

Appendix 8.1: Townscape Baseline and Sensitivity				
Townscape Elements	Baseline Description	Townscape Value	Susceptibility to Change	Overall Sensitivity of Receptor
Townscape Character Area	The townscape character within the site and surrounding city centre context is illustrated within Figure 8.4 of Appendix 8.3. The Site is located within Manchester City Centre, as defined by Manchester Core Strategy 2012-2027. The City Centre is defined as the area inside the Inner Relief Route, and extends to the south to encompass the Oxford Road Corridor, and includes several distinct areas. The site is located in an area defined as ‘The Corridor’, which contains major educational and medical institutions located alongside a linear route (Oxford Road) in a variety of large scale buildings. Underlying this are remnants of the historic past such as the grid iron street pattern dating principally from the 19th Century. The area contains a network of open spaces often resulting from more recent developments and is busy especially with public transport and pedestrian movement through much of the 24 hour day with patterns of movement linking areas to both sides of Oxford Road. The Corridor represents the only area where the levels of activity, range of uses and scale of built form associated with the City Centre extend beyond the Mancunian Way. The Strategy states that new development needs to reflect the significant scale and form expected from major City institutions and opportunities will exist for more innovative and contemporary built forms, which have regard to the historic context. In addition, a balance between built form and open space which allows for easy movement through and across the area will be required within new development. The Corridor is considered a suitable location for new office, research and development, light industrial, general industrial, education and health developments. The Site in its current form does not contribute to achieving the objectives for the ‘The Corridor’, as set out within the Core Strategy. It is essentially a cleared site, currently being used as a temporary compound area for the ongoing Circle Square development. The townscape character area is assessed as ‘medium’ in terms of townscape value, with ‘medium’ potential to accommodate change without harm. The overall sensitivity of the townscape character as a receptor is ‘medium’.	Medium	Medium	Medium
Urban Grain	Urban grain on the Site and in the surrounding area is shown in Figure 8.5 of Appendix 8.3. The urban grain within the site and surrounding study area is generally tight and in a grid pattern appropriate to the city centre location. Gaps within the grain are infrequent, due to the ongoing regeneration in this part of the city including within the Circle Square development which forms the site’s immediate context. Buildings are generally medium-large floor plate with floorplate generally increasing to the south beyond the Mancunian Way. Density generally increases to the north within the heart of the city centre. There is currently no development within the site, and it forms a gap within the urban grain. The historic intricate urban grain was lost prior to the development of the BBC building, which formed a substantial floorplate on the Circle Square site. Recent redevelopment works to incorporate the Circle Square masterplan have created a grain more appropriate to the city centre, which is dense but allows movement through and ‘breathing space’ in the form of Symphony Park. The townscape value of the study area in terms of urban grain and has therefore been assessed as ‘medium’, with ‘medium’ ability to accommodate change without undue harm. The overall sensitivity of the urban grain as a receptor is ‘medium’.	Medium	Medium	Medium
Land Use	Land use on the Site and in the surrounding area is shown in Figure 8.6 of Appendix 8.3. Land uses to the north of the site, beyond Circle Square, are a mix of uses associated with the city centre, and are generally retail and commercial mixed uses. To the south, land use is dominated by educational use associated with the Universities. Office and residential use are also prominent land uses within the study area. The site is currently being used as a temporary compound area for the ongoing Circle Square development. Circle Square will form the immediate context for the site. It is an employment-led mixed use development which includes commercial office space; other business/research space; a new residential neighbourhood; ground floor retail and leisure space; and a series of public realm interventions. The development is in advanced stages of construction and therefore forms part of the baseline for this assessment. It will turn this part of the city into a vibrant new district, legibly connecting in to the wider city centre fabric. The land within the study area has been assessed as ‘medium’ in terms of value, with as ‘medium’ ability to accommodate change without harm. The overall sensitivity of land use as a receptor is ‘medium’.	Medium	Medium	Medium
Building Heights	Building heights on the Site and in the surrounding area is shown in Figure 8.7 of Appendix 8.3. Buildings within Circle Square development are characterised by a mix of building heights, with development ranging from seven up to thirty-seven storeys in height. The building heights within the city centre to the north and along the Oxford Road Corridor to the south are generally substantially, reflecting their location within the Manchester City Centre Townscape Character Area, as defined within the Core Strategy. Building heights generally step up to the north within Circle Square, and more generally towards the city centre core to the north of the railway line. Buildings within Circle Square set a new height datum within the area, and form the context for the site. The land within the study area has been assessed as ‘medium’ in terms of value, with ‘medium’ ability to accommodate change without harm. The overall sensitivity of building heights as a receptor is ‘medium’.	Medium	Medium	Medium
Movement and Linkages	Movement and linkages on the Site and in the surrounding area are shown in Figure 8.8 of Appendix 8.3. The surrounding area contains many key transport links including Manchester Piccadilly station, Oxford Road station and Deansgate station. To the north adjacent to St. Peter’s Square lies the Metrolink line, and to the south of the Site lies the A57 Mancunian Way ring-road which dominates much of Manchester’s urban grain. Heavily used vehicular roads of Princess Street, directly to the east, and Oxford Road directly to the west also contain bus stops and also act as key pedestrian links, with Oxford Road in particular integrating a cycle link from St. Peter’s Square at the north of Oxford Road to Fallowfield in the south. The central location to the city centre, leisure attractions	Medium	Medium	Medium

Terminology for Townscape Effect:

Townscape Value:	High, Medium, Low	Duration:	Long-term, Medium-term, Short-term
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Overall Sensitivity of Receptor:	High, Medium, Low	Overall Magnitude of Effect:	Major, Moderate, Minor, Negligible, No Change
Size/Scale of Effect:	Major, Moderate, Minor, Negligible, No Change	Nature of Effect:	Adverse, Beneficial, Neutral, Not Applicable, Direct, Indirect
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	and university campuses results in a large amount of footfall in this area. There are no pedestrian or transport links through the Site at present due to its nature as a temporary compound and site cabin location for the ongoing developments at Circle Square. While there are no pedestrian links at present through the Circle Square development, there are planned pedestrian links which will allow pedestrian movement from Oxford Road to Princess Street, similar to the adjacent Brancaster Road. The land within the study area has been assessed as ‘medium’ in terms of value, with ‘medium’ ability to accommodate change without harm. The overall sensitivity of building heights as a receptor is ‘medium’.			
Public Open Space	Greenspace and Open Space on the Site and in the surrounding area are shown in Figure 8.9 of Appendix 8.3. Green open space within the city centre is limited due to the density of the built form. The quality of green open space is also varied, with low quality amenity green spaces within close proximity to the site adjacent to the Mancunian Way. The green space lacks a clear function. In contrast, Symphony Park forms a major new public space within the city centre and is within close proximity to the site. The space is high quality and forms a valuable resource for workers, visitors and residents within this part of the city. There are no green space or environmental designations covering the Site due to its nature as a temporary compound and site cabin location for the ongoing developments at Circle Square., The land within the study area has been assessed as ‘medium’ in terms of value, with ‘medium’ ability to accommodate change without harm. The overall sensitivity of building heights as a receptor is ‘medium’.	Medium	Medium	Medium
Site Character	The site character is shown in Figure 8.10 of Appendix 8.3. The Site currently lacks a clear function and is devoid of development in what is a key city centre location and key frontage onto Princess Street. Newman Street also forms a key east-west linkage. The site character is currently defined by its temporary use. It has therefore been assessed as ‘low’ in terms of value, with ‘high’ potential to accommodate change without harm.	Low	Low	Low

Appendix 8.1: Townscape Effects Table: Description of Change, Magnitude and Significance											
Townscape Resources	Description of Change	Mitigation	Summary of Effect	Overall Sensitivity of Receptor	Size/Scale of Effect	Geographical Extent of Effect	Duration/ Reversibility	Overall Magnitude of Effect	Nature of Effect	Significance	Confidence
Townscape Character	<u>Construction Phase:</u> The site does not currently contribute positively to defining and/or reinforcing townscape character.	- Site hoarding to provide visual screening of construction works at street level. - Use of hydraulic cranes which can be lowered when not in use, in order to minimise impacts of construction works. - Use of directional lighting across the site to minimise impact of construction works on the wider townscape setting.	Although signalling the regeneration of the site, the construction period is likely to detract temporarily from the existing townscape context, especially as the Site is part of the ongoing Circle Square, development which is now substantially completed.	Medium	Minor	City	Short/medium term. Temporary	Minor	Neutral	Minor significance	High

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	<u>Operational Phase:</u> The Proposed Development will infill a gap in the existing urban grain which detracts from the character of Circle Square and forms a minor detractor within the wider Corridor townscape character area.	No additional mitigation required	The Proposed Development will contribute positively to defining and reinforcing the character within Circle Square and the wider character of the The Corridor.		Minor	City	Long term. Permanent	Minor	Beneficial	Minor significance	High
	<u>Future Baseline (Consented Plot 12) Operational Phase:</u> The site is located in the Oxford Road townscape character area in the City Centre of Manchester. By creating residential use within such close proximity to the City Centre, the Proposed Development will contribute positively to achieving the vision for a 24hr city. The proposed residential tower will also contribute to reinforcing the ongoing Circle Square development.	No additional mitigation required	The Proposed Development will deliver a scheme that will support economic growth, create jobs, and provide necessary infrastructure to support the tourism, evening and night-time economies of the City. Furthermore, the proposal will be of a high quality design that will positively contribute to the streetscene of Manchester.		Moderate	City	Long term. Permanent	Minor	Beneficial	Minor significance	High
Urban Grain	<u>Construction Phase:</u> The construction process will see a infilling of the site and creation of a new urban grain within a key part of the city.	- Site hoarding to provide visual screening of construction works at street level. - Use of hydraulic cranes which can be lowered when not in use, in order to minimise impacts of construction works. - Use of directional lighting across the site to minimise impact of construction works on the wider townscape setting.	As the site currently forms a void in the urban form, the construction process is not predicted to result in any adverse effects.	Medium	Minor	Local	Short/medium term. Temporary	Minor	Neutral	Minor significance	High
	<u>Operational Phase:</u> The proposed development will return the site into active use by filling the current gap in the urban grain in what is a key part of the city with an appropriate urban form.	No additional mitigation required	The existing gap currently offers no contribution to the urban block and has an adverse impact on the streetscape along Newman Steet due to the lack of enclosure. The scale, massing and form of the proposal will result in a strong building line and sense of enclosure that will contribute to the visual interest and rhythm of the streetscene. The urban grain will be infilled in what is a key part of the Circle Square development and the city centre		Minor	Local	Long term. Permanent	Minor	Beneficial	Minor significance	High
	<u>Future Baseline (Consented Plot 12) Operational Phase:</u> The existing vacant gap site currently offers no contribution to the urban block and has an adverse impact on the streetscape given the lack of enclosure. The scale, massing and form of the proposal will result in a strong building line and sense of enclosure that will contribute to the visual interest and rhythm of the streetscene.	No additional mitigation required	The proposed development will return the site into active use by filling the current gap in the urban grain in what is a key part of the city with an appropriate urban form.		Moderate	Local	Long term. Permanent	Minor	Beneficial	Minor significance	High

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Land Use	<u>Construction Phase:</u> The site currently lacks a clear function due to temporary uses associated with construction. New uses within the site will commence once the construction phase is complete.	- Site hoarding to provide visual screening of construction works at street level. - Use of hydraulic cranes which can be lowered when not in use, in order to minimise impacts of construction works. - Use of directional lighting across the site to minimise impact of construction works on the wider townscape setting.	As the site currently does not have any use other than temporary construction storage, the construction process is not predicted to result in any adverse effects.	Medium	Moderate	Local	Short/medium term. Temporary	No change	N/A	Not significant	High
	<u>Operational Phase:</u> The site will be transformed from an underused site in a key city centre location to one which has a clearly defined use appropriate to the immediate, townscape character and wider city centre context.	No additional mitigation required	The proposed office and amenity space and independent commercial spaces will be in keeping with the wider Circle Square development, The Corridor character area, and the wider City Centre context		Moderate	Local	Long term. Permanent	Minor	Beneficial	Minor significance	High
	<u>Future Baseline (Consented Plot 12) Operational Phase:</u> The surrounding area is characterised by a mix of land uses that include education, office, retail, car parking, and residential. This proposal continues this theme by having both residential flower floors and an active ground and lower ground floor containing a potential mix of uses.	No additional mitigation required	The proposed mix of land uses will contribute positively to achieving the vision to allow the city centre to expand.		Moderate	Local	Long term. Permanent	Minor	Beneficial	Minor significance	High
Building Heights	<u>Construction Phase:</u> The construction process will see a gradual appearance of a new building in the overall Circle Square development and within the Site with significant height.	- Site hoarding to provide visual screening of construction works at street level. - Use of hydraulic cranes which can be lowered when not in use, in order to minimise impacts of construction works. - Use of directional lighting across the site to minimise impact of construction works on the wider townscape setting.	Construction of the building on the Site will be clearly visible but, due to the heights of the taller surrounding Circle Square, development buildings will have a low impact. Although signalling the regeneration of the site, the construction period is likely to detract temporarily from the existing townscape context.	Medium	Moderate	City	Short/medium term. Temporary	Minor	Neutral	Minor significance	High
	<u>Operational Phase:</u> The building will be 15 storeys. The surrounding buildings in the Circle Square development are varied, with some between 14-16 storeys high with taller landmark buildings 30+ storeys tall.	No additional mitigation required	The proposed development will be in keeping with building heights within the Circle Square development and wider city centre context. The overall building height and aesthetic parameters are as set by the Circle Square masterplan.		Major	City	Long term. Permanent	Minor	Beneficial	Minor significance	High
	<u>Future Baseline (Consented Plot 12) Operational Phase:</u> The Site building sits at 15 storeys. However, the majority of the surrounding buildings in the Circle Square development sit between 14-16 storeys high with a few buildings 30+ storeys tall. The 15 storeys of the Site building do not dominate the adjoining public square or surrounding landscape.	No additional mitigation required	The existing skyline neighbouring the Application Site is characterised by a variety of built forms and heights, some of which rise above the general level and punctuate the townscape, others are low in scale.		Major	City	Long term. Permanent	Minor	Beneficial	Minor significance	High

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Movement and Linkages	<u>Construction Phase:</u> Existing pedestrian, cycle and vehicular routes through the site are limited and poor quality. The construction activity is not predicted to result in detrimental change. During construction, the the logistics operations which service existing buildings will be considered and maintained.	- Site hoarding to provide visual screening of construction works at street level. - Use of hydraulic cranes which can be lowered when not in use, in order to minimise impacts of construction works. - Use of directional lighting across the site to minimise impact of construction works on the wider townscape setting.	The construction process is not predicted to result in any adverse effects.	Medium	Moderate	Local	Short/medium term. Temporary	Minor	Neutral	Minor significance	High
	<u>Operational Phase:</u> Newman Street will form a new, high quality east-west route, replacing the existing Brancaster Road. The route will allow vehicular access, and will provide a strong connection between Oxford Road and Princess Street. New circulation routes will provide access to buildings and within the new Symphony Gardens, encouraging use and activity. Access for car parking and servicing will be re-routed through the MSCP and between the site and MSCP to remove the need for these vehicle movements on Newman Street. The Proposed Development incorporates principles of the Circle Square masterplan to provide a high-quality development with active frontages and pedestrian linkages.	No additional mitigation required	The proposed development will enhance the pedestrian and cycle movement network at the local level as part of the Circle Square development, and will contribute positively to the wider movement network. The Proposed Development will create overlooking and active frontage at ground level onto key routes. The character and quality of Newman Street will be positively enhanced by high quality landscape proposals which will ‘green’ the street’.		Moderate	Local	Long term. Permanent	Moderate	Beneficial	Moderately significant	High
	<u>Future Baseline (Consented Plot 12) Operational Phase:</u> A new pedestrian route will run adjacent to the building on the Site on a roughly east/west axis, through the public space and forming a new connection between Upper Brook Street and Oxford Road, and well overlooked by buildings in the Circle Square development. The Proposed Development incorporates principles of the Circle Square masterplan to provide a high-quality development with active frontages and pedestrian linkages.	No additional mitigation required	The proposed development will enhance the pedestrian movement network at the local and site level, by allowing pedestrians to move through the site via a safe and attractive route.		Moderate	Local	Long term. Permanent	Moderate	Beneficial	Moderately significant	High
Public Open Space	<u>Construction Phase:</u> There are currently no environmental designations covering the site, and none proposed. There is currently no designated public open space within the site. The proposed new public space will be functional once the construction phase is complete.	- Site hoarding to provide visual screening of construction works at street level. - Use of hydraulic cranes which can be lowered when not in use, in order to minimise impacts of construction works. - Use of directional lighting across the site to minimise impact of construction works on the wider townscape setting.	As the site currently does not have any public open space within it, the construction process is not predicted to result in any adverse effects.	Medium	Moderate	Local	Short/medium term. Temporary	No change	N/A	Not significant	High

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	<u>Operational Phase:</u> The Site forms part of the wider Circle Square development which features Symphony Park, over 5.7 acres of public green space with over 100 trees. Symphony Gardens will form a new, high quality space which will be well overlooked by development and will form an ‘urban oasis’ within the city	No additional mitigation required	Symphony Gardens will form a new high quality space which will have a unique character and reference Symphony Park in its form. The planting and features will create an attractive and functional space. The Gardens will connect to the newly greened Newman Street.		Moderate	Local	Long term. Permanent.	Moderate	Beneficial	Moderately significant	High
	<u>Future Baseline (Consented Plot 12) Operational Phase:</u> The Site forms part of the ongoing Circle Square development which features The Lawn, a green public space and linkage in the heart of the scheme which the Site sits adjacent to. There are no public space designations within the Site.	No additional mitigation required	There are no public space designations within the Site.		Moderate	Local	Long term. Permanent.	No change	Neutral	Minor significance	High
Site Character	<u>Construction Phase:</u> The site character is defined by ongoing construction works and is therefore not predicted to change as a result of the proposed works.	• Site hoarding to provide visual screening of construction works at street level. • Use of hydraulic cranes which can be lowered when not in use, in order to minimise impacts of construction works. • Use of directional lighting across the site to minimise impact of construction works on the wider townscape setting.	The Proposed Development will result in little change to the existing site character during the construction phase.	Low	Moderate	Local	Short/medium term. Temporary	Minor	Neutral	Not significant	High
	<u>Operational Phase:</u> The character of the site will be transformed from a construction site to a high quality development with a clearly defined use.	No additional mitigation required	The character of the site will be transformed as a result of the Proposed Development. The change will be positive, with a high quality new mixed use development incorporating new linkages and a clearly defined character that contributes positively to achieving the vision of the Circle Square development as a whole. Symphony Gardens will form a new, high quality green space for the site, which will contribute positively to the wider Circle Square and city centre context.		Major	Site	Long term. Permanent	Major	Beneficial	Moderately significant	High
	<u>Future Baseline (Consented Plot 12) Operational Phase:</u> The character of the site will change from a construction site to a high quality development with a clearly defined use.	No additional mitigation required	The character of the site will be transformed as a result of the Proposed Development. The change will be positive, with a high quality new mixed use development incorporating new linkages and a clearly defined character that contributes positively to achieving the vision of the Circle Square development as a whole.		Major	Site	Long term. Permanent	Major	Beneficial	Moderately significant	High

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Townscape Value:

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Overall Sensitivity of Receptor:

Size/Scale of Effect:

Geographical Extent of Effect:

High, Medium, Low

High, Medium, Low

High, Medium, Low

Major, Moderate, Minor, Negligible, No Change

Site, Local, Neighbourhood, City

Duration:

Reversibility:

Overall Magnitude of Effect:

Nature of Effect:

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Long-term, Medium-term, Short-term

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