

158 Cheetham Hill Road, Manchester, M8 8LQ

Planning Statement

August 2025

Introduction & Site Context

This Planning Statement is submitted on behalf of the applicant in support of an outline planning application for the development of an exhibition centre at 158 Cheetham Hill Road. The application seeks approval for matters of access and layout only, with all other matters (including scale, appearance, and landscaping) reserved for consideration at Reserved Matters stage. The application site is currently a vacant parcel of land, identified by the red pointer in the image below.



Figure 1: Application site - Google Earth

The application site comprises a corner plot site, with Derby Street, fronting Cheetham Hill Road (A665) within a highly active and commercially focused area characterised by a diverse mix of wholesale outlets, light industrial premises, vehicle repair workshops, storage facilities, and various service businesses.

The immediate surroundings include a dense concentration of services, business and shop activity, with numerous takeaways, restaurants, offices, and other commercial uses. The

overall character of the locality is defined by utilitarian architecture, and a strong presence of businesses catering to both trade customers and the general public.

The application site is shown in the image below.

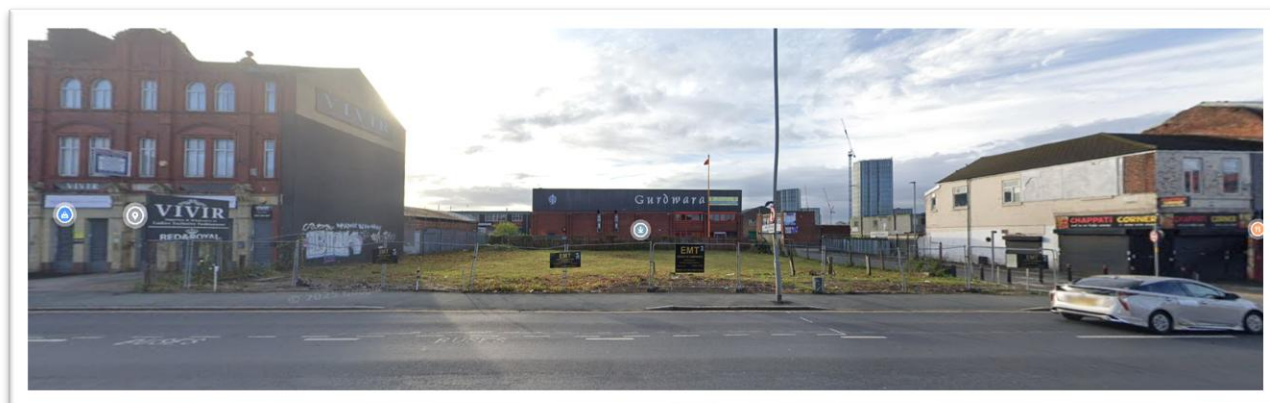


Figure 2: Application site - Google Maps

The application site occupies a cleared parcel of land fronting Cheetham Hill Road in a prominent position between existing commercial buildings of varying scale and appearance. To the left stands a substantial three-storey red brick Victorian property incorporating retail units at ground floor level, which features large fascia signs, printed banners, and a substantial painted advertisement on the gable end, all contributing to a strong visual presence onto the street.

Immediately to the right is a two-storey commercial building with active ground floor uses, including the takeaway premises “Chappati Corner,” which prominently displays fascia signage and window graphics. Directly behind the site sits the large brick-built Gurdwara, whose bold lettering in contrasting colours and large symbolic iconography create a highly legible and visually prominent landmark within the streetscene.

The wider Cheetham Hill Road corridor is defined by a pronounced commercial character where a wide range of signage, including large format fascias, projecting signs, hoardings, painted wall adverts, and illuminated displays, are integral to the identity of the area. Many premises utilise vivid colours, large-scale text, and LED lighting to attract attention in this high-traffic environment.

As such, signage of various scales and materials is commonplace, forming a defining element of the streetscape’s visual language and reinforcing the mixed commercial and retail function of the locality.

Proposal

Description

The proposed development comprises a purpose-built exhibition centre at 158 Cheetham Hill Road, designed to provide a flexible, modern venue capable of accommodating a wide range of events, exhibitions, conferences and functions. The building incorporates high-quality internal spaces including a large exhibition hall, dedicated conference rooms, reception and bar areas, kitchen and storage facilities, as well as a generous function space with stage and dining provision at first floor level. A basement car park with cycle storage ensures convenient and sustainable access for visitors and staff. The design and layout of the building seek to deliver a well-integrated community and commercial facility that can support cultural, business and social activities, contributing positively to the local economy and reinforcing the role of Cheetham Hill Road as a diverse and active mixed-use corridor.

Outline Matters

Access

The site will be accessed directly from Derby Street, which in turn connects onto Cheetham Hill Road, a well-established and highly accessible thoroughfare within the local highway network. Cheetham Hill Road benefits from frequent bus services providing links to Manchester city centre and surrounding areas, and the location is also well served by local taxi services, ensuring convenient access for visitors arriving by public transport. The proposed access arrangements via Derby Street allow vehicles to enter and exit the site safely while maintaining smooth connections to the wider road network.

Layout

The proposed development is arranged across three floors, comprising a basement, ground floor and first floor, each designed to serve complementary functions that together create a modern, flexible exhibition centre.

Basement Level

The basement level is primarily dedicated to parking and storage. It accommodates a secure car park with multiple vehicle bays, including disabled parking provision, as well as a cycle storage area. Lift and stair access are provided to connect the basement directly with the upper floors of the building, ensuring full accessibility. Indicated layout plans shown below.

Ground Floor

The ground floor serves as the main public-facing area of the exhibition centre. It provides a generous reception space leading into the exhibition hall, which forms the core of the development. Additional features include conference rooms, a bar and seating areas. Supporting facilities include a kitchen, storage rooms, and amenities, ensuring the smooth day-to-day operation of the building. The layout also includes clear connections to the basement car park entrance, allowing convenient access for visitors and staff.

First Floor

The first floor provides a large, flexible event and function space, designed to accommodate a variety of uses such as banquets, conferences, and staged performances. A central stage is located at the front of the hall, with seating areas laid out across the floor to maximise capacity. Ancillary facilities include a buffet section, a kitchen, storage space, and additional WC provision. A bar area is also positioned to serve events, and circulation is supported via stair and lift access from the lower floors.

Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

The NPPF sets out broad national policies on themes such as housing, historic environment, town centres, design, climate change and the Green Belt. Central to the broad policy direction contained within the NPPF is the notion of sustainable development; development which effectively balances economic, social and environmental factors. The following sections are relevant to this proposal:

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy

Section 11 – Making effective use of land

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Local Planning Policies

Places for Everyone (2022-2039) – 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 and took effect and became part of the statutory development plan on March 21, 2024.

The PfE Plan and its policies are now a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. The PfE Plan and its policies must therefore be given full weight in the planning balance.

The relevant Places for Everyone policies for this application are as follows:

- JP-S1 – Sustainable Development
- JP-P1 – Sustainable Places
- JP-P3 - Cultural Facilities
- JP-J1 – Supporting Long Term Economic Growth

Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012-2027) - The Core Strategy was adopted on the 11 July 2012 and replaces a large number of policies in Manchester's Unitary Development Plan. Parts of the policies have been superseded by the Places for Everyone Plan.

The relevant Core Strategy policies for this application are as follows:

- DM 1 – Development Management
- SP 1 – Spatial Principles (partially superseded by PfE)
- EC 4 – North Manchester
- C3 – North Manchester District Centres – Cheetham Hill and Harpurhey

- C10 – Leisure and the Evening Economy

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) for the City of Manchester (1995) - The Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester was adopted in 1995 and has largely been replaced with the policies contained within the Core Strategy. However, there are a number of policies that are extant.

The relevant saved UDP policies for this application are:

- CC10 – Industrial and Commercial uses

The relevant supplementary planning guidance documents for this application are:

- The Guide to Development in Manchester SPD

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Appraisal

Places for Everyone (2022-2039)

JP-S1 – Sustainable Development

The proposed development aligns with the principles of sustainable development by making efficient use of a previously developed urban site, located on a highly accessible corridor within Cheetham Hill. The exhibition centre will encourage sustainable patterns of travel by providing basement cycle storage, easy access to frequent bus services along Cheetham Hill Road, and proximity to local taxi services, reducing reliance on private car travel. The scheme will also support the creation of a vibrant, mixed-use environment that contributes positively to the area's economic and social sustainability.

JP-P1 – Sustainable Places

The scheme contributes to the creation of a sustainable place by introducing a high-quality, purpose-built community and commercial facility that integrates effectively within its surroundings. The layout has been designed to ensure safe and convenient access via Derby Street while maximising the site's potential for cultural and economic activity. The proposal will enhance the role of Cheetham Hill Road as a diverse and active mixed-use corridor, supporting vitality both during the day and into the evening.

JP-P3 – Cultural Facilities

The development directly addresses this policy by delivering a new cultural and community facility, providing flexible spaces for exhibitions, conferences, events and performances. The centre will cater to a wide range of cultural, social and business activities, reinforcing the local area as a hub for community interaction and enterprise. By broadening the range of cultural facilities available, the scheme will support inclusivity and participation, while also attracting visitors from a wider catchment area.

JP-J1 – Supporting Long Term Economic Growth

The exhibition centre will contribute to long-term economic growth by creating a modern venue that supports local businesses, conferences and events. It will generate employment opportunities during both the construction and operational phases, while also stimulating indirect economic benefits for surrounding shops, restaurants and services along Cheetham Hill Road. The scheme represents significant investment in the local area, strengthening Manchester's reputation as a regional destination for business, culture and events.

Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012-2027)

DM 1 – Development Management

The proposal accords with the principles of Policy DM 1 by ensuring that the development is appropriate in terms of its siting, layout and relationship to surrounding uses. The design of the exhibition centre makes efficient use of the site while respecting its urban context, with access taken safely from Derby Street and good connections to Cheetham Hill Road. The scheme incorporates practical servicing and parking arrangements, alongside measures to encourage sustainable modes of transport such as cycle storage. In doing so,

it demonstrates a high standard of design, accessibility and functionality consistent with the requirements of Policy DM 1.

SP 1 – Spatial Principles

Although partially superseded by Places for Everyone, Policy SP 1 continues to emphasise the need for development that promotes economic growth, supports sustainable communities and enhances Manchester's role as a regional centre. The proposed exhibition centre will make a positive contribution to these objectives by providing a high-quality cultural and commercial facility in a sustainable location, well served by public transport. The scheme will strengthen the role of Cheetham Hill as a key corridor for employment and enterprise, whilst also creating opportunities for community use and participation.

EC 4 – North Manchester

The proposal directly supports the objectives of Policy EC 4 by contributing to the regeneration and economic growth of North Manchester. The exhibition centre represents significant new investment in Cheetham Hill and will help to diversify the local economy by attracting conferences, exhibitions and cultural events. In doing so, it will create jobs, stimulate local spending and enhance the profile of North Manchester as a place to do business, invest and visit.

C3 – North Manchester District Centres – Cheetham Hill and Harpurhey

The scheme will strengthen the role of Cheetham Hill as an important district centre by introducing a facility that draws visitors, increases footfall and generates linked trips to surrounding shops, services and restaurants. The exhibition centre will complement existing town centre uses by providing a cultural and business facility not currently available within the district. This will reinforce Cheetham Hill's vitality and viability, in line with Policy C3's objectives of supporting sustainable growth and strengthening the economic role of district centres across North Manchester.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

NPPF Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development

The NPPF establishes three interdependent objectives for sustainable development; economic, social, and environmental, and places the ***“presumption in favour of sustainable development”*** at its core.

- Economic: The proposed exhibition centre supports a strong, responsive and competitive economy, ensuring that land of the right type is available in the right place and time.
- Social: By providing a high-quality, flexible venue that enhances cultural, business, and community interaction, the scheme fosters “well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services”.

- Environmental: The scheme optimises a previously developed urban site with sustainable transport access, particularly through basement cycle storage and proximity to public transit, thereby supporting “making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently”.

This aligns the development squarely with the NPPF’s overarching objectives.

NPPF Section 6 – Building a Strong, Competitive Economy

This section emphasises that ***“significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity”*** and that planning decisions should create conditions where “businesses can invest, expand and adapt”.

- Our scheme offers a modern, purpose-built facility capable of hosting exhibitions, conferences, and events, generating direct and indirect economic benefits for the local area, including job creation and support for nearby businesses.
- It reflects the NPPF’s call to “set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth”.
- The flexible design responds to the needs of a modern economy, providing adaptable event space and amenities that can accommodate evolving business and cultural demands.

NPPF Section 11 – Making Effective Use of Land

Section 11 instructs that planning policies and decisions should ***“promote an effective use of land... making as much use as possible of previously developed or ‘brownfield’ land”***.

- The exhibition centre redevelops a brownfield site, ensuring efficient use of land in a sustainable urban location.
- The scheme supports “multiple benefits”, combining cultural, social, and economic functions within one development, another key objective of the section.
- The proposal exemplifies a proactive approach to land use by revitalising under-utilised urban land to meet pressing community and commercial needs.

NPPF Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places

Section 12 underscores that ***“the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental”***, and that “good design is a key aspect of sustainable development”.

- The design of the exhibition centre emphasises quality, flexibility, and longevity, creating a building that is both functional and aesthetically considerate.

- The proposal aligns with NPPF's advocacy of clear design expectations and integrated engagement with local communities and authorities