Merebridge Construction Statement of Community Involvement

Project: M1 Developments

Address: 48 Store Street, M1 2WA

Contractor: Merebridge Construction

Prepared for: Manchester City Council

Date: December 2025

1.0 Overview

This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been prepared by Merebridge Construction in support of a revised planning application for a residential development at Store Street, Manchester.

Merebridge Construction acquired the site in April 2025 with the benefit of a planning consent for a 15-storey building containing 54 apartments. The planning application submitted by the previous owner of the site for this consent was accompanied by a comprehensive consultation process involving local residents and local businesses as well as ward councillors and community stakeholders.

The new planning application proposes:

- A 16-storey residential building (no overall building height change)
- 73 high-quality apartments (increased from 54)
- Improved internal and external amenity space
- Secure cycle storage
- A refined architectural design that removes the previous gold façade and replaces it with a more contextual material palette
- A development that contributes positively to the regeneration of the Piccadilly area

Purpose of this SCI

Because Merebridge Construction are limiting the changes to the current consented scheme, the previous consultation remains directly relevant to the revised scheme.

This SCI therefore:

1. Responds to Planning Officers requirements to reach out to ward councillors
2. Summarises the previous consultation carried out with residents and local businesses
3. Reports the feedback received from the community and councillors
4. Explains how the current 73-unit proposal responds to those comments
5. Demonstrates continued compliance with Manchester City Council's SCI and national guidance

2.0 Policy Framework

Manchester City Council's Statement of Community Involvement (2017) encourages meaningful consultation with all affected community groups, including local residents, businesses, and councillors. Merebridge's 2021 consultation and the incorporation of that feedback into the new proposals fully align with these requirements.

3.0 Consultation Programme

A comprehensive programme of engagement was undertaken in November and December 2021 with residents, local businesses, councillors, and stakeholders. Further consultation was undertaken from September to December 2025 specifically on the new application and the proposed changes.

3.1 Engagement with Local Residents and Local Businesses

100 letters delivered (November 2025)

Letters were hand-delivered to residential addresses and local businesses surrounding the site, including:

- Warehouse workspaces
- Small independent retailers
- Managed residential apartments
- Commercial premises on Store Street and adjoining roads

These letters directed recipients to a consultation website and offered opportunities to provide feedback – see copy of letter in appendices

2021 Consultation

Consultation website

This was available to residents and businesses, containing plans, FAQs, and a feedback form.

Virtual exhibition

Nine boards explaining the scheme were made available online for residents and businesses to view at any time.

Public webinar

Open to both residents and businesses, held on 30 November 2021.

Email address & phone number

Provided for residents and business owners to ask questions or provide comments.

Social media advertising

Targeted to people living and working within a 750m radius of the site, ensuring local employees and business operators were included.

3.2 Engagement with Local Representatives

As requested by the planning officers, we reached out to the Local Ward Councillors on numerous occasions namely Cllr Jon-Connor Lyons, Cllr Adele Douglas, Cllr Sam Wheeler offering to meet them however only Cllr Jon-Connor Lyons responded

We held a meetings with Cllr Jon-Connor Lyons on the Monday the 15th September 2025. Feedback from these discussions influenced the design review.

3.3 Summary of New and Previous Responses

A total of 22 responses were received from a mix of:

- Nearby residents
- Local business owners and employees
- Interested parties living within the city centre

These views were used as the foundation for revising the updated scheme.

4.0 Feedback Received from Residents and Local Businesses

Consultation responses from residents and businesses highlighted the following:

Positive themes

- Support for redeveloping a long-vacant brownfield site
- Recognition of demand for new housing and increased activity
- Broad support for bringing investment to the Piccadilly area

Concerns and issues raised

Residents and local businesses raised similar issues, including:

- Building height and massing
- The previous gold-coloured façade (commonly viewed as out of keeping)
- Impacts on daylight and views
- Desire for a more contextual architectural approach
- Interest in retail or commercial units at ground floor
- Limited parking in the area
- Loss of self-seeded trees previously present on the site

Several businesses also noted:

- Potential improvement to the local environment through regeneration
- Opportunities for increased footfall due to new residents
- Desire for improved public realm and street-level activity

5.0 Merebridge's Response to Residents and Local Businesses

Merebridge has directly addressed the issues raised by both residents and local businesses.

5.1 Height & Massing

Although the overall height of the building remains the same as the previous proposal, the massing and building form have been significantly refined. These changes have been made to improve:

- **Townscape relationships**, ensuring the building integrates more effectively with both existing and emerging developments in the Piccadilly area
- Views from nearby residential properties and local businesses**,** reducing perceived bulk through improved articulation and façade treatment

- Visual quality along Store Street**,** creating a more elegant profile and a contextual architectural expression

5.2 Removal of Gold Façade

One of the most consistent concerns raised, particularly from local residents and business owners, was the gold-coloured cladding.

This has been completely removed. The new proposal features a:

- More contextual material palette
- Colour and detail referencing local industrial heritage
- Softer, higher-quality architectural expression

5.3 Communal Spaces & Activation

Feedback requested more activation and communal opportunity. In response, the revised scheme includes:

- Improved internal amenities
- Outdoor terrace space
- More sociable layouts supporting home working
- Increased cycle and storage capacity

5.4 Parking & Transport

Residents and businesses raised concern about parking pressure.
The scheme remains car-free, in line with MCC policy, but includes:

- Comprehensive cycle provision
- Sustainable Transport Strategy
- Travel Plan measures supporting residents and local employees

5.5 Landscaping & Trees

Loss of trees was noted by residents and businesses.
The new scheme:

- Introduces new planting
- Improves landscaping
- Strengthens the green character of Store Street

6.0 Updated Scheme Overview (2024)

The revised scheme delivers:

- 73 apartments
- 16 storeys
- Significantly improved design quality
- Contextual materials replacing the previous gold façade
- Better amenity and communal spaces
- Enhanced public realm
- A more refined, commercial-friendly frontage to benefit local businesses
- A development that complements neighbouring uses and improves the setting for residents AND the business community

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7.0 Conclusions

This SCI demonstrates that:

- Residents and local businesses were actively consulted in 2021
- Their feedback has been carefully considered during the redesign of the scheme
- Key concerns—especially the gold façade and massing—have been meaningfully addressed
- The new scheme represents a significant improvement in design quality and contextual response
- The proposals support both the residential community and the local business environment

Merebridge remains committed to ongoing, positive engagement with residents, businesses, councillors, and stakeholders throughout the planning process.

Prepared by: Owen Simmons
On behalf of: Merebridge Construction

APPENDIX A – LETTER TO RESIDENTS

02/11/2025

Dear Resident / Business Owner,

Re: Updated Planning Application – 48 Store Street, Manchester

We are writing to provide you with an update on the above development. Merebridge Construction have acquired the site from the previous owners M1 Picadilly in April 2025. As the new owners Merebridge Construction are bringing forward an updated planning application for the vacant site on Store Street. Many of you will remember that the previous landowner, consulted residents and businesses in 2021, when proposals were shared for a 15-storey residential building containing 54 apartments.

Overall, there was several negative comments received which Merebridge Construction wants to address to improve the scheme. Further to positive design development, Merebridge Construction is now submitting a revised application for a high-quality residential building that responds directly to the feedback received.

What has changed since 2021?

The updated proposals now include:

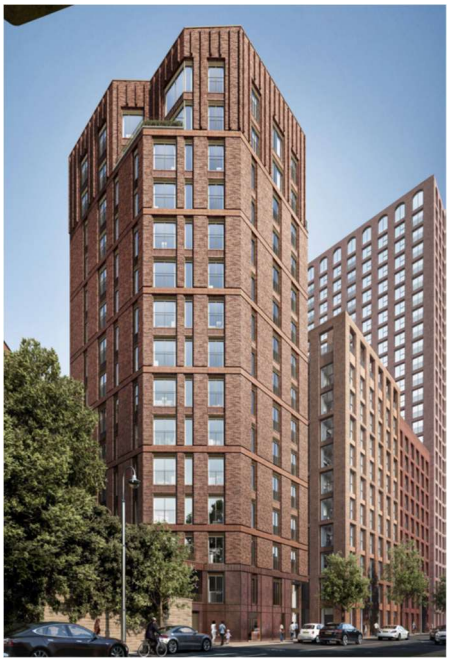
- The current consent for 54 number apartments is very luxurious in layout and caters for the wealthy investor market with highly priced apartments. We are seeking to address this issue by providing a more well designed and appropriate apartments for local residents which has increased the overall provision of new homes to 75 apartments from 54.
- A building that is the same overall height as previously consented.
- A refined massing and profile to improve the building's relationship with neighbouring properties
- Improved views and a more elegant frontage along Store Street
- A revised architectural design that removes the 'gold' coloured façade, which residents and businesses told us felt out of keeping with the area
- Enhanced internal and external amenity spaces for future residents
- Secure cycle parking for all homes

These changes have been informed by the comments received from local residents, local businesses and ward councillors during the 2021 consultation.

CONSENTED 2021



PROPOSED 2025



Why the site is being brought forward now

The site has remained vacant for many years, and the updated proposals continue to support Manchester City Council's vision for the wider Piccadilly area, helping to:

- Regenerate underused brownfield land
- Increase activity, safety, and natural surveillance along Store Street
- Deliver much-needed new homes in the city centre

We are a Developer Contractor committed to bringing quality developments to life and creating legacy. We also manage all our developments post completion meaning we retain strong control over the future maintenance and appearance of our buildings.

We will liaise with all stakeholders during the construction process and always be available to deal with any challenges in partnership with the local community and stakeholders

Where to view the updated plans

All updated plans, drawings, and supporting documents will be available to view on Manchester City Council's planning portal once the application is validated. Search: 48 Store Street – Merebridge

If you would like to receive a direct link once the application is live, please email us using the address below.

How to provide comments

You can submit comments directly to the Council through the planning portal once the application is open for public consultation.

If you have any questions for the project team, you can also contact us at: email: owen@merebridgeconstruction.co.uk

Thank you

We would like to thank residents and local businesses for the feedback you provided which has played an important role in shaping the updated design. We remain committed to engaging with the community as the planning process continues.

Yours sincerely,

The Merebridge Team