Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning applicat4124*ion

Application no.	144124/FO/2025
Date registered valid:	30 September 2025
Proposal:	Installation of digital LED totem.
Address:	Opposite No. 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3BU
Ward(s):	Piccadilly Ward
Applicant:	BT Telecommunications PLC
Agent (if any):	Tom Hayes Dalcour Maclaren
Case officer:	James Bridgman Tel: 0161 219 6202 Email: james.bridgman@manchester.gov.uk
Recommendation:	Refuse
Date of recommendation:	25 November 2025

Application details

Type of application: Full Application Consent

Development type: Minor Other

Date of site visit: 13 October 2025

Standard consultations:
Printed: 27 October 2025 Expired: 17 November 2025

Neighbour notifications
Printed: 8 October 2025 Expired: 29 October 2025

Site notice
Posted: 13 October 2025 Expired: 3 November 2025

Press advert
Published: 14 October 2025 Expired: 4 November 2025

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site and area

Listed building: Not applicable

Conservation area: Whitworth Street Conservation Area 1985

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

The application relates to a footpath adjacent to the Grade II listed building (Sackville Building) at No.60 Sackville Street. The significance of this building is characterised by the red brick facades with dressings of red brick sandstone and terracotta and slate mansard roofs.

The site is within a busy city centre location within the north campus of the University of Manchester.

The footpath is within the boundary of the North Campus (ID Manchester) Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF).

The site is within a busy city centre location and within walking distance to Piccadilly station and Oxford Road station.

The site is located adjacent to the Grade II listed Sackville Building and No.60 Sackville Street.

The site is within the Whitworth Street conservation area.

Description of development

The proposal seeks planning permission for the installation of a digital LED totem.

It would replace an existing totem and increase the dimensions of the structure and digital advertisement screen.

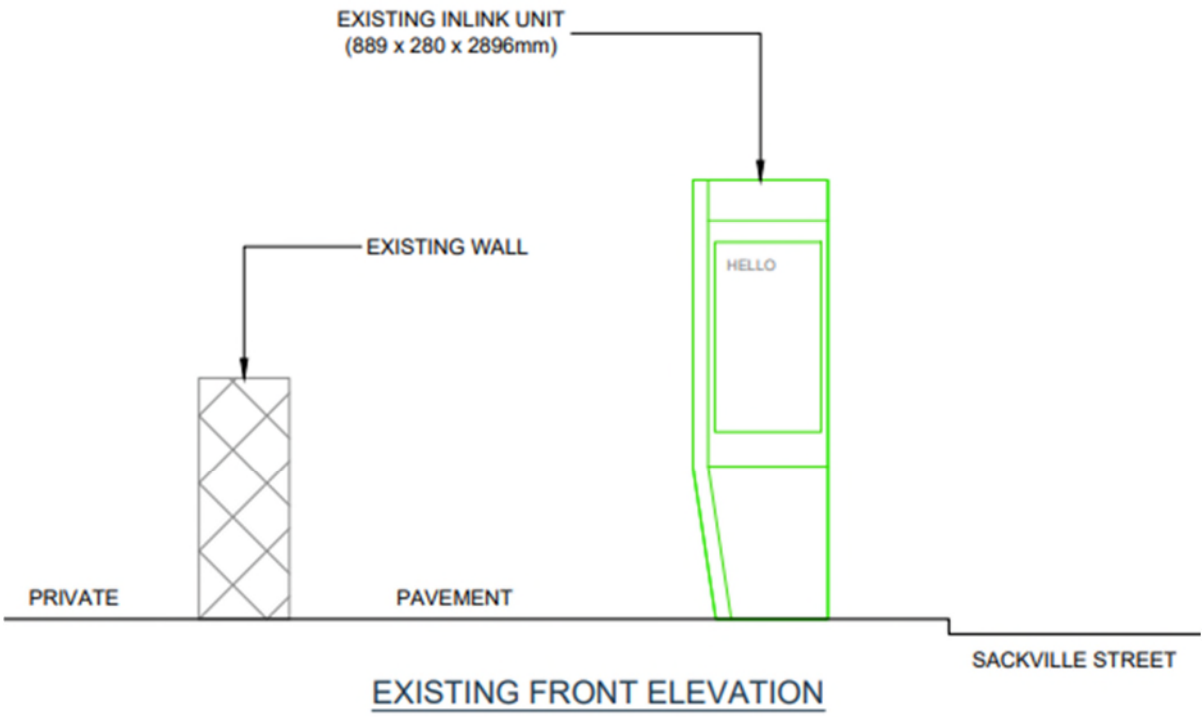


Figure 1 – Existing front elevation

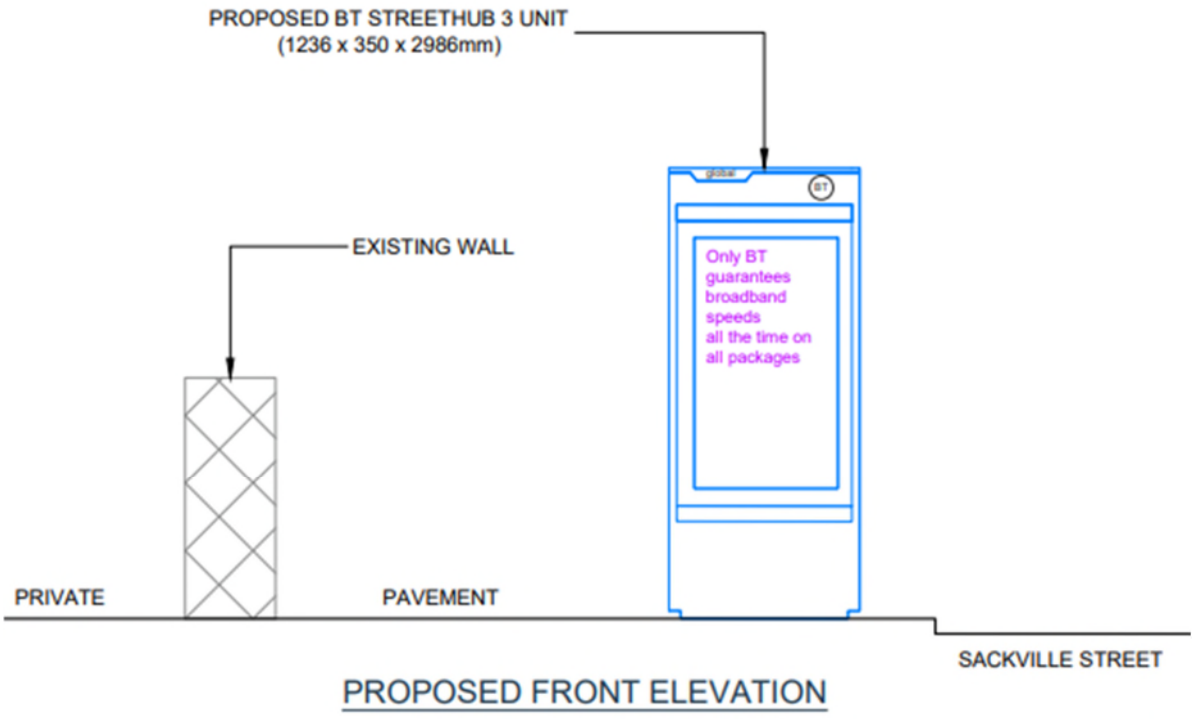


Figure 2 – Proposed front elevation

Relevant applications

144197/AOH/2025 - Installation of 2no internally illuminated digital display screens. **-** *To be considered alongside this application.*

Consultations & Notification Responses

Publicity - Neighbour notification letters were sent to surrounding properties. A site notice and local press advert were also produced. No representations have been received.

Ward Councillors – Councillor Marcus Johns raised concerns the advertisement totem is in a busy location, does not contribute to the Council's objective to reduce street clutter, reduces pavement space and sightlines and makes pedestrians feel more enclosed in locations where we should be prioritising pedestrians.

Highway Services - Advised that the proposal does not contribute to or align with Manchester City Council's ongoing de-cluttering strategy of the highway.

The development will impede pedestrian movement and inclusive accessibility, does not mitigate any ongoing security implications with existing totems, and fails to meet the councils broader design standards.

In summary, the proposed replacement digital totem does not contribute to the rationalisation of on street furniture and exacerbates issues with street clutter.

Environmental Health - Requested that if in applications were to be approved, conditions should be attached to control luminance levels from the digital display screens, the noise from speakers on the street hub, and for a maintenance management plan to be submitted for approval.

Greater Manchester Police (Design for Security) – Have no comments on this occasion.

Greater Manchester Police (Operational Policing) – Were consulted but no consultation response was received.

Policies

The Places for Everyone Plan - Joint Development Plan Document, for nine of the 10 boroughs which make up Greater Manchester adopted on 21st of March 2024:

- Policy JP-P1 - Sustainable Places
- Policy JP-P2 - Heritage
- Policy JP-C5 - Streets for All
- Policy JP-C6 - Walking and Cycling

The Manchester Core Strategy - Development Plan Document 2012-2027 ("the Core Strategy") was adopted by the City Council on the 11th of July 2012:

- Policy SP1 - Spatial Principles
- Policy CC5 - Transport
- Policy CC9 - Design and Heritage
- Policy EN1 - Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas
- Policy EN3 - Heritage
- Policy DM1 - Development Management

Saved Unitary Development Plan for Manchester (1995) - The following saved UDP Policies are of relevance to this application:

- Policy DC18 - Conservation Areas
- Policy DC19 – Listed Buildings
- Policy DC22 - Footpath Protection

- Policy DC26 - Development and Noise

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024):

- Chapter 12 - Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- Chapter 16 - Conserving the Historic Environment

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Sections 66, and 72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 require that special consideration is given to the preservation of the significant fabric and setting of listed buildings and conservation areas.

The National Design Guide (January 2021)

Illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring, and successful can be achieved in practice. It forms part of the Government's collection of planning practice guidance and should be read alongside the separate planning practice guidance on design process and tools.

Greater Manchester's Streets for All Design Guide (2023)

Adopted November 2023 to ensure will ensure that streets are welcoming, green and safe spaces for all people, enabling more travel by walking, cycling, and using public transport while creating thriving places that support local communities and businesses.

The Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (Adopted 2007)

This document provides guidance to help develop and enhance Manchester. In particular, the SPD seeks appropriate design, quality of public realm, facilities for disabled people (in accordance with Design for Access 2).

In Chapter 2 'Design', paragraph 2.7 outlines the City Council's expectations that all new developments should have a high standard of design making a positive contribution to the City's environment and encourages "the most appropriate form of development to enliven neighbourhoods and sustain local facilities.

Sister (ID Manchester)

Innovation District Manchester Strategic Regeneration Framework 2023

Issues

Principle

All applications shall each be assessed on their own merit against all relevant material planning considerations.

The application would see the installation of a digital kiosk on the public footway, for public use, within the City Centre. As discussed in the below sections of the report, given the impact on visual amenity and heritage, the proposed installation is not considered to be acceptable in principle.

Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage

Visual Amenity

The proposed Street Hub 3 totem would be a replacement of the existing InLink model.

The replacement totem would also be free-standing, rectilinear in shape and there would be an increase in size of the structure and associated screen. The dimensions of the new structure would have a depth of 0.35m, a width of 1.23m and a height of 2.99m.

In comparison of the existing and proposed structures, it would be deeper and taller, particularly towards the base it would no longer narrow and therefore would have a larger footprint on the footpath. The totem would be a galvanised steel structure and feature a black powder coated cladding.

Each side of the totem would feature a digital HD screen measuring 0.95m x 1.67m and the overall appearance of the structure is considered to be relatively utilitarian.



Figure 3 - Existing on street totem and proposed replacement totem

The site is located within the ID Manchester city centre regeneration area which is also known as Sister. Strategic Regeneration Frameworks (SRF) 'North Campus ID Manchester SRF 2017' was superseded by the 'Innovation District Manchester SRF 2023'. The SRF was developed in partnership with the University of Manchester to shape investment and development at a key gateway location to the city centre aligned with adjacent development at Piccadilly and Mayfield.

This application site is located within boundary of the SRF's and is located directly adjacent to the highly significant Grade II listed Sackville Building within the University of Manchester Campus.

The existing InLink totem was installed following the approval of application 121612/FO/2018 for 'Full planning permission for installation of 1 no. 2.9m high InLink following removal of 2 no. telephone kiosks'. The supporting information for these applications saw a strategy for the removal of many telephone boxes that were not replaced by InLink units, thereby contributing to a reduction in the amount of visual street clutter within the street scene.

For this site in particular, application 121612/FO/2018 stated that up to two payphones would be removed from the site to reduce on street clutter. As shown below in Figures 4 and 5, only one of these payphones highlighted with an arrow was removed following the installation of the existing InLink totem.

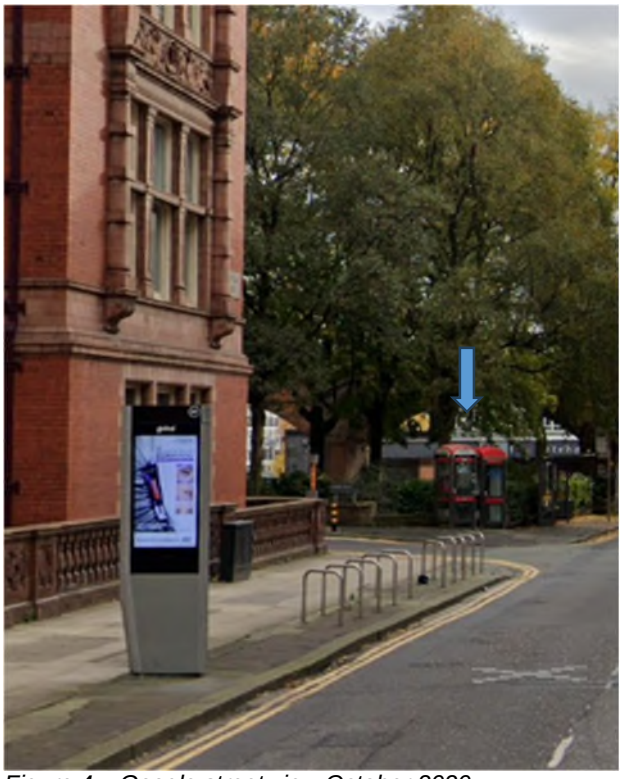


Figure 4 – Google street view October 2020



Figure 5 –Officer site visit in October 2025

Unlike the previous proposals, the current applications do not contribute to a reduction in overall visual clutter of street furniture in the public realm.

When viewed in the context of the street scene described above, the Street Hub totem would be larger and bulkier, particularly when viewed from the front and back. It would also appear dark, being predominantly covered in black matt cladding with the exception of its digital screen. This would therefore result in a more prominent presence within the street scene than the existing totem, occupying more space, being bulkier in its massing, appearing starker in its dark colour and contrasting more strongly with the lighter paving stones of the footway.

Existing on street furniture such as the immediately adjacent cycle racks are of a slimmer design and do not create as significant visual impact as the proposed totem.

While in a different context within the City, it is noted that in an appeal decision for application 142695/FO/2025 (Appeal ref: APP/B4215/W/25/3369446), the Inspector described a similar Street Hub 2 totem model as such:

> *Due to a combination of its height, width and freestanding position close to the edge of the carriageway, the proposed hub, with its large digital advertisement panels on both sides, would represent a dominant and obtrusive feature on the pavement.*

In view of the above, it is not considered that the proposed Street Hub totem represents a like-for-like replacement within the street scene, having a more dominant visual presence than the existing InLink model. Its imposing appearance is considered to detract from the street scene.



Figure 6 – Existing and Proposed totem CGIs on existing footpath

Unlike the existing InLink model application approved in 2018, the proposal would not include any removal of neighbouring clutter and provide no visual benefit weighing in favour of the scheme.

Instead, it would work against the decluttering and rationalisation of street furniture that has occurred in this location, constituting a bulkier, more visually dominant item of street furniture which occupies more space than the existing InLink model. In so doing, a more imposing structure would be added to the street scene.

In an appeal decision for application 142705/FO/2025 (Appeal ref: APP/B4215/H/25/3369504) relating to the footpath outside 15 Oldham Road featuring high levels of advertisement and street clutter, the Inspector found that despite 'the largely commercial character of the area… [with] various signs and adverts on nearby buildings' the totem and advertisement's dominant and obtrusive presence would add further visual clutter and result in cumulative harm:

> *it would add further visual clutter, making this busy pedestrian route a less pleasing place to walk, and its siting close to the edge of the carriageway would only exacerbate its visual prominence and dominance at this busy junction.*

The proposed replacement digital totem does not contribute to the rationalisation of on street infrastructure. Instead, it would exacerbate issues associated with street clutter in an already busy city centre environment. As such, the proposal is inconsistent with MCC's decluttering strategy and fails to meet broader design standards and policies.

Excessive street furniture detracts from the quality of spaces, and the increased size of the totem would contribute to an increase in street clutter that would detract from the quality of the public realm, making this busy pedestrian route a less pleasing place to walk.

The proposed totems would an intrusive structure in a place that would negatively impact upon the regeneration of the area by introducing a larger, bulkier, darker modern structure that would appear unduly prominent against the lighter footpath.

Policy JP-P1 states that development should respect and acknowledge the character and identity of the locality in terms of design, siting, size, scale and materials used. It is considered that the increase in size and scale of the totem, resulting in a taller and bulkier structure, as well as the dark appearance of the material, would be contrary to this policy.

Policy JP-C5 sets out a goal to ensure that streets are welcoming for all. The inclusive of a visually intrusive, taller, bulkier, darker structure in the street scene would not contribute to ensuring that the streets are welcoming for all and therefore be contrary to this policy.

Policy SP1 states that development should make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including creating well designed places that enhance or create character and protects and enhances the built and natural environment. The nature of this intrusive, taller, bulky, darker feature in the public realm is not considered to make a positive contribution to the neighbourhood or enhance the build environment and is therefore contrary to this policy.

The adoption of the Streets for All Design guidance by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority in November 2023 reinforces the position on reducing street clutter, recommending that in reviewing existing situations, street furniture should be rationalised wherever possible, and clutter removed. As the proposal fails to rationalise street furniture or remove clutter, instead exasperating the street clutter issues in the area, it is therefore not compliant with the Streets for All Design guidance.

Policy DM1 states that all development should have regard for appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail, impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development, and have regard to the character of the surrounding area. The larger, bulkier, darker materiality of the structure is not considered to have regard for the character of the surrounding area and is therefore contrary to this policy.

Policy EN1 states that wherever possible, the opportunity should be realised to enhance existing areas of meaningful open space. The introduction of a larger, bulkier, darker, intrusive structure is not considered to enhance of the existing area of this very important and meaningful open space and is therefore contrary to this policy.

Section 12 of the NPPF attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, stating that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

In summary of the above assessment, it is considered that this intrusive feature would have a negative visual impact upon the built environment and not contribute to positively making a better place for people. The proposal is therefore not considered to be acceptable in terms of visual amenity and contrary to Places for Everyone policies JP-Strat2, JP-C4 and JP-P1, and Core Strategy policies SP1, EN1, and DM1, nor in line with Section 12 of the NPPF.

Heritage Assessment

Impact on heritage assets

The site is located within the Whitworth Street Conservation Area. The listing for this Conservation Area notes it is uniquely Mancunian in character, and its physical form is established by the wealth of the fine Victorian and Edwardian buildings built between 1850 and 1920.

The significance of the Conservation Area derives from the historical importance of the textile industry in the city.

The application site is located within the setting of the Grade II listed Institute of Science and Technology (University of Manchester) which is known as the ‘Sackville Building’.



Figure 7 - Grade II listed Sackville Building

As described in the listing entry on Historic England (No.1247609), the building dates from 1895-1912 by Spalding and Cross. It consists of red brick with dressings of red sandstone and terracotta and slate mansard roofs. The style of the building is French Renaissance and is over five storeys with a basement and attics.

The façade fronting Sackville Street has projecting gable bays and an arched entrance. The facades are highly decorative and contribute significantly to the character of the Whitworth conservation area.

The site is also within the setting of the No.60 Sackville Street, known as ‘Velvet House’. The Council consider this to be a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA), as it consists of a decorative entrance to the corner of Sackville Street and Bombay Street. The facades predominantly feature red brick with stone window surroundings and decorative projecting gables.

The new taller and bulkier advertisement totem would be sited prominently in front of the Grade II listed Sackville Building and is within the setting of the NDHA. It would read as a dark, modern and incongruous structure in the foreground of the highly decorative and red brick façade. This would form an unduly harmful juxtaposition, and the proposal would represent a low-quality addition to the detriment of the setting of the listed building and the character of the conservation area.

For the reasons outlined above, the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the Grade II listed Sackville Building and nearby NDHA.

The proposal would therefore harm the setting of this listed building, and features of architectural interest which contribute to its significance.

Paragraph 213 of the NPPF states that any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset from development within its setting should require clear and convincing justification. It is not considered that a clear and convincing justification has been provided.

Policy JP-P2 states that development proposals affecting a designated heritage asset and a conservation area should conserve those elements which contribute to its significance including those identified in any conservation area appraisal as making a positive contribution to the area. Harm to such elements will only be permitted where this is clearly justified and outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal. The proposed totem does not conserve elements which contribute to the significance of the heritage asset as it would conceal views of important architectural features that contribute to the significance of the listed building.

Policy EN1 advises that developer's will be expected to consider the City's heritage, including its listed buildings, conservation areas. The proposal is not considered to properly consider the City's heritage, by way of the introduction of this larger, bulkier structure into the setting of a listed building.

Policy EN3 states that new developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including listed buildings and conservation areas. This proposal would not preserve or enhance the character or setting of the listed building or conservation area, due to the introduction of a bulkier, taller, darker structure that would be a harmful juxtaposition with the traditional decorative facades.

Policy CC9 advises that development in Manchester should preserve or enhance the heritage assets affected. The proposal, for the reasons outlined in the section above, would not be considered to preserve or enhance the heritage assets affected.

Policy DM1 advises that all development should be appropriately sited, scaled, formed, massed, and detailed with appropriate layout and materials and should have regard to the character of the surrounding area and effects on built heritage. The proposal, for the reasons outlined in the section above, is not considered to have sufficient regard for the effects on built heritage.

Saved UDP Policy DC18 states that the Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Area and will seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering; the relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces; and the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings. The proposal, for the reasons outlined in the section above, would not preserve or enhance the character of the designated Whitworth Street conservation area.

Saved UDP Policy DC19 states that the Council will seek to preserve and enhance the setting of listed buildings by appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity. The proposal, for the reasons outlined in the section above, would not preserve or enhance the setting of affected listed buildings.

Paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. This shall be fully detailed in the section below.

Public benefits

The proposal would result in a high level of less than substantial harm to the setting of heritage assets. As required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF, it is necessary to consider whether any public benefits exist to outweigh this harm.

The applicant has stated that there are public benefits associated with the installation of the totems. The planning statement submitted in support of the application, highlights the national policy context encouraging investment in mobile infrastructure and 5G provision. The Council has also published the Manchester Digital Strategy 2021 – 2026, outlining its goal to invest in digital infrastructure.

The applicant has stated that the phone service provided in the totem would provide access to public services, multiple accessibility options, secure power-only USB ports for rapid device charging, free phone calls, a direct emergency call button, community and emergency awareness messaging. All of which are currently provided by the existing structure.

The applicant has submitted some BT usage data, which covers the entire BT InLink and Street Hub estate, from the period of 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025, detailing the number of calls made to various charities and services.

The data submitted covers all BT units across the country. There is no data provided as to the specific existing InLink Unit to demonstrate how many calls have been made from this unit that could demonstrate the public benefit it has, nor is there an average provided to show how many calls are made yearly per totem unit.

The City Council's does not dispute that free public Wi-Fi can have benefits for visitors and residents who wish to connect to the internet for free, however, the quality of the service depends on range to the Wi-Fi source. The range quoted for the updated Smart Hub is not stated, it is not clear what range a user has access to for Wi-Fi, and therefore the public benefit cannot be accurately determined.

The success of public Wi-Fi delivered in this way depends on density and frequency of similar Wi-Fi devices on streets - this could quickly become problematic for street furniture clutter. As such, the hubs do not offer comprehensive coverage, and the benefits offered are limited.

There are concerns with public Wi-Fi when it comes to cyber security and the security of the network, the smart solution requires an email to access the service and has several measures in place to control what potentially harmful material is viewed online. However, as the nature of public Wi-Fi is to be open, it is more susceptible to cybersecurity concerns for users than home or business Wi-Fi connections.

Digital connectivity in city centre locations is notably hard to achieve well at scale, quality and cost for users. Whilst free public Wi-Fi is one solution, it is not the only solution available on the market. For example, 4G/5G small cells to increase mobile capacity and user experience or public mesh networks.

It is not clear whether small cell capability is included in the Smart Hub as standard, and if the technology will be activated.

Even so, small cells can also be installed on existing street furniture that is more fundament to the public highway, such as streetlights. The installation of small cells on such existing necessary street furniture would be a less visually harmful manner to provide better digital connectivity that would also have a less harmful impact upon the setting of heritage assets.

In addition, when small cells are placed at higher altitudes, such as on street lighting, they achieve better reception. It is not clear if the height of the screens is optimal for small cell network coverage.

It is also not clear if any proposed small cell solution in the Smart Hubs would be a neutral host and provide connectivity across more than one operator or if they are exclusively for the use of EE. A neutral host small cell would be preferable for the city's needs given if the small cells were only to host EE, then it is considered the public benefits would be limited.

The applicant states that there is potential for IoT environmental sensors within the Smart Hubs, however, it is not clear how Local Authorities would access this data or any associated costs or considerations.

There is no evidence to suggest that data from previous BT Smart Hub – and other like solutions has been shared with MCC. It has not been made clear in the application that BT would share this data moving forwards. Without confirmation of this, the public benefits are again limited.

The planning statement notes that the digital screens can be used by the Council as there is 5% free screen time allocated on each BT Street Hub unit. There is no detail as to how this would be provided in practice.

In order for people to use the Smart Hubs a degree of technical knowledge of how they work and what their functions are is needed. It is not clear what resource BT will put into letting the public know the full functionality of the Smart Hub and how they can easily replace phone booths.

To conclude, given the above, it is considered that while there maybe be some public benefits, they are limited. It is also noted that the existing totem has similar capabilities, and the limited public benefits of this application are therefore a marginal improvement of the existing circumstance.

The totem does not provide the public benefits that many other items of street furniture do, such as the introduction of cycle hubs, which supports the active travel objectives of the City Council.

In addition, many of potential public benefits mentioned by the applicant in their submission cannot be currently accurately determined, due to a lack of substantial and concrete information provided in the submission as to what coverage precisely would be provided, how data collected would be provided to the Local Authority, and definitive strategies confirming how many of these public benefits would be actually be delivered.

Further clarity would be required detailing the precise extent of these public benefits and outlining how these public benefits would actually be provided. Otherwise, there is no assurance that many of these public benefits would be delivered.

On this basis, the City Council cannot accurately determine that the extend of many of the public benefits, it can only be determined that limited marginal public benefits will be provided.

When these limited marginal public benefits are weighed against the medium level of less than substantial harm, as well as their emphasising of the prevalence of street clutter, impact upon visual amenity and heritage, it is not considered that the harm is outweighed and therefore the requirements of paragraph 215 of the NPPF have failed to be met.

Sections 66 and 72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 require that special consideration is given to the preservation of the significant fabric and setting of listed buildings and conservation areas. For the reasons outlined above, it is not considered that the proposal

preserves the setting of listed buildings or the character of the conservation area, causing a low level of less than substantial harm to their setting.

By virtue of the development's adverse visual impacts discussed above, as well as the lack of proven public benefit that would be brought about via the implementation of the proposed works, it is considered that the proposal is contrary to Places for Everyone Plan Policies JP-P1 and JP-P2, Manchester Core Strategy Policies SP1, CC9, EN1, EN3 and DM1, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies DC18 and DC19, and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which collectively seek to preserve and enhance the visual appearance of the local environment and areas of historical significance.

Highways Impact, Public Safety and Accessibility

Paragraph 117 of the NPPF requires that proposals create attractive routes and avoid unnecessary street clutter. Core Strategy Policies SP1, CC5 and DM1 and saved UDP Policy DC22 require consideration of the impact on existing pedestrian routes, pedestrian safety and the pedestrian environment more broadly.

Pursuant to these objectives, the Council has had a longstanding decluttering strategy that has been strengthened since the adoption of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, in which Policies JP-C5 and JP-P1 further emphasise the 'movement and place' function of streets, requiring that development is designed to make a significant positive contribution to the quality of a place, ensuring that streets are welcoming for all, support high levels of walking, is safe, easy to move around for pedestrians, and free from obstacles.

The adopted of the Streets for All Design Guidance by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority in November 2023 reinforces this position on reducing street clutter, recommending that in reviewing existing situations, street furniture should be rationalised wherever possible, clutter removed, and clear pedestrian routes provided throughout, achieved via clear and legible zones for pedestrian routes and street furniture.

The adoption of Places for Everyone and the Streets for All Design Guidance is an important change in policy since the applications for the InLink totems were determined in 2018.

The application site lies within a busy city centre location, subject to Manchester City Council's ongoing decluttering strategy, which aims to:

- Remove barriers caused by excessive or poorly placed street furniture.
- Improve accessibility and pedestrian safety; and
- Enhance and encourage active travel for all users.

The applicant has referenced previous approvals for the existing totems in 2017. Part of the justification for these structures being approved was that larger, bulkier telephone boxes, that contributed to anti-social behaviour, were being replaced by smaller units that reduced the physical footprint of the structures, as well as a rationalisation of the telecoms estate, which saw a strategy for the removal of many telephone boxes that were not replaced by InLink units, thereby contributing to a more navigable and inclusive public realm.

The current proposals do not contribute to a reduction in the overall number of these units and the proposal totem has a larger footprint than the existing InLink Units, therefore, the proposal does not align with the decluttering strategy's principles.

Highway Services have advised that they have concerns that the increased totem footprint will impede pedestrian movement and inclusive accessibility, which is of particular concern at this city

centre location as the area regularly accommodates significant levels of pedestrian movement with other street-furniture located in close proximity.

Highway Services have raised that pedestrian flows in the immediate vicinity are likely to increase with the development of plots associated with the ID Sister SRF. They have advised that the proposal could therefore lead to reduced levels of pedestrian comfort, local pedestrian navigation/confusion and safety issues particularly for those with accessibility needs. It should also be noted that congested areas can result in pedestrians stepping out onto the adjacent live carriageway which is an obvious safety concern.

In addition, digital totem screens situated-on pavements can create obstacles to pedestrians, with specific accessibility impacts for blind or partially sighted people.

In conclusion, while only moderately increasing in footprint, there are concerns that the larger proposed Street Hub totem does not contribute to the rationalisation of on-street infrastructure and it would exacerbate issues associated with street clutter within a city centre environment.

This is of particular concern at this city centre location as during peak periods of pedestrian movements, they must navigate around other street-furniture located in close proximity.

The City Council recognises, however, that the existing structures do present similar challenges and that the change in totem design is not significant enough to warrant a refusal on the grounds of Highway Safety and Accessibility.

Residential Amenity

The totem could potentially be a source of disamenity to nearby occupiers through issues with noise and light nuisance.

Environmental Health advised the luminance levels of the structure could be controlled through a planning condition. This would ensure that the luminance level of the digital display screens can be controlled by a light sensor to adjust the screen brightness to reflect the ambient levels during the daytime and set to a maximum brightness of 600cd/m2 during hours of darkness.

Also, the condition would require in the event of breakdown or malfunction, the screen would automatically switch off, and specify that any excessively animated, flashing, scrolling, intermittent or video elements and similar transitions are not allowed, and that the minimum display time for each piece of content on the digital display screens shall be 10 seconds.

In respect to noise, the totem could impact on nearby residents during telephone calls as the totem is not enclosed. To address this, a noise management plan was submitted and the findings of this have been accepted by MCC's Environmental Health team. A verification element report would still have to be conditioned in order to confirm compliance with agreed noise limit.

MCC's Environmental Health team also requested that a management plan shall be submitted to demonstrate how the units will be maintained to ensure the agreed light levels and noise levels are maintained and not exceeded.

Subject to these being resolved satisfactorily via conditions attached to an approval decision, it is considered that there would be sufficient mitigation of any concerns regarding residential amenity and that in residential amenity terms, the proposal would be in accordance with polices SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy, and DC26 of the UDP.

Conclusion

As established within the report, the installation of the replacement totem would not result in any significant concerns to warrant refusal grounds in respect to residential amenity, highways impact and access, or crime and anti-social behaviour.

However, a combination of its height, width, materiality, and appearance, the proposed hub, with its large digital advertisement panels on both sides, would represent a dark, dominant and incongruous structure within the setting of the highly decorative and red brick facades of the Grade II listed Sackville Street. The structure would read as a modern low-quality addition which would create an unduly harmful juxtaposition within the setting of the listed building and conservation area.

The proposed digital LED totem should therefore be refused on visual amenity and impact on heritage grounds, as the public benefits do not outweigh any less than substantial harm caused to heritage assets, and due to the proposal being contrary to the provisions of policies JP-C5, JP-P1 and JP-P2 of the Places for Everyone Plan, policies SP1, CC9, EN1, EN3 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012), saved policies DC18, DC19 and DC22 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995), sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990.

Other Legislative Requirements
Equality Act 2010
Section 149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality Act 2010 requires due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and; Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves consciously thinking about the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making.

Human Rights Act 1998 considerations
This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have a right to a fair hearing and to this end the local planning authority must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved polices of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the recommendation given is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

Recommendation: Refuse

Article 35 Declaration

The applicant has also been made aware of concerns during the course of this application and that the Council have the view that no amendments to the proposal would overcome these concerns. The application has been determined in timely manner and against the relevant policies of the Development Plan.

Reasons for recommendation to refuse

1) The proposed totem would by virtue of its siting, scale, design, materiality and appearance would result in an overly dominant and obtrusive item of street clutter awkwardly sited along the footway in a prominent and highly visible location in the city centre. This would form clutter with other street furniture in areas of the city centre where significant efforts to declutter the streetscape, rationalise existing street furniture, and investments to improve the public realm and place making and pedestrian experience have been made. The proposal would also impact on the setting of the Grade II Listed Institute of Science and Technology Building (Sackville Building) and the Whitworth conservation area. The totem would be read as a dark, modern and incongruous structure in the foreground of the highly decorative and red brick facade of the Sackville Building forming an unduly harmful juxtaposition and low-quality addition to the setting of the listed building and the character of the conservation area. The proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated assets and the required public benefits do not exist to outweigh the harm identified. The proposed totem would therefore be contrary to Places for Everyone Policies JP-C5, JP-P1 and JP-P2 and Core Strategy Policies SP1, CC9, EN1, EN3 and DM1 , saved UDP policies DC18, DC19 and DC22; Streets for All, Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990; and guidance contained in Sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Highway Services
Environmental Health
Greater Manchester Police
GMP - CC Neighbourhood Policing

Flat 2, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 19, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 23, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 48, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Advertising Right BT Inlink Near Junction With Bombay Street, Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3BU
Flat 5, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 21, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 16, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 42, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 10, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 49, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 59, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 51, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 31, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 42, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 58, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 13, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 36, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 10, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT

Flat 40, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 5, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 39, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 40, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 45, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 20, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 13, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 19, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 5, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 22, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 39, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 31, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 40, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Ground Floor, 68 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3NJ
Flat 1, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 9, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 24, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 19, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 16, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 8, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 45, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 43, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 28, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 32, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 29, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 52, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 41, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 11, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 38, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 14, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 1, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 41, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 26, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 17, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 38, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 34, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 28, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 44, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 4, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 3, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 23, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 47, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 33, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 22, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 38, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 46, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 43, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 26, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 32, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 29, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 6, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 24, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 4, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 15, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS

Flat 8, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 7, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 11, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Basement, 68 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3NJ
Flat 17, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 3, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 20, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 56, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 57, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 26, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 37, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 11, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 34, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 17, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 21, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 9, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 3, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 29, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 30, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 15, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 6, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 34, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 39, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 53, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 12, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 24, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 22, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 23, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 25, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 12, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 33, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
First Floor, 68 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3NJ
Flat 14, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 1, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 14, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 35, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 32, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 36, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 13, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 6, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 54, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 61, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 30, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 42, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 31, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 36, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 28, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 15, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 27, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Second Floor, 68 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3NJ
68 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3NJ
Flat 41, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 37, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 18, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE

Flat 9, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 35, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 27, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 44, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 50, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 2, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 44, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 35, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 37, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 18, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 43, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 25, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Third Floor And Fourth Floor, 68 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3NJ
Flat 7, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 4, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 12, Velvet House, 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WE
Flat 2, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 55, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 21, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 25, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 20, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 18, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 60, Sackville Place, Bombay Street, Manchester, M1 7AT
Flat 33, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 8, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 27, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 30, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 7, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 16, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS
Flat 10, Whitworth House, 53 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 3WS

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - City Centre PD Restriction - Class B1(a) To C3
Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
Coal Authority - Development Low Risk - Name: DEVELOPMENT_LOW_RISK_AREA
Conservation Area - Whitworth Street Conservation Area 1985
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL