enabl



Planning Statement

Piccadilly Gardens Redevelopment

Client: Manchester City Council & Galliford Try

11/08/2026

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Document Issue Sheet

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2.0	Planning Statement	FINAL	13/08/2026	MCC	Enabl Planning Team	KG/KM/MD

Executive Summary

The redevelopment of Piccadilly Gardens represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform one of Manchester's most important civic spaces into a greener, safer, more inclusive and better managed destination at the heart of the city centre. Shaped through extensive engagement with Manchester City Council, ward members, statutory consultees, businesses, community groups and the public, the proposals respond directly to longstanding concerns while creating a public space that reflects Manchester's ambition, character and international profile.

As a major transport gateway and civic destination, Piccadilly Gardens occupies a unique position within the city centre. The proposed redevelopment seeks to create a high-quality, landscape-led environment centred on generous green space, enhanced biodiversity, improved accessibility and an improved visitor experience. The scheme will deliver significant environmental enhancements, including the planting of 49 new trees, achieving a replacement ratio in excess of 3:1, alongside diverse planting inspired by the "Botany of Manchester". Together with rain gardens and sustainable drainage features, the proposals will contribute to climate resilience and deliver a predicted 10.47% Biodiversity Net Gain.

The redesigned public realm will provide a more attractive and welcoming environment that encourages people to spend time in the city centre, supporting relaxation, recreation, social interaction and civic activity. A new central lawn, enhanced seating areas, improved pedestrian routes and high-quality materials will establish a distinctive and functional destination. The proposals also include an enhanced children's play area, strengthening Manchester's growing family-friendly offer and encouraging healthy, active lifestyles.

Inclusivity and accessibility have been fundamental to the design development. The scheme incorporates step-free routes, accessible seating, adaptive cycle provision and inclusive play equipment, ensuring the Gardens can be enjoyed by people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. Increased access to green space, opportunities for physical activity and improvements to the overall environment will support wider health and wellbeing objectives.

The redevelopment will also generate substantial social and economic benefits. Through a Local Labour Agreement, the project will create employment, apprenticeship and training opportunities while supporting local supply chains and community initiatives. These benefits will extend beyond the construction phase, delivering lasting social value for local communities.

The proposals form part of a wider programme of investment across the Piccadilly area and will play an important role in strengthening confidence in Manchester city centre. By transforming this prominent gateway space into a high-quality civic destination, the scheme will enhance first impressions of the city, encourage future investment and support wider regeneration objectives.

A comprehensive programme of stakeholder and public engagement has informed the proposals throughout their evolution. This has included consultation with ward councillors, Greater Manchester Police, Transport for Greater Manchester, accessibility groups, businesses, landowners, community organisations and the

wider public. More than 400 consultation responses helped shape key elements of the scheme, including the play area, landscaping, accessibility measures and approaches to safety and management.

The proposals also address longstanding concerns regarding anti-social behaviour, safety and maintenance through high-quality design, improved natural surveillance, enhanced lighting, integrated CCTV and a strengthened stewardship and management strategy. Together, these measures will help create a public space that feels safe, welcoming and well cared for throughout the day and evening.

Overall, the redevelopment of Piccadilly Gardens will deliver significant and lasting public benefits. It will transform a highly prominent city centre location into a greener, healthier and more attractive civic destination, improve environmental quality and biodiversity, generate meaningful social value, support economic growth and encourage further investment into Manchester city centre. The proposals represent a bold and positive vision for the future of one of Manchester's most important public spaces.



1

Introduction

1. Introduction



1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Enabl on behalf of the applicant, Manchester City Council. The statement accompanies a planning application for the proposed redevelopment and comprehensive works to the public open space at Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester.

1.2 This statement sets out the conformity of the proposals with the development plan and relevant national policy, as well as any other material considerations having regard to Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Scheme Description

1.3 The submitted planning application is seeking planning consent for:

> *"Redevelopment and reconfiguration of Piccadilly Gardens comprising works to the public realm including public open space and use of space for events, together with decommissioning and removal of the existing fountain; creation of play space, lawn area, hard and soft landscaping; lighting; and drainage and other associated infrastructure; and a severable plot for a future ancillary structure with associated interim landscaping."*



Background to the Application

1.4 The application has been prepared in partnership with Manchester City Council, who owns the freehold to the Gardens. Prior to the submission of this application, extensive discussions have been taking place with Councillors and Officers, relevant statutory consultees, Council departments, and other interested parties. A public consultation process has been carried, including 3 public in person sessions held in June 2026.

Application Documents

1.5 This Planning Statement should be read alongside the architectural plans / drawings and supporting documents submitted to accompany the planning application. The application documents comprise:

- Design and Access Statement, prepared by Planit;
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Tree Constraints Plan and Tree Survey, prepared by Arbtech;
- Archaeological Desk-based Assessment, prepared by Civic;
- Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report, prepared by Civic;

- Blue and Green Infrastructure Statement, prepared by Planit (appended to this Planning Statement);
- Combined Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy Report, prepared by Civic;
- Construction Management Plan, Construction Environmental Management Plan, and Site Waste Management Plan, prepared by Galliford Try;
- Crime Impact Statement, prepared by Greater Manchester Police;
- Employment and Labour Proposal and Reporting Template, prepared by Galliford Try;
- External Lighting Strategy, prepared by Hoare Lea;
- Health Impact Assessment, prepared by Enabl;
- Heritage Statement, prepared by Civic;
- Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan, prepared by Planit;
- Phase 1 Desk Study, prepared by Civic;
- Preliminary Ecological Assessment, prepared by Civic;
- Public Benefits Statement, prepared by Enabl;
- Public Realm Management Framework, prepared by Planit and Manchester City Council;
- Statement of Community Involvement, prepared by Counter Context;
- Transport and Access Note, prepared by Civic;
- Utilities Report, prepared by Civic; and
- Planning Statement, prepared by Enabl [this document].

Our Vision for Piccadilly Gardens

1.6 Piccadilly Gardens is one of Manchester's most important public spaces and transport interchanges, acting as a key gateway for people arriving in the city from Piccadilly Station and beyond. It has been the subject of extensive public consultation in recent years, which has informed the vision for its regeneration.

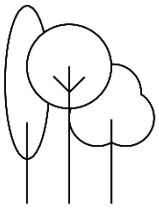
1.7 A renewed Piccadilly Gardens needs to reflect who we are as a city – diverse, welcoming, creative and full of life. The proposed redevelopment is the first step on the journey to transform Piccadilly Gardens into an attractive, well-managed and welcoming space.

1.8 As Manchester's front door, Piccadilly Gardens is where first impressions are formed, where journeys begin and end, and where the energy, diversity and character of the city are on display every day. As one of Manchester's most important public spaces and transport gateways, it performs a unique civic role, connecting people, places and experiences at the heart of the city. Today, those first impressions are not what we all need and expect them to be. Structures and behaviours have crept in, meaning the gardens of today hold all the wrong associations and do not speak positively to the city and its citizens.

1.9 Shaped by extensive public engagement and informed by a renewed ambition for the city centre, this vision looks to reimagine Piccadilly Gardens as a greener, safer, and more welcoming destination that reflects modern Manchester: confident, inclusive, creative, and cosmopolitan. The proposals will transform the Gardens from a place people simply move through into a destination where people of all ages and background choose to spend time, meet, play, relax and connect.

1.10 The regeneration is far more than a physical redesign. It is an investment in Manchester's social, environmental, cultural and economic future - creating a landscape that celebrates nature, supports wellbeing, encourages activity, and opens opportunities for all. New tree planting, vibrant gardens that respond to our ever-changing climate will reconnect the space to Manchester's growing network of green infrastructure, contributing to a more resilient, healthy, and resilient city centre.

- The new Gardens will significantly increase tree cover in an area of the city with an identified shortfall, introducing a diverse range of quality species to provide character, define space and support a healthier environment.



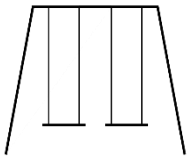
- The redevelopment will create and sustain construction jobs, deliver new apprenticeships and support local supply chains with a Manchester-first approach.



- Broader skills and employment initiatives including support for young and unemployed Mancunians, meaningful work placements or pre-employment training, work trials for Manchester job seekers, community projects with skills and employability.

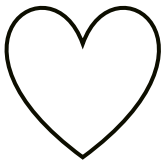
- The physical enhancement of Piccadilly Gardens will encourage future investment into the area, providing an economic boost to the city and supporting the continued regeneration and vitality of the city centre.





- Enhanced play facilities will knit into a network of provision for children and young people, making the city more inclusive and support healthy, active lifestyles.

- The scheme would contribute positively to the function and quality of an important civic space and support the creation of a welcoming, accessible and socially inclusive destination capable of accommodating a broad range of users.



- Hard and soft landscaping will uplift the environmental quality of the space, responding to desire lines, creating opportunities for social interaction and dwell and celebrate Manchester's history while looking towards the future.



Trees

1.11 **49no. new trees** are proposed to be planted in the Gardens, tying into a botanical network spanning across the city.

1.12 Mature trees across a diversity of species have been selected for robustness and to reference horticulture across Manchester.

Work and Skills

1.13 During construction, a Local Labour Agreement will secure the creation of **two new jobs**, support for **eight sustained jobs**, delivery of **two new apprenticeships** and a commitment to prioritise local employment outcomes through a Greater Manchester approach with a Manchester-first focus. There is also a strong commitment to supporting local supply chains through the procurement process.

1.14 In addition, **60 hours of support for Manchester young people up to the age of 24, 40 hours of support for unemployed Manchester adults, four weeks of meaningful work placements or pre-employment training, four weeks of work trials for Manchester job seekers, 100 hours of community projects with skills and employability outcomes and five site visits for local people** will be provided.

Play

1.15 A **state-of-the-art, 455m^2 play area** for children ten and under, inspired by the topography of Manchester and surrounds and incorporating inclusive play facilities, replaces an outdated and unfit for purpose play area.

1.16 Complementing recently completed play facilities at Mayfield Park and Ancoats Green, and future planned play areas at the Central Retail Park, City River Park and Great Northern Square, the new play area will draw together **a city-wide network of play** for children and young people of all ages.

Economic Investment

1.17 The regeneration of Piccadilly Gardens will reinvigorate inward investment into the city core.

1.18 This will be complimentary to the circa **£500 million** of investment being made across new developments in and around Piccadilly Gardens, including the Rylands Building, 1 Picadilly and extending outwards to developments such as at Church Street.

Social Value

1.19 The new Gardens will be **fully accessible to all,** with facilities to cater to people from all backgrounds, including street furniture, play equipment and step-free routes.

1.20 The redevelopment will **instil pride in our city**, creating a destination befitting of one of Manchester's premier civic spaces.

Environmental Quality

1.21 Piccadilly Gardens will be transformed with a thoughtful planting strategy which see the **Gardens bloom year-round**, providing **colour and vibrancy**, in combination with a palette of **durable, high-quality materials in the local vernacular.**

1.22 Planted areas will double up as **sustainable drainage systems**, furthering the area's resilience. It will be sought to store rainwater within the former water feature storage tanks which can be reused to irrigate trees, planting and lawn areas.

1.23 New **lighting installations, CCTV and a wider management strategy** will make Piccadilly Gardens a safe and welcoming place for people to pass through, meet up and spend time.



2

Site and Surroundings

2. Site and Surroundings

Site

2.1 The site is located at Piccadilly Gardens in Manchester City Centre and forms one of the city's principal public open spaces. The site extends to 0.93 ha and is broadly rectangular in form, bounded by Piccadilly to the north, Mosley Street to the west, Portland Street to the east, and Parker Street to the south. It occupies a highly prominent position at the intersection of key pedestrian and transport routes.

2.2 The site currently comprises a mix of hard and soft landscaping, including paved pedestrian routes, grassed areas and public realm spaces. Directly outside the site, there is also a range of transport-related infrastructure, including bus stops and shelters, Metrolink infrastructure and associated street furniture. The space performs a dual function as both a civic square and a major public transport interchange.



Figure 1 - Red Line Boundary



Figure 2 - 3D Aerial (from west) (Google Earth, 2026)

Surrounding Context

2.3 The site sits within the city centre core and is surrounded by a diverse and intensive mix of land uses. These include retail, notably Market Street and the Manchester Arndale to the northwest leading away from the site as well as commercial offices, hotels, food and beverage uses, leisure venues, and residential accommodation.

2.4 Key buildings adjacent to the site include Piccadilly Plaza, a commercial complex to the east, and large-scale retail and mixed-use developments along Market Street and Portland Street. To the southwest, the area transitions towards St Peter's Square, a significant civic and cultural destination, while to the northwest it connects with the Northern Quarter, characterised by smaller buildings and independent retail uses.

2.5 The surrounding area is varied in scale and architectural character. Building heights range from mid-rise commercial blocks to taller landmark structures, with evidence of historic façades and contemporary

developments. Piccadilly Gardens acts as a key central connecting space linking several important routes.

2.6 The site also functions as a major gateway between different parts of the city centre, forming a transition between the primary retail core, the Northern Quarter, and the Piccadilly Station area. Its open character contrasts with the dense built form of the surrounding streets, enhancing its role as a focal point for movement and activity.

Surrounding Built Form, Character and Materiality

2.7 The townscape surrounding the Piccadilly Gardens site is considered to be dense with a varied urban grain which shows a change from industrial use to a contemporary commercial and transport hub. The overriding character is a mix of high-quality historic buildings, predominantly constructed in red brick, with some examples of sandstone, alongside more contemporary commercial development characterised by glass, steel and concrete. Building scale generally ranges from mid-rise to large-scale developments, with strong building lines enclosing the gardens although these are interspersed with larger post war structures. Active ground floor frontages to the boundary of the site as well as retail uses and busy pedestrian flows reinforce the civic and commercial importance of the site and its surroundings.

2.8 Immediately surrounding the site are several notable buildings. To the east, Piccadilly Plaza represents a more modernist, mid-20th-century office typology, characterised by curtain walling and concrete structure. In contrast, to the north, there are examples of more traditional late Victorian and Edwardian buildings which contribute to the historic character through more ornamental facades. The Gardens themselves include a distinctive stainless steel and concrete pavilion, which represents a late 20th-century intervention and introduces a more contemporary architectural language to the setting.



Figure 3 - Piccadilly Plaza (Manchester History)



Figure 4 - 15-17 Piccadilly (Place North West, 2021)



Figure 5 - Piccadilly Pavillion (Apple Maps)

2.9 Further notable buildings within the wider context include the Grade II listed former Lewis's Department Store, whose prominent stone façade creates a strong architectural presence overlooking the Gardens. Further to this, the Britannia Hotel (formerly the Watts Warehouse), to the south, on Portland Street offers a significant example of Victorian warehouse architecture. Collectively these buildings reinforce the mixed character of Piccadilly Gardens as a place where there is a distinct mix of historic commercial architecture and modern redevelopment.



Figure 6 - Primark (formerly Lewis' Department Store) (Simpson, 2022)



Figure 7 - Brittania Hotel (formerly Watts Warehouse) (Britannia Hotels, 2026)

Sustainability of the Site

2.10 The site benefits from a highly sustainable location at the heart of Manchester's public transport network. Piccadilly Gardens is one of the city's primary transport interchange hubs, with numerous bus stops located along its edges providing frequent and extensive services across Greater Manchester, including connections to the Trafford Centre, Manchester Airport, Didsbury, Bolton, Altrincham, Oldham, Ashton-under-Lyne and Wythenshawe.

2.11 The Metrolink tram network runs along the southern boundary of the site, with Piccadilly Gardens stop offering direct services to destinations including Bury, Altrincham, Eccles, MediaCityUK, East Didsbury, and Manchester Airport.

2.12 Manchester Piccadilly railway station is located approximately a 5-minute walk to the southeast of the site, providing national and regional rail connections, while Manchester Victoria station is approximately a 10-minute walk to the north-west. Together, these stations offer comprehensive connectivity across the UK.

2.13 The site is highly accessible on foot, with strong pedestrian connections to surrounding streets and key destinations such as Market Street, the Arndale Centre, St Peter's Square, and the Northern Quarter. High quality pedestrian infrastructure supports significant footfall and permeability through the existing site.

2.14 The site's central location and accessibility offer access to a wide range of services, employment opportunities, and transport options. Accordingly, the site aligns strongly with sustainable development principles by reducing reliance on private car travel and supporting low-carbon patterns of movement.

2.15 The map below shows the extent of public transport infrastructure which surrounds the site.

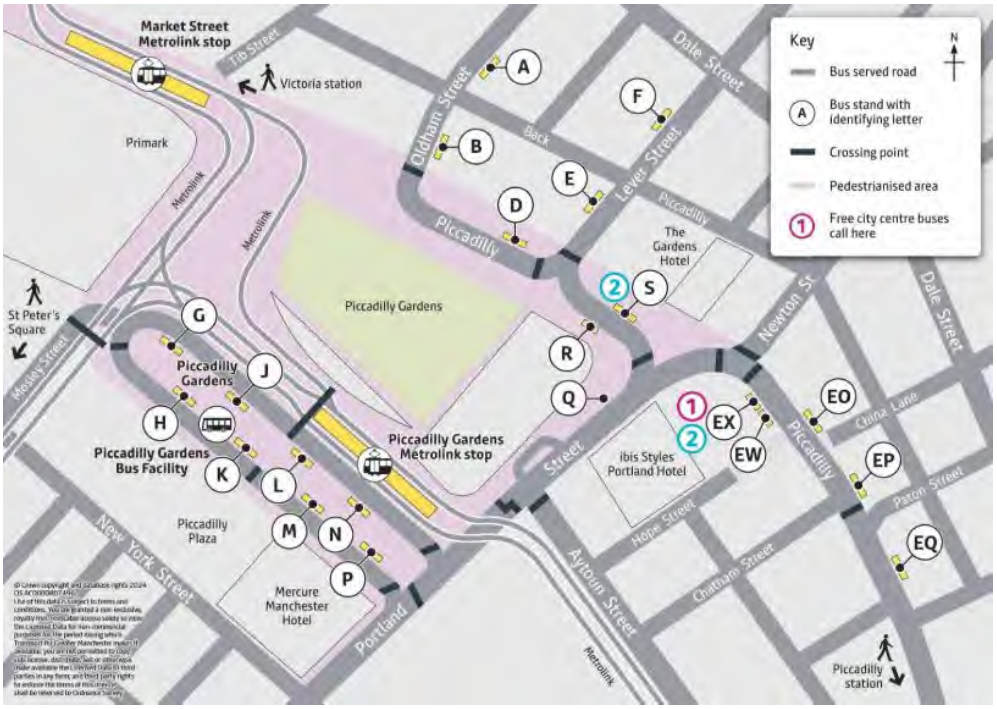


Figure 8 - Manchester Piccadilly Gardens bus station map (TfGM, 2026)

2.16 The DfT Connectivity Tool demonstrates that the site is located within an exceptionally well-connected location, with an overall multi-modal score of 88, placing it within the "highest" national category (top 10% of locations). Public transport (91), cycling (88) and walking (84) all fall within the highest band, indicating very strong opportunities for travel by sustainable modes and connectivity levels that are amongst the highest when compared with locations across England and Wales. Access to key day-to-day destinations is particularly strong, with shopping, leisure, healthcare, workplaces and residential uses all achieving "highest" ratings. Shopping scores particularly highly across all modes (99), indicating excellent access to essential

services without reliance on private vehicles.

2.17 Connectivity to education facilities is comparatively lower, with an overall score of 67, which falls within the "slightly above average" range. However, this is primarily driven by lower walking (50, below average) and cycling (72, slightly below average) scores, whilst public transport accessibility remains "very high" (87). This indicates that, although some modes are less competitive, there remains a strong level of accessibility to education destinations, particularly by public transport. Overall, the assessment demonstrates that the site performs within the highest tiers of national connectivity when compared with other locations across England and Wales. Whilst the DfT Connectivity Tool should be considered alongside local evidence and professional judgement, the results indicate that the site is exceptionally well connected to a wide range of day-to-day destinations by walking, cycling and public transport, supporting planning policy objectives which seek to promote sustainable travel and reduce reliance on the private car.

Piccadilly Gardens – History

2.18 Piccadilly Gardens occupies a pivotal position within Manchester City Centre and has long served as an important civic, social and transport hub. Its evolution reflects the wider historical development of Manchester, from a pre-industrial settlement, through rapid industrial expansion, to its emergence as a regenerated post-industrial city. Over time, the site has undergone a series of transformations in response to changing social, economic and infrastructure priorities. Whilst its physical form and function have altered significantly, a consistent feature throughout its history has been its role as an accessible public space.

2.19 Prior to its creation, the site comprised an ornamental pond, which was established in the late eighteenth century but suffered from persistent water quality issues. Following the visit of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert to Manchester in 1851, Manchester Corporation sought to improve the appearance of the city along the royal processional route through Piccadilly. As a result, the pond was infilled and, in 1854, the site was transformed into a formal public esplanade designed by Sir Joseph Paxton.

2.20 The new civic space was characterised by formal landscaping, ornamental fountains and a series of commemorative monuments celebrating nationally significant political, military and scientific figures. These monuments formed a carefully composed ensemble, arranged to frame the former Royal Infirmary and create a dignified public setting. Three of these Grade II listed statues remain within the application site today, with one directly adjacent, and continue to make significant contribution to the historic character and townscape of Piccadilly Gardens.

Sir Robert Peel Statue (October 1853)

2.21 The Statue of Sir Robert Peel, designed by William Calder Marshall and unveiled in 1853, was the first public monument erected within Piccadilly Gardens. Commissioned shortly after Peel's death through public subscription, it was also the first outdoor statue in Manchester to be funded in this manner, reflecting both his national importance and his strong regional connections. As one of the region's most influential political figures, Peel is best known for repealing the Corn Laws in 1846, a decision which split the Conservative Party, and for implementing a series of legal reforms that substantially reduced the number of offences punishable by death.



Figure 9 – Sir Robert Peel Statue (Manchester Libraries)

2.22 The monument, shown in Figure 9, stands approximately 7.6 metres high and depicts Peel holding a scroll whilst delivering a parliamentary address. It is mounted upon a substantial granite pedestal incorporating allegorical bronze figures. Originally positioned in front of the Manchester Royal Infirmary, the statue established the precedent for the subsequent arrangement of civic monuments within the esplanade and remains an important element of Manchester's nineteenth-century public realm.

James Watt Statue (1857)

2.23 The James Watt Statue, unveiled in 1857 and sculpted by William Theed, commemorates the Scottish engineer, born in 1736, whose improvements to the modern steam engine were fundamental to the Industrial Revolution and Manchester's emergence as the world's leading textile manufacturing centre, earning the city the title of "Cottonopolis".

2.24 The bronze sculpture depicted in Figure 11 is based upon Sir Francis Chantrey's earlier marble statue for Westminster Abbey. Positioned alongside the Dalton Statue along the boundary of the former Royal Infirmary, the Watt Statue was deliberately placed to frame the institution's frontage and reinforce its formal civic setting. The monument therefore derives significance not only from its commemorative value but also from its contribution to the planned architectural composition of the former esplanade.



Figure 10– Watt Statue, 1900 (Manchester Libraries)

Queen Victoria Monument (1901)

2.25 The Queen Victoria Monument occupies the principal focal point within Piccadilly Gardens. Commissioned by the Manchester Jubilee Commemoration Fund to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, the monument was designed by the leading sculptor Onslow Ford. Although originally intended to be carved in marble, concerns regarding Manchester's industrial atmosphere resulted in the monument being cast in bronze.



Figure 11– Queen Victoria Statue, 1975 (Manchester Libraries)

2.26 Completed and unveiled in 1901, shortly after Queen Victoria's death, the monument occupies the central axis of the former esplanade directly in front of the Royal Infirmary's principal entrance. The seated figure of the Queen (Figure 12), holding the sceptre and orb beneath a sculptural representation of St George fighting the dragon, forms the visual and ceremonial centrepiece of the historic composition. The monument is elevated on a stepped plinth, reinforcing its prominence within the wider civic landscape. Its location within an area of open paving allows appreciation from multiple viewpoints and reinforces its prominence within the wider civic landscape.

Duke of Wellington Statue (August 1856)

2.27 The Statue of the Duke of Wellington, sculpted by Matthew Noble and unveiled in 1856, commemorates Arthur Wellesley, whose military leadership as a British commander during the Napoleonic Wars culminated in victory at the Battle of Waterloo before his subsequent career in national politics.

2.28 The bronze statue portrays Wellington later in life addressing the House of Lords, with military dispatches positioned at his feet, and is mounted upon a granite pedestal as seen in Figure 10. Together with the Peel Statue, it occupied a symmetrical position on either side of the ornamental fountains, reinforcing the formal composition of the esplanade and framing views towards the Royal Infirmary.

2.29 The inauguration of the monument in 1856 attracted an estimated crowd of 100,000 people, demonstrating the



Figure 12 – Duke of Wellington Statue (Manchester Libraries)

civic significance attached to the monument at the time. It was subsequently featured in the Illustrated London News that "the statues of Peel and Wellington occupy sites of about equal magnitude on the right and left of the fountains." As intended, a monument to Queen Victoria would subsequently occupy the central position within the composition.

Heritage Significance

2.30 Collectively, the Grade II listed monuments form a highly significant group of designated heritage assets which illustrate Manchester's civic ambitions during the Victorian and Edwardian periods. Individually, each monument commemorates nationally significant figures who influenced Britain's political, military and industrial development. Collectively, they create a coherent townscape composition that contributes substantially to the significance of Piccadilly Gardens, the surrounding conservation area and the wider civic identity of Manchester.

2.31 Although several changes have occurred within Piccadilly Gardens since the removal of the Royal Infirmary in the early twentieth century and subsequent redevelopment of the space, the surviving monuments continue to define its historic character. Their architectural quality, historic associations and carefully considered spatial arrangement remain key heritage assets whose significance should be conserved and enhanced where possible.

Institutional Development: Infirmary and Asylum (1755-1905)

2.32 The first significant transformation of the Piccadilly Gardens site occurred in 1755 with the construction of the Manchester Royal Infirmary, following its relocation from its original premises on Garden Street, where it was founded in 1752.

2.33 Its relocation to Piccadilly Gardens made the area a key institutional centre within Manchester. There was a subsequent addition of the Manchester Royal Lunatic Asylum in 1763, further adding to the site's medical function, as can be seen in the map (Figure 13).

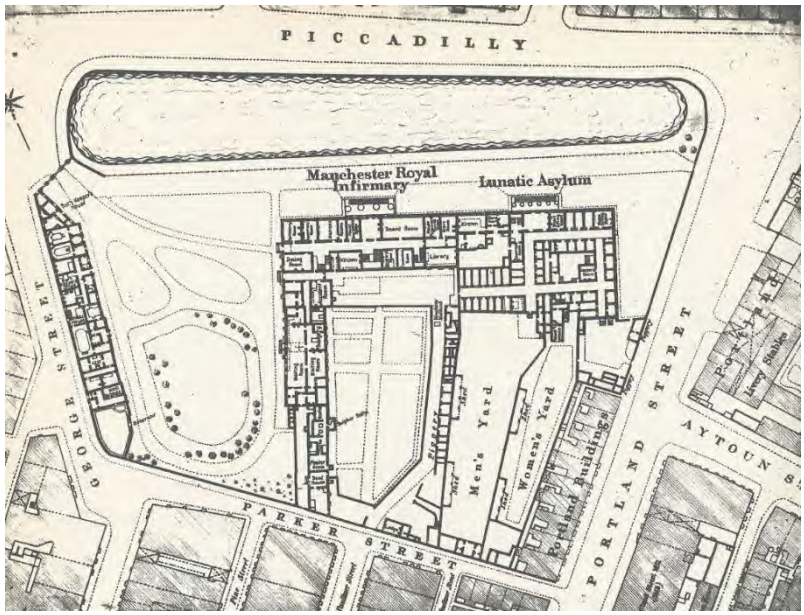


Figure 13 - 1760s map of Piccadilly Gardens (Modern Mooch, 2021)

2.34 The land was donated by Sir Oswald Mosley under the condition that it remained in public use in perpetuity, embedding an enduring principle of public accessibility. In the mid-19th century, the civic quality of the site was enhanced through the laying out of the infirmary grounds and adjacent esplanade in 1854, incorporating ornamental planting, promenades, fountains, and statuary. This phase marked the emergence of the site not

only as a place of institutional significance but also as an important civic and landscaped space within the city.

Formation of Public Gardens (1908-1930s)

2.35 Following the relocation of the Manchester Royal Infirmary to Oxford Road in 1908 and the demolition of its buildings by roughly 1910, the site was redeveloped as a formal public garden. This marked the creation of the first iteration of Piccadilly Gardens as a dedicated civic open space. The design incorporated lawns, trees, ornamental planting, and a distinctive sunken garden feature derived from the former infirmary basements.



Figure 14 - Piccadilly Gardens, 1930 (MEN, 2022)

Although alternative development proposals were considered, including the construction of cultural buildings, the decision to retain the site as open space reflected the growing importance of public realm provision in a densely industrialising city.

Interwar and Wartime Adaptation (1930s–1945)

2.36 During the interwar period, Piccadilly Gardens began to assume an additional role within Manchester's transport network, with the introduction of a bus station in the early 1930s. This dual function continued into the Second World War, when the Gardens were adapted to accommodate air raid shelters (Figure 15) and other emergency infrastructure, while surrounding buildings suffered bomb damage. Despite these interventions, the site retained its essential identity as a public open space.



Figure 15 - Piccadilly Air Raid Shelters, 1940s (Modern Mooch, 2021)

Post War Modernisation and Transport Expansion (1945–1980s)

2.37 In the post war period, the Gardens underwent incremental modification in response to changing urban demands, particularly the growth of vehicular and public transport infrastructure (Figure 17). While the space continued to function as a traditional urban garden, there was a gradual shift towards accommodating increased connectivity.



Figure 16 - Piccadilly Gardens, 1948 (Britain from Above)



Figure 17 - Piccadilly Gardens Car Park, 1950s (Modern Mooch, 2021)

2.38 The development of surrounding commercial structures, notably the Piccadilly Plaza complex in the 1960s, further altered the setting and character of the Gardens, introducing modernist architecture. This period reflects a transitional phase in which the Gardens maintained their civic and recreational role while becoming increasingly integrated into the city's evolving transport and commercial framework.

Late 20th Century Decline and Pressure for Change (1980s–1990s)

2.39 By the late 20th century, Piccadilly Gardens was widely perceived as underperforming in both functional and aesthetic terms. The historic layout had become dated, and the quality of the public realm declined relative to the wider regeneration taking place across Manchester. This period coincided with broader economic restructuring and, critically, the aftermath of the 1996 IRA Manchester bombing, which prompted a comprehensive rethinking of the city centre's urban design and infrastructure. Piccadilly Gardens was identified as a key opportunity site for redevelopment, with ambitions to modernise its form and reinforce its role as a principal civic space.

Major Redevelopment and Contemporary Reconfiguration (2000–2002)

2.40 The most significant transformation of Piccadilly Gardens occurred in the early 2000s following the launching of an international design competition. The scheme, led by EDAW and Arup and incorporating a pavilion designed by Tadao Ando, was implemented between 2001 and 2002. This redevelopment replaced much of the traditional garden layout with a contemporary urban plaza, introducing extensive hard landscaping, a large water feature and the concrete pavilion. While the scheme sought to modernise the space and

accommodate increased pedestrian movement and events, it represented a substantial departure from the site's historic character, retaining only limited elements such as the original statuary.

Post-Redevelopment Challenges and Public Criticism (2002–2020)

2.41 In the years following the redevelopment, Piccadilly Gardens became the subject of sustained public criticism. The concrete pavilion became emblematic of the scheme's shortcomings, attracting criticism for its visual impact and contribution to perceptions of poor safety and antisocial behaviour. Despite these issues, the Gardens remained a highly frequented space, functioning as one of Manchester's primary meeting points and a major transport interchange.



Figure 18 - View of Piccadilly Gardens, 2003 (MEN, 2022)

Current Phase: Ongoing Regeneration and Re-Evaluation (2020–Present)

2.42 Since 2020, Piccadilly Gardens has entered a further phase of incremental change and re-evaluation. Elements of the controversial pavilion have been partially removed or adapted, and recent interventions have focused on addressing long standing issues associated with the water features and overall usability of the space. The Gardens continue to operate as a major transport hub and public gathering space, and ongoing proposals reflect a continued ambition to reconcile its historic role as a civic green space with the practical demands of a busy city centre location.



Figure 19 - Aerial Image of Piccadilly Gardens, 2024 (Webb Aviation, 2026)

2.43 The historical development of Piccadilly Gardens demonstrates a consistent pattern of civic, recreational and transport-related uses spanning more than two centuries. Whilst the site has undergone substantial physical change, including the removal of the Royal Infirmary and major redevelopment in the early twenty-first century, its function as a focal public space has endured. The surviving listed monuments and their historic

spatial relationships remain key components of the site's significance and continue to contribute to the character and identity of Manchester City Centre.

Planning History

2.44 The most relevant planning history relating specifically to the site and its context of commercial development and regeneration have been identified and summarised in the table below.

Reference	Description	Address	Decision
On the Site			
144971/VO/2026	*City Council Development for the phased erection of a 2.4-metre-high hoarding for a temporary period of 18 months.*	Piccadilly Gardens Manchester	Approved 02/03/2026
EIASCR/26/003	*Request for Screening opinion under Part 2, Regulation 6 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended)*	City Centre Controlled Parking Zone Scheme Manchester	Approved 15/04/2026
143890/VO/2025	*City Council Development for the temporary change of use of public open space for the purpose of a Christmas Market for a period of 46 days.*	Piccadilly Gardens Manchester	Approved 23/10/2025
132578/FO/2021	*Application for physical works to the Pavilion and surrounding Public Realm*	Land At Piccadilly Gardens Manchester M1 1AF	Approved 27/04/2022
126559/VO/2020	*City Council Development for the use of public highway as a food market and associated erection of timber chalets and waste storage and traffic management infrastructure*	Piccadilly Gardens Manchester	Approved 02/08/2021
116923/FO/2017	*Demolition and redevelopment of the current single storey building and retaining wall and erection of two buildings linked by a green roof with central covered walkway from Parker Street to comprise 2 to 3 floors including mezzanine level and roof top terrace area (part of Unit 7) containing 7*	The Pavillion & Gardens Piccadilly Gardens	Withdrawn 13/03/2019

Reference	Description	Address	Decision
	commercial units (Use Class A3 (Restaurant and Cafe Use)/ Sui Generis (mixed A1 (Shop Use)/A3 (Restaurant and Cafe Use)) with associated outdoor seating and improvement works to Piccadilly Gardens including formation of raised grass areas, replacement paving, replacement of some existing trees, new lighting, introduction of additional lawned areas and planting, additional of 22 cycle stands (2 spaces per stand) and erection of new maintenance facility.		
102072/FO/2013/C2	*Retrospective consent for temporary use of land at Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester for siting a ride attraction known as the Starflyer and supporting ride infrastructure including ticket office, photo booth and office*	Piccadilly Gardens Mosley Street Manchester M1 1AF	Approved 23/05/2013
057537/LO/CITY1/99	*LISTED BUILDING CONSENT Renovation and relocation of Peel statue/Watt statue/Wellington statue and Victoria as part of regeneration*	Piccadilly Gardens, Piccadilly, City	Approved 10/04/2000
056973/VO/CITY2/99	*CITY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENTS Regeneration of existing gardens,Parker Street bus station and associated highways*	Piccadilly Gardens, Parker Street, City	Approved 22/12/1999
Near the Site			
144522/FO/2025	*Creation of new rooftop pavilion, external terrace and lift access, and enclosure of ground level walkway to create new internal floorspace with associated elevational alterations and the introduction of PV panels to the roof.*	1 Piccadilly Gardens Manchester M1 1RG	Approved 29/05/2026
143024/FO/2025	*Phased development comprising: Phase A - demolition of existing buildings and structures, erection of a basement (C1 Building and C2 Building) and a podium across lower ground and upper ground floors comprising flexible commercial space (Class E and/or Sui Generis drinking establishment), erection of a building (C1 Building) to form offices (Class E),*	Sister Plot C Former UMIST Campus Altrincham Street Manchester M1 7JA	Approved 06/03/2026

Reference	Description	Address	Decision
	landscaping works, highways, access, servicing, infrastructure and other associated works; *Phase B - erection of a podium across lower ground and upper ground floors and a new building (C2 Building) to form offices (Class E) and flexible commercial and community uses (Class E, F2 and/or Sui Generis drinking establishment), alterations to the existing Sculptural Wall (Hollaway Wall), relocation of existing art work, landscaping works, highways, access, servicing, infrastructure and other associated works;* *Phase C - change of use and associated works to railway Viaduct arches to form flexible commercial units (Class E and/or Sui Generis drinking establishment) including highways, access and servicing arrangements, and other associated works.*		
139986/FO/2024	*Demolition of existing part vacant buildings and erection of a part 10 storey, part 27, part 28 storey residential development comprising 359 homes (Use Class C3) with supporting amenity spaces, and associated highways works, landscaping, plant areas, and other associated works.*	Sparkle Street Manchester M1 2NJ	Approved 29/10/2025
127881/FO/2020	*Development comprising erection of four storey roof-top extension (for use within Class E (Commercial, Business and Service Uses); for use of floors 1-7 for use within Class E (Commercial, Business and Service Uses) and change of use of the basement and ground floor to permit Use Class E (Commercial, Business and Service Uses) and Drinking Establishments and Hot Food Takeaway (Sui Generis) use, external works associated with the formation of new ground floor entrances, sub-division of the ground floor into 9 units; works to windows including replacements, creation of winter gardens on the 6th floor; creation of external roof top amenity spaces; installation of new rooftop plant; the provision*	109-127 Market Street Manchester M60 1TA	Approved 26/01/2021

Reference	Description	Address	Decision
	of secure cycle parking (255 spaces) in sub-basement and other associated works.		
063523/FO/CITY 2/01	*Erection of 8 storey building for the following mix of uses: 2 levels of basement car parking. A1 and/or A2 and/or A3 use and/or hotel, residential or serviced apartment reception and office use at ground floor; offices on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th floors; office or residential or serviced apartments or hotel use on the 5th floor; and offices an/or restaurant or residential or serviced apartments or hotel on the 6th floor; and plant room on the 7th floor*	Site at Piccadilly Gardens, Fronting Portland Street, City	Approved 13/12/2001
059749/VO/CITY 2/00	*CITY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT Mixed use development comprising offices, retail or restaurants, hotel, serviced apartments or residential*	Site at Piccadilly Gardens, Fronting Portland Street, City	Approved 28/09/2000
059750/VO/CITY 2/00	*CITY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT RESERVED MATTERS APPLICATION Office building with public and semi-public space at ground floor*	Site at Piccadilly Gardens, Fronting Portland Street, City	Approved 28/09/2000

Table 1: Planning History

Designations

2.45 According to the Manchester City Council's proposals map, the site is subject to the following designations:

- Metrolink Existing & Proposed (T1.8) (Bury to Altrincham and Eccles) running to the south and west boundaries of the site
- City Centre (CC1-CC10)
- Regional Centre (Core Strategy EC3)
- The northwestern section of the site lies within the Smithfield Conservation Area (CA) along Market Street, while the northeastern section overlaps with the southern edge of the Stevenson Square Conservation Area along Piccadilly.
- The site is also adjacent to/nearby the following CAs:
    - Upper King Street (nearby W)

- George Street (nearby SW)

- Grade II Listed Assets on site include:
  - Peel Statue
  - Watt Statue
  - Queen Victoria Monument

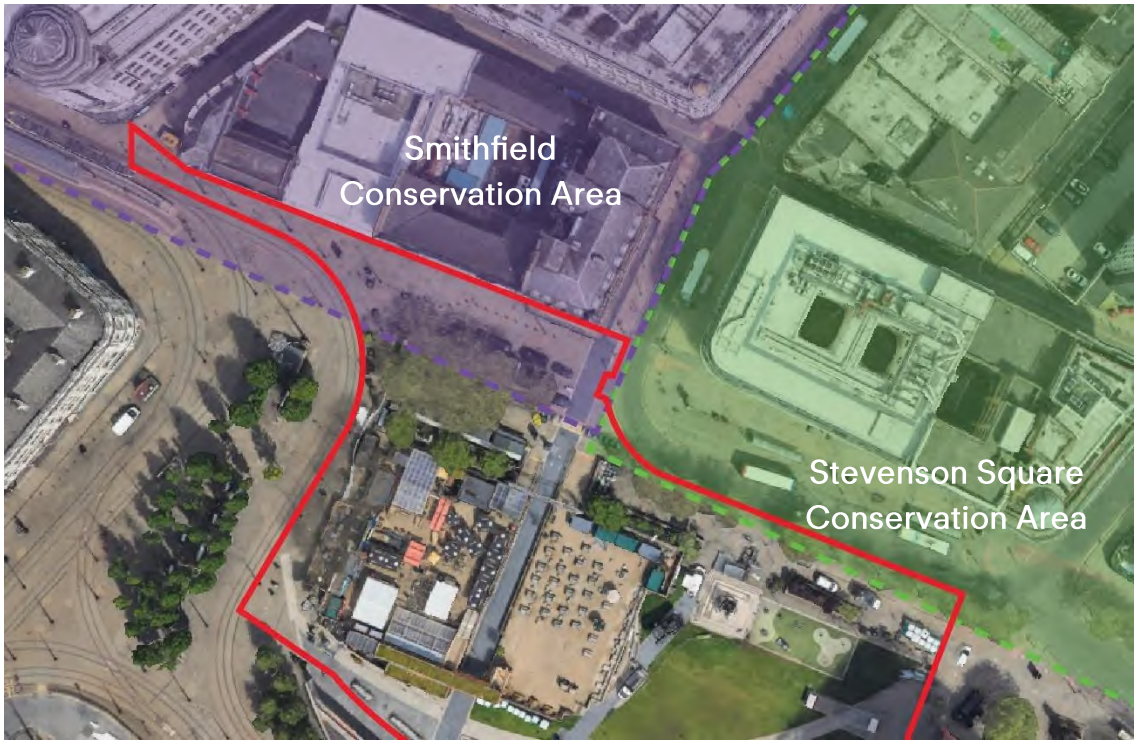


Figure 20 – Overlap of Conservation Areas with Site

[Red boundary line indicative to demonstrate relationship]



Figure 21 – Listed Assets on Site (historicengland.org.uk)

2.46 Further to the listed building on site there are a number of Grade II listed buildings and assets located within 150m of the site to the north, northwest, east and west boundaries. The notable ones of these are listed below:

Description	Address
Wellington Statue	WELLINGTON STATUE, PICCADILLY, Non Civil Parish, MANCHESTER, Manchester
1 Piccadilly	1, PICCADILLY, Non Civil Parish, MANCHESTER, Manchester
15 and 17 Piccadilly	1-3, OLDHAM STREET, Non Civil Parish, MANCHESTER, Manchester
47 Piccadilly (including warehouse facing Back Piccadilly)	47 Back Piccadilly, M1 1HP, Non Civil Parish, Manchester
49 Piccadilly	49, Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 2AP, Non Civil Parish, MANCHESTER, Manchester

Description	Address
Clayton House (59 and 61 Piccadilly)	61, Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 2AG, Non Civil Parish, MANCHESTER, Manchester
The Portland Thistle Hotel	THE PORTLAND THISTLE HOTEL, 3,5 AND 9, PORTLAND STREET, Non Civil Parish, MANCHESTER, Manchester
Gardens Hotel and Shops	51-57 (odd) Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 2AP, Non Civil Parish, Manchester
Rylands Building (Debenhams)	RYLANDS BUILDING (DEBENHAMS), 109-127, MARKET STREET, Non Civil Parish, MANCHESTER, Manchester
Electricity Junction Box, Tib Street	Electricity junction box, at the junction of Tib Street with Market Street', Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 1LZ, Non Civil Parish, Manchester
No. 10 Mosley Street	10, MOSLEY STREET, Non Civil Parish, MANCHESTER, Manchester
12 Mosley Street	12, MOSLEY STREET, Non Civil Parish, MANCHESTER, Manchester
Harvest House (14-16 Mosley Street)	HARVEST HOUSE, 14 AND 16, MOSLEY STREET, Non Civil Parish, MANCHESTER, Manchester

Table 2: Listed Assets Near Site

2.47 Further to this, assets that are of local interest within 150m of the site include:

- 19-21 Piccadilly;
- 35 Piccadilly;
- Piccadilly Cinema;
- Piccadilly Plaza;
- Wellington House; and
- Former Lewis's.

2.48 According to the Environmental Agency's flood risk map, the site is located within Flood Zone 1, where the probability of flooding is considered low. In terms of surface water flooding there are some very minor pockets of surface water flood extent on site, as can be seen below.

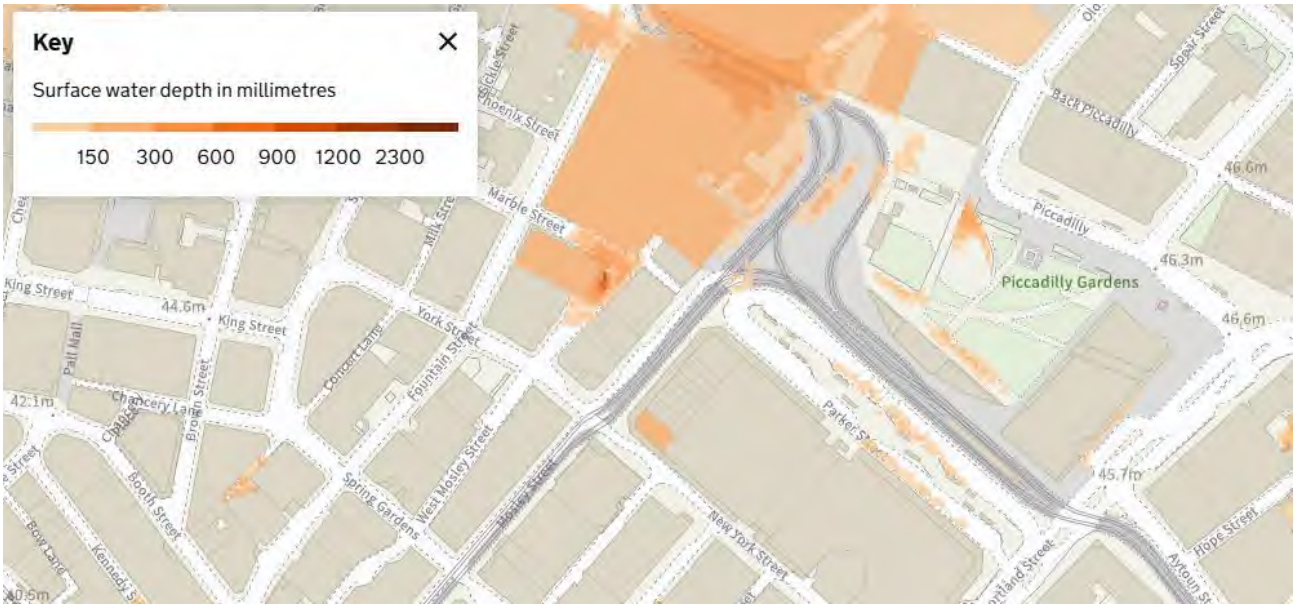


Figure 22 - Extent of Flood Zone and Surface Water Flooding (Gov.uk)

2.49 As the site measures over 1 hectare, a Flood Risk Assessment will be undertaken and provided in support of the planning application.

Environmental Designations and Constraints

Transport & Accessibility

2.50 Piccadilly Gardens benefits from exceptional public transport connectivity. Multiple Metrolink tram stops and high-frequency bus services are located immediately adjacent to the site, including along Parker Street (southwest), Piccadilly (northeast), and further northwest along Market Street. These provide direct access across the city centre and to key destinations such as Eccles, Bury, Altrincham, Ashton-under-Lyne, Langley, Higher Crumpsall, and Middleton.

2.51 The Blue, Navy, Green, Yellow and Purple Metrolink lines run along the southern Parker Street and western Mosley Street edges of the site, offering extensive regional connectivity across Greater Manchester's rapid transit network.

2.52 The Metrolink corridors running along the site's south-west boundary are safeguarded under Unitary Development Plan Policy T1.8, which seeks to protect existing and proposed public transport routes. The policy supports the Council's objective to enhance public transport provision, reduce reliance on private vehicles, and improve the overall balance of transport modes within the city.

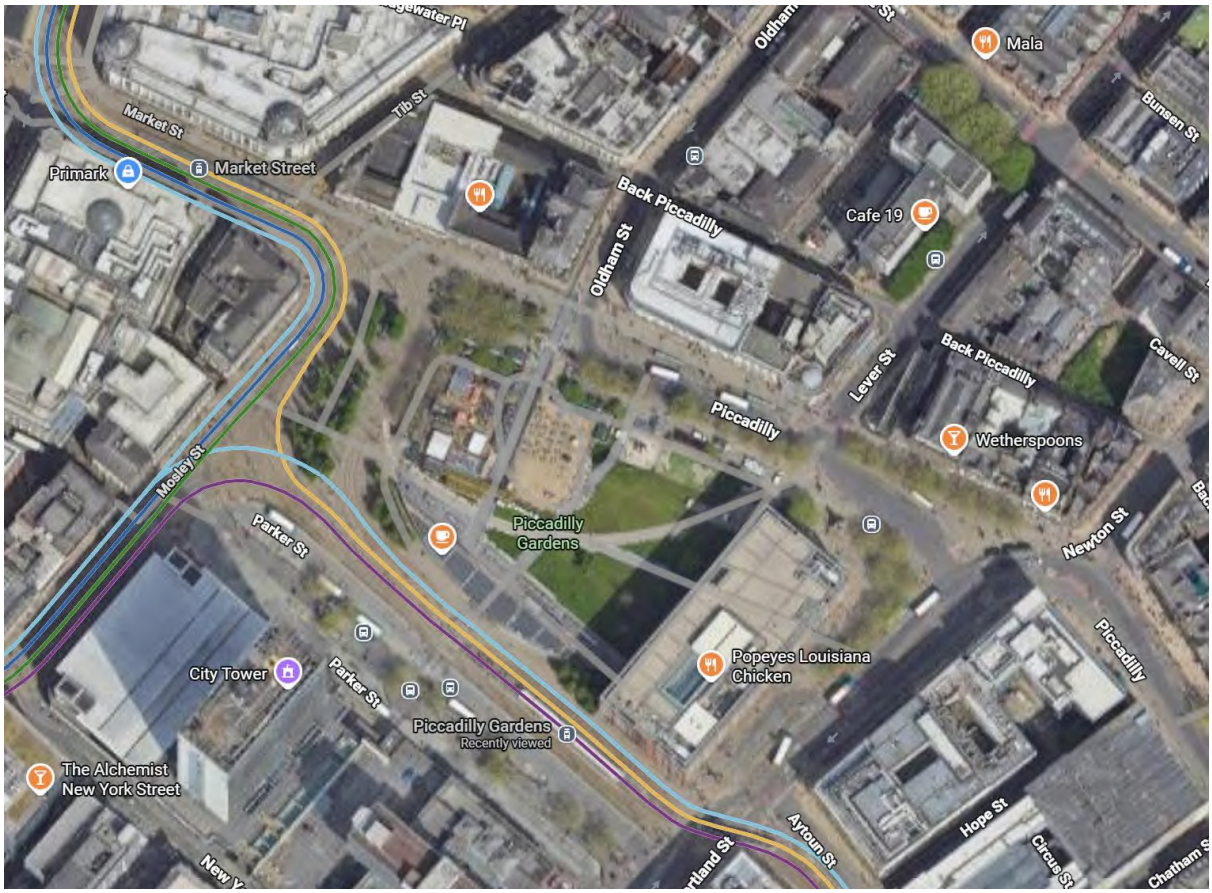


Figure 23 – Metrolink Public Transport Routes (Google Maps)

2.53 The area is well served by walking and cycling infrastructure, with continuous footways, pedestrianised streets, and cycle-friendly routes surrounding the site. Dedicated cycle lanes are provided along Portland Street to the east, and wider connections link into the city's strategic cycling network, supporting sustainable travel choices and promoting active lifestyles.



Figure 24 – Cycle Routes and Trails (Google Maps)

2.54 In addition to local tram and bus services, the site is located approximately 500 metres from Manchester Piccadilly Station, the city's principal rail hub. The station provides extensive regional, national and international connections, including direct services to London, Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Sheffield, Newcastle, Edinburgh and Manchester Airport, further enhancing the site's accessibility and strategic importance within the regional transport network.

2.55 Manchester Coach Station, located on nearby Chorlton Street, is also easily accessible from the site. The facility provides local, regional and national coach services, complementing the wider public transport network and expanding travel options for visitors and commuters.

2.56 Overall, the site occupies a highly accessible and strategically significant location, within easy walking, wheeling, and cycling distance of the wider city centre. Established pedestrian routes and shared-use paths provide direct access to community facilities, commercial destinations, and recreational spaces, whilst high-frequency bus, tram and rail services provide seamless connectivity across Greater Manchester and beyond. The concentration of sustainable transport options supports reduced car dependency and reinforces Piccadilly Gardens' role as a key interchange, civic gateway and destination within Manchester city centre.

Flood Risk

2.57 Piccadilly Gardens is located within Manchester City Centre in a highly urbanised environment characterised by extensive areas of hardstanding, public realm infrastructure and transport networks. The management of surface water and flood risk is therefore an important consideration in understanding the environmental baseline of the site and its surrounding area.

2.58 According to the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning, the site lies within Flood Zone 1, indicating a low probability of flooding from rivers or the sea, as shown in the below map:

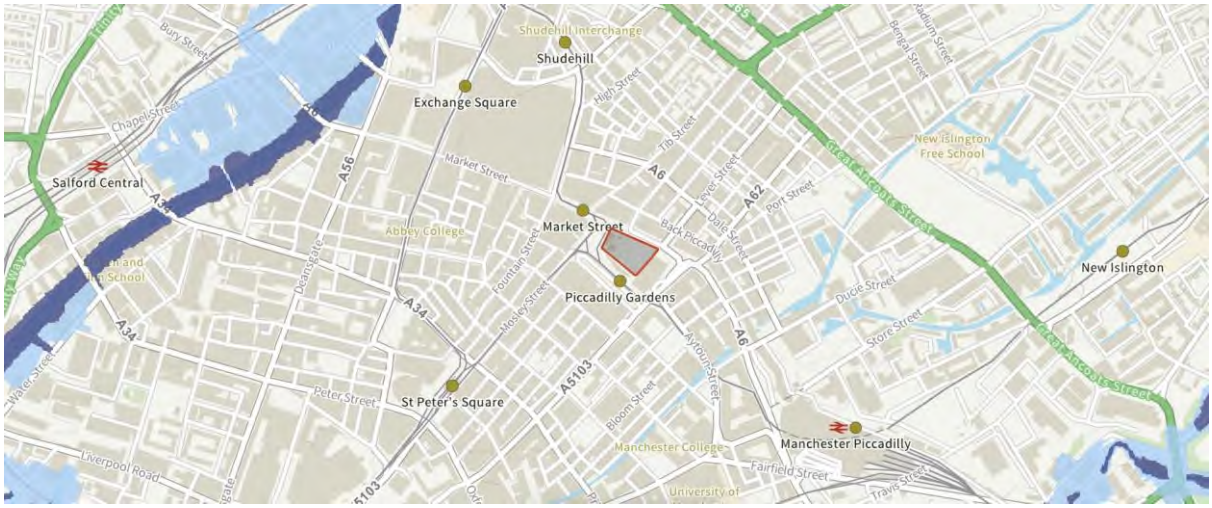


Figure 25 – Flood Zone (Gov.uk)

[Red boundary line indicative]

2.59 Flood risk within England is assessed using a range of sources including fluvial flooding from rivers, surface water flooding resulting from intense rainfall, groundwater flooding and flooding associated with sewer infrastructure. The Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning identifies areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea and provides the basis for the application of national planning policy relating to flood risk.

2.60 National planning policy seeks to direct development away from areas at the highest risk of flooding and ensure that flood risk is appropriately considered throughout the planning process. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires development proposals to avoid increasing flood risk elsewhere and, where appropriate, incorporate measures to manage and mitigate flood risk through sustainable design and drainage solutions.

2.61 At a strategic level, the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan forms part of the statutory development plan for Manchester and promotes a proactive approach to flood risk management and climate resilience. Relevant policies seek to ensure that development is designed to adapt to the potential effects of climate change and contributes towards reducing flood risk through appropriate drainage and water management measures.

2.62 At the local level, Manchester's planning policies support the delivery of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS),

the management of surface water runoff and the protection of water environments. These policies recognise the increasing importance of resilient drainage infrastructure within densely developed urban areas, particularly in response to more frequent extreme rainfall events associated with climate change.

2.63 Within heavily urbanised areas such as Piccadilly Gardens, surface water management is a particularly important consideration due to the extensive coverage of impermeable surfaces and the concentration of people, infrastructure and transport assets. Public realm design, landscape features, planting and drainage infrastructure all contribute to the management of rainfall and the movement of surface water through the urban environment.

2.64 Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and intensity of extreme rainfall events over coming decades, placing greater pressure on existing drainage networks and increasing the potential for surface water flooding within urban centres. The consideration of flood resilience and sustainable water management therefore forms an important element of long-term environmental planning.

2.65 Overall, Piccadilly Gardens forms part of a densely developed city-centre environment where effective flood risk management and surface water drainage are important considerations. The existing baseline is characterised by an established network of public realm, drainage and transport infrastructure, with future flood resilience influenced by the interaction between urban form, surface water management and wider climate change considerations.

Embodied Carbon

2.66 Piccadilly Gardens is a long-established area of public realm located within Manchester City Centre comprising hard and soft landscaping, pedestrian circulation routes, public transport infrastructure, public art, lighting, street furniture and associated structures. As a largely developed urban site containing existing physical assets and infrastructure, any future interventions have the potential to result in embodied carbon impacts associated with the retention, removal, refurbishment or replacement of existing materials and components.

2.67 Existing structures, paving materials, retaining features, landscape elements and associated street infrastructure represent a substantial stock of embodied carbon resulting from their original extraction, manufacture, transportation and construction. The retention and continued use of existing assets can therefore play an important role in reducing the demand for new materials and avoiding unnecessary lifecycle emissions.

2.68 In accordance with contemporary approaches to sustainable development, embodied carbon considerations are closely linked to resource efficiency and circular economy principles. The reuse, retention and adaptation of existing materials and infrastructure are generally recognised as effective measures for reducing upstream carbon emissions and minimising construction waste.

2.69 Whilst embodied carbon is often discussed in relation to buildings, it is also a significant consideration for public realm and landscape projects. Hard landscaping, paving, concrete structures, drainage infrastructure, street furniture and planting interventions all contribute to the whole-life carbon impact of urban

environments and are increasingly considered within project-level carbon assessments.

2.70 Embodied carbon refers to the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the materials and construction processes of a development throughout its lifecycle, including extraction, manufacture, transportation, construction, maintenance and eventual replacement or disposal. It is recognised as a significant contributor to built environment emissions and can account for a substantial proportion of a development's whole-life carbon impact.

2.71 With regards to the national policy stance on embodied carbon, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the overarching policy context. The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development with planning decisions being taken in accordance with an integrated approach to environmental objectives. In relation to climate change, the NPPF makes reference to the planning system supporting "the transition to a low carbon future" and the UK's legally binding commitment to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Whilst the NPPF does not refer explicitly to embodied carbon, its emphasis on addressing climate change, supporting the transition to a low-carbon future, and considering the environmental impacts of development provides an important policy basis for assessing whole-life carbon emissions. Embodied carbon forms an increasingly important consideration in planning decisions and sustainability appraisals.

2.72 At strategic level, The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE), adopted in March 2024, introduces a comprehensive policy framework for energy and carbon reduction across Greater Manchester and forms part of the statutory development plan for Manchester. Policy JP-S2 and JP-S3 of PfE are central to this approach and set out requirements for developments to minimise carbon emissions and support the transition to a net zero carbon city region by 2038. Supporting narrative provides a detailed framework for achieving these objectives, including requirements for energy and carbon statements and the application of lifecycle assessment. This supporting narrative within PfE promotes strategies for reducing both operational and embodied carbon emissions, confirming that development proposals should take a whole life approach to design and delivery. This policy stance further establishes expectations for quantifying and minimising upfront carbon impacts, including through the efficient use of materials, specification of low carbon products, and consideration of construction techniques, all of which are relevant to a dense urban environment such as Piccadilly Gardens and the surrounding environs.

2.73 At local level, the Manchester Core Strategy (2012) continues to form part of the adopted development plan. Policy EN4 requires development to follow the energy hierarchy and support low and zero carbon technologies, embedding the principle that carbon emissions should be minimised through design and construction. While the Core Strategy is focussed more on operational energy use, its emphasis on carbon reduction and sustainable design remains relevant and is strengthened through the introduction of PfE and in particular Policy JP-S2, which introduces a more comprehensive approach to carbon management including embodied emissions.

2.74 Saved policies within the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) further support this approach through their emphasis on sustainable development, efficient use of resources, and minimisation of environmental impacts.

Although these policies predate contemporary approaches to carbon, they remain consistent with the principles underpinning embodied carbon reduction.

2.75 The policy framework referred to above is further reinforced by Greater Manchester's commitment to becoming a carbon neutral city region by 2038, alongside Manchester City Council's own zero carbon ambitions. Achieving these targets will require substantial reductions in both operational and embodied emissions from the built environment. As such there is a clear expectation that development proposals will demonstrate how carbon emissions have been minimised across the building lifecycle, including through the use of Whole Life Carbon Assessments and methodologies.

2.76 Overall, Piccadilly Gardens comprises an established urban environment containing significant existing material and infrastructure assets. The embodied carbon baseline is therefore characterised by the carbon already invested in the site's public realm, transport infrastructure, landscape features and associated structures. Within this context, the principles of material efficiency, asset retention, reuse and whole-life carbon assessment are important considerations in understanding the environmental implications of future change at the site.

Sociodemographics – *Population Distribution (Census 2021)*

2.77 The more detailed health, deprivation and demographic baseline is provided within the accompanying Health Impact Assessment as part of the application.

2.78 Piccadilly Gardens occupies a central location within Manchester City Centre and serves a wide range of residents, workers, students and visitors. Understanding the demographic characteristics of the surrounding population provides important context for assessing how current and future uses of Piccadilly Gardens may affect different communities and population groups, recognising that the Gardens serve a substantially wider population than the immediate resident community.

2.79 The area surrounding Piccadilly Gardens exhibits a highly diverse demographic profile. The proportion of residents identifying as 'Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh' ranges from 5.9–16.7% in neighbourhoods immediately north and west of the site, rising significantly to 57.8–99.1% in areas to the south. In contrast, the proportion falls to 0.0–5.9% in the immediate eastern blocks.

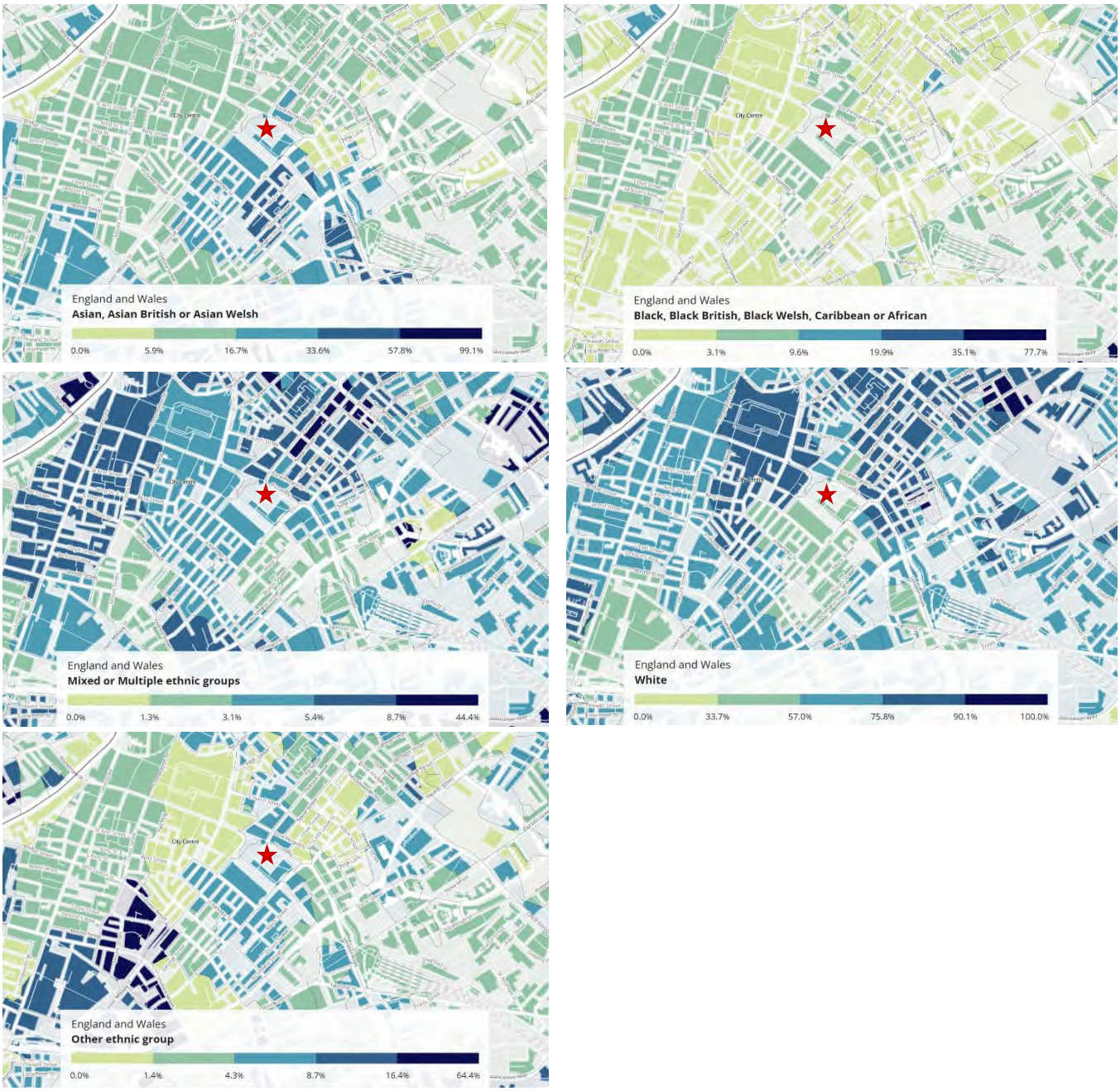
2.80 Residents identifying as 'Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African' constitute between 0.0–3.1% and 3.1–9.6% across all sides of the site, indicating a relatively even but modest distribution.

2.81 The proportion of 'Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups' ranges from 3.1–5.4% and 5.4–8.7% to the north and east of the site, reducing to 3.1–5.4% to the west and further to 1.3–3.1% immediately south.

2.82 The 'White' population forms the majority demographic to the north, west and east, accounting for 57.0–75.8% and predominantly 75.8–90.1% of residents. To the south, however, this proportion decreases markedly to 33.7–57.0%, reflecting the area's broader ethnic diversity.

2.83 Residents identifying with 'Other ethnic groups' make up 4.3–8.7% of the population to the immediate north and south. To the east and west, this varies between 0.0–1.4% and 4.3–8.7%.

2.84 Overall, the area surrounding Piccadilly Gardens exhibits a diverse ethnic composition, with notable variation between neighbourhoods located to the north, south, east and west of the site. This pattern reflects the city centre's role as a focal point for a wide range of communities and is consistent with Manchester's position as one of the UK's most ethnically diverse urban areas. The Gardens themselves serve a substantially broader population than those living within the immediate area, including residents, workers, students, visitors and public transport users. In this context, the creation of an inclusive, accessible and welcoming civic space is particularly important to ensure that Piccadilly Gardens can be comfortably used and enjoyed by a broad and diverse range of people.



Figures 26 – Population Census Map (ONS.gov.uk)

Age Distribution *(Census 2021)*

2.85 Children and young people aged 15 years and underrepresent 1.4–12.4% of the local population. This comparatively low proportion reflects the predominance of city-centre living and a relatively limited presence of family households within the immediate area.

2.86 The working-age population (16 to 64 years) forms the overwhelming majority of residents, accounting for between 76.6% and 97.8% of the local population. This reflects the concentration of employment opportunities, higher-density housing and educational institutions within Manchester City Centre.

2.87 Older residents aged 65 years and over comprise 0.8–11.7%, indicating a relatively small but present older population within the city centre.

2.88 Overall, the age profile surrounding Piccadilly Gardens is characteristic of a dense city-centre environment, comprising a predominantly working-age population alongside smaller but important populations of children, young people and older residents. Whilst the resident population is largely shaped by city-centre living, the Gardens are used by a substantially wider range of people, including families, commuters, students, visitors and public transport users. This reinforces the importance of ensuring that Piccadilly Gardens functions as an inclusive, accessible and welcoming civic space capable of supporting a broad range of needs, activities and age groups.







Figures 27 – Age Distribution Map (ONS.gov.uk)

Deprivation & Health

2.89 In addition to demographic characteristics, socio-economic conditions and health outcomes provide important context for understanding the communities surrounding Piccadilly Gardens. Health and wellbeing are influenced not only by access to healthcare, but also by wider determinants including deprivation, environmental quality, access to open space, community safety, social inclusion and opportunities for physical activity.

2.90 The area surrounding Piccadilly Gardens lies within Manchester City Centre, where neighbourhoods exhibit varying socio-economic characteristics. The city centre benefits from strong employment, education, retail, leisure, cultural and public transport opportunities, but also experiences some of the challenges typically associated with dense urban environments, including pressures on public space, environmental quality and community safety.

2.91 The accompanying Health Impact Assessment identifies that the Site is located within Lower-layer Super Output Area (LSOA) Manchester 055B. The English Indices of Deprivation 2025 identify Manchester 055B as a relatively deprived neighbourhood nationally, ranking 11,026 out of 33,755 neighbourhoods in England on the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation. The 2025 evidence also identifies crime and the living environment as particularly relevant considerations within the wider Manchester context. Manchester ranks as the third most deprived local authority nationally within the Crime Domain, with 39% of Manchester's LSOAs falling within the 10% most deprived areas nationally for crime, whilst the authority ranks 46th most deprived nationally within the Living Environment Domain.

2.92 These findings are relevant because crime, perceptions of safety and environmental quality are recognised determinants of health and wellbeing. The Health Impact Assessment identifies that higher levels of crime and associated perceptions of insecurity can influence mental wellbeing, social interaction, use of public space, opportunities for recreation and physical activity, and confidence in walking and spending time outdoors. Similarly, living environment deprivation can influence health outcomes through reduced environmental quality, poorer environmental conditions and limited access to high-quality public spaces.

2.93 Overall, the 2025 deprivation and health evidence identifies crime, environmental quality, access to outdoor space and perceptions of safety as particularly relevant considerations within the wider Piccadilly area. These factors provide important context for the Proposed Development, which seeks to improve public realm quality, accessibility, natural surveillance, lighting, landscape design, play provision and long-term stewardship within one of Manchester's most heavily used civic spaces. The proposals therefore have the potential to respond positively to a number of the issues identified through the latest deprivation and health evidence.

Security, Counterterrorism, and Antisocial behaviour

2.94 Piccadilly Gardens is a prominent public space within Manchester City Centre, accommodating high levels of pedestrian activity and acting as a key transport interchange. The combination of extensive public access, concentrations of people, public transport infrastructure and its role as a civic destination means that

considerations relating to security, public safety, counterterrorism and antisocial behaviour are particularly relevant to the site and its surrounding area.

2.95 As with many city-centre public spaces, the management of safety and security within Piccadilly Gardens requires consideration of crime prevention, public reassurance and the effective operation of the public realm. Existing surveillance, lighting, pedestrian movement patterns and ongoing management arrangements contribute to maintaining a safe and accessible environment for residents, workers and visitors.

2.96 The consideration of security, counterterrorism and antisocial behaviour within development proposals is considered an integral component to planning and design, supported by a robust framework of national policy, legislation and guidance. In the context of a highly accessible location such as Piccadilly Gardens in central Manchester, this is particularly material, given the high levels of footfall, public accessibility and the importance of ensuring a safe and well managed urban environment.

2.97 At national planning policy level, the NPPF makes reference to the contributions develops make towards the creation of safe and secure environments. Chapter 8 of the NPPF relates to healthy and safe communities where there is a requirement for decisions to create "safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life of community cohesion and resilience." This puts an emphasis on need for applicants to demonstrate how proposals respond to crime prevention and community safety needs. The NPPF is supported by Planning Practice Guidance as well as Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, which requires local authorities to exercise their functions to prevent crime and disorder, inclusive of terrorism. This establishes that security and crime prevention are considered core planning considerations.

2.98 The principle of "designing out crime" is central to planning and development. This approach is detailed within national guidance and reflected in police initiatives such as Secured by Design, which aims to reduce crime through effective design and physical security measures. Secured by Design is based on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, including natural surveillance, access control, territorial reinforcement and management, which are considered as an effective method in reducing both crime and antisocial behaviour.

2.99 Considerations surrounding security extend beyond crime prevention to encompass counterterrorism and protective security measures. National guidance highlights that the UK continues to face ongoing threat from terrorism and that crowded places remain an attractive target for terrorists. As this is the case, there is a clear expectation that development proposals, particularly those in dense urban centres, incorporate protective security measures. Guidance from Counter Terrorism Policing emphasises that security should be considered early in the planning process, enabling the design of environments that "deter threats, facilitate quick responses to emergencies, and promote a sense of safety and security." This includes measures such as hostile vehicle mitigation (HVM), where design interventions such as street furniture, physical landscape features are used to reduce the risk of vehicle borne attacks and maximise stand off distances.

2.100 The importance of protective security has been reinforced through the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, which places duties on those responsible for qualifying premises and events to consider and, where

appropriate, implement proportionate measures to reduce vulnerability to terrorist acts. Associated guidance emphasises the need to assess risk and incorporate appropriate security and operational procedures to protect the public.

2.101 The design and management of the public realm also play an important role in addressing antisocial behaviour. Well-designed environments that promote activity, visibility and natural surveillance can help reduce opportunities for crime and disorder whilst supporting a greater sense of safety for users.

2.102 Piccadilly Gardens is a prominent public space within Manchester City Centre, accommodating high levels of pedestrian activity and acting as a key transport interchange. The combination of extensive public access, concentrations of people and its role as a civic destination means that considerations relating to security, public safety, counterterrorism and antisocial behaviour are particularly relevant to the site and its surrounding area.

2.103 The wider evidence base highlights the relevance of these issues within the context of Piccadilly Gardens. The accompanying Health Impact Assessment identifies crime as a significant deprivation issue within Manchester, with the city ranking as the third most deprived local authority nationally within the Crime Domain and 39% of Manchester's Lower-layer Super Output Areas falling within the 10% most deprived areas nationally for crime. The assessment also identifies that the local area experiences high levels of crime and antisocial behaviour consistent with its city-centre location and intensity of activity. Recorded offences within the vicinity of the Site include theft, robbery, criminal damage and assault-related offences, whilst concerns relating to antisocial behaviour, perceptions of safety and public confidence in the use of the Gardens have been identified through consultation and engagement. In this context, the creation of a safe, well-managed and positively used public space represents an important planning and public realm objective

2.104 Overall, Piccadilly Gardens is a highly accessible and heavily used public space where safety, security and effective management are important considerations. The site's role as a transport interchange, civic space and visitor destination means that principles of crime prevention, counterterrorism resilience and antisocial behaviour reduction are key factors in maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for all users.

3

Proposed Development

3. Proposed Development

The Concept – A Bright New Chapter for Piccadilly Gardens

3.1 Piccadilly Gardens is one of Manchester's most important public spaces and transport interchanges, acting as a key gateway for people arriving in the city from Piccadilly Station and beyond. It has been the subject of extensive public consultation in recent years, which has informed the vision for its regeneration.

3.2 A renewed Piccadilly Gardens needs to reflect who we are as a city – diverse, welcoming, creative and full of life. The overall approach is a two-part journey to transform the Piccadilly Gardens area and make it an attractive, well-managed and welcoming space.

3.3 The first part of this journey, to which this application relates, will transform the design and functionality of the Gardens through enhanced environmental quality, accessibility, safety and usability. This includes upgraded public realm, improved movement routes, and the coordination of pedestrian, cycle and public transport flows across this busy interchange. The second part of the plan will see a transformation of the wider area in the coming years, including a multi-million-pound investment by Transport for Greater Manchester to create a new, modern transport interchange. The current proposals have taken this future step into consideration with the proposed design.

3.4 The aim is to create a renewed Piccadilly Gardens – a better designed, high quality and resilient public space centred on a generous lawn, year-round planting and a varied tree canopy, with a family-friendly play space and the flexibility for outdoor events.

Proposed Redevelopment Works

3.5 This application seeks planning consent for:

"Redevelopment and reconfiguration of Piccadilly Gardens comprising works to the public realm including public open space and use of space for events, together with decommissioning and removal of the existing fountain; creation of play space, lawn area, hard and soft landscaping; lighting; and drainage and other associated infrastructure; and a severable plot for a future ancillary structure with associated interim landscaping."

3.6 The proposals make provision for a future structure within the Gardens, which will complement the ongoing investment in and refurbishment of the Piccadilly Gardens landscape. The structure does not form part of this application and will be brought forward under a separate full planning application.

3.7 The Proposed Development General Arrangement Landscaping Plan therefore incorporates an area of that has the potential to accommodate a future structure, with an interim landscaping solution. In the event that a future ancillary structure does not come forward, a longer-term landscaping solution is being proposed that can be secured via planning condition.

3.8 The Gardens will continue to operate as a publicly accessible civic open space and a key component of

Manchester city centre's public realm. The section of Piccadilly within the application boundary will remain a pedestrianised public highway, providing an important route through the city centre and serving the adjoining public transport interchange. As part of the strategic shift in Piccadilly Garden's role in the city, the existing Piccadilly Street Food Market is not retained as part of the Proposed Development, and the traders will be relocated within the city centre.

3.9 Manchester City Council, who operate the Market, are actively working to explore appropriate alternative city centre locations and placemaking opportunities to the benefit of both the traders and the city centre. Any future reprovision of the market stalls falls outside the scope of this application, and will be addressed through a separate planning application in due course as required.

3.10 The relocation of existing market traders forms part of a wider City Council initiative to enhance and activate public spaces across Manchester city centre. Proposals for the activation of an alternative civic square are currently being developed, with the aim of creating a coordinated offer incorporating a diverse range of traders and operators within a high-quality, managed environment.

3.11 As part of the wider Piccadilly Gardens project, a commitment has been made to restore and clean the three listed statues located within the application site. However, it is important to note that these works do not form part of the full planning application and will instead be progressed through a separate Listed Building Consent application in due course.

Proposed Layout

3.12 The renewed layout will strengthen Piccadilly Gardens' role as both a civic destination and a key transport interchange, creating a modern, adaptable and visually coherent space at the heart of Manchester.

3.13 Four distinct character areas have developed across the proposal, which break down as corresponding spaces within the layout. These will be discussed accordingly.

3.14 The Gardens will be arranged around a roughly-oval central lawn, which forms the heart of the new Piccadilly Gardens. The existing fountain will be removed, an off-centred pedestrian route will cut through the lawn, creating a connection between Oldham Street and Piccadilly Gardens transport interchange to the south, and divots on the north side create space for the statue of Queen Victoria to sit within the layout and provide a location for a potential future structure. A paved pedestrian route will also loop around the lawn, connecting the different areas of the Gardens.

3.15 The lawn forms the basis of the Community character area, focused on everyday city life – a space for people to stay and enjoy that also works as an infrastructure exchange.

3.16 The area to the north-east around the Queen Victoria statue will become the Victoria Gardens character area. Hard landscaping will expand around Victoria to enhance her setting, and ample seating set against vibrant planting will allow people to dwell and enjoy time in the Gardens. Lush colourful planting, selected to bloom and thrive in the local conditions, will sit beneath tall tree canopies providing much needed shade and shelter.

3.17 To facilitate a calmer character the existing play area adjacent to the Queen Victoria statue will be removed,

and a new, significantly expanded play area will be built to the south of the lawn. This will create the Family character area, a space within the Gardens and wider City Centre specifically to children and carers, positioned to the south to benefit from excellent natural surveillance and the lowest pedestrian passing footfall. Specific details on the play area can be found later in this Section of the Planning Statement.

3.18 To the east, expanded spill out seating areas for cafes and restaurants in One Piccadilly Gardens will be provided, creating a retail active edge. A through route between One Piccadilly and the lawn will be provided.

3.19 A new smaller civic space, Peel Square, is proposed adjacent to the Robert Peel statue, and is another of the four character areas. This location will create a new civic focus around the Robert Peel Monument and act as a transitional space between the lawn and Piccadilly. The provision for a future structure adjacent to this space provides further potential to activate and enliven the space.

3.20 While not forming part of this application, the potential future location for a structure has also been considered from a layout perspective. It has been informed by several factors, including to avoid the perimeter route for pedestrian movement and make use of existing trees to the northwest as an anchor for a possible built structure. It would also allow any future building to have a prominent position for those arriving to the Gardens from Market Street, Piccadilly and the transport interchange to the south.

3.21 How the revised layout interacts with delivery drivers and cyclists has also been considered, and will be addressed through the emerging stewardship model.

3.22 Further details can be found in the Design and Access Statement that accompanies this application.

Access and Connectivity

3.23 Piccadilly Gardens functions as one of Manchester City Centre's most important public spaces and transport interchanges, accommodating significant levels of pedestrian movement every day. For this reason pedestrian movement has been a primary driver in the development of the public realm design with survey information showing approximately 21,000 people move through Piccadilly Gardens on a daily basis and 24 million annually. The movement strategy has therefore been informed by key desire lines and established movement patterns to ensure routes respond to how people use the space and provide clear, direct and attractive connections across the Gardens.

3.24 The renewed layout will enhance the pedestrian journey through Piccadilly Gardens, making routes clearer to navigate with an improved layout and reduced clutter. Piccadilly Gardens functions as one of Manchester City Centre's principal civic spaces and transport interchanges, accommodating significant levels of pedestrian movement throughout the day. The movement strategy has therefore been informed by key desire lines and established movement patterns, ensuring routes respond to how people use the space whilst providing clear, direct and attractive connections across the Gardens. Particular consideration has been given to accessibility and inclusive movement, ensuring people with a range of mobility and access needs can navigate the space safely and comfortably

3.25 Seating along these circulation routes provides regular opportunities to stop, rest and dwell, improving comfort for people travelling through or spending time within Piccadilly Gardens. A variety of seating types are proposed, including accessible seating, helping to support the needs of a broad range of users including older people, disabled people, people with reduced mobility, families with young children and those requiring more frequent rest opportunities.



Figure 28 - Proposed Movement Strategy (Planit)

3.26 In line with its current use and aspired role within the city centre, no vehicle parking is proposed. 16no. cycle stands accommodating 32no. cycles are proposed across four locations. The end spaces of each can be used by wider/large cycles (8no. spaces in total).



Figure 29 - Proposed Cycle Parking Locations (Civic)

3.27 Clear sight lines, step-free routes and accessible seating will ensure that the space is accessible to all users. The proposals have been developed with inclusive design principles in mind and seek to support safe, comfortable and independent movement throughout the Gardens. The layout responds to the needs of a diverse range of users, including wheelchair users, people with mobility impairments, people with sensory impairments, older people, families with young children and those travelling with luggage or pushchairs. Together, these measures will help ensure that Piccadilly Gardens functions as an inclusive civic space that can be used and enjoyed by the widest possible range of people.

3.28 A potential new pedestrian crossing point has been incorporated to the northern boundary adjacent to Piccadilly, beyond the red line boundary. While this lies outside the extent of the current application, it forms part of a broader programme of planned improvements to which the proposed scheme will connect. The design has therefore been developed to ensure compatibility with these future works.

Landscaping

3.29 The planting will play a key role in the redesign of Piccadilly Gardens, with a real focus on bringing the "Gardens" back through the use of colour, flowers and vibrancy.

3.30 A rich planting palette has been selected to ensure a mix of planting that brings colour and life to the area all year-round. Seasonally blooming plants will be chosen to ensure the gardens feel colourful and vibrant throughout the year.

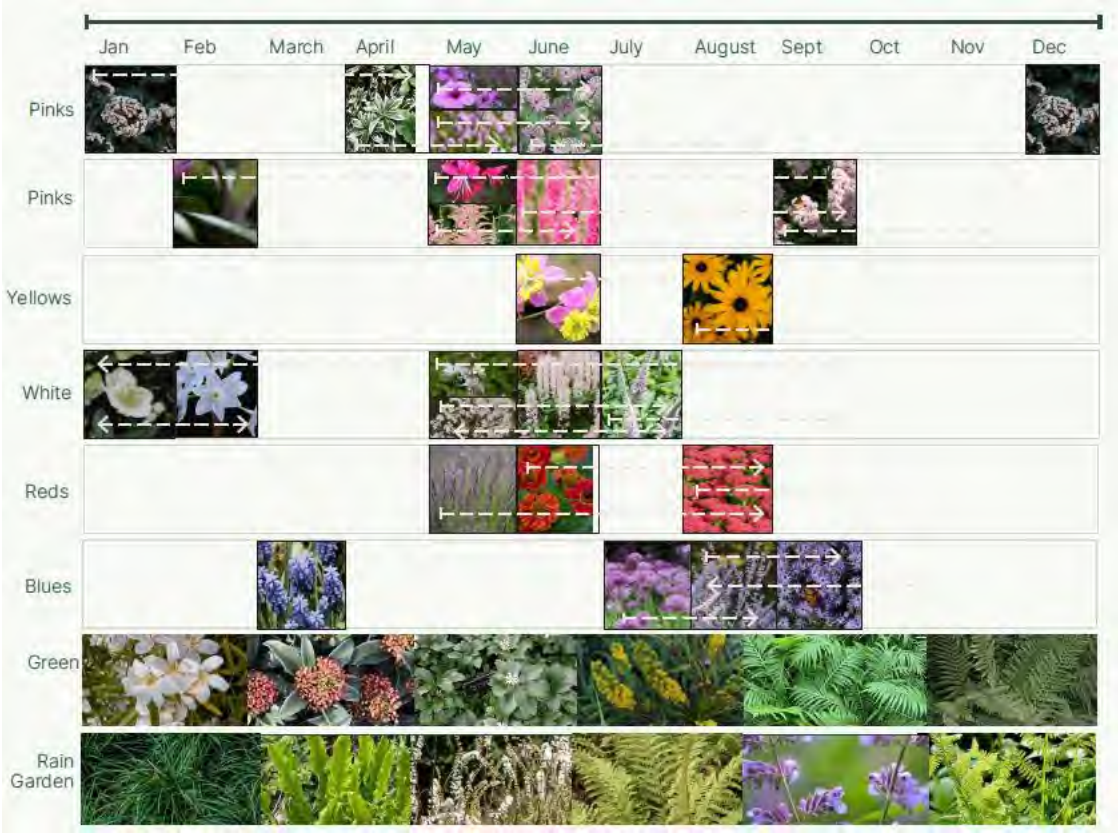


Figure 30 - Seasonal Planting Chart (Planit)

3.31 Trees are central to the transformation of Piccadilly Gardens and play a key role in re-defining its character. New native, high quality trees with tall canopies will provide shade and support habitats without making the area feel too enclosed. The arrangement of trees around the central lawn provides a distinct character shift between the surrounding streets and transport interchanges and the Gardens.

3.32 The tree planting vision for Piccadilly Gardens draws inspiration from the wider network of civic green spaces that contribute to Manchester's identity. The 'Botany of Manchester' concept celebrates the diversity of landscapes found across the city and positions Piccadilly Gardens as a central node within this emerging green network.

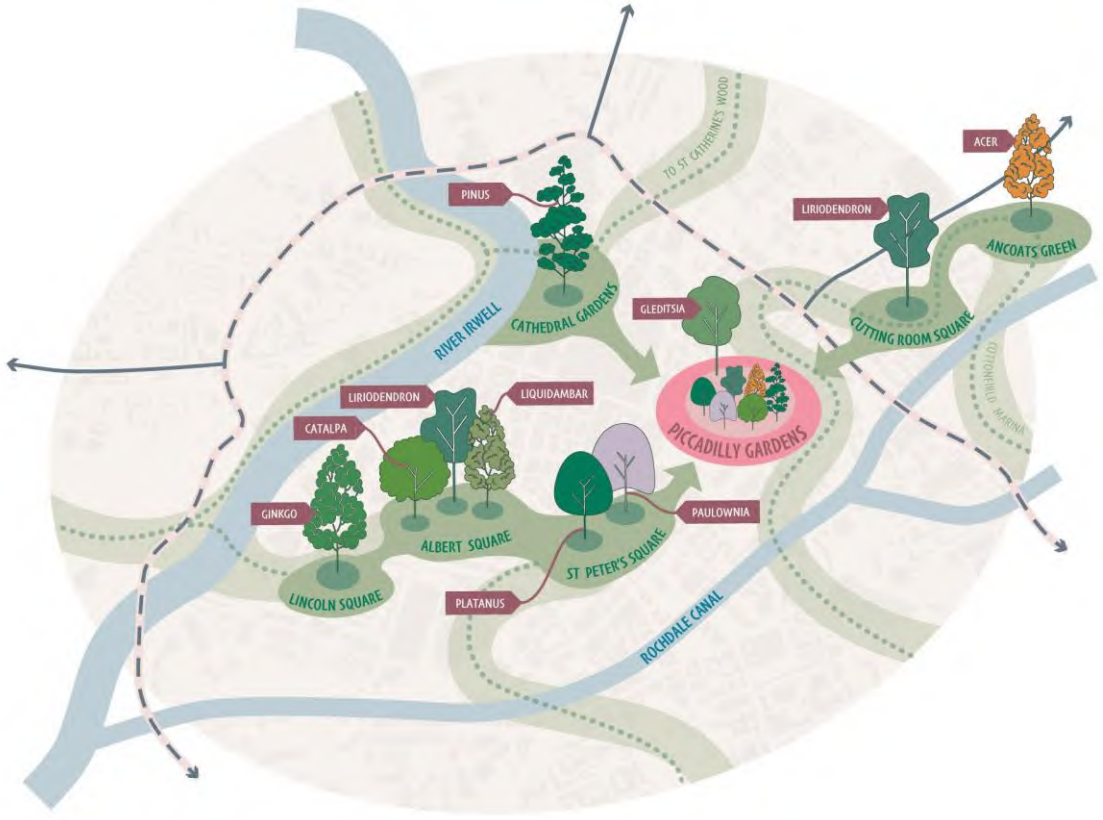


Figure 31 - The Botany of Manchester (Planit)

3.33 Green and blue infrastructure will be integrated throughout the Gardens as one part of the wider civic network of public spaces. Planting area will incorporate rain gardens to sustainably manage surface water run-off. The existing basement provides the opportunity to collect rainwater for use in the irrigation system.

3.34 Decorative railings edge the areas of soft landscaping. These are a light touch approach to clearly defining planting areas while preserving visual permeability, preventing trampling of planting and allowing uninterrupted views of the planting within. A solid up-stand to the base of the railing ensures white cane detectability and prevents mulch from migrating onto circulation areas.

3.35 The arched top design draws reference from the shape of the lawn and will be finished in the same consistent colour as the rest of the metalwork. These features ensure a visual legibility and cohesion across the whole space.

3.36 In terms of hard landscaping, a palette of materials has been developed that responds not only to the character areas within the proposed design, but relative to the adjacent public realm areas. A reduced palette of high-quality materials has been chosen to create tonal consistency throughout Piccadilly Gardens.

3.37 Natural stone paving is the predominant material proposed to the public realm, referencing the other civic spaces within the city centre. Natural stone is also incredibly durable making it ideal for use in such a high traffic environment. Variations in paving module texture and laying pattern assists in creating character areas and movement roots without the need for excessive way finding signage.

3.38 Some existing Yorkstone has been identified for reuse within the landscaping scheme.

3.39 A simple pallet of robust contemporary furniture has been selected to support the everyday enjoyment of the gardens. Benches have been located on key routes and within garden spaces to provide opportunities for rest, social interaction and the enjoyment of the landscape. Durable materials, accessible locations and a consistent design language/specification ensure the furniture not only looks good, but is easy to repair or replace individual components quickly and cheaply in the future.

3.40 Regarding levels, the lawn is elevated, held by a raised edge. This defining design feature establishes a clear and robust transition between the central lawn and the surrounding pedestrian thoroughfares whilst also helping to guide people through the space. The pedestrian path that cuts through the lawn rises and falls to provide a dedicated level access point to the grassed areas.

3.41 Given the significant levels of footfall experienced through the site, the design of this edge is intended to be decorative yet guide movement flow. Robust stone detailing with integrated anti-skate measures to the top echoing the 'Picadil' colour shape. A variety of surface textures and a decorative fluted base protects the edge from damage whilst maintaining a simple and elegant appearance.

3.42 The landscape and public realm have been designed in accordance with inclusive design principles to support a broad range of users and access needs. This includes the use of clear and legible routes, visual contrast between key surfaces and features to aid navigation, and the avoidance of unnecessary obstacles within pedestrian desire lines.

3.43 Planting and landscape features have been carefully arranged to maintain clear movement corridors and support cane detection, whilst seating, resting opportunities and open spaces have been distributed throughout the Gardens to accommodate different patterns of use and mobility needs.

3.44 Consideration has also been given to neurodiversity through the creation of clear, readable spaces with good sightlines, intuitive routes and opportunities for quieter moments away from principal movement corridors. Together, these measures help create a public realm that is more accessible, welcoming and comfortable for a diverse range of users, including disabled people, older people, families, children and those with sensory, cognitive or mobility needs.

Play Space

3.45 The aim of the play space is to create a high-quality, family-friendly space for younger children (up to 10 years old). It is intended to complement, not dominate, the wider function of Piccadilly Gardens. In a bustling city centre, we want to create a location where children can come to run around and enjoy themselves for a few minutes, or to have some quieter time to recharge, in a safe and welcoming space.

3.46 The design draws reference from the landscapes beyond Greater Manchester and the three-river story, introducing a variety of physical, social, imaginative, sensory and natural play whilst being carefully integrated into the wider public realm design.

3.47 Play mounds and in-ground trampolines make reference to the site's historic 'daub' holes, and a central

feature climbing structure has a form inspired by the silhouette of the hills surrounding Manchester.

3.48 Other proposed play and interactive features include integrated slides, balance beams, talk tubes, musical chimes and a wheelchair accessible roundabout.

3.49 Inclusivity and accessibility have been key considerations in the development of the play space. The play strategy has been designed to support a broad range of ages, abilities and play preferences, incorporating opportunities for physical, sensory, social and imaginative play. Accessible features, including the wheelchair-accessible roundabout, are integrated throughout the play area rather than being separated from the wider play experience. The layout also incorporates clear routes, visual contrast, opportunities for quieter forms of play and spaces for children who may benefit from less stimulating environments. Collectively, these measures help create a welcoming and inclusive play environment that can be enjoyed by children and families with a diverse range of access, mobility, sensory and neurodiverse needs.

3.50 Seating is included around the play area for comfortable supervision, and planting through and around the extents integrate it into the wider Gardens and provide a sense of natural protection and enclosure.

3.51 More strategically, the proposed play space and its target demographic for younger children forms part of a wider network of play and recreational destinations offering additional choice across the city as a whole.

3.52 Mayfield Park located approximately 14 minutes' walk southeast of the site provides a large 6.5-acre parkland adventure play area incorporating elevated climbing structures, multi-level slides, balancing features and in-ground trampolines. The scale and nature of these facilities are particularly attractive to older children and pre-teens, whilst also supporting informal recreation within a high-quality parkland setting.

3.53 The park has been designed as a sequence of interconnected spaces, each with its own character and recreational function, ranging from active play areas to quieter landscaped settings. The quality of the park has been recognised through its Green Flag Award status, reflecting a welcoming, safe and well-managed with strong community value.

3.54 Similarly, the recently reopened Ancoats Green Park, situated approximately 20 minutes' walk to the northeast of the site, provides a range of play facilities, accessible equipment and multifunctional open spaces that serve older children, families and local residents. In addition to its play provision, Ancoats Green incorporates enhanced walking and cycling connections to encourage active travel and biodiversity improvements.

3.55 Collectively, with the proposed play space at Piccadilly Gardens, these destinations offer a complementary network of play provision across the city centre, ensuring that a range of play experiences are available for different age groups, interests and abilities, whilst encouraging families to move between and enjoy Manchester's growing network of high-quality public spaces.

3.56 The proposed play space at Piccadilly Garden's focus on younger children (up to 10 years old) therefore complements, rather than duplicates, the wider network of play opportunities available across Manchester city centre. For older children and young people, a range of more adventurous and physically challenging play environments are already provided elsewhere, helping to create a connected hierarchy of play

destinations across the city.

Safety and Security

3.57 New lighting and CCTV will play a key role in shaping the evening character of Piccadilly Gardens, creating a bright, welcoming and comfortable environment for everyone.

3.58 A detailed lighting strategy has been developed to support the creation of a safe, welcoming and distinctive space that can be used through the day and into the evening. As one of Manchester's most important public spaces, and a key city centre gateway, the Gardens require a coordinated lighting approach that responds to the high levels of football, character areas, security and CCTV requirements and that ties in with the existing lighting beyond the red line.

3.59 Taller multi-headed feature columns form a perimeter to the central lawn area and principal movement corridors, while lower-level columns and catenary lighting create a more intimate atmosphere within surrounding garden spaces, seating areas and play areas. This hierarchy of lighting allows each space to retain its own character while contributing to a coherent night time atmosphere.

3.60 Feature lighting and programmable elements provide opportunities for reasonable programming, event events and specific occasions, allowing the Gardens to adapt to changing uses for out here while maintaining a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere.

3.61 Practically, the key objective of the strategy is to provide consistent lighting levels across all areas and integrate with CCTV requirements, to result in a coordinated high-quality lighting design that is future proofed as a part of the cities broader strategy.

Interpretation Concept

3.62 Interpretation boards are proposed across the site to convey information about the re-design of the Gardens and the history of the site.

3.63 Boards will be informed by 'The Three Rivers' concept, which centres around the three rivers that run through Manchester, and how these tie together the relationships between landscape, industry and people, and what makes us uniquely Manchester.

3.64 The River Irwell, the River Irk and the River Medlock have shaped the city's history and is intrinsic to the character of Manchester today. The interpretation and artwork strategy will draw inspiration from these waterways, using them as a framework to tell a story of Manchester through three interconnected themes; Natural, Industrial and Cultural.

3.65 These stories will be conveyed through a number of means; formal interpretation boards distributed through the site, bespoke artwork etched into stone elements in and around the play area, and in bespoke inlay details within the in situ concrete paths running through the site.

Stewardship and Management

3.66 Beyond the proposed redevelopment of Piccadilly Gardens, a completely new approach to managing the space is being developed. The ambition will be to bring together the people, policy and partnership ingredients that make change happen to make real the vital stewardship of Piccadilly Gardens.

3.67 Working in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), Greater Manchester Police (GMP), CityCo, city centre businesses and residents, the new stewardship model will ensure that Piccadilly Gardens is safe, clean and well maintained, addressing community concerns about anti-social behaviour with a proactive, problem-solving approach.

3.68 Further details will be provided at a later stage once details have been confirmed.

3.69 To assist, the proposals have been designed with ongoing maintenance and stewardship in mind. This includes the use of durable and resilient materials, guiding footfall to protect planting and grassed areas and the lighting and CCTV strategy.

3.70 Manchester City Centre bins are proposed throughout the landscape scheme at key pedestrian locations. These will be maintained and emptied by the Council as with other City bins.

3.71 A Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan setting out the key principles has also been prepared by Planit, with a bespoke management and maintenance plan commissioned.

3.72 It sets out how the proposed public realm, planting, trees, play facilities, drainage, lighting, CCTV and heritage assets at Piccadilly Gardens will be managed and maintained to ensure successful establishment, high quality appearance, public safety and biodiversity enhancement over the long term.

4

Pre-Application Engagement

4. Pre-Application Engagement

4.1 Section 122 of the 2011 Act introduced a requirement upon prospective developers to carry out pre-application discussions before submitting applications for developments of certain type and scale.

4.2 The applicant has been working closely with Manchester City Council from the early stages of the process to ensure all elements of the proposal are being progressed in line with the Council's requirements. The project team also carried out a comprehensive pre-application engagement with relevant stakeholders and the public.

4.3 Following the pre-application public consultation, a decision was taken not to include the pavilion within this planning application. There is still an intention to include a structure as part of Piccadilly Gardens in the future, and so the feedback provided as part of this consultation on the purpose, location and design of the pavilion will be helpful in shaping these future plans.

Manchester City Council Programme Boards and Multi-Agency Steering Group

4.4 At a strategic level, the project has been overseen through Manchester City Council, bringing together senior representatives from Growth and Development, Neighbourhoods, Highways, Capital Projects, Facilities, Estates and other relevant service areas. This collaborative approach has supported integrated decision-making from the earliest stages of the project, enabling stakeholders to shape the design brief and contribute to the evolution of the proposals. As a result, both strategic objectives and day-to-day operational considerations have been incorporated into the design development process.

4.5 Effective partnership working has also been a key component of the project. To support this, the Piccadilly Gardens Multi-Agency Steering Group was established in 2025, comprising representatives from:

- Manchester City Council (Neighbourhoods, City Centre Partnerships and Communications)
- Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM)
- Greater Manchester Police (GMP)
- CityCo

4.6 The Steering Group met on a regular basis and played an important role in informing the project brief. During the pre-application stage, a dedicated meeting was held on 18 May 2026 to present the emerging design proposals and outline the planned programme of pre-application consultation activities.

4.7 The discussion generated a number of valuable comments and recommendations. These included consideration of the relationship between proposed taller tree planting and CCTV coverage, together with further design development to ensure planters and landscaped areas do not inadvertently create opportunities for anti-social behaviour by providing concealed spaces. It was also recognised that additional

engagement with specialist technical teams, particularly TfGM and GMP, would be required to explore the proposals in greater detail and allow more detailed feedback to inform the design. The outcomes of this subsequent engagement are summarised in the following sections.

Manchester City Council Ward Councillors

4.8 The Piccadilly Gardens site is located within Piccadilly ward, but directly adjacent to Deansgate ward. As such, both sets of Manchester City Council ward councillors have been actively engaged. Again, this engagement stretches back before the current pre-application period, but specific meetings have taken place as part of this pre-application engagement.

4.9 These engagement meetings took place at the end of May 2026, with one meeting with the Labour ward councillors and another with the Green ward councillor. The meetings included an introduction to the design proposals and approach to public consultation, with questions and comments invited from the councillors. Questions and areas of discussion included:

- Discussions around tree loss and tree planting, including requests to ensure that there was direct replacement for any tree loss.
- Discussions around the lawn, including positive feedback that it would be raised to prevent people walking through as a cut through, but also wanting to encourage biodiversity.
- Discussions around the pros and cons of increased surveillance.
- Discussions about how this project interacts with the wider accessibility improvements being considered outside of the red line boundary.
- Discussions around the play area and how to address safety.

Strategic Stakeholder Group

4.10 The Piccadilly Gardens Strategic Stakeholder Group is comprised of representatives from the key landowners and occupiers in and around Piccadilly Gardens, including the owners of One Piccadilly, Rylands, City Tower, 111 Piccadilly, The Royal Buildings (among others), and McDonald's and Primark.

4.11 As part of the pre-application engagement, a briefing meeting with the Strategic Stakeholder Group was held on 21 May 2026. Information on the emerging design proposals, including CGI images, and an overview of the consultation programme was provided to members of the group. A second meeting was held on 25 June 2026, providing an update on the consultation and changes made to the proposals as a result of feedback. Feedback on the plans received from the group across these two sessions included:

- Positive feedback about the design concepts, particularly the planting and use of colour.
- Discussions about the children's play space, including general support for the provision but questions about the proximity to office entrances. As a result of this feedback, the children's play space location was adjusted and an enhanced landscape buffer provided to ensure sufficient separation.

- Discussions about the potential for desire lines to be created across the lawns and how to discourage this.
- Discussions around feelings of safety if people sit along the lawn podium at night, as well as lots of interest in the new approach to managing Piccadilly Gardens.

4.12 As with other stakeholders listed above, the Applicant intends to provide regular updates to the Strategic Stakeholder Group on an ongoing basis.

Technical Stakeholder Engagement

4.13 Additionally, extensive engagement has taken place with a range of technical and statutory stakeholders, including the following:

- Greater Manchester Police (including Counter Terrorism Unit): Several meetings took place between May and July 2026 to provide GMP with the opportunity to comment and feed into the emerging design proposals. This included input on CCTV positioning and the lighting strategy, as well as specific input around the design of the pavilion and on Hostile Vehicle Mitigation. Specific meetings were held to discuss the Crime Impact Statement.
- Transport for Greater Manchester, MCC Highways and MCC Cycle Smart: Considering the crucial interplay between the design of Piccadilly Gardens and the role of this area as a transport hub, extensive engagement has taken place with transport-related stakeholders during the pre-application period.
- Following on from initial briefing sessions, representatives from TfGM were invited to attend the project's regular Design Team Meetings to ensure alignment with their workstream around the wider Piccadilly area and iterative input into the design proposals. Likewise, extensive engagement with MCC Highways and MCC Cycle Smart has taken place to discuss and agree approaches to pedestrian flow and pedestrian crossings; cycle movement and cycle parking; and vehicular movements and servicing.
- Manchester City Council Estates Management, Facilities Management, Environmental Health, Parks and Trees: Considering the interaction between these areas, several meetings included representatives from across these areas to input into the detailed design proposals, with meetings held between May and July 2026. Extensive discussions took place around the approach to CCTV and lighting, including the night-time activation strategy, as well as the detailed tree planting strategy. Another key workstream was around the approach to the children's play space, including involvement from members of the Manchester City Council team with previous experience designing and managing play spaces within the city.
- Manchester City Council Welfare, Equality & Diversity and Internal Access Group Panel: a meeting was held to review accessibility of the scheme and consider how the proposed design would perform for a wide range of users. As part of this process, the project team presented the emerging landscape and public realm proposals, including the proposed lighting strategy, and received feedback on issues relating to accessibility, wayfinding, safety and user experience.

- Lighting was identified as an important consideration in ensuring the Gardens remain welcoming, legible and accessible throughout the day and into the evening. Key themes raised through the review included the need to support intuitive wayfinding, provide a consistent and evenly lit environment, maintain clear sightlines across the Gardens and ensure that any feature or event lighting remains inclusive for all users.

- Utilities: Prior to the public consultation period, the Applicant engaged with utility companies and broadband service providers to discuss the proposals and, where necessary, arrange detailed site surveys. Input and guidance were obtained from Cadent Gas, United Utilities, SP Energy Networks, BT and Virgin Media. The findings of these discussions and any supporting surveys have informed the proposals and are reflected within the technical information submitted as part of this application.

  A meeting was held with United Utilities on 7 July 2026 to discuss the site's proposed surface water and foul water drainage strategy. Initial comments were provided by United Utilities during the meeting, and a follow-up discussion has been arranged for 21 August 2026.

4.14 Some of these key stakeholders were engaged over several meetings, with the aim of building understanding and support and addressing the specific design-related questions or concerns they have ahead of the submission of the planning application, therefore reducing the likelihood of major issues during the planning determination stage and the resulting risk of programme delay.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) – Screening

4.15 The procedures for carrying out EIA for a proposed development within the terrestrial environment are set out within the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) (referred to as the 'EIA Regulations').

4.16 The Proposed Development falls under the category of "Infrastructure Projects – Urban Development Projects" (Schedule 2, 10, (b)) as described in the EIA Regulations. The applicable threshold above which EIA is likely to be required is

(i) the development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development; or

(ii) the development includes more than 150 dwellings; or

(iii) the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.

4.17 The indicative thresholds and criteria state that:

"In addition to the physical scale of such developments, consideration should be given to the potential increase in traffic, emissions and noise. EIA is unlikely to be required for the redevelopment of land unless the new development is on a significantly greater scale than the previous use, or the types of impact are of a markedly different nature or there is a high level of contamination".

4.18 The Site extends to approximately 0.93 hectares and therefore does not exceed the indicative threshold of 1

hectare for urban development projects. Therefore, an EIA is not mandatory. Notwithstanding this, an EIA screening assessment has been completed given the Site's location within a dense city centre environment which, whilst not environmentally sensitive in terms of designated ecological or physical constraints, is characterised by a very high concentration of receptors and potential effects on people and users of the space.

4.19 An EIA Screening Request (LPA ref. OTH-2026-001123) was submitted to MCC on 22nd July 2026 seeking confirmation that the Proposed Development does not constitute EIA development. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Request has been submitted to Manchester City Council and a formal response is awaited at the time of submission. Based on the information contained within the submitted EIA Screening Request, prepared by Civic, it is anticipated that the proposed development would not give rise to significant environmental effects and therefore would not require an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Play Specific-Engagement

4.20 Recognising the importance of the proposed play space as part of the wider scheme, a more in-depth engagement have been caried out to influence the design, experience and management of the space.

4.21 Counter Context worked closely with MCC (Waste, Business Units & Operations, Parks), MCR Active, Child Friendly Lead etc. on the proposal via several engagement strategies, including:

- Early listening sessions with parents, carers and children at the existing Piccadilly Gardens play area and Mayfield Park during the May 2026 half-term period.
- Engagement workshops with families through Sure Start Centres and Family Hubs across Ancoats and Miles Platting, Ardwick, Cheetham Hill, Gorton and Moss Side.
- Co-design and creative engagement sessions through Creative Tiny Humans at HOME Manchester.
- Discussions with Manchester City Council officers responsible for parks, public realm, play provision and children's services to ensure the proposals respond to operational and management considerations.
- Engagement with parents, carers and children of different ages to understand how city-centre play spaces are used, barriers to use and aspirations for future provision.
- The engagement directly informed the play strategy, reinforcing the importance of inclusive and accessible play, opportunities for both active and quieter forms of play, family-friendly seating and supervision, and the creation of a safe and welcoming environment for children and carers within Manchester City Centre.

Public Consultation

4.22 The applicant has undertaken a programme of pre-application engagement proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposed development, in line with the expectations set out in the Council's Statement of

Community Involvement (2025).

4.23 Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared by Counter Context and accompanies this application providing a detailed record of the engagement undertaken. It sets out the consultation methods used, summarises the feedback received, and explains how the comments have informed the evolution of the proposals. This ensures transparency in the decision-making process and demonstrates how the applicant has responded to the expectations of the Council's SCI and its wider public sector equality duty.

4.24 Three half-day sessions were held at Manchester Art Gallery, as an accessible public building close to the site:

- Tuesday 23 June, 1pm – 5pm
- Friday 26 June, 10am – 2pm
- Saturday 27 June, 11am – 3pm

4.25 In person events provided an opportunity for residents, businesses and visitors to come to view the proposals, talk to the team and provide their feedback. A "walk-through" video along the Consultation Boards was used at the events to help people to understand the proposals.

4.26 The existing Piccadilly Gardens MCC webpage (manchester.gov.uk/piccadillygardens) provided the 'home' for the engagement content, which included:

- Introductory/background information and images on the webpage itself.
- A link to a branded "Design Overview" PDF, taking the reader through a simple narrative to introduce the aims of the design proposals, the overall masterplan and to spotlight key themes (e.g. activation, play, lighting and safety).
- An online survey for people to complete to provide their feedback, as well as an email address for any more bespoke feedback.

4.27 The events were published via a number of channels, including:

- Direct notifications for neighbours directly adjoining Piccadilly Gardens;
- Use of digital displays within Piccadilly Gardens to inform passers-by;
- MCC press release and MCC corporate social media channels;
- MCC e-bulletins to resident and businesses;
- Direct email notifications to key community, residents' and civic interest groups;
- Partner (e.g. CityCo) publicity.

4.28 The following parties have also been notified about the consultation via email:

- Manchester Civic Society

- 20th Century Society
- Victorian Society
- Manchester Museums
- Northern Quarter Forum
- Piccadilly Village Residents Association
- Royal Mills Residents Association
- Friends of the Gay Village
- Castlefield Forum
- Friends of Sackville Gardens
- Granby Row Residents' Association
- St John's Residents Association
- Friends of Angel Meadow
- Manchester Disabled People's Access Group (MDPAG)
- Disability Design Reference Group
- Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People
- Manchester Deaf Centre
- Manchester People First
- Manchester Disability Collaborative
- Breakthrough UK
- Greener Journeys
- Canal and River Trust - North West Waterways
- Walk Ride GM
- Community Transport Association
- Manchester City of Trees
- Cyan Lines
- National Trust
- Manchester Youth Council

- Greater Manchester Youth Network
- Unity Radio
- Albert Kennedy Trust
- Manchester Homelessness Partnership
- LGBT Forum
- Young Manchester
- Powerhouse
- Manchester College

Feedback summary

4.29 In total, 405 responses were received during the pre-application consultation period, comprising 374 responses submitted via the online feedback form and 31 paper feedback forms. All responses have been logged and reviewed by the Applicant's team.

4.30 Overall, the feedback demonstrates a strong level of public interest in the future of Piccadilly Gardens and a clear desire to see meaningful improvements to the quality, safety, usability and appearance of the space. Responses to the closed questions indicated broad support for key elements of the proposals, with a majority of respondents considering that the plans would provide more safe and welcoming places to sit and relax, deliver a greener and more colourful landscape, and create clearer walking routes through the Gardens.

4.31 The open-text feedback raised a broad range of comments, including both support for the proposals and areas where respondents considered further consideration or clarification was required. Many respondents welcomed the principle of investment in Piccadilly Gardens and supported the ambition to create a more attractive, green, family-friendly and welcoming public space. Positive comments particularly related to the proposed increase in planting, improved seating opportunities, clearer routes, enhanced lighting, children's play provision and the potential for the Gardens to become a more inclusive civic space for residents, workers and visitors.

4.32 Respondents also identified a number of recurring issues which they considered important to the long-term success of the proposals. These included safety and anti-social behaviour, lighting and CCTV, long-term management and maintenance, the durability of lawn areas, accessibility, pedestrian movement, the role and location of the pavilion, and the design and management of children's play provision. A number of respondents emphasised the need for the final design and future management arrangements to ensure that Piccadilly Gardens functions successfully both as a key city centre movement route and as a place for people to dwell, relax and spend time.

4.33 The feedback received has been carefully considered by the Applicant and design team and has informed the ongoing development and refinement of the proposals. A detailed summary of the principal issues raised,

together with the Applicant's response and the manner in which the feedback has influenced the evolution of the scheme, is provided within Section 10 of the Statement of Community Involvement prepared by Counter Context and submitted as part of the application.



5

Planning Policy Context

5. Planning Policy Context

Adopted Development Plan

5.1 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 state that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2 The relevant documents of the adopted development plan for Manchester City Council (MCC) are:

- Place for Everyone (PfE) (2024);
- Core Strategy (CS) (2012); and
- Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (1995).

5.3 Manchester is also in the process of preparing a new Local Plan. The Executive approved the Regulation 19 Publication Draft in July 2026 for public consultation no earlier than 17th August. While it is expected that this application will be determined prior to adoption of these draft policies, they continue to be given increasing weight in decision making as the plan making process progresses.

Relevant Policies

5.4 The relevant policies in determining this planning application include:

Places for Everyone (2024)	
JP-Strat1	Core Growth Area
JP-Strat2	City Centre
JP-Strat13	Strategic Green Infrastructure
JP-Strat14	A Sustainable and Integrated Transport Network
JP-S1	Sustainable Development
JP-S2	Carbon and Energy
JP-S4	Flood Risk and the Water Environment
JP-S5	Clean Air
JP-S6	Resource Efficiency
JP-J1	Supporting Long-Term Economic Growth
JP-G2	Green Infrastructure Network
JP-G6	Urban Green Space
JP-G7	Trees and Woodland
JP-G8	A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity
JP-P1	Sustainable Places
JP-P2	Heritage
JP-P5	Education, Skills and Knowledge
JP-P6	Health
JP-P7	Sport and Recreation
JP-C1	An Integrated Network
JP-C5	Streets for All

JP-C6	Walking and Cycling
JP-C8	Transport Requirements of New Developments

Core Strategy (2012)

SP 1	Spatial Principles
CC 1	Primary Economic Development Focus : City Centre and Fringe
CC 5	Transport
CC 8	Change and Renewal
CC 9	Design and Heritage
CC 10	A Place for Everyone
T 1	Sustainable Transport
T 2	Accessible Areas of Opportunity and Need
EN 1	Design Principles and Strategic Character Area
EN 3	Heritage
EN 4	Reducing CO_2 Emissions by Enabling Low and Zero Carbon Development
EN 5	Strategic Areas for low and zero carbon decentralised energy infrastructure
EN 8	Adaption to Climate Change
EN 9	Green Infrastructure
EN 10	Safeguarding Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities
EN 12	Area priorities for Open Space, Sport and Recreation
EN 14	Flood Risk
EN 15	Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
EN 16	Air Quality
EN 17	Water Quality
EN 18	Contaminated Land and Ground Stability
EN 19	Waste
DM 1	Development Management

Unitary Development Plan (1995)

RC20	Area 9 Piccadilly and Oldham Street
DC18	Conservation Areas
DC19	Listed Buildings
DC20	Archaeology
DC22	Footpath Protection

5.5 Manchester City Council is in the process of preparing its new Local Plan. The relevant draft policies which will carry limited weight prior to their adoption are set out below:

Manchester Local Plan (Publication Draft) (2026)

SP 1	Spatial Principles
SP 2	Development Principles
GL 1	Growth Locations
GL 2	Manchester City Centre
ZC 1	Sustainable Design and Construction
ZC 2	Towards Net Zero Carbon
ZC 4	Heat Networks
EN 1	Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure
EN 3	Trees and Woodlands

EN 4	Biodiversity and Geodiversity
EN 5	Biodiversity Net Gain
EN 6	Urban Green Factor
EN 7	Air Quality
EN 8	Water Quality and Efficiency
EN 9	Flood Risk
EN 10	Ground Contamination and Ground Stability
EN 11	Waste
SI 1	Protection of existing Open Space, Sport and Recreation land and facilities
SI 2	Provision of new Open Space, Sport and Recreation land and facilities
SI 4	Social Value
T 1	Transport Principles
T 2	Sustainable location of development
D 1	Design Principles
D 2	Character Areas
D 4	Heritage
D 5	Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, and Registered Parks and Gardens
DM 1	Development Management

5.6 Appendix 1 contains a schedule of all relevant policies, including relevant policy wording.

Summary of Policy Position

5.7 The adopted policy position controlling the proposed development can be summarised under a number of key themes.

Principle of Redevelopment

5.8 In principle, the enhancement of infrastructure and the physical environment of the City Centre is supported. Improvements in the public realm, walking and cycling facilities, and green infrastructure will help to enhance the local character and environmental quality of the City Centre, and will thus be encouraged.

5.9 All development should make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice and improve access to jobs, services, education and open space by being located to reduce the need to travel and provide good access to sustainable transport provision.

5.10 Existing open spaces are to be retained and improved. To this end, proposals that improve the quality and quantity of accessible open space, and those which improve access to open space for disabled people, will be supported.

5.11 Policy recognises Piccadilly Gardens as a major civic open space, which is also a focal point receiving passengers from the numerous bus stops in the area and those en route from Piccadilly Station to the shopping and office core areas. Priorities for the area include improving the environment of the Regional Shopping Centre and the major civic open spaces, of maintaining accessibility whether by foot, bus or car and of enhancing the level and diversity of activity generally.

5.12 Policy specifically promotes a reduction in the prominence of bus station activities around Piccadilly Gardens, including an aspiration to remove the bus stands fronting Piccadilly.

Design and Landscaping

5.13 All development must be of high-quality, contextual design. This includes (but is not limited to) being:

- Distinctive, with a clear sense of identity;
- Visually stimulating and interesting;
- Socially and physically inclusive;
- Resilient, adaptable, durable and resource-efficient;
- Safe, including by designing out crime and terrorism, reducing opportunities for anti-social behaviour and by ensuring that developments make appropriate provision for response and evacuation in the case of an emergency or disaster;
- Functional and convenient;
- Legible, easy to move around and well connected to other places;
- Comfortable and inviting (indoor and outdoor environments); and
- Of an appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materiality and detail.

5.14 Incorporating high quality and well managed green infrastructure and quality public realm is a core tenet of quality urban design.

5.15 In addition, City Centre development should, through its design, preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments.

5.16 Development in this location should respond to the City Centre Character Area. In the context of this application, this means:

- Considering the City's heritage and continuing the rich pattern of activity in the core area;
- Creating landmark buildings;
- Contributing positively to the experience of all at street level;
- Enhancing existing and providing new areas of meaningful open space; and
- Considering the maintenance and improvement of the City's permeability.

Environment and Sustainability

5.17 In line with Greater Manchester's objective to become carbon neutral by 2038, development should support the transition towards net zero carbon through energy demand reduction, energy efficiency measures, renewable and low-carbon energy generation and compliance with the energy hierarchy.

5.18 Development should maximise its environmental benefits, utilise sustainable construction techniques, minimise resource consumption and waste generation, and support the transition towards a circular economy.

5.19 Environmental and ecological assets should be protected and enhanced. This includes trees, which should be retained where possible and must be replanted at a ratio of two-to-one where removal is proposed (proposed to increase to three-to-one in Piccadilly).

5.20 Development should protect, integrate and enhance green infrastructure, recognising its role in climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity enhancement, urban cooling, flood management and wider environmental benefits.

5.21 Development is also expected to follow the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy (avoid, mitigate, compensate), achieve a measurable biodiversity net gain of at least 10%, enhance habitats where appropriate and contribute to ecological connectivity and nature recovery.

Heritage

5.22 Manchester's historic environment and heritage assets as well as their settings will be positively conserved, sustained and enhanced. Development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets and/or their settings will be considered having regard to national planning policy.

5.23 Development which compliments and takes advantage of heritage features will be encouraged.

5.24 Heritage assets include the City's conservation areas, and development within and adjacent to these are given particular consideration.

Transport and Connectivity

5.25 Development should take a vision-led approach to transport planning, promoting a modal shift away from private motor vehicles and towards walking, cycling and public transport.

5.26 Streets should be designed and managed to make a significant positive contribution to the quality of place and support high levels of sustainable transport.

5.27 Access and servicing arrangements should be well-considered, with appropriate provision made for deliveries, servicing and pick-up/drop-off uses.

5.28 As appropriate, planning applications are to be supported by a Transport Assessment or Statement and Travel Plan.

Health, Wellbeing, Open Space and Social Value

5.29 Development should maximise its positive contribution to health, wellbeing and social value, including through job creation and providing positive work and skills outcomes.

5.30 Proposals are expected to support and enable healthy lifestyles. To this end, active design principles are

supported.

5.31 Opportunities should be taken to encourage physical activity, recreational use and play in the public realm.

5.32 Development in the City Centre should increase the diversity of activity in the City Centre, with an emphasis on family-oriented activity, and deliver high standards of accessibility across spaces.

Flood Risk, Drainage and Water

5.33 Development should be concentrated to those areas with the lowest risk of flooding.

5.34 Development should manage surface water runoff through sustainable drainage systems and as close to source as possible, and drainage systems should where possible seek to provide multifunctional benefits (including for water quality, nature conservation and recreation).

5.35 Development should also avoid any adverse impact on water quality

Environmental Pollution Control

5.36 Potential and predicted impacts in relation to the following need to be considered and measure put in place to manage and mitigate said impacts:

- Air quality;
- Contaminated land and ground stability;
- Waste; and
- Noise.

Supplementary Planning Documents

Guide to Development in Manchester (2007)

5.37 The document sets out the MCC's stance on a wide range of issues relating to design, demonstrating, where applicable, their links to the UDP. The first part deals with development principles and the majority of it has SPD status. The second part provides additional guidance on the character of various areas within the City and should be considered planning guidance.

5.38 MCC want to ensure all development in Manchester contributes and enhances to the city's unique identity and that its many neighbourhoods retain and develop their sense of place.

5.39 The issues covered within the document include urban design, accessibility, environmental standards, street hierarchy, parking guidelines, housing density and design for health and security.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

5.40 As part of the determination process, material considerations inform the acceptability of planning proposals. The Framework sets out the nationally controlling policies which inform development.

5.41 Paragraph 39 seeks that Local Planning Authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way, using the full range of planning tools available, working with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social, and environmental conditions of the area.

5.42 Section 8 encourages healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible and enable and support healthy lifestyles. Paragraph 103 recognises that access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change.

5.43 Section 9 promotes sustainable transport to ensure potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed. A vision-led approach should be adopted in plan-making and development proposals. Schemes should seek to promote walking, cycling and public transport where possible. To support development proposals safe and suitable access should be achievable for all users. Paragraph 116 stipulates that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

5.44 Section 12 of the Framework seeks to achieve well-designed places with the creation of high-quality buildings and good design as a key aspects of sustainable development. Proposals should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout, and appropriate landscaping, be sympathetic to local character and history, establish a strong sense of place and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible.

5.45 Paragraph 136 affirms the contribution that trees make to the character and quality of urban environments and promotes their inclusion in development

5.46 Section 14 meets the challenge of climate change and flooding. New development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change and be designed to reduce greenhouse gas requirements. Developments should be positioned in areas of least risk of flooding when with proposed end users who would be at risk.

5.47 Section 15 tackles the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment and protecting neighbouring amenity with regards to soil, air, water and noise pollution.

5.48 Section 16 sets out the national position on conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. It requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

5.49 Reforms to the NPPF are currently in the pipeline, with draft text for consultation published in December 2025. Similarly to the Draft Manchester Local Plan, it is not expected that a new NPPF will be adopted during the determination of this application. However, proposed NPPF policies indicate the direction of travel for national policy.

5.50 Headline decision-making policies which would be relevant to this application include:

- DM4: Development proposals should not be refused on the grounds of being premature, other than in the limited circumstances.
- S3: Development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan and also the decision-making policies in this Framework should be approved without delay.
- S4: Development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.
- DP3: Development should respond to their context and create well-designed places with respect to liveability, climate, nature, movement, built form, public space and identity.
- P5: Development proposals should anticipate and address possible malicious threats and other hazards (whether natural or man-made).
- N2: Proposals should contribute positively to the natural environment and support nature's recovery.
- N3: New streets should be tree-lined, tree species should be carefully selected and new trees must be maintained in the long-term.
- HE4 – HE6: Sets out the new approach to conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Other Material Considerations

Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (2015)

5.51 This strategy sets out objectives for environmental improvements within the City in relation to key objectives for growth and development.

5.52 By 2025 high quality, well maintained green and blue spaces will be an integral part of all neighbourhoods. The city's communities will be living healthy, fulfilled lives, enjoying access to parks and greenspaces and safe green routes for walking, cycling and exercise throughout the city.

5.53 Four objectives have been established to enable the vision to be achieved:

- Improve the quality and function of existing green and blue infrastructure, to maximise the benefits it delivers;
- Use appropriate green and blue infrastructure as a key component of new developments to help create successful neighbourhoods and support the city's growth;
- Improve connectivity and accessibility to green and blue infrastructure within the city and beyond; and
- Improve and promote a wider understanding and awareness of the benefits that green and blue infrastructure provides to residents, the economy and the local environment.



6

Development Plan Compliance

6. Development Plan Compliance

6.1 The proposed development compliance against the development plan in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning Act 2004 is set out within this section.

Principle of Development

6.2 The proposals in principle represent the enhancement of a major civic open space and key piece of existing green and social infrastructure, as well as the physical environment of the City Centre. The scheme will result in marked improvements in the public realm and pedestrian environment.

6.3 Infrastructure provision will be needed to support the growth and continued capacity of the proposed Core Growth Area.

6.4 The future stewardship model for the enhanced Gardens is anticipated to provide future job opportunities, with further details of this to be confirmed at a later date.

6.5 The improvements in green infrastructure, such as the net increase in tree cover using trees which respond to the Botany of Manchester can will help to enhance the local character and environmental quality of the City Centre.

6.6 By virtue of Piccadilly Gardens being a transport interchange in the city centre, it is one of the most well-connected locations in the City and sub-region. It is therefore an appropriate location for enhanced open space and the provision of play facilities.

6.7 The proposed layout, from the routes around and through the Gardens to the location of a possible future structure, has been designed to consider the journey of arrivals to the city and offer them a pleasing sense of arrival.

6.8 Through the provision of step-free routes and accessible furniture and play equipment, the development will allow improve access to the existing open space, which is also supported in principle.

6.9 Through planting and landscaping, the proposals will also reduce the prominence of bus station activities around Piccadilly Gardens. The planted buffer along the north-eastern boundary with Piccadilly will shield the Gardens from the heavily used bus route.

6.10 The proposals are therefore in line with: PfE Policies JP-Strat1, -Strat2, -S1, -G6 and -C1; CS Policies SP 1, CC 1, CC 8, EN 10 and EN 12; UDP Policy RC20 (Area 9); Draft Local Plan Policies SP 1, SP 2, GL 1, GL 2, SI 1 and SI 2; and Section 8 of the NPPF.

6.11 The proposals also contribute towards the Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, furthering in particular Objective 1 by improving the quality and function of existing green infrastructure.

Layout

6.12 The proposed refreshed layout for Piccadilly Gardens responds to the needs of the City and its people, and the role which the area plays within Manchester.

6.13 The central lawn provides space for people to dwell and for outdoor events of an appropriate scale without interfering with the busy movement corridors. Step-free routes which respond to the existing connections to the wider area will enhance accessibility.

6.14 On connectivity and permeability, desire lines and connections with the surrounding areas are reflected in the layout. The central path which cuts through the lawn provides a legible route between the main transport interchange to the south and the Northern Quarter, and the radial route around the lawn will invite passers-by to circumvent it without needing to walk over the grass or through any obstacles on it (in the form of people or otherwise).

6.15 The play area has been positioned in the southern corner away from the busiest routes. The pedestrian environment along Picadilly and Market Street will also be enhanced by the proposals.

6.16 The planting around Victoria Gardens has been positioned in the north-east corner to create a buffer between the space and the busy bus route on Piccadilly.

6.17 The layout responds to the existing location of the listed assets within the site, better revealing the statues for people to appreciate.

6.18 The proposals are therefore in line with: PfE Policies JP-P1, -C1, -C5, -C6 and -C8; Core Strategy Policies EN 1, CC 8 and DM 1; UDP Policies RC20 and DC22; Draft Local Plan Policies GL 2, T 1, D 1 and DM 1; and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Landscaping

6.19 Aligned with the aspirations for Piccadilly Gardens as one of Manchester's principal civic spaces, the redevelopment will incorporate landscaping that delivers a multifunctional green infrastructure resource, enhancing biodiversity, tree cover and climate resilience whilst creating a distinctive, attractive and accessible public realm.

6.20 Enhancing the Gardens as central piece of the city's green infrastructure network is integral to the proposed scheme. Across soft landscaping and tree planting, the proposals will deliver multiple benefits, including biodiversity enhancement, urban cooling and visual storytelling of the way blue and green infrastructure can be embedded within a public realm scheme (see Appendix 2 for more details).

6.21 Tree planting which tells the story of the Botany of Manchester will provide vibrancy, colour and a civic connection with the rest of the city, inspiring interest and intrigue. Retained and proposed trees will provide shade and shelter, improve biodiversity and ecological resilience, improve air quality and contribute to a strong sense of place.

6.22 1no. category U, 7no. category C and 8no. category B trees (16no. in total) are proposed to be removed as part of the redevelopment. However, 10no. trees will be retained as part of the redevelopment: 8no. trees (Honey locust *Gleditsia triacanthos*) are proposed to be retained in their current position, and 2no. Magnolias are to be relocated within the site. A total of 49no. new trees are proposed to be planted (resulting in a total of 51no. trees with the 2no. replanted Magnolias). This exceeds the current policy requirement of two-to-one replacement, and meets the emerging policy ask of three-to-one in the Piccadilly ward along with significantly improving the diversity of species and overall quality of tree provision and canopy cover.

6.23 9no. additional category C trees in planters are also proposed to be removed. These planters are approximately 1.2-1.5m in height and are considered to create a partial or complete barrier to rooting into the underlying ground. Whilst these trees have been assessed within the Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment, they are not established within the natural ground conditions of the site and therefore do not form part of the baseline tree stock used for the purposes of calculating replacement planting ratios. Accordingly, the replacement planting calculation has been undertaken on the basis of the existing site trees originally planted directly into the ground.

6.24 The ecological and environmental benefits of the proposed landscaping, including biodiversity net gain, are discussed further in the Ecology Section of this Chapter.

6.25 Soft and hard landscaping taken together will deliver high-quality public realm and placemaking. Thoughtful planting which will be in bloom year-round in combination with a considered hard material palette which responds to the surrounding context will create a visually stimulating environment which enhances the identity and character of Piccadilly Gardens and improve the experience at street level. Trees will define different spaces where people will want to spend time, encouraging social interaction.

6.26 The material palette has been carefully selected having regard to durability, longevity, maintenance requirements and responsible sourcing considerations. Materials have been sourced from established and traceable suppliers, including natural stone from Portugal and the Lake District, balancing quality, resilience, security of supply and environmental considerations. The proposals also incorporate material re-use opportunities, locally fabricated play equipment and products selected for their repairability, recyclability and long-term performance. Together, these measures support a sustainable and enduring public realm befitting one of Manchester City Centre's most important civic spaces. Through proposed high quality materials and street furniture that will create an improved setting for them, the significance of the Queen Victoria and Robert Peel statues will be better revealed and reinforced.

6.27 The brand new play area will be of a greater extent and quality than the existing play area to be removed and will provide a space that young children can enjoy and be proud of. Play elements which speak to the history and topography of Manchester and surrounds will inspire children and young people to learn through play and develop their own connection to place.

6.28 The raised lawn will provide ample open space for people to dwell without the interruption of through traffic. The rise-and-fall of the central pathway that bisects the lawn will ensure that it remains accessible to all.

6.29 By creating numerous locations where people will want to spend time and providing places for people to sit (benches, the lawn edge and spill out spaces), the proposals will benefit from natural surveillance, contributing towards feelings of safety. This will be complemented by the proposed lighting columns with CCTV to enhance safety and deter anti-social behaviour in Piccadilly Gardens at all times of the day.

6.30 The long-term maintenance and management of the landscaping will be secured by the new stewardship model being developed in partnership with TfGM, GMP and neighbouring businesses. The use of robust materials and planter edge railings will help to ensure that the Gardens are easier to manage, and the creation of a new space which reflects who we are as a city will encourage everyone to have a stake in its maintenance.

6.31 The proposals are therefore in line with: PfE Policies JP-Strat13, -G2, -G6, -G7, -G8 and -P1; Core Strategy Policies EN 9, EN 12 and DM 1; UDP Policies RC20 and DC19; Draft Local Plan Policies EN 1, EN 3, EN 6, D 1, D 2, and DM 1; the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD; Section 12 of the NPPF; and the Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy.

Heritage & Archaeology

6.32 Piccadilly Gardens sits within a rich historic landscape with a storied past. While the proposed redevelopment is very much concerned with creating a bright new future for Piccadilly Gardens, it does so with real consideration for its history.

6.33 As discussed in previous sections on Design and Landscaping, the proposed development responds to the site's historic environment through the proposed materiality, layout and design. In addition, interpretation boards and environmental features informed by 'The Three Rivers' concept will celebrate the site's history and tell stories of the city's natural, industrial and cultural past.

6.34 A detailed Heritage Assessment has been prepared by Civic Heritage to support the application, in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, NPPF, Historic England guidance and relevant local policy, including Core Strategy Policy EN 3 and PfE Policy JP-P2.

6.35 Piccadilly Gardens contains a group of designated heritage assets comprising three Grade II listed statues (Peel, Watt and Queen Victoria), which hold group value with the nearby Wellington Statue. These assets are of medium significance, deriving from their architectural, artistic and historic interest as part of a formally designed 19th century esplanade associated with the former Manchester Royal Infirmary. As part of the wider Piccadilly Gardens project, a commitment has been made to restore and clean the three listed statues located within the application site. However, it is important to note that these works do not form part of the full planning application and will instead be progressed through a separate Listed Building Consent application in due course.

6.36 The site also lies partly within the Smithfield and Stevenson Square Conservation Areas, and within the setting of the Upper King Street Conservation Area, all of which are designated heritage assets of high significance reflecting Manchester's commercial, industrial and mercantile development.

6.37 Notwithstanding this context, the Assessment identifies that the original setting and spatial composition of the statues has been substantially eroded through the demolition of the Infirmary, the relocation of monuments and subsequent phases of redevelopment. As a result, the contribution of the current site to the significance of these assets is low, and the site presently makes a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of surrounding heritage assets, including Conservation Areas.

6.38 The proposed development comprises public realm enhancements, including high-quality hard and soft landscaping, tree planting and play space, alongside the reuse of historic materials such as granite setts. The design has been informed by the historic context, including the alignment of the statues, and has been carefully arranged to maintain key views and intervisibility between assets while reducing existing visual clutter.

6.39 The Heritage Impact Assessment concludes that the proposed works to the site are classed as being of negligible, and minor magnitude of impact, resulting in a low level of less than substantial effects on the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets, in accordance with national planning policy, in particular paragraph 219 of the NPPF. The scheme will:

- Improve the immediate setting of the listed statues through decluttering and enhanced landscaping;
- Reinforce visual connections and aid legibility of the historic layout;
- Enhance the setting of the Conservation Areas through improved public realm quality and permeability; and
- Deliver wider public benefits through improved accessibility, amenity and use of the space.

6.40 Any minor adverse effects, such as temporary impacts during construction or limited changes to intervisibility arising from new planting, are mitigated through design measures and are not considered to result in harm to significance. The proposed planting is deliberately visually permeable, ensuring that key heritage views are retained.

6.41 Overall, the Assessment finds that the development will preserve and enhance the significance and setting of heritage assets, in line with the statutory duties of the 1990 Act and the requirements of the NPPF. The proposals therefore conserve the historic environment while delivering clear public and placemaking benefits.

6.42 An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment has also been prepared by Civic Heritage in support of the application, in line with the NPPF, Historic England guidance and relevant local policy.

6.43 The Assessment identifies that the Site lies outside Manchester's medieval core and historically formed part of the town's agricultural hinterland, later developing as a key institutional and civic space associated with the Manchester Royal Infirmary and earlier Daube Holes clay extraction pits.

6.44 There is no known archaeological evidence of prehistoric activity within the Site, and little known evidence for Roman or medieval activity. The potential for remains from these periods is consequently assessed as

very low. The principal archaeological interest relates to the post-medieval and industrial periods, where there is moderate and high potential respectively for buried remains associated with:

- The Daube Holes (clay extraction pits);
- The Manchester Royal Infirmary and associated structures; and
- Later phases of development, including the 20th century sunken gardens.

6.45 Notwithstanding this potential, the Assessment concludes that any surviving remains would be of low (local) significance, reflecting the degree of previous disturbance across the Site, including demolition, landscaping and late 20th century redevelopment works.

6.46 The proposed development has the potential to locally disturb or remove buried archaeological remains where present. However, the nature of the resource and its low significance means that any impacts can be appropriately managed and mitigated.

6.47 Following consultation with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS), the Assessment confirms that a programme of archaeological mitigation, likely comprising a watching brief during groundworks (including initial site investigations), will be secured.

6.48 This approach accords with the requirements of the NPPF, which seeks to ensure that archaeological remains are appropriately recorded and understanding advanced where harm may occur, and reflects established best practice for development affecting non-designated archaeological assets.

6.49 Overall, the proposals are considered to represent a policy-compliant form of development which appropriately responds to the Site's archaeological potential. Any impacts on below-ground remains will be proportionately mitigated, ensuring that the significance of the archaeological resource is conserved and recorded in accordance with national and local policy requirements.

6.50 The proposals are therefore in accordance with: PfE Policy JP-Strat2, -P1 and -P2; Core Strategy Policies CC 8, CC 9, EN 1, EN 3 and DM 1; UDP Policies DC18, DC19 and DC20; Draft Local Plan Policies GL 2, D 2, D 4, D 5, DM 1 and DM 2; and Section 16 of the NPPF.

Social Value, Health and Wellbeing

6.51 The proposal would deliver enhancements to an existing civic space within Manchester City Centre, creating a high quality, attractive and accessible environment for residents, workers and visitors. The scheme would contribute positively to the function and quality of the public realm and support the creation of a welcoming and inclusive destination capable of accommodating a broad range of users. This is consistent with the objective of creating beautiful, healthy and socially inclusive places which promote community interaction, accessibility and a sense of place.

6.52 The enhancement of the Gardens and various spill-out areas would encourage people to spend time within the space, support opportunities for social interaction and reinforce the role of the area as an important civic destination.

6.53 The incorporation and enhancement of green infrastructure would further contribute towards public health and wellbeing objectives by improving environmental quality and air quality, providing opportunities for recreation and supporting attractive outdoor spaces and access to nature. Such measures would assist in maximising the health and wellbeing benefits associated with high quality public realm and green infrastructure.

6.54 The inclusion of an enhanced play area will further encourage physical activity and social interaction in the form of play, both resulting in positive outcomes for health and wellbeing.

6.55 Space for visitors to safely secure cycles of all types will encourage and enable people regardless of ability to travel to Piccadilly Gardens (or the wider city) by bike. Increasing levels of active travel in this way supports health via the pathways of physical activity and improved air quality.

6.56 Various aspects of the proposals provide informal educational benefits, such as interpretation boards and play features which tell the story of Manchester's geography. In addition, the enhancement of one of Manchester's premier public spaces will contribute towards making the city the first-choice destination for students.

6.57 Inclusivity and accessibility run through multiple threads of the proposed development and have therefore been discussed throughout this section. To summarise how the development delivers on being socially inclusive and accessible:

- Step-free, clear and legible routes designed to accommodate wheelchair users, people with mobility impairments and families with buggies;
- Majority of routes maintaining an average gradient of 1:50;
- Circulation routes typically 3m to 6m wide, and 2m minimum maintained at local pinch points;
- Minimum 2.1m clear height beneath tree canopies and lighting infrastructure;
- High contrast interpretation boards, within the extended accessible zone where possible and with the potential for tactile elements;
- Street furniture distributed across the site with inset arm rests for wheelchair transfer;
- Cube blocks at base of raised lawn edge to offer tonal and texture contrast;
- Cycle parking which can accommodate larger, adaptive cycles;
- Kick plate to the base of planter railings for white cane users; and
- Wheelchair accessible roundabout and in-ground trampoline and wide slides within the play area.

6.58 It is also the intention by virtue of the raised lawn that the redeveloped Piccadilly Gardens will not accommodate large, semi-permanent commercial installations as it has done in recent years (namely the Dock 53 complex). Structures like this (albeit temporarily) effectively privatise public space over longer

periods of time, reducing opportunities for people to meet and spend time in the space without the need to spend money. While the lawn could accommodate public and civic events, these are more transient and do not 'close off' parts of the public realm for extended periods of time. All of this considered, the proposed design will result in a space which will be more accessible to the public while still retaining the ability to host temporary public events.

6.59 A Public Benefits Statement has also been prepared by Enabl which discusses wider public benefits (including social benefits) of the proposed development.

6.60 A Local Labour Agreement will help to ensure economic benefits associated with the construction phase are felt locally.

6.61 The Proposed Development has the potential to deliver substantial health and wellbeing benefits through improved access to high-quality green infrastructure, opportunities for recreation and play, enhanced opportunities for social interaction and the creation of a more welcoming and inclusive public environment. Collectively, these interventions will help transform both the experience and perception of Piccadilly Gardens, encouraging more positive and diverse use of the space by residents, workers and visitors

6.62 Regarding Design for Security, a Crime Impact Statement (CIS) has been prepared by Greater Manchester Police in accordance with the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) to assess the proposals from a community safety and crime prevention perspective. The Proposed Development has been informed by these principles, including improved sightlines, increased natural surveillance, activation of the public realm, enhanced lighting, legible movement routes and integrated hostile vehicle mitigation measures. The accompanying Crime Impact Statement concludes that the proposals respond positively to existing safety concerns. The report concludes that the redevelopment is supported, subject to a small number of design and management recommendations, and confirms that the proposals have been very well designed from a crime prevention perspective.

6.63 The assessment recognises that Piccadilly Gardens occupies a highly prominent city centre location with significant levels of pedestrian activity, public transport interchange movements and evening economy uses. Whilst local crime levels are comparatively high, the report identifies that many existing issues are exacerbated by poor visibility, fragmented surveillance opportunities and the presence of physical features that create opportunities for antisocial behaviour.

6.64 The CIS concludes that the proposals will make a positive contribution to community safety through the creation of a more active, legible and well-overlooked public realm. Particular benefits identified include improved natural surveillance, enhanced pedestrian routes, a larger and better located play space, high-quality landscape design and improved lighting and CCTV coverage. The report notes that these measures are likely to transform perceptions of the area, creating a more welcoming and secure civic space.

6.65 Greater Manchester Police support the redevelopment and conclude that, subject to the implementation of the recommended management, maintenance and security measures, the proposals will contribute positively to reducing opportunities for crime and antisocial behaviour whilst improving safety and user

experience within this important city centre public space.

6.66 The proposals are therefore in line with: PfE Policies JP-Strat13, -G2, -P1, -P5, -P6, -P7 and -C5; Core Strategy Policies SP 1, CC 8, CC 10, EN 10 and DM 1; Draft Local Plan Policies SP 2, GL 2, EN 1, SI 4 and DM 1; and Section 8 of the NPPF.

Technical Considerations

Transport and Access

6.67 A Transport and Access Note has been prepared by Civic Engineers. It confirms that pedestrian routes are proposed within and throughout the site which connect to both existing and proposed pedestrian crossing points around the site boundaries.



Figure 32 - Pedestrian Access (Civic)

6.68 16no. new Sheffield cycle stands will be provided, distributed around the site, accommodating 32 cycles. The end two spaces at the four locations can be used by wider/larger cycles, making cycling more accessible for more people.

6.69 As previously addressed, the site is a key transport interchange and thus easily accessed by public transport. Enhancing the environment through this application will make public transport choice more attractive, assisting in mode shift towards sustainable modes of travel.

6.70 The development fundamentally follows the transport hierarchy as a public open space that is closed off private vehicles and has no car parking, well-served by public transport and will provide parking facilities for cyclists around the site edges. Pedestrians (including those using wheelchairs) are the priority users of the development.

6.71 The proposals are therefore in line with: PfE Policies JP-Strat14, -C1, C5 and -C8; Core Strategy Policies SP 1, CC 5, T 1, T 2 and DM 1; UDP Policies RC20 and DC22; Draft Local Plan Policies GL2, T1, T2 and D1; and Section 9 of the NPPF.

Energy and Sustainability

6.72 An Environmental Standards Statement has been prepared by Civic in support of the application. The Statement demonstrates that the Proposed Development has been developed having regard to national, regional and local sustainability objectives and seeks to deliver a more resilient, climate-responsive and environmentally sustainable public space. The proposals respond positively to the environmental objectives of the development plan through improvements to green infrastructure, biodiversity, sustainable transport, climate adaptation and public realm quality.

6.73 The submitted Environmental Standards Statement confirms that the Proposed Development incorporates a range of measures intended to support climate change mitigation and adaptation, including increased tree planting, enhanced green infrastructure, sustainable drainage measures, rain gardens and improvements to surface water management. The proposals will contribute towards urban cooling, climate resilience and environmental quality within Manchester City Centre, whilst supporting the wider transition towards a lower carbon and more sustainable urban environment.

6.74 The Statement also confirms that sustainability considerations have informed the development of the scheme from the outset, including consideration of carbon reduction, resource efficiency, biodiversity enhancement, pollution control and sustainable construction practices. The accompanying Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report confirms that the Proposed Development is predicted to deliver a biodiversity net gain exceeding the statutory minimum requirement, further contributing towards the environmental objectives of the development plan.

6.75 In addition to delivering measurable biodiversity, drainage and environmental benefits, the Proposed Development will contribute towards the wider climate resilience objectives of Manchester City Council through the delivery of enhanced green and blue infrastructure, increased tree canopy cover, urban cooling benefits and climate adaptation measures. As such, the scheme represents a significant environmental improvement to one of Manchester City Centre's most important public spaces.

6.76 Overall, the Proposed Development represents a significant environmental enhancement to an established city centre public space. It will deliver a greener, more biodiverse and more climate-resilient environment whilst supporting sustainable travel, improving environmental quality and contributing positively towards Manchester's wider sustainability and carbon reduction objectives. The proposals are therefore considered to accord with the relevant energy, sustainability, biodiversity and environmental policies of the development

plan.

Arboricultural Impact Assessment

6.77 Tree retention and planting was discussed in the earlier Landscaping section. Notwithstanding this, the proposed tree strategy will provide a plethora of benefits:

- New tree species have been selected to tell the story of the Botany of Manchester, drawing on trees present across other spaces of the city – this diversity will mean trees are more resilient to disease;
- Retained and proposed trees will provide shade and shelter, improve biodiversity and ecological resilience, improve air quality and contribute to a strong sense of place;
- Canopy cover will be enhanced while maintaining clear sightlines; and
- Trees will contribute to urban cooling and reduce the impacts of Urban Heat Island;

6.78 1no. category U, 7no. category C and 8no. category B trees (16no. in total) are proposed to be removed as part of the redevelopment. A total of 10no. trees will be retained overall, comprising 8no. existing Honey Locust trees (Gleditsia triacanthos) to be retained in situ, and 2no. existing Magnolias are to be retained and relocated within the site.

6.79 A total of 49no. new trees are proposed as part of the planting strategy. This represents a replacement ratio of approximately 3.06:1, exceeding both the current two-to-one replacement expectation (Places for Everyone) and the emerging three-to-one target within the Piccadilly ward (emerging MCC Local Plan). Overall, the proposals deliver a significant increase in tree numbers, species diversity and long-term landscape quality.

6.80 4no. Category C trees proposed to be removed are on the edge of the Smithfield Conservation Area. These trees are proposed to be replaced by 4no. quality trees as part of the wider tree strategy. The existing trees are located on the boundary of the conservation area, the interest of which derives from the historic food markets, built form and street layout. The trees to be removed, then, do not significantly contribute to the interest of the Conservation Area and, as confirmed in the Heritage Assessment, the proposed development will have a slight beneficial impact on the Conservation Area. A further 8no. trees, within the Site's northern boundary along Piccadilly, are considered to fall slightly outside of the Stevenson Square Conservation Area.

6.81 The proposals are therefore in line with: PfE Policies JP-G2 and -G7; Core Strategy Policy EN 9; Draft Local Plan Policy EN 3.

Ecology and BNG

6.82 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been undertaken by Civic Engineers to establish the baseline ecological conditions at Piccadilly Gardens and inform the redevelopment proposals. The assessment confirms that the Site comprises a highly urbanised public realm environment dominated by hardstanding, amenity grassland and urban tree planting, all of which are considered to be of site-level ecological importance.

6.83 The PEA found no statutory designated ecological sites within or adjacent to the application site, and no statutory designations within 5km that are ecologically connected to the Site. No ancient woodland, Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems or invasive non-native species were identified.

6.84 Ecological surveys recorded limited habitat value across the Site, comprising species-poor modified grassland and 36no. young-mature urban trees (including young/immature trees within planters). Although these habitats provide opportunities for common urban wildlife, including birds, bats and hedgehogs, they are common and widespread within the urban environment.

6.85 The assessment concluded that the Site itself provides negligible suitability for bat roosting, with no potential roost features identified within trees or structures inside the application boundary. Limited suitability was identified for bat foraging and commuting, whilst the Site may provide opportunistic foraging habitat for West European Hedgehog and nesting opportunities for common urban bird species.

6.86 The principal ecological impacts identified relate to the loss of areas of modified grassland and urban trees, together with the potential disturbance of nesting birds and other wildlife during construction. Appropriate mitigation measures are recommended, including vegetation clearance outside the bird breeding season, pre-construction ecological checks where necessary and implementation of site-wide ecological good practice measures. Importantly, the report confirms that no protected species licences are currently required and that no further protected species surveys are necessary at this stage, other than recommended surveys relating to bat roost features identified on buildings outside the application site.

6.87 The PEA also identifies opportunities for biodiversity enhancement through new landscaping, habitat creation and species-specific measures such as hedgehog refuges, insect habitat features and swift nesting provision. Subject to the implementation of the recommended mitigation and enhancement measures, the report concludes that the redevelopment can proceed without significant adverse ecological effects and provides an opportunity to enhance biodiversity within this city centre location.

6.88 A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Design Stage Report has been prepared by Civic Engineers to accompany the planning application. The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the Environment Act 2021 and the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and demonstrates that the proposals will exceed the mandatory requirement to deliver a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain.

6.89 The Site comprises a highly urbanised area of public realm where ecological value is currently limited and largely associated with areas of modified grassland and urban tree planting. The baseline assessment identified four habitat types within the Site, with a total baseline value of 2.68 habitat units. No irreplaceable habitats were recorded. Existing biodiversity value is primarily derived from urban trees, which are recognised as being of high strategic significance within the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, although they are currently in poor condition.

6.90 The proposed redevelopment has been informed by the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy, seeking to retain, enhance and create habitats wherever practicable. The design includes the retention and enhancement of eight existing Honey Locust trees, the retention and relocation of two Magnolia trees, extensive new tree

planting, the creation of new lawn areas, rain gardens and ornamental planting, alongside a comprehensive programme of habitat management and monitoring.

6.91 The final Statutory Metric assessment confirms that the scheme will deliver a post-development biodiversity value of 2.96 habitat units, representing a net gain of 0.28 habitat units and an overall BNG uplift of %. This exceeds the statutory minimum requirement and demonstrates that the redevelopment will achieve a measurable enhancement in biodiversity value despite the constraints associated with a heavily trafficked city centre public space.

6.92 Key biodiversity enhancements incorporated within the proposals include:

- Retention and enhancement of existing mature trees where practicable;
- Planting of 49 new trees across the Site;
- Creation of approximately 0.24ha of grassland;
- Introduction of 0.09ha of rain gardens to provide ecological and sustainable drainage benefits;
- Provision of approximately 0.10ha of ornamental and herbaceous planting;
- Long-term habitat management secured through a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan for a minimum period of 30 years.

6.93 The BNG Report concludes that, subject to implementation of the approved landscape strategy and long-term maintenance arrangements, the proposals will deliver a measurable and policy-compliant biodiversity enhancement. The development therefore accords with the requirements of the Environment Act 2021, the National Planning Policy Framework and local biodiversity objectives, whilst contributing to the wider regeneration of Piccadilly Gardens through the delivery of a greener, more resilient and ecologically valuable public space.

6.94 Appropriate arrangements will be secured through the relevant legal agreement to provide a commuted sum for monitoring compliance with the Biodiversity Net Gain requirements associated with the development, ensuring that the long-term biodiversity outcomes delivered by the scheme can be appropriately monitored by the Local Planning Authority.

6.95 The proposals are therefore in line with: PfE Policies JP-G2, -G7 and -G8; Core Strategy Policies EN 8, EN 9, EN 15 and DM 1; Draft Local Plan Policies EN 1, EN 3, EN 4 and EN 5; and Section 16 of the NPPF.

Flood & Drainage

6.96 The site is located in Flood Zone 1 and measures less than 1 ha. However, due to its situation within the Conurbation Core Critical Drainage Area (CDA) a Flood Risk Assessment is required to support the planning application.

6.97 A Combined Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy Report has been prepared by Civic.

6.98 The Flood Risk Assessment concludes that the overall flood risk for the proposed development at the site is low and can be summarised as follows:

Flood Risk Type	Risk
Tidal/Fluvial (Rivers and Sea)	Very low risk
Pluvial (Surface Water)	Low risk
Reservoir	Very low risk
Canals	Extremely low risk
Public Sewers	To be confirmed by United Utilities, presumed low risk
Groundwater	Low risk (to be confirmed by site investigation)

Table 3: Summary of On-Site Flood Risk

6.99 It is proposed that Surface water discharge from the site will be restricted to the existing brownfield runoff rate, calculated at 50.5 l/s for the 1 in 1 year storm event and 119.32 l/s for the 1 in 30 year storm event, with a 50% betterment applied. The drainage strategy incorporates sustainable drainage measures including rain gardens, permeable paving and a buried attenuation storage tank to provide on-site storage and manage surface water runoff.

6.100 The drainage hierarchy has been considered and followed as such:

- There are two 54m3 tanks that serve the fountains. These are being investigated to confirm capacity and understand whether they can be re-purposed for the collection and storage of rainwater for later use;
- Infiltration is assumed not feasible due to varying depths of made ground found underlaid by clay strata and is therefore not considered a viable method for surface water disposal;
- The nearest water bodies are the River Tib which is culverted to the north west of the site, and Rochdale canal which is 300m to the east of the site. Discharging to and in both the River Tib and Rochdale Canal have been ruled out due to the potential routes requiring crossing third-party assets;
- There are no known surface water sewers close to the development, therefore disposal via surface water sewers is currently deemed to not be feasible;
- There are several combined sewers surrounding the site, which is likely to be the only feasible option for the development.

6.101 The drainage strategy will seek to maximise the reuse of collected surface water for irrigation of the proposed landscape areas, utilising existing and adapted infrastructure where feasible and reducing reliance on potable water supplies.

6.102 Overall, it is not expected that the development will have detrimental impact on wider flood risk in the area. This Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy conclude the development is appropriate subject to the implementation of the flood mitigation described in this report being carried out.

6.103 Full details can be found in the Combined Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy Report, prepared by Civic.

6.104 The proposals are therefore in line with: PfE Policy JP-S4; CS Policies EN 8 and EN 14; Draft LP Policy EN 9; and Section 14 of the NPPF.

Ground Conditions

6.105 A Phase 1 Desk Study including a preliminary risk assessment has been prepared by Civic in support of the planning application.

6.106 The report has been prepared in accordance with national guidance. It includes an evaluation of potential human health, environmental and geotechnical risks and constraints associated with the Proposed Development, and recommendations for ground investigation and further assessment if necessary.

6.107 According to available map records, the site has undergone a number of stages of historical development and demolition. It is noted that prior to its use as an Infirmary in 1753, the site contained Daub Holes (Clay Pits), one of which is considered to have been redeveloped into the Canal.

6.108 The site is not within a groundwater Source Protection Zone, and the combined groundwater vulnerability at the site is low.

6.109 The site does not lie within a Radon Affected Area as less than 1% of properties are estimated to have a radon level at or above the action level. No radon protective measures are therefore considered necessary.

6.110 Ground conditions at the site comprised Till (Diamicton), Chester Formation (Sandstone) which is underlain by the Manchester Marls Formation and the Collyhurst Sandstone Formation in succession. No deposits of Artificial Made Ground (undivided) were indicated to be present on-site, with Infilled Ground found to be present in the north of the Site, corresponding to the previous location and shape of the historical canal. It is noted that general Made Ground is anticipated to be present across the Site given the historical development of the Site, including the infill of the other clay pits, former sunken gardens and multiple phases of redevelopment across the Site. Made Ground was however observed in the trenches being carried out by others at the time of the Site walkover.

6.111 The preliminary qualitative risk assessment indicates that there is a moderate risk to identified receptors from potential contaminants associated with the current and former uses of the site and surrounding area, and potential Made Ground associated with the former development of the site.

6.112 In addition, the assessment has identified a number of possible geotechnical constraints associated with the potential for below ground obstructions, variable thickness of Made Ground, aggressive ground conditions, on site traffic infrastructure and existing buried services beneath the Site.

6.113 In terms of the Detailed UXO Risk Assessment for the site boundary, it has been concluded that there was a low risk to the site. It is recommended however to incorporate UXO awareness for site operatives and an emergency response plan prior to intrusive ground investigation.

6.114 Further recommendations based on the findings of the report include an intrusive ground investigation to assess the identified contaminants of concern, to evaluate the potential contaminant linkages through soil,

leachate and groundwater sampling, and to enable the development of a remediation strategy, if required. This investigation should include a laboratory analysis of soil and groundwater samples for the identified contaminants of concern and a ground gas monitoring programme to confirm the ground gas regime at the site. In addition, the ground investigation can be used to obtain data to inform the geotechnical design of the project. It is anticipated that an archaeological watching brief will be required during the intrusive ground investigation.

6.115 Full details can be found in the Phase 1 Desk Study report, prepared by Civic.

6.116 The proposals are therefore in line with: PfE Policy JP-S1; CS Policy EN 18; Draft LP Policy EN 10; and Section 15 of the NPPF.

Utilities

6.117 A Utilities Report has been prepared by Civic MEP to assess the existing utility infrastructure serving Piccadilly Gardens and identify any constraints arising from the proposed redevelopment. The assessment considers gas, water, wastewater, telecommunications and electricity infrastructure and concludes that, whilst a number of utility diversions, disconnections and protection measures will be required, no utility constraints have been identified that would prevent delivery of the proposed scheme, subject to continued engagement with the relevant statutory undertakers.

6.118 The proposals are therefore in line with PfE Policy JP-P1.

External Lighting

6.119 A Lighting Strategy has been prepared by Hoare Lea to establish a coordinated approach to lighting across the proposed public realm. The strategy recognises the Gardens' role as one of Manchester's principal civic spaces and seeks to create a safe, accessible and welcoming environment after dark while reinforcing the character of the landscape and surrounding city centre context.

6.120 The proposals replace the existing fragmented lighting arrangement with a coherent lighting hierarchy tailored to the different functions of the Gardens, including the central lawn, pedestrian routes, play area and key entrances. The strategy combines functional lighting with carefully integrated feature lighting to improve legibility, visual comfort, natural surveillance and wayfinding, whilst maintaining a high-quality public realm experience. Lighting levels have been designing in accordance with British Standard practice as detailed in the supporting External Lighting Strategy, providing a consistent level of illumination appropriate with a busy city centre pedestrian environment and supporting orientation and safe movement of pedestrians after dark.

6.121 Accessibility and safety are key drivers of the lighting strategy by Hoare Lea. The design has been developed to provide clear pedestrian routes, consistent lighting levels, good vertical illumination as well as enhanced visibility at key movement points, entrances and areas whether people are likely to dwell. The coordinated lighting approach supports inclusive use of the Gardens by all users, helping to create a welcoming environment throughout hours of darkness whilst assisting with natural surveillance.

6.122 Ambient lighting is intended to operate, as a minimum, from dusk until dawn in accordance with operational,

accessibility and public safety requirements, this is to be linked to Manchester City Council's wider city lighting network. This approach with enable central monitoring, scheduled operation, remote fault reporting and implementation of dimming profiles where appropriate.

6.123 A key objective of the strategy is to minimise light pollution, glare and unnecessary light spill through the use of energy-efficient lighting, careful optical control and adherence to recognised industry standards. The scheme adopts the principles of the Institution of Lighting Professionals' guidance on obtrusive light and has been developed to limit upward light, glare and spill to surrounding areas whilst maintaining an appropriate level of illumination for public safety and accessibility. The scheme uses warm white light sources, generally not exceeding 3000k, is proposed to enhance perceived safety and ensure materials and planting are viewed naturally after dark. The scheme also incorporates integrated infrastructure, allowing lighting columns to accommodate CCTV and other technologies where required, reducing visual clutter and supporting future management of the Gardens.

6.124 Overall, the strategy delivers a sustainable and flexible lighting framework that supports public safety, accessibility and the long-term operation of the Gardens while enhancing Manchester's night-time environment and contributing positively to the quality and identity of this important civic space. The proposals combine high quality lighting design, environmental responsibility and intelligent operational controls to create an inclusive, safe and attractive civic destination that remains accessible throughout hours of darkness.

6.125 The proposals are therefore in line with PfE Policy JP-P1, Core Strategy Policy DM 1 and Draft Local Plan Policy DM 1.

Employment and Skills

6.126 The Local Labour Agreement provides a clear framework for securing employment, skills and social value outcomes during the construction phase of the Proposed Development. The targets include the creation of 2 new jobs, support for 8 sustained jobs, delivery of 2 new apprenticeships, and a commitment to prioritise local employment outcomes through a Greater Manchester approach with a Manchester-first focus. The template also identifies a commitment to supporting local supply chains through the procurement process.

6.127 In addition to employment and apprenticeship outcomes, the Local Labour Agreement includes wider employability and skills initiatives. These comprise 60 hours of support for Manchester young people up to the age of 24, 40 hours of support for unemployed Manchester adults, 4 weeks of meaningful work placements or pre-employment training, 4 weeks of work trials for Manchester job seekers, 100 hours of community projects with skills and employability outcomes, and 5 site visits for local people.

6.128 Collectively, these commitments will help ensure that investment in Piccadilly Gardens generates wider social value benefits alongside the physical redevelopment of the Site. The Local Labour Agreement supports the objectives of Places for Everyone Policy JP-J1 (Supporting Long-Term Economic Growth) by helping to create employment opportunities, develop skills and support local communities, whilst also aligning with the aspirations of Draft Manchester Local Plan Policy SI4 through the delivery of targeted employment, apprenticeship, training and employability initiatives that maximise the social value benefits arising from

development.

Public Realm Management

6.129 The Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan seeks to prescribe all necessary management and maintenance principles and management tasks to enable successful establishment and ensure the continued maturing of all landscape elements.

6.130 In combination with the bespoke landscape management and maintenance plan which has been commissioned, the principles set out in this document will ensure the long-term health and wellbeing of planting, trees, rain gardens and habitats.

6.131 The proposals are therefore in line with: PfE Policies JP-S4, JP-G2, JP-G8 and JP-P1; Core Strategy Policy EN 9; and Draft Local Plan Policies EN 1 and EN 3.

Construction Management

6.132 A Construction Management Plan (CMP), Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) have been prepared by Galliford Try. Together, these documents set out a comprehensive framework for managing construction activities within this sensitive city centre location, with particular emphasis on public safety, stakeholder coordination and minimising disruption to surrounding businesses, public transport operations and visitors to the city centre.

6.133 The CMP confirms that the works will be carefully phased to maintain safe pedestrian movement around the Site, with measures including secure hoarding, controlled access arrangements, traffic management, delivery booking systems and ongoing stakeholder engagement. The construction programme will also be supported by project-specific health and safety procedures, emergency planning and risk management measures to ensure the safe delivery of the development.

6.134 The CEMP identifies the principal environmental sensitivities associated with the Site and establishes mitigation measures to control potential impacts during construction. These include the management of noise, vibration, dust, waste, traffic and pollution risks, together with the protection of retained trees, existing landscaping and ecological features. The plan also incorporates measures to support sustainable construction practices, resource efficiency and biodiversity protection throughout the construction period.

6.135 The SWMP sets out procedures to ensure that construction, excavation and demolition waste is managed in accordance with relevant environmental legislation and the principles of the waste hierarchy, prioritising waste prevention, reuse and recycling ahead of disposal. It sets project-specific waste performance targets, including diversion of at least 85% of waste from landfill (including soils and stones) and 90% diversion of waste excluding soils and stones.

6.136 Overall, the documents demonstrate that construction impacts can be appropriately managed through a robust programme of mitigation, monitoring and stakeholder liaison, ensuring that the redevelopment can be delivered in a manner that safeguards public amenity and accords with relevant planning, environmental and health and safety requirements.

6.137 The proposals are therefore in line with PfE Policy JP-C8 and Core Strategy EN 19.

7

Planning Balance

7. Planning Balance

7.1 The proposal has been considered to be in compliance with the Development Plan and any Material Considerations. To summarise this position, the below sets out the scheme against the three dimensions of sustainable development as defined by paragraph 8 of the NPPF.

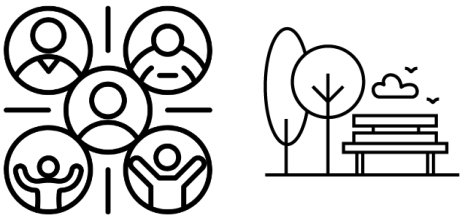
Economic Benefits



The Proposed Development would support the continued regeneration of Manchester City Centre through the comprehensive renewal of Piccadilly Gardens, **enhancing the quality, attractiveness and functionality of one of the city's most important civic spaces and transport interchanges.**

- The Proposed Development would secure the long-term future of Piccadilly Gardens through significant investment in public realm, landscape, community infrastructure and ongoing stewardship.
- The Proposed Development would support the continued regeneration and vitality of Manchester City Centre by improving the experience of a key gateway location used by residents, workers, businesses and visitors.
- A Local Labour Agreement will support local employment, apprenticeships, training, skills development and wider employability initiatives during the construction phase.
- The regeneration of Piccadilly Gardens will support economic activity, investment and city-centre vitality through the creation of a more attractive, welcoming and actively used civic space.

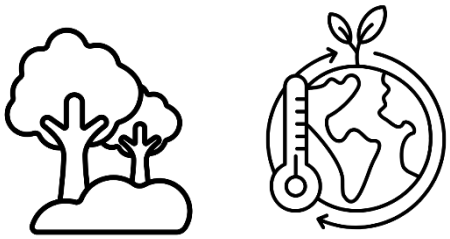
Social Benefits



The Proposed Development would transform Piccadilly Gardens into a safer, greener and more inclusive civic destination, delivering substantial benefits for health, wellbeing, recreation, community activity and the day-to-day experience of residents, workers and visitors.

- The Proposed Development would transform perceptions of Piccadilly Gardens through the creation of a safer, greener and more welcoming civic space, encouraging positive day-to-day use by residents, workers, visitors and families.
- The Proposed Development would provide new opportunities for recreation, play, relaxation and community activity through the delivery of a central lawn, enhanced seating and a family-friendly play area.
- The Proposed Development would improve health, wellbeing and social inclusion through enhanced accessibility, increased greening, improved perceptions of safety and the long-term stewardship and management of the Gardens.

Environmental Benefits



The Proposed Development would deliver significant environmental enhancements through increased greening, biodiversity, climate resilience and sustainable design within one of Manchester's most important civic spaces.

- Delivery of a predicted 10.47% Biodiversity Net Gain, exceeding the statutory minimum requirement.
- 3:1 tree replacement, diversity of species, and references to horticulture across Manchester.
- Increased tree canopy cover, new planting and rain gardens that enhance biodiversity, environmental quality and climate resilience.
- Integration of SuDS and blue-green infrastructure to improve surface water management and support adaptation to climate change.
- Support for sustainable travel through improvements to a highly accessible city centre location and major public transport interchange.

7.2 Overall, the proposed development would deliver valuable economic, social and environmental benefits such that would deliver sustainable development. It would make a valued contribution to the offer within the locality and support employment opportunities within the area.

7.3 In considering the planning balance on the proposals, the scheme has been evidenced to providing a sustainable development for a sector of society with specific needs such that the benefits of allowing the proposal would outweigh any adverse impacts which may arise as a result. It is therefore considered that the proposals accord with the Development Plan and consequently the proposals should be approved without delay in accordance with paragraph 11(c) of the NPPF and MCC Local Plan.

Appendix 1

Appendix 1 – Policy Schedule

Places for Everyone (2024)	
JP-Strat1: Core Growth Area	The economic role of the Core Growth Area will be protected and enhanced, with sustainable development supporting major growth in the number of jobs provided across the area providing opportunities to create jobs for local communities. […] Infrastructure provision will support the growth and continued capacity of the Core Growth Area.
JP-Strat2: City Centre	The role of the City Centre as the most significant economic location in the country outside London will be strengthened considerably. The City Centre will continue to provide the primary focus for business, retail, leisure, culture and tourism activity in Greater Manchester […].It will enable people to take advantage of […] the extensive public transport offer, reducing the need to travel to work whilst supporting economic growth and reducing levels of poverty. It will be a priority for investment in development and infrastructure. This will include addressing current network capacity issues in the City Centre which will enable the future expansion of the rapid transit public transport network across Greater Manchester. Improvements in the public realm, walking and cycling facilities, and green infrastructure will help to enhance the local character and environmental quality of the City Centre so that it can rival city centres across the globe, enabling it to compete effectively at the international level for investment, businesses, skilled workers, residents and tourists. A broad range of commercial accommodation will be delivered, helping the City Centre to capture growth across key economic sectors. The new functions within the City Centre will be delivered in a way that complement, rather than displace the area's non-residential functions and will seek to protect and enhance the city centre's historic environment and assets.
JP-Strat13: Strategic Green Infrastructure	The following strategic green infrastructure assets will be protected and enhanced as key features: […] 4. Trees and woodland (see Policy JP-G7 'Trees and Woodland'). The protection and enhancement of these key strategic green infrastructure assets is complemented by a suite of policies to protect and enhance our network of green infrastructure, including protecting and enhancing sites of ecological value. This will enable our residents to access and maximise the benefits of green infrastructure on their health and wellbeing.
JP-Strat14: A Sustainable and Integrated Transport Network	The transport network will be improved so that half of all daily trips can be made by public transport, cycling and walking, especially those shorter journeys around neighbourhoods. An ambitious programme of investment in our transport network will be crucial to ensure much greater access for people across the Plan area to high quality, high frequency, easy-to use, public transport services, and benefit from healthy and active streets. […] New development will have a significant role in delivering our future sustainable and integrated transport network in order to reduce car dependency and increase levels of walking, cycling and public transport.
JP-S1: Sustainable Development	To help tackle climate change, development should aim to maximise its economic, social and environmental benefits simultaneously, minimise its adverse impacts, utilise sustainable construction techniques and actively seek opportunities to secure net gains across each of the

	different objectives. […] In bringing forward previously developed sites for development, particular attention will be paid to tackling land contamination and stability issues, ensuring that appropriate mitigation and remediation is implemented to enable sites to be brought back into use effectively.
JP-S2: Carbon and Energy	The aim of delivering a carbon neutral Greater Manchester no later than 2038, with a dramatic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, will be supported through a range of measures including: […] 2. Promoting the use of life cycle cost and carbon assessment tools to ensure the long-term impacts from development can be captured; […] 4. Increasing the range of nature-based solutions including carbon sequestration through the restoration of peat-based habitats, woodland management, tree planting and natural flood management techniques; 5. An expectation that new development will, unless it can be demonstrated that it is not practicable or financially viable: a. Be net zero carbon, which applies: • From adoption- to regulated operational carbon emissions; • From 2028 - to all emissions 'in construction' From 2025 development should also calculate and minimise carbon emissions from unregulated emissions alongside regulated emissions. Development proposals should set out how this has been achieved in an energy statement in accordance with the energy hierarchy, which in order of importance seeks to: i. Minimise energy demand; ii. Maximise energy efficiency; iii. Use renewable energy; iv. Use low carbon energy; and v. Utilise other energy sources. From 2025 any residual carbon emissions that cannot be fully mitigated on-site should be offset, in agreement with the relevant local planning authority through a financial contribution to a carbon offset fund. […] c. Where practicable, prioritise connection to a renewable energy/heating/cooling network in the first instance or a low carbon energy/heating/cooling network that is adaptable to non-fossil fuels at a later date; […] e. For non-residential developments, achieve at least BREEAM excellent standard (or equivalent) for the 'Ene 01 – reduction of energy use and carbon emissions' category rising to 'BREEAM outstanding' equivalent for ENE 01 from 2028. f. Include a detailed energy statement to demonstrate via site relevant evidence how

	the development has sought to maximize reductions in carbon emissions in line with relevant policy targets, including the minimisation of overheating risks and appropriate measures for post occupancy evaluation. Whole life cycle emissions should be considered where possible. Districts may set out specific carbon emission reduction targets, particularly if carbon neutral targets within Local Plans.
JP-S4: Flood Risk and the Water Environment	An integrated catchment-based approach will be taken to protect the quantity and quality of water bodies with reference to the North West River Basin Management Plan and managing flood risk, by: [...] 2. Working with natural processes and adopting a natural flood management approach to slow the speed of water drainage and intercept water pollutants; 3. Locating and designing development so as to minimise the impacts of current and future flood risk, including retrofitting or relocating existing developments, infrastructure and places to increase resilience to flooding; 4. Expecting developments to manage surface water runoff through sustainable drainage systems and as close to source as possible. Development should achieve greenfield run-off rates unless it is demonstrated to be impracticable. District local plans should consider setting more detailed surface water drainage policies to reflect local circumstances, including alternative surface water discharge rates, such as in areas with critical drainage issues; 5. Ensuring that sustainable drainage systems: i. Are designed to provide multifunctional benefits wherever possible, including for water quality, nature conservation and recreation; ii. Avoid adverse impacts on water quality and any possibility of discharging hazardous substances to ground; iii. Are delivered in a holistic and integrated manner, including on larger sites split into different phases; and iv. Are managed and maintained appropriately to ensure their proper functioning over the lifetime of the development. 6. Securing the remediation of contaminated land and the careful design of developments to minimise the potential for urban diffuse pollution to affect the water environment; and [...]
JP-S5: Clean Air	A comprehensive range of measures will be taken to support improvements in air quality, focusing particularly on locations where people live, where children learn and play, where there are impacts on the green infrastructure network and where air quality targets are not being met, including: 1. Locating and designing development, and focusing transport investment, so as to reduce reliance on forms of transport that generate air pollution; 2. Determining planning applications having regard to the most recent development and planning control guidance published jointly by the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) and Environmental Protection UK (EPUK), and the most recent IAQM Guidance on the Assessment of Dust from Demolition and Construction, or relevant successor guidance, including the requirement for developers to submit construction management plans as appropriate; 3. Requiring applications for developments that could have an adverse impact on air quality to

	submit relevant air pollution data so that adverse impacts on air quality can be fully assessed and development only permitted where they are acceptable and/or suitable mitigation can be provided; [...] 6. Implementing the Clean Air Plan and associated measures; [...] 8. Designing streets to avoid trapping air pollution at ground level, including through the appropriate location and scale of buildings and trees; 9. Controlling traffic and parking within and around schools, early years sites and other locations that are particularly sensitive to air quality; 10. Promoting actions that help remove pollutants from the air, such as enhancing the green infrastructure network and using innovative building materials that capture air pollutants; and 11. Development should be located in areas that maximise the use of sustainable travel modes and be designed to minimise exposure to high levels of air pollution, particularly for vulnerable users.
JP-S6: Resource Efficiency	The achievement of a circular economy and a zero-waste economy will play a key role in meeting Greater Manchester's ambition of becoming a leading green city region by 2038. The following measures will help achieve this: [...] 3. Using sustainable design and construction techniques to reduce carbon emissions, adapt and future proof to the impact of climate change, reduce and recycle waste and minimise water use.
JP-J1: Supporting Long-Term Economic Growth	A thriving, inclusive and productive economy will be sought in all our boroughs. There will be an emphasis on: [...] F. Supporting local job growth, by seeking agreement with employers and developers, including housebuilders, to enter into local labour and training agreements through planning obligations and other mechanisms where appropriate [...]
JP-G2: Green Infrastructure Network	A strategic approach will be taken to the protection, management and enhancement of our Green Infrastructure in order to protect and enhance the ecosystem services which the Green Infrastructure Network provides, including flood management, climate change mitigation and adaptation. Alongside this primary function an enhanced Green Infrastructure network will support wider public health benefits, including promotion of active travel, food growing and recreational opportunities. The protection, management and enhancement of Green Infrastructure will contribute to the development of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Greater Manchester. This Strategy will feed into the development of a Nature Recovery Network locally and nationally. Development within and around the Green Infrastructure Network should be consistent with delivering major green infrastructure improvements within them and should contribute to improvements. [...] Wherever practicable, opportunities to integrate new and existing green infrastructure into new development will be taken to protect, enhance and expand the green infrastructure

	network. Where new or improved green infrastructure is delivered as part of a development, the developer should make appropriate provision for its long-term management and maintenance.
JP-G6: Urban Green Space	To ensure there is an appropriate scale, type, quality and distribution of accessible urban green space that can support a high quality of life and other important green infrastructure functions: • existing urban green space will be protected and enhanced in balance with other considerations; • […] Development should be designed to support the positive use of nearby green spaces, such as by offering a high-quality setting, providing natural surveillance, and facilitating easy access by walking and cycling
JP-G7: Trees and Woodland	We will work to deliver the aims and objectives of the Greater Manchester Tree and Woodland Strategy, aiming to significantly increase tree cover, protect and enhance woodland, and connect people to the trees and woodland around them. This will be done through local planning and associated activities such as: […] 2. Encouraging habitat diversity through conserving and managing existing woodland and trees that are of heritage, cultural and/or aesthetic value, including ancient woodland and veteran trees; 3. Aiming to plant a tree for every resident in the plan area over the next 25 years as part of the City of Trees initiative; 4. Targeting tree-planting at the areas of greatest need where the green infrastructure benefits can be maximised, whilst avoiding the loss of, or harm to, other priority habitats, including encouraging woodland planting schemes on areas of low-grade agricultural land and land in need of remediation; […] 6. Considerably increasing the provision of street trees within urban areas; 7. Promoting the provision of community orchards to increase fruit consumption; […] 9. Securing a diversification of broadleaved species, in order to increase biodiversity and disease resilience; 10. Improving public access to woodland and trees particularly by sustainable travel models to capture the health and wellbeing benefits whilst managing the associated pressures; […] And through development as follows: 12. Where development would result in the loss of existing trees, requiring replacement on the basis of two new trees for each tree lost, or other measures that would also result in a net enhancement in the character and quality of the treescape and biodiversity value in the local area, with a preference for on-site provision; and 13. Protecting trees and woodland during the construction phase of development.
JP-G8: A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity	Through local planning and associated activities a net enhancement of biodiversity resources will be sought, including, where relevant, by:

and Geodiversity	1. Increasing the quality, quantity, extent and diversity of habitats, particularly priority habitats identified in national or local biodiversity action plans and those that support priority species; 2. Improving connections between habitats, to protect and enhance the provision of corridors, ecological networks (including Nature Recovery Networks) and stepping stones that enable the movement of species, especially as the climate changes; 3. Enhancing the management of existing habitats, including through habitat restoration, avoiding habitat fragmentation and combating invasive species; [...] 5. Facilitating greater access to nature, particularly within urban areas; [...] Development will be expected to: a. Follow the mitigation hierarchy of: i. Avoiding significant harm to biodiversity, particularly where it is irreplaceable, through consideration of alternative sites with less harmful impacts, then ii. Adequately mitigating any harm to biodiversity, then iii. Adequately compensating for any remaining harm to biodiversity b. Avoid fragmenting or severing connectivity between habitats; c. Achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity of no less than 10% d. Make appropriate provision for long-term management of habitats and geological features connected to the development; e. Where appropriate, development should: mitigate air pollution impacts on Manchester Mosses SAC; mitigate urban edge, functionally linked land and recreation disturbance impacts on the South Pennine Moors SAC/SPAs; and assess and potentially mitigate boat movement, water pollution, and light spillage and shading impacts on the Rochdale Canal SAC; and f. Development proposals should be informed by the findings and recommendations of the appropriate biodiversity/ecological assessment(s) in the PfE evidence base and/or any updated or appropriate biodiversity/ecological assessments submitted as part of the planning application process
JP-P1: Sustainable Places	We aim to become one of the most liveable city regions in the world, consisting of a series of beautiful, healthy and varied places, each having the following key attributes that all development, wherever appropriate, should be consistent with: 1. Distinctive, with a clear identity that: A. Conserves and enhances the natural environment, landscape features, historic environment and local history and culture; B. Enables a clear understanding of how the place has developed; and C. Respects and acknowledges the character and identity of the locality in terms of design, siting, size, scale and materials used 2. Visually stimulating, creating interesting and imaginative environments which raise the human spirit through the use of green space, public art and quality design 3. Socially inclusive:

	A. Responding to the needs of all parts of society; B. Enabling everyone to participate equally and independently; C. Providing opportunities for social contact and support; and D. Promoting a sense of community 4. Resilient, capable of dealing with major environmental events 5. Adaptable, able to respond easily to varied and changing needs and technologies 6. Durable, being built to last and using robust materials that reflect local character, weather well and are easily maintained 7. Resource-efficient with: A. A low carbon footprint; B. Efficient use of land; C. Minimised use of new materials; D. High levels of recycling 8. Safe, including by designing out crime and terrorism, reducing opportunities for anti-social behaviour and by ensuring that developments make appropriate provision for response and evacuation in the case of an emergency or disaster. 9. Supported by critical infrastructure, such as energy, water and drainage and green spaces 10. Functional and convenient, enabling people and uses to act efficiently with minimal effort, and responding to needs relating to servicing, recycling facilities, refuse collection and storage 11. Incorporating inclusive design within all spaces with support for tackling inequality and poverty to form part of creating sustainable places 12. Legible, being easy to understand and navigate, with the protection and enhancement of key views and new development well-integrated into the place 13. Easy to move around for those of all mobility levels, particularly by walking and cycling, with enjoyable routes free from obstacles and disorienting stimuli, and with places to rest 14. Well-connected to other places, particularly by public transport and digital infrastructure enabling everyone to take advantage of the employment, cultural and leisure opportunities across Greater Manchester and beyond 15. Comfortable and inviting, with indoor and outdoor environments: A. Offering a high level of amenity that minimises exposure to pollution; and B. Addressing microclimate issues such as sunlight, indoor air quality, overheating, shade, wind and shelter 16. Incorporating high quality and well managed green infrastructure and quality public realm, with: A. Opportunities for recreation and outdoor play for children, and interaction between the generations; B. Public and private spaces clearly distinguished; C. Development clearly defining, and promoting activity within, public spaces; D. High quality landscaping with schemes

	17. Well-served by local shops, services and amenities, including education and health facilities
JP-P2: Heritage	We will proactively manage and work with partners to positively conserve, sustain and enhance our historic environment and heritage assets and their settings. Opportunities will be pursued to aid the promotion, enjoyment, understanding and interpretation of heritage assets, as a means of maximising wider public benefits and reinforcing Greater Manchester's distinct character, identity and sense of place. Local Plans will set out the key elements which contribute to the district's identity, character and distinctiveness and which should be the priority for conserving and enhancing in the future and demonstrate a clear understanding of the historic environment and the heritage values of sites, buildings or areas and their relationship with their surroundings. This knowledge should be used to inform the positive management and integration of our heritage by: 1. Setting out a clear vision that recognises and embeds the role of heritage in place-making; 2. Ensuring that the heritage significance of a site or area is considered in accordance with national planning policy in the planning and design process and opportunities for interpretation and local engagement are optimised; 3. Integrating the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, with creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to their significance and sense of place; 4. Delivering positive benefits that sustain and enhance the historic environment, as well as contributing to the economic viability, accessibility and environmental quality of a place, and to social wellbeing; and [...] Particular consideration will be given to ensure that the significance of key elements of the historic environment which contribute to Greater Manchester's distinctive identity and sense of place are protected from harm. These include historic town centres, places of worship, historic transport routes including the canal network, industrial buildings and structures including textile mills, farmsteads and other sites, buildings, and areas of identified archaeological, architectural, artistic and/or historic value. Development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets and/or their settings will be considered having regard to national planning policy. [...] Proposals should be informed, as necessary, by the findings and recommendations of the appropriate heritage assessment(s) in the development plan evidence base and/or any updated heritage assessment submitted as part of the planning application process.
JP-P5: Education, Skills and Knowledge	Significant enhancements in education, skills and knowledge to benefit existing and new residents will be promoted, including by: [...] 3. Supporting the continued growth and success of the university sector, such as through: [...] c. Continuing to help develop Greater Manchester as the UK's best destination for students.
JP-P6: Health	To help tackle health inequality new development will be required, as far as practicable, to: A. Maximise its positive contribution to health and wellbeing, whilst avoiding any

	potential negative impacts of new development; B. Support healthy lifestyles, including through the use of active design principles making physical activity an easy, practical and attractive choice; and C. Be supported by a Health Impact Assessment for all developments which require to be screened for an Environmental Impact Assessment, and other proposals which, due to their location, nature or proximity to sensitive receptors, are likely to have a notable impact on health and wellbeing. [...]
JP-P7: Sport and Recreation	A network of high quality and accessible sports and recreation facilities will be protected and enhanced, supporting greater levels of activity for all ages, including by: 1. Creating a public realm that provides frequent opportunities for play and that all ages can enjoy together; [...] 3. Requiring new development to provide new and/or improved existing facilities commensurate with the demand they would generate. The provision of sports facilities will be determined by individual local authorities through an evidence based approach; 4. Locating and designing recreation facilities in relation to housing so as to ensure that they are accessible but also minimise the potential for complaints due to disturbance to residential amenity from recreational activity; [...]
JP-C1: An Integrated Network	In order to help deliver an accessible, low carbon Greater Manchester with worldclass connectivity, we will support a range of measures, including: 1. Delivering a pattern of development that minimises both the need to travel and the distance travelled by unsustainable modes to jobs, housing and other key services, including healthcare, education, retail, recreation and leisure facilities, green space and green infrastructure; 2. Enabling the provision of high quality digital infrastructure; 3. Locating and designing development, to deliver a significant increase in the proportion of trips that can be made by walking, cycling and public transport; [...] 5. Ensuring that development and transport investment fully considers the needs of all people and those modes which make most efficient and sustainable use of limited road space, by following the hierarchy set out below (highest priority first): a. Pedestrians (and people using mobility aids); b. Cyclists, powered two-wheelers, and public transport users; c. People doing business or providing services (such as taxis/private hire, deliveries or waste collection) d. People in personal motorised vehicles [...]
JP-C5: Streets for All	Streets will be designed and managed to make a significant positive contribution to the quality of place and support high levels of walking, cycling and public transport. Targeted improvements to the highway network will be supported through studies and scheme development, where they complement the aim of securing a significant increase in the proportion of trips made by walking, cycling and public transport (as set out in Policy JP-C6

	'Walking and Cycling' and Policy JP-C3 'Public Transport'). We will seek to ensure: 1. The design and management of streets will follow a Streets for All approach, including by: a. Understanding the 'movement and place function' of streets as the starting point for improvement; b. Ensuring that streets are welcoming for all, and respond to the needs of those with reduced mobility; c. Delivering new and improved walking and cycling routes and facilities as part of the delivery of an integrated sustainable transport network; d. Maximising the ability of pedestrians and cyclists to navigate easily, safely and without delay, and minimising barriers and obstacles to their movement; e. Providing frequent opportunities for people to rest, linger and socialise, and for children to play, particularly in streets with a high 'place function'; f. Setting aside space for cycle parking (including for bike-sharing schemes where appropriate), high-quality public transport waiting areas, and other facilities that will support sustainable modes of travel; g. Incorporating increased levels of greenery including trees where possible; h. Offering shelter from wind and rain, and shade from the sun; k. Mitigating the impacts of air and noise pollution and carbon emissions from road transport; l. Ensuring the efficient movement of people and goods on streets with a high 'movement function' and; m. Harnessing new mobility innovations such as traffic signals technology and ULEV charging infrastructure. 2. Improvements to the highways network are part of a multi-modal strategy to increase public transport, cycling and walking and improve access for all; 3. Any new infrastructure minimises the negative effects of vehicle traffic; and 4. New infrastructure includes provision for utilities and digital infrastructure where required.
JP-C6: Walking and Cycling	In order to help deliver a higher proportion of journeys made by walking and cycling, we will support a range of measures, including: 1. Creating safe, attractive and integrated walking and cycling infrastructure, connecting every neighbourhood and community with reference to national and locally adopted design guidance; 2. Ensuring routes are direct, easily navigable and integrated with the street and public transport network; 3. Creating active neighbourhoods and street networks which are more permeable to walking and cycling than to the private car, creating an incentive to walk and cycle; 4. Creating, where needed, dedicated separate space for people walking and cycling, with pedestrians and cyclists given priority at junctions and crossings; 5. Increasing the capacity and quality of walking and cycling infrastructure in locations where significant growth in the number of short journeys is anticipated, and where quality of place improvements are proposed; […]
JP-C8:	We will require new development to be located and designed to enable and encourage

Transport Requirements of New Development	walking, cycling and public transport use, to reduce the negative effects of car dependency, and help deliver high quality, attractive, liveable and sustainable environments.
	
	We will do this by:
	
	Connectivity and Permeability
	
	1. Prioritising safe and convenient access to the site and buildings for all users in accordance with the user hierarchy in Policy JP-C1 'An Integrated Network' including
	
	• Prioritising new and enhanced walking, cycling and public transport routes and stops, through and around the site. These routes should
	  o be direct, safe and convenient;
	  o connect to nearby facilities, employment areas, public transport stops; and
	  o improve the coverage, quality and integration of the wider walking and cycling infrastructure and public transport provision;
	• Ensuring that the layout, design and landscaping of development prioritises the provision of safe, secure and attractive access to local services and facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and people with a disability; and
	• Ensuring that new development is connected visually and physically; within the site and to the surrounding built environment;
	
	2. Ensure appropriate connectivity to the existing highway network.
	
	Design
	
	3. Reducing the need to travel by ensuring that community facilities, services and amenities are provided within the site or within walking distance of new development;
	
	4. Incorporating highway design at a human scale using street-based prescriptions such as those within Manual for Streets and/or any locally adopted design guidance, to ensure that highways do not dominate the development;
	
	Public Transport
	
	5. Ensuring (through funding improvements where appropriate) that the nearest public transport stops (both within and adjacent to the development site) are attractive to users in terms of seating, shelters, information and easy step-free access;
	
	[…]
	
	Parking Infrastructure
	
	[…]
	
	9. Incorporating enough secure and covered cycle parking to meet long-term demand from occupiers and visitors in a convenient location that helps to maximise its use […]
	
	[…]
	
	Access and Servicing
	
	13. Providing designated pick-up/drop-off points for taxis and other demand-responsive transport services where appropriate, taking into account the potential increase in demand if car ownership falls;
	
	14. Making appropriate provision for deliveries and servicing (including requiring Delivery and Servicing Plans for appropriate developments), in a way that:
	
	• meets road safety requirements,

	• reduces transport emissions and other environmental impacts, • reduces traffic congestion, the number of vehicle movements and the need for repeat deliveries; <u>Construction Management</u> 15. Ensuring Construction Management Plans are produced for developments, where appropriate, to mitigate construction logistics and environmental impacts including air quality and noise on the surrounding area and encourage sustainable deliveries <u>Transport Assessments</u> 16. Planning applications will be accompanied by a Transport Assessment / Transport Statement and Travel Plan where appropriate, in order to assess impacts and determine the most appropriate mitigation on the SRN and local transport network. Where a Transport Assessment is required, this should start with a vision of what the development/allocation is seeking to achieve and then test a set of scenarios to determine the optimum design and transport infrastructure to realise this vision. Consultation should be undertaken, at pre-application stage, with the relevant local highway authorities to agree which committed developments / allocations and which potential transport interventions should be considered, with reference to Appendix D, as appropriate. 17. Planning applications which are required to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment will need to consider air quality impacts on Holcroft Moss, within the Manchester Mosses Special Area of Conservation (SAC). […]
Core Strategy (2012)	
SP 1 Spatial Principles	The key spatial principles which will guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027 are: • The Regional Centre will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity, alongside high quality city living. • The City is covered by regeneration areas including the City Centre. All development should have regard to the character, issues and strategy for each regeneration area as described in the North, East, Central and South Manchester and Wythenshawe Strategic Regeneration Frameworks and the Manchester City Centre Strategic Plan. • The City's network of open spaces will provide all residents with good access to recreation opportunities. The River Valleys (the Irk, Medlock and Mersey) and City Parks are particularly important, and access to these resources will be improved. • New development will maximise the potential of the City's transport infrastructure, in particular promoting walking, cycling and use of the public transport. […] Core Development Principles Development in all parts of the City should:- • Make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including:- o creating well designed places that enhance or create character. o making a positive contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of residents o considering the needs of all members of the community regardless of age, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, culture, ethnicity or income. o protect and enhance the built and natural environment.

	• [Bullet replaced by JP-S1] • Improve access to jobs, services, education and open space by being located to reduce the need to travel and provide good access to sustainable transport provision.
CC 1 Primary Economic Development Focus : City Centre and Fringe	The City Centre is a strategic economic location and focus of employment growth in the City and City Region. […] New, and the enhancement of existing, infrastructure provision which supports the agglomeration role of the City Centre and Fringe will be supported. Proposals will be expected to show how they contribute to decentralised low and zero carbon energy infrastructure in the Regional Centre as set out in the Energy policies. […] Proposals in the City Centre and City Centre Fringe, in particular schemes in Mayfield, The Corridor and Strangeways, will need to take account of the flood risk issues, in line with policy EN14 - Flood Risk.
CC 5 Transport	The Transport Strategy for Manchester City Centre will be delivered to ensure that transport is managed in a way which supports the projected growth of the City Centre. Developers should work with public transport providers to ensure that all users are able to access development by sustainable means, especially taking account of times when developments are likely to be busiest. Proposals will be supported that improve pedestrian safety, improve air quality and increase the scope for accessible public realm improvements, for example improvements to: • […] • create a new pedestrian priority zone initially the area bounded by Deansgate, Peter Street / Oxford Street, Portland Street, Piccadilly North, Manchester Arndale, Corporation Street and Exchange Square • […] The Council will seek to ensure that development includes adequate parking provision for cars and bicycles. This should be based on the parking standards described in Appendix B.
CC 8 Change and Renewal	The City Council has identified the types of development and approach to development which is considered most likely to deliver the vision for the City Centre and development which reflects elements of this will generally be supported. The approach to development, and redevelopment, in the City Centre will welcome large-scale schemes. Developments […] which improve the accessibility and legibility of the Centre will be supported, subject to the proposal's impact on key aspects of the City's heritage and character. The Council will also provide appropriate support, including site assembly, for schemes which are likely to contribute to the promotion or improvement of the social, economic or environmental well-being of Manchester. […]
CC 9 Design and Heritage	[…] The standards and guidance explained in other LDF policies should be the basis for the approach to design, with particular attention to be given to the City Centre context and character. Development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments. […]
CC 10 A Place for Everyone	The City Centre will develop as a location which appeals to a wide range of residents and visitors. Development which promotes this objective will be supported, particularly through: • Uses which increase the diversity of activity in the City Centre, with an emphasis on

	family-oriented activity; and, • High standards of accessibility to buildings and across spaces in the City Centre.
T 1 Sustainable Transport	To deliver a sustainable, high quality, integrated transport system to encourage modal shift away from car travel to public transport, cycling and walking, to support the needs of residents and businesses and to prepare for carbon free modes of transport, the Council will support proposals that: - • Improve choice by developing alternatives to the car. • […] • Improve pedestrian routes and the pedestrian environment. • Improve and develop further Manchester's cycle network […]
T 2 Accessible Areas of opportunity and need	The Council will actively manage the pattern of development to ensure that new development: - • Is located to ensure good access to the City's main economic drivers, including the Regional Centre, the Oxford Road Universities and Hospitals and the Airport and to ensure good national and international connections • Is easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport; connecting residents to jobs, centres, health, leisure, open space and educational opportunities. […] • Within the City Centre, provides a level of car parking which reflects the highly accessible nature of the location, as well as the realistic requirements of the users of the development. […] In all parts of the City proposals should have regard to the need for disabled and cycle parking, in line with appendix B. […] • Includes proportionate Traffic Impact Assessments and Travel Plans for all major applications and for any proposals where there are likely to be access or transport issues.
EN 1 Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas	All development in Manchester will be expected to follow the seven principles of urban design, as identified in national planning guidance and listed above and have regard to the strategic character area in which the development is located. Opportunities for good design to enhance the overall image of the City should be fully realised, particularly on major radial and orbital road and rail routes. Design and Access Statements submitted with proposals for new development must clearly detail how the proposed development addresses the design principles, reinforces and enhances the local character of that part of the City and supports the achievement of the Core Strategy Strategic Objectives. 1. City Centre Character Area The City Centre contains a rich legacy which reflects its urban evolution to the current day and includes listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeological remains and an historic street pattern. Its core area presents a particularly dense environment that accommodates a wide and closely integrated range of uses including commercial, civic and residential activities. Relative to the amount of development there is limited open space and this includes a range of civic and less formal green spaces and waterways. Outside the core and associated with the Inner Relief Route there are less active and less densely developed areas with significant elements of cleared land. The City Centre is the focus of the City's transport routes. • Developers will be expected to consider the City's heritage and continue the rich pattern of activity in the core area. • While there will be opportunities to create landmark buildings, developments should

	also contribute positively to the experience of all at street level. • Wherever possible the opportunity should be realised to enhance existing and provide new areas of meaningful open space, and the maintenance and improvement of the City's permeability should be considered in all proposals. […]
EN 3 Heritage	Throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre. 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 scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains. […]
EN 4 Reducing CO_2 Emissions by Enabling Low and Zero Carbon Development	The Council will seek to reduce fuel poverty and decouple growth in the economy, growth in CO_2 emissions, and rising fossil fuel prices, through the following actions: • [Bullet replaced by JP-S2] • Wherever possible new development and retrofit projects, including energy generation plant, must be located and designed in a manner that allows advantage to be taken of opportunities for low and zero carbon energy supplies. • Where possible new development and retrofit projects will be used as a mechanism to help improve energy efficiency and provide low and zero carbon energy supplies to existing buildings. • Where appropriate new development and retrofit projects will be required to connect to and/or make contributions to low or zero carbon energy schemes and/or to incorporate provision to enable future connection to any existing / potential decentralised energy schemes. • The use of building materials with low embodied carbon in new development and refurbishment schemes.
EN 5 Strategic Areas for low and zero carbon decentralised energy infrastructure	Within Manchester it is considered that the following strategic areas, indicated on the key diagram, will have a major role to play in achieving an increase in the level of decentralised, low and zero carbon energy supplies available: • The Regional Centre, which also includes the Oxford Road Corridor and Eastlands • […] Within these areas new development, regeneration and retrofit projects, will be expected to take place in the context of more detailed proposals for decentralised low and zero carbon energy infrastructure in the form of energy proposals plans. The Council will work with all relevant stakeholders, which may include developers, landowners, residents, community groups, private sector partners, utilities companies, neighbouring authorities and other public sector bodies, as appropriate, to bring forward such plans. Where investment or development is being undertaken into or adjacent to a public building/asset or district heating network, full consideration shall be given to the potential role that these can have in providing an anchor load within a decentralised energy network or in creating opportunities for CO2 reduction funded by contributions.
EN 8 Adaption to Climate	All new development will be expected to be adaptable to climate change in terms of the design, layout, siting and function of both buildings and associated external spaces. In

Change	achieving developments which are adaptable to climate change developers should have regard to the following, although this is not an exhaustive list: • [Bullet replaced by JP-S2, JP-S4 and JP-G8] • Reduction in urban heat island effect through the use of Green Infrastructure such as green roofs, green walls, increased tree cover and waterways • […] • [Bullet replaced by JP-S2, JP-S4 and JP-G8] Developers will be permitted to use green infrastructure elements such as green roofs, green walls, street trees and waterways to contribute to compliance with CO_2 mitigation under Policy EN6, subject to sufficient evidence to quantify their contribution to compliance.
EN 9 Green Infrastructure	New development will be expected to maintain existing green infrastructure in terms of its quantity, quality and multiple function. Where the opportunity arises and in accordance with current Green Infrastructure Strategies the Council will encourage developers to enhance the quality and quantity of green infrastructure, improve the performance of its functions and create and improve linkages to and between areas of green infrastructure. Where the benefits of a proposed development are considered to outweigh the loss of an existing element of green infrastructure, the developer will be required to demonstrate how this loss will be mitigated in terms of quantity, quality, function and future management. Key features of Manchester's green infrastructure will include: • The continued development of a network of green spaces, water bodies, canals, paths and cycleways, with priority given to those parts of the City where there is an identified existing lack of open space. The Council will seek to protect existing street trees and promote new planting, particularly where this can enhance green links in the urban area. • […] • The provision of new, and improvements to the quality and accessibility of existing green infrastructure assets, to mitigate for any loss of green infrastructure as a result of development […]. • The encouragement of green roofs, green walls, tree planting and other forms of green infrastructure to allow for the adaption to climate change in heavily urbanised areas. New green infrastructure provision should be an exemplar of best practice and innovation in terms of both its design and management.
EN 10 Safeguarding Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities	The Council will seek to retain and improve existing open spaces, sport and recreation facilities to the standards set out above and provide a network of diverse, multi-functional open spaces. Proposals will be supported that: • improve the quality and quantity of accessible open space, sport and recreation in the local area • provide innovative solutions to improving the network of existing open spaces, increase accessibility to green corridors, and enhance biodiversity • improve access to open space for disabled people […]
EN 12 Area priorities for Open Space,	The priorities for open space, sport and recreation in the City set out in Manchester's Strategic Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study and within the regeneration areas include the following:-

Sport and Recreation	• […] • City Centre: enhance quality of existing areas and integrate new facilities within the character of the area. […]
EN 14 Flood Risk	• In line with the risk-based sequential approach contained within PPS25, development should be directed away from sites at the greatest risk of flooding, and towards sites with little or no risk of flooding; this should take account of all sources of flooding identified in the Manchester-Salford-Trafford Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). • In addition to the requirements for site-specific Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs) set out in PPS25, an appropriate FRA will also be required for all development proposals, including changes of use, on sites greater than 0.5ha within Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs) and Canal Hazard Zones identified in the SFRA. • [Replaced by JP-S4]. In CDAs, evidence to justify the surface water run-off approach / rates will be required. • The City of Manchester contains many sections of rivers which are culverted or 'hidden'; where these are indicated in the SFRA beneath the proposed development site, further investigation will be required and the development proposal should take this into account; where feasible and appropriate development should seek to open up culverted/hidden rivers to reduce the associated flood risk and danger of collapse, taking advantage of opportunities to enhance biodiversity and Green Infrastructure.
EN 15 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation	The Council will seek to maintain or enhance sites of biodiversity and geological value throughout the City. Particular consideration will be given to: • sites with international or national designations for their biodiversity value. Manchester contains one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (Cotteril Clough); there is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and an SSSI just over the border in Oldham (both on the Rochdale Canal within Oldham); • other sites of biodiversity value, including Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs); Manchester currently has 35 SBIs (including the Rochdale and Ashton Canals) and 7 LNRs; priority habitats found within Manchester, as listed in the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy and included in the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GM BAP); • protected and priority species, as listed in the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy and included in the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GM BAP); • sites that are recognised for their geological importance; • the Council's objective to protect and conserve the City's existing trees and woodlands and the aim for a net increase in trees across the City. Developers will be expected to identify and implement reasonable opportunities to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity, [replaced by JP-G8] contributing to linkages between valuable or potentially valuable habitat areas where appropriate, with reference to: • the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy, which provides further details of priority habitats within Manchester and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement including corridors such as the Mersey, Medlock and Irk river valleys, the canals and disused railway lines and areas of managed greenspace particularly in parks; • the Green Infrastructure Framework for Greater Manchester, which encompasses an ecological framework that seeks to guide and inform habitat creation and repair,

	including identifying large 'biodiversity opportunity areas' including the Moston Brook Corridor and Nutsford Vale; • the Open Space, Sport & Recreation Study, which identifies areas where there is a deficit of natural and semi-natural greenspace, opportunities for green corridors and other linkages; • Manchester's Climate Change Action Plan; • the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for Manchester; • the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for Manchester, which gives detailed consideration to Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), including the Rochdale Canal SAC just outside the district boundary; • the River Basin Management Plan for the North West; • the Manchester Tree Strategy. Any adverse impacts on biodiversity will need to be justified against the wider benefits of the proposal, assessed against other LDF policies. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, developers will be required to provide appropriate mitigation and/or compensation. [Sentence replaced by JP-G8]
EN 16 Air Quality	The Council will seek to improve the air quality within Manchester [replaced by JP-S5]. Developers will be expected to take measures to minimise and mitigate the local impact of emissions from traffic generated by the development, as well as emissions created by the use of the development itself, including from Combined Heat and Power and biomass plant. When assessing the appropriateness of locations for new development the Council will consider the impacts on air quality, alongside other plan objectives. This includes cumulative impacts, particularly in Air Quality Management Areas.
EN 17 Water Quality	With reference to the Manchester-Salford-Trafford SFRA and other relevant documents: • Development should avoid any adverse impact on water quality, including during the construction phase, and wherever possible should seek to enhance water quality, both chemical and ecological; • [Bullet replaced by JP-S4] • Development close to a watercourse should also ensure that waste or litter cannot enter the watercourse from the site; Development should, where feasible and appropriate, seek to open up any culverted or hidden watercourse beneath the site to improve the ecological status of that watercourse.
EN 18 Contaminated Land and Ground Stability	The Council will give priority for the remediation of contaminated land to strategic locations as identified within this document. Any proposal for development of contaminated land must be accompanied by a health risk assessment All new development within former mining areas shall undertake an assessment of any associated risk to the proposed development and, if necessary, incorporate appropriate mitigation measures to address them.
EN 19 Waste	The Council will • [...] • Require all developers, including those of new waste management facilities within the District, to demonstrate the proposal's consistency with the principles of the waste hierarchy (prevention, reduction, re-use, recycling/composting, energy recovery, final disposal)

	• […] • Require all developers to submit a waste management plan to demonstrate how both construction and demolition waste will be minimised and recycled on site wherever possible and how the sustainable waste management needs of the end user will be met. […]
DM 1 Development Management	All development should have regard to the following specific issues for which more detailed guidance may be given within a supplementary planning document:- • 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. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area. • Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation. This could also include proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise. • Accessibility: buildings and neighbourhoods fully accessible to disabled people, access to new development by sustainable transport modes. • Community safety and crime prevention. • Design for health. • Adequacy of internal accommodation and external amenity space. • Refuse storage and collection. • Vehicular access and car parking. • Effects relating to biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage. • Green Infrastructure including open space, both public and private. • The use of alternatives to peat-based products in landscaping/gardens within development schemes. • Flood risk and drainage. • Existing or proposed hazardous installations. • […]
Unitary Development Plan	
RC20 Area 9 Piccadilly and Oldham Street	A number of factors combine to make this area an active and important part of the Regional Centre. Whilst the recent completion of the Arndale Centre to the immediate west has resulted in a shift in the focus of mainstream shopping in the City Centre, this area, especially on the north side of Piccadilly and in the vicinity of Market Street, remains an active and vital part of the Regional Shopping Centre. The substantial pedestrian activity which stems from the area's shopping role is supplemented by the attractions of Piccadilly Gardens, a major civic open space, which is also a focal point receiving passengers from the numerous bus stops in the area and those en route from Piccadilly Station to the shopping and office core areas. The area is characterised not only by high pedestrian and bus activity but also lies at the edge of major routes (Portland Street/Newton Street) for general traffic moving around the core. It is thus an area where the Plan's concern of improving the environment of the Regional Shopping Centre and the major civic open spaces, of maintaining accessibility whether by foot, bus or

	car and of enhancing the level and diversity of activity generally are of direct relevance. The main emphasis will be on enhancing the character and appearance of the area, making it even more conducive to pedestrian activity whilst at the same time ensuring continued access to and free movement around the core. Particular attention will be given to the improvement of pedestrian links to the bus station and those pedestrian routes through the area leading to Piccadilly Railway Station. The Market Street pedestrianisation scheme has resulted in improvement on Market Street between Lewis's and Debenhams. Furthermore the proposals for Portland Street/Lever Street/Newton Street, together with the promotion of the use of Travis Street and Whitworth Street as a through route, will not only cater for movements of general traffic around the City Centre but also offer further scope for enhancing the pedestrian environment notably in Oldham Street and Piccadilly Gardens and its surroundings as well as improving accessibility by public transport. Yet further improvements would accrue from a reduction in the prominence of bus station activities around Piccadilly Gardens. The Council and the Passenger Transport Executive will concentrate bus terminal stands in the Parker Street Area and remove the bus stands fronting Piccadilly. In addition, bus services will be extended from Greengate (in Salford) and from Lever Street to Parker Street, whilst those presently routed north to south through the Piccadilly area will be rerouted to concentrate on Oldham Street and Mosley Street. One of the attractions of the area is its lively, commercial and undeniably urban environment. Two of the essential features contributing to this are the form and appearance of surrounding buildings and the uses within them. In this context retailing is both a vital element in the City Centre's role as a regional centre and provides a lively and interesting atmosphere. [...]
DC18 Conservation Areas	DC18.1 The Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas. a. The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering the following issues: i) the relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces; ii) the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings; iii) the desirability of retaining existing features, such as boundary walls, gardens, trees, (including street trees); iv) the effect of signs and advertisements; v) any further guidance on specific areas which has been approved by the Council. b. The Council will not normally grant outline planning permission for development within Conservation Areas. c. Consent to demolish a building in a conservation area will be granted only where it can be shown that it is wholly beyond repair, incapable of reasonably beneficial use, or where its removal or replacement would benefit the appearance of character of the area. d. Where demolition is to be followed by redevelopment, demolition will be permitted only where there are approved detailed plans for that redevelopment and where the Council has been furnished with evidence that the development will be undertaken. e. Development proposals adjacent to Conservation Areas will be granted only where it can be shown that they will not harm the appearance or character of the area. This will include the protection of views into and out of Conservation Areas.
DC19 Listed	DC19.1 In determining applications for listed building consent or planning applications for development involving or having an impact on buildings of Special Architectural or Historic

Buildings	Interest, the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings and to protecting their general setting. In giving effect to this policy, the Council will: a. not grant Listed building consent for the demolition of a listed building other than in the most exceptional circumstances, and in any case, not unless it is satisfied that every possible effort has been made to continue the present use or to find a suitable alternative use; [...] c. not permit any external or internal alteration or addition to a Listed building where, in its opinion, there would be an adverse effect on its architectural or historic character; d. seek to preserve and enhance the settings of listed buildings by appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity, control over the use of adjacent land, and where appropriate, by the preservation of trees and landscape features; [...] f. not permit alterations to a listed building which would prevent the future use of any part of the building, in particular upper floors or basements, or where poor maintenance is likely to result.
DC20 Archaeology	DC20.1 The Council will give particular careful consideration to development proposals which affect scheduled Ancient Monuments and sites of archaeological interests, to ensure their preservation in place. In particular: a. Applications for consent to alter scheduled Ancient Monuments or sites of archaeological interest or their settings should be accompanied by an evaluation and assessment of the implications of the proposal. b. The Council will have special regard to the desirability of securing the preservation of Ancient Monuments and other sites of archaeological interest and their setting in place. It will not permit development that, in its opinion, would adversely affect scheduled Ancient Monuments, or other sites of archaeological interests, and their settings, In exceptional cases where development is inevitable, the Council will look at the scope for combining preservation in place with limited investigation and recording. c. Where the preservation of scheduled Ancient Monuments and sites of archaeological interest in place is not appropriate, the Council will seek to gain full and proper recording of the site through early consultation between the applicant and approved archaeological organisation.
DC22 Footpath Protection	DC22.1 In considering development proposals, the Council will have regard to the effect on existing pedestrian routes and will not normally allow development which would result in unacceptable inconvenience to local pedestrian movement.
Manchester Local Plan (Publication Draft) (2026)	
SP 1 Spatial Principles	The key spatial principles which will guide strategic development to 2039 are: • The Core Growth Area will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity, alongside high-quality residential development. This will be focused primarily on the City Centre within the Inner Ring Road, the universities and hospitals along the Oxford Road Corridor and east towards Central Park. • [...] • The City's network of green and blue infrastructure, including open spaces, will provide all residents with good access to recreation opportunities. The River Valleys

	(the Irk, Medlock and Mersey), canals and City Parks are particularly important, and access to these resources will be improved. • New development will maximise the potential of the City's transport infrastructure, in particular promoting walking, cycling and use of public transport.
SP 2 Development Principles	Development in all parts of the City should: • Contribute to the delivery of high quality design and architecture which creates places where people want to live, work and visit. • Contribute to the delivery of net zero carbon development. • Make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including: o creating well designed places that enhance or create character and promote social cohesion; o making a positive contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of residents; o considering the needs of all members of the community regardless of age, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, culture, ethnicity or income; and o taking account of the local character and history, including the surrounding built and natural environment. • Ensure efficient use of natural resources and reuse previously developed land and buildings wherever possible. • Ensure adverse impacts on water and air quality are mitigated. • Improve access to jobs, services, education, health services, sport, recreation and open space by locating development to reduce the need to travel and provide good access to sustainable transport provision. • Assist in the delivery of spatial interventions to address health inequalities.
GL 1 Growth Locations	[…] Appropriate infrastructure provision will be required to support the growth and continued capacity of these areas, with particular regard to public transport, green and blue, digital, renewable energy, healthcare, social and utilities infrastructure. […]
GL 2 Manchester City Centre	The expanded City Centre is the most significant economic location outside London and will remain the primary focus for business, retail, leisure, culture and tourism activity in Greater Manchester to 2039. Development proposals will be expected to contribute to inclusive economic growth. It will be expected to support residential growth, where there is no detriment to jobs, in high quality areas and to meet the need for quality student accommodation. Development which contributes to its role as a major visitor destination of national and international significance will be encouraged. […] <u>Areas</u> • Take account of the areas in which they are located by ensuring proposals are suitable in terms of the scale, massing, design, density and form. As part of this, consideration will need to be given to existing natural and built assets within and surrounding the site in the design of a proposal. • […] • Ensure development contributes to the creation of a high-quality inclusive environment that is accessible to all and promotes permeability by creating places that are easy to move through and connect with each other and existing services.

	• Ensure proposals take appropriate account of relevant heritage assets and their settings, including Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings in accordance with Policy D 4 Heritage and Policy D 5 Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, and Registered Parks and Gardens. • Ensure proposals make provision for enhanced active travel public transport and highway improvements, in accordance with the City Centre Transport Strategy to 2039, the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan: Manchester Local Implementation Plan and any subsequent strategy or guidance adopted in the future. • […] • Support the objective to be net zero carbon by 2038. Proposals will deliver energy efficient development through sustainable design and construction and utilise renewable and low carbon energy and be in accordance with policies in the Zero Carbon and Resilience Chapter. • Ensure development enhances and relates well to existing areas of open space and improves quality and public access to areas of open space. Public realm will also be enhanced and where appropriate provided as part of development proposals. • Ensure that any development is safe from and mitigates for potential flood risk from all sources including the River Medlock, River Irwell and surface run off and does not increase the flood risk elsewhere. • Developments should demonstrate their climate resilience, including Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs), the reduction of surface water flooding and mitigation of the urban heat island effect. • Improve safety and promote positive social contact, behaviours and community cohesion, including through creation or enhancement of effective places to dwell and through increased natural surveillance. • Ensure proposals promote civil resilience and mitigate the risk of potential terrorist attacks through recognised urban and landscape design solutions.
ZC 1 Sustainable Design and Construction	All new developments shall support sustainable development, unless it can be demonstrated that it is not practical or financially viable, through: […] b adopting the principles of the energy hierarchy as set out in policy JP-S2 of Places for Everyone with: • […] • minor non-residential development under 1000m² achieves BREEAM very good rating or meet the standard required by any subsequent revision to building regulations. c ensuring the efficient use of natural resources and materials accounting for the energy, carbon emissions and other environmental impacts arising from construction and end of life demolition and disposal. […] d minimising the need to travel and encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport instead of by private car and in non-residential developments encourage the more sustainable movement of freight through the location and form of development […] g ensuring the design of new developments is sufficiently flexible and adaptable to enable

	future changes of use or layout and facilitate future adaptation and retrofitting h designing development, through its layout, orientation, form and massing and through the use of green and blue infrastructure, to minimise the overheating of buildings and provide comfortable external spaces in hot weather and conserve water supplies. Where appropriate to its context, this should include the integration of green/living walls and the use of living roofs with sufficient substrate depth to maximise cooling benefits. Development proposals should demonstrate through a Sustainability Statement/ Assessment how the above have been met
ZC 2 Towards Net Zero Carbon	The council will expect new development, unless it can be demonstrated that it is not practical or financially viable, to achieve the net zero targets and energy efficiency for residential and commercial development as follows: • […] • All non-residential proposals should achieve levels in line with the Net Zero Building Standards or, where not specified, a site average space heating demand of around 40 kWh/m²/yr and a site average total energy demand of 45 kWh/m²/yr a) Energy Demand Reduction i All developments should minimise the demand for heating, cooling, hot water, lighting and power through the inclusion of energy efficiency measures and in line with the energy hierarchy […] iii Meet any remaining heat/cooling demands in a sustainable way as set out below. • The operational energy use (both regulated and unregulated) of a proposed development shall be considered at the design stage, to minimise any performance gap. This should be demonstrated through modelling using Passivhaus Passive House Planning Package (PHPP), Design for Performance, NABERS UK Design or CIBSE TM54. • Compliance with the energy efficiency and renewable energy provisions and presenting the carbon savings achieved across each step of the energy hierarchy (demand reduction, efficient supply, renewable and other low carbon technology) • any residual operational regulated carbon emissions (over the course of 30 years) will be calculated and offset to zero How these requirements will be met should be demonstrated through a detailed Energy Statement set out as part of its Sustainability Statement based on expected end user requirements. This will indicate, using site relevant evidence, how the development has sought to maximise reductions in carbon emissions through energy efficiency measures. Where end user requirements change significantly, an updated Energy Assessment should be submitted prior to construction. […] b) Renewable Energy All developments should, where feasible and possible, incorporate the use of renewable and low carbon energy on site including connecting to district heating networks which should be detailed in the Sustainability Statement/ Assessment. c) Carbon Offsetting Offsetting will only be considered an acceptable solution to net zero carbon

	requirements if it can be demonstrated that carbon reductions achieved via on-site measures (and near site renewables) are unfeasible or unviable and once on-site CO2 reduction requirements for energy efficiency and renewable energy measures have been met.
ZC 4 Heat Networks	Where district heating networks exist or are proposed the Council will expect the development proposals to demonstrate that the proposed heating and cooling systems have been selected considering the heat hierarchy in line with the following order of preference: i Connection with existing networks (with a decarbonisation plan) ii Site wide network fed by renewables or low carbon source iii Communal network fuelled by renewable energy sources In areas identified as a Heat Network Zone major development proposals will be expected to connect to an existing or planned network, where feasible and viable. In the absence of an existing or planned heat network new major development will be expected to be designed to facilitate future connection to a heat network. Development and energy proposals that would generate significant surplus or waste heat shall take all practicable measures to utilise that heat to meet local energy needs, including as part of an existing or proposed district heating network. Development proposals should demonstrate through a heat/energy network assessment how the above have been met. Where proposals involve the decarbonisation of existing heat networks supporting information should indicate the timeline for the transition works.
EN 1 Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure	The strategic elements that make up Manchester's network of green and blue infrastructure include: • […] • Existing parks, amenity space, and natural and semi natural open spaces that provide accessible recreational space but also make vital contributions to the City's biodiversity, flood management, community health and well-being, with the potential to increase this functionality still further. • Trees and woodland that together make up the urban forest. • […] Development proposals will be expected to: • Maintain and enhance existing green and blue infrastructure in terms of its quality, quantity and multifunctionality. • Incorporate green and blue infrastructure early in the design stage. • Seek to maximise the benefits that high quality green and blue infrastructure can bring to the local community and beyond, such as improving health, increasing biodiversity, enabling nature recovery and connecting people with nature, adapting to climate change and reducing flood risk, including through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). • Incorporate links to existing green and blue infrastructure to improve the accessibility of Manchester's open spaces and increase the potential for wildlife corridors. • Facilitate extensions to and connections with strategic recreational routes, where appropriate opportunities arise. • Ensure that appropriate long-term management and maintenance measures are in

	place for any proposed green and blue infrastructure. • Ensure that improvements to green and blue infrastructure are consistent with other relevant Local Plan policies; in accordance with the latest Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and with the priorities and actions set out in the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy (GM LNRS) • Consider the role that green and blue infrastructure can play in helping to enhance the historic environment. Where the benefits of a proposed development are considered to outweigh the loss of an existing element of green or blue infrastructure, the developer will be required to justify why the loss is necessary, and demonstrate how this loss will be mitigated in terms of quantity, quality, accessibility, function and future management.
EN 3 Trees and Woodlands	Provision of trees Trees are an essential element in Manchester's urban landscape. The provision of additional, and/or the improved management of existing trees, will be expected as part of the landscape treatment of all new development. Innovative approaches to incorporating trees that contribute to creating a strong sense of place will be welcomed. • Trees provided as part of the landscape treatment will be expected to: • Be designed into the scheme from the beginning; • Be appropriate to the scheme in terms of their size, species and placement; • Contribute to a strong sense of place; • Take opportunities to create tree lined streets and pedestrian routes, subject to practical considerations, e.g. visibility and driveway access, sufficient pavement width; • Assist in reducing or mitigating run-off and flood risk on the development site; and • Increase canopy cover and assist in providing shade and shelter. Proposals will be expected to set out the reasoning behind species selection and appropriate measures to secure the long-term maintenance of newly planted trees. Protection and replacement of trees New development should retain and integrate existing trees or fully justify why the removal of trees is required. A British Standard compliant tree survey (BS5837:2012 or later) should be submitted with the planning application. Development resulting in the loss of ancient woodland or ancient or veteran trees will not be permitted. The removal of a tree within a Conservation Area or subject to a Tree Preservation Order would need full justification and will not normally be permitted. Where tree loss or damage is proposed to allow for appropriate development, all existing trees above 7cm in diameter at 1.5m height shall be assessed by using an agreed valuation tool, e.g. the CAVAT Full Method, and the assessment submitted with the planning application. The size of the trees being planted should reflect the size of the trees being removed. The value of the trees lost will form the starting point for discussions on replacement trees. Where tree loss or damage is proposed to allow for appropriate development, all existing trees above 7cm in diameter at 1.5m height shall be assessed by using an agreed valuation tool, e.g. the CAVAT Full Method, and the assessment submitted with the planning application.

	The value of the trees lost will form the starting point for discussions on replacement trees. As a minimum, two trees or equivalent canopy cover at maturity, or a commensurate financial contribution, will be required for every tree lost. Within the following wards, which have a lower tree canopy cover in comparison with the average across the City, a minimum of three trees or equivalent canopy cover at maturity, or commensurate financial contribution, will be required for every tree lost. • […] • Piccadilly All new or replacement trees must be containerised standard trees sourced from a UK nursery with a robust biosecurity policy, and be a minimum tree size of Extra Heavy Standard (EHS) 14-16cm girth. The tree planting specifications shall be as set out in Section19 Appendix B: Tree Planting Guidance. New and replacement trees that are not subject to Biodiversity Net Gain thirty year maintenance requirements, will be subject to a three year maintenance condition to ensure that they are established and likely to reach maturity and will contribute to an increased canopy cover and climate resilience across the City. Each tree will also be subject to a ten year replanting condition so that in the event of a tree failing within the first ten years it will need to be replanted with a further three year maintenance period imposed. Replacement trees should be located on site in the first instance. Where off-site planting is required, this shall always be as close as possible to the development site, subject to practical considerations e.g. underground services. Where the development site is within one of the wards listed above, any off-site tree planting location should be as close to the site as possible. Where that is not possible, off site planting should be in the same ward or, as a last measure, within one of the wards listed. Off-site replacement trees will be secured through an appropriate legal agreement.
EN 4 Biodiversity and Geodiversity	[…] Any adverse impact on biodiversity will need to be fully justified against the wider benefits of the proposal and against other Local Plan policies. Where an adverse impact is unavoidable then this shall be minimised as far as possible, and developers will be required to provide appropriate mitigation and/or compensation for the remining adverse impact. Development should wherever possible seek to maintain, enhance or restore existing geodiversity. Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy (GM LNRS) Development should seek to support and deliver on the priorities and actions for nature recovery that are set out in the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy. […] All developments should demonstrate the following, having regard to the GM Local Nature Recovery Strategy relevant mapped and unmapped actions for that location: • The expansion, where appropriate, and enhancement of existing habitats; • The strategic creation and restoration of habitat to better connect existing habitats; • The way in which the design and layout of the development will enhance biodiversity, including large scale interventions e.g. wildflower meadow creation, and small scale interventions e.g. swift/bat bricks; and • The mitigation of the impact of any infrastructure that could be detrimental to

	achieving enhanced biodiversity connectivity, such as roads, buildings and other barriers to species movements e.g. fences. • The opportunities for design and construction to accommodate specific bespoke species actions outlined in LNRS.
EN 5 Biodiversity Net Gain	All development subject to the national mandatory requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain shall deliver at least a 10% net gain in biodiversity value, to be secured for a minimum of 30 years through an appropriate means e.g. a legal agreement. In identifying and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain, developers will be expected to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity that contributes to linkages between valuable or potentially valuable habitat areas where appropriate, with reference to: • The priorities and actions set out in the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy; • The Manchester Biodiversity Strategy, which provides further details of priority habitats within Manchester, and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement including corridors such as the Mersey, Medlock and Irk River Valleys, the canals and disused railway lines, and areas of managed greenspace particularly in parks; and • The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for Manchester, which gives detailed consideration to Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), including the Rochdale Canal SAC just outside the district boundary. Developers must follow the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy when selecting a site, in preparing development proposals and in preparing the Biodiversity Gain Plan. As far as possible, Biodiversity Net Gain must be provided on site. Any off-site Biodiversity Net Gain shall be provided in the following order of priority, with full justification given: 1. Off site, but as near to the development site as possible, within the boundary of Manchester District and within the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy Network area. 2. Off site, within the National Character Area: Manchester Conurbation, and within the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Network area. 3. Off site and within the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Network area. 4. Off site and within Manchester. 5. Off site and within Greater Manchester. 6. Off site, beyond Greater Manchester or via the purchase of Statutory Credits as a last resort. Consideration will be given to the provision of off-site Biodiversity Net Gain that is located within Manchester but not within the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Network, where the specific ecological benefits and wider social benefits to the local community can be clearly demonstrated. In the event of no possible Biodiversity Net Gain within Manchester, either on-site or off-site, the location for any off-site biodiversity units beyond Manchester's boundary, should have some benefit to Manchester residents e.g. schemes that would reduce flooding downstream or improve water quality. Significant on-site gains must be secured with a legal agreement or planning condition for 30 years and a Habitat Monitoring and Management Plan will be required. Significant on-site gains relate to habitats:

	• Of medium or higher distinctiveness in the biodiversity metric; • Of low distinctiveness but which create a large number of biodiversity units relative to the biodiversity value of the site before development; • Where distinctiveness is increased relative to the distinctiveness of the habitat before development; • Created or enhanced which are significant in area relative to the size of the development; or • Where the condition is enhanced, for example from poor or moderate to good. Significant on-site gains which are considered to be substantive will be secured with a legal agreement. [...] In the design of on site Biodiversity Net Gain, or any enhanced biodiversity where the site is exempt from BNG, consideration should also be given to the requirements of the Urban Green Factor Policy at the earliest possible stage, to ensure that these requirements are complementary and considered from the outset of design.
EN 6 Urban Green Factor	All development proposals, except for householder, shopfront and signage applications, and applications for Listed Building Consent and minor change of use, will be required to: • Incorporate the provision of urban greening early in the design stage; and • Include high quality greening, which is clearly indicated on landscaping/elevation plans that are submitted with the planning application All major development will be required to: • Include a Manchester Urban Green Factor (UGF) calculation, as set out in 18 Appendix A: Urban Green Factor Guidance, demonstrating how the scheme meets the following UGF scores as a minimum: o [...] o 0.3 for all other land use. • Submit an operation and management plan to show how the green features will remain successful throughout the building's life. • Ensure that UGF calculations are consistent with any mandatory BNG calculations; in terms of measurements of site area and on-site habitats post-development In providing on site urban greening, it is expected that the following will be prioritised in all developments: • The use of permeable paving, particularly where it can reduce discharge to combined sewer overflows and flood risk. • The linking of urban green features to the strategy for surface water management and the integration of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). These shall be designed to comply with current Manchester City Council Highways Developer Design Guidance. • Standard trees planted in connected tree pits with a minimum soil volume equivalent to at least two-thirds of the projected canopy area of the mature tree. Consideration may also be given to environmental improvements on riparian or canal side land that is adjacent to, but outside, the site edged red, provided they are secured by means of a legal agreement.

	Where the ability to reach the appropriate UGF score is reduced, for example, due to the provision of other social infrastructure of benefit to the local community as part of the overall scheme or due to insurmountable technical constraints such as contamination or subsurface issues, developers will be expected to justify fully the UGF score that has been reached. In instances where individual phases within a large development cannot meet the relevant UGF score e.g. where the site edged red is drawn very tightly around a building, submitted plans should indicate how the UGF score will be reached across the site as a whole
EN 7 Air Quality	The Council will seek to improve the air quality within Manchester, taking account of policy JP S5 in Places for Everyone; and statutory Air Quality Management Areas within the City. Developers will be expected to take measures to minimise and mitigate the local impact of emissions from traffic generated by the development, as well as emissions created by the use of the development itself, including from Combined Heat and Power and biomass plant. When assessing the appropriateness of locations for new development the Council will consider the impacts on air quality, alongside other plan objectives. This includes cumulative impacts, particularly in Air Quality Management Areas
EN 8 Water Quality and Efficiency	All development shall be expected to: • Avoid any adverse impact on water quality, including during the construction phase, and wherever possible seek to enhance water quality, both chemical and ecological. • Minimise surface water run-off from development and associated roads, and maximise the use of appropriate sustainable drainage systems in order to minimise groundwater contamination and avoid pollutants reaching watercourses. • Ensure that waste or litter cannot enter any watercourse from the site. • Where feasible and appropriate, seek to open up any culverted or hidden watercourse beneath the site to improve the ecological status of that watercourse. • […] • Major non-residential development will be required to achieve five credits for category Wat 01 of BREEAM unless demonstrated to be impracticable. • Development proposals should demonstrate how they contribute to integrated water management across the catchment, including consideration of cumulative impacts on water quality, flood risk and ecological status, in line with the Greater Manchester Integrated Water Management Plan.
EN 9 Flood Risk	In line with the risk-based sequential approach, development should be directed away from sites at the greatest risk of flooding, and towards sites with little or no risk of flooding; this should take account of all sources of flooding identified in the most recent Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and any subsequent updates. In addition to the requirements for site-specific Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs) set out in Planning Practice Guidance, an appropriate FRA will also be required for all development proposals, including changes of use, on sites greater than 0.5 ha within Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs) and Canal Hazard Zones. All new development should minimise surface water run-off, including through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and the appropriate use of Green Infrastructure. Developers should aim to minimise surface water runoff from developments and achieve at least the following runoff rates: • […] • A 50% runoff rate reduction for Brownfield sites, with an aim of reducing runoff to

	Greenfield rates up to a 1 in 100 year storm event, including consideration of climate change. The City of Manchester contains many sections of rivers which are culverted or 'hidden'; where these are indicated in the Council's asset register as being beneath the proposed development site, further investigation will be required and the development proposal should take this into account; where feasible and appropriate development should seek to open up culverted/hidden rivers to reduce the associated flood risk and danger of collapse, taking advantage of opportunities to enhance biodiversity and Green Infrastructure.
EN 10 Ground Contamination and Ground Stability	The Council will give priority for the remediation of previously developed land to strategic locations as identified within this document. Any proposal for development of land potentially affected by ground contamination must be accompanied by a human health and environmental risk assessment with details on proposed ground surveys and remediation work. All new development within former mining areas shall undertake an assessment of any associated risk to the proposed development and, if necessary, incorporate appropriate mitigation measures to address them.
EN 11 Waste	The Council will: • […] • Require all developers, including those of new waste management facilities within Manchester, to demonstrate the proposal's consistency with the principles of the waste hierarchy (prevention, reduction, re-use, recycling/composting, energy recovery, final disposal). • […] • Require all developers to submit a waste management plan to demonstrate how both construction and demolition waste will be minimised and recycled on site wherever possible and how the sustainable waste management needs of the end user will be met. • […]
SI 1 Protection of existing Open Space, Sport and Recreation land and facilities	The Council will seek to retain and improve existing open spaces and indoor and outdoor sport and recreational land and/or facilities. […] This policy applies to all existing sites and facilities that have an open space, sport, or recreational use or value, irrespective of whether they are owned or managed by the public, private or voluntary sector.
SI 2 Provision of new Open Space, Sport and Recreation land and facilities	Proposed new and/or enhanced open space, sport and recreation land and facilities, both indoor and outdoor, will be supported in principle where they are evidenced by an appropriate, up-to-date needs assessment, and subject to consideration of any impact on neighbouring uses. […]
SI 4 Social Value	Major planning proposals should seek to maximise social value provided by new development for its future users and the wider community. Major planning proposals will be informed and accompanied by a Social Value Statement clearly setting out the measures proposed through the lifecycle of the development that will

	make a positive contribution to social value, including Employment and Skills plans, the creation of apprenticeships and training opportunities for local people and the use of local suppliers of goods and services.
T 1 Transport Principles	To deliver a world class, integrated transport system for Greater Manchester, achieve the modal shift from private vehicles to public transport, shared mobility and active travel and contribute to zero carbon, road danger reduction and sustainable economic growth, the Council will support proposals that: • Enable and remove barriers to travel and access by public transport and active travel, and only enable the minimum necessary quantum of trips by private vehicle. • Promote sustainable economic growth, a reduction in carbon emissions, improve equitable access to services and positively contribute to delivery of the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040, the Manchester Climate Change Framework, City Centre Transport Strategy 2040 and subsequent updates to these documents. • […] • Contribute to improvements to the extent and reliability of the public transport network through safe and attractive waiting and interchange facilities, better bus and rapid transit priority, improved services and information provision. • […] • Are located and designed, through their internal and site layout, public realm and transport infrastructure, to prioritise users according to the following hierarchy, in order of preference, as set out in Places for Everyone policy JP-C1: o Pedestrians and people using mobility aids; o Cyclists, powered two wheelers and public transport users; o People doing business or providing services (such as taxis/private hire, deliveries or waste collection); o People in personal motorised vehicles.
T 2 Sustainable location of development	The Council will actively manage the pattern of development to ensure that new development: - • Is located to ensure access by convenient, frequent and high-quality public transport and active travel. • Is easily accessible by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport; connecting residents to jobs, centres, health, leisure, open space and educational opportunities. • Will be designed to prioritise practical, safe and convenient access and use by sustainable transport modes, namely walking, cycling and public transport and must include accessible parking provision. • In the City Centre, as defined in the Policies Map, development will be permitted to include appropriate car parking provision to meet the needs for persons with disabilities; emergency vehicles; and vehicles accessing to provide services to businesses within the City Centre. Additional parking required beyond these categories will be considered in relation to how it will complement the Council's approach to sustainable transport within the City Centre. • […] • Evidence to justify parking provision associated with development proposals should be provided in a reasonable and proportionate Transport Assessment according to

	the requirements in Places for Everyone Policy JP C8. • In all parts of the City, proposals will provide cycle parking in line with national guidance (LTN 1/20) or the use of alternative solutions where appropriate reasons can be demonstrated. • Where development would be likely to lead to levels of off-site car parking that would have an adverse impact on the surrounding area, appropriate mitigation measures will be required
D 1 Design Principles	All development will be required to create high quality places, both in terms of design of individual building; and how development combines to create a sense of place and relate to the wider context. The key principles to incorporate include: • Reinforce qualities of local character by consideration of existing context and character; rooted within a sense of place; incorporate high quality materials and details; and are of an appropriate scale. • Addressing the needs of diverse and inclusive communities. • Demonstrate how the design responds to street hierarchy including the contribution to safe and active streets with opportunities for surveillance. • Taking into account connectivity and the wider transport network that facilitates and encourages walking and cycling; and enhances way finding and legibility. • Respond positively to landscape context and connect to blue and green infrastructure network. • Offer appropriate solutions for car parking, cycle and bin storage that do not dominate the street scene. • Future proof from climate change by reducing need for energy in the design of the development, build in adaptability, and apply solutions that consider retrofit and reuse first. • […] […]
D 2 Character Areas	All development should demonstrate how proposals consider the distinct character areas of the city. • City Centre; The main opportunity area for growth with a significant presence of heritage and concentration of listed buildings, requiring development to enhance and complement the historic legacy and provide skyline interest, with high quality innovative and contemporary designs that promote active frontages. • […]
D 4 Heritage	Manchester has a distinctive historic environment with a concentration of heritage assets in the city which contribute to the character, economy, sustainability, culture and quality of life. Development affecting Heritage assets will positively conserve or enhance their significance as an integral part of sustainable growth, and will: • Describe and assess the significance of the heritage asset which will inform proposals for their positive conservation. • Ensure heritage assets and their settings are conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance. • Secure the continued beneficial use of heritage assets while allowing them to meet

	changing needs and adapt to climate change. • Ensure heritage is at the heart of place making and sustainable growth, responding positively to the distinctive character of our heritage assets and delivering high quality buildings and spaces which enhance their settings. • Avoid harm to the significance of heritage assets, but where unavoidable clearly demonstrate the public benefit of the proposals and seek to mitigate the harm in all cases. Archaeological Assets Conserve and enhance archaeological heritage assets and scheduled ancient monuments in a manner appropriate to their significance. Prioritise preservation in situ for archaeological remains of significance and where not feasible ensure appropriate mitigation through excavation, recording and analysis. Non-designated Heritage assets (NDHAs) Non-designated heritage assets including local buildings and structures of merit, archaeology, and open spaces will be conserved. When assessing Proposals affecting NDHAs a balanced judgement will be made regarding the scale of any harm or loss of the asset and the public benefit of the development.
D 5 Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, and Registered Parks and Gardens	Conservation Areas New development will conserve or enhance the character and appearance of Conservation Areas taking into account their special architectural or historic interest and the contribution made by their setting, and will:: • Conserve the unique and distinctive townscape characteristics and features of the conservation areas including landscape character, boundary treatments, walls, gardens, open spaces, trees and buildings. • Preserve or enhance key views and vistas. • Expect high quality design in new development that enhances the historic an architectural character. • Use high quality materials and detailing appropriate to the context. • Refurbish or replace undesignated buildings that have a negative impact on the area. • Take opportunities to better reveal the significance of the area. • Resist harmful incremental changes where the cumulative effect erodes the character and appearance of the area. • Take account of any further guidance and frameworks approved by the Council. Listed Buildings Alterations to listed buildings and their settings will conserve or enhance their significance, where appropriate restoring architectural detail and historic fabric through: • Development affecting settings of Listed Buildings should take opportunities to enhance or better reveal their significance. • Taking opportunities to reinstate internal and external features of special architectural or historic significance and remove harmful features. • […] • Resisting the demolition of Listed Buildings in whole or in part or the removal or

	modification of features which contribute to significance. • Ensuring work is informed by appropriate specialists and carried out to high quality conservation standards. [...]
DM 1 Development Management	All development will have regard to the following specific issues. • 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. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area. • Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation. This could also include proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise. • Accessibility: buildings and neighbourhoods, including recreational open space and public realm, fully accessible to disabled people, access to new development by sustainable transport modes. • Community safety and crime prevention. • Design for health. • Adequacy of internal accommodation and external amenity space. • Refuse storage and collection. • Vehicular access and car parking. • Effects relating to biodiversity, including habitat and species protection, landscape, archaeological or built heritage. • Green Infrastructure including open space, both public and private. • The use of alternatives to peat-based products in landscaping/gardens within development schemes. • Flood risk and drainage. • Existing or proposed hazardous installations • Designed to ensure that where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development the applicant (or agent of change) should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed.

Appendix 2

Appendix 2 – Blue / Green Infrastructure Statement

PLANIT

12 August 2026

Green Blue Infrastructure Strategy

4004-WO-002-01-Green Blue Infrastructure Strategy

About

The proposed redevelopment of Piccadilly Gardens represents an opportunity to tie in with and enhance the green and blue infrastructure of this key location in the heart of Manchester City Centre. Creating a resilient biodiverse and people focused public realm, the strategy seeks to balance the sites functions as a key Civic destination, transport interchange and major arrival space, whilst delivering measurable environmental, social and climate benefits.

Green Infrastructure

The landscape proposals are focused creating a coherent and high-quality green network comprising; extensive tree planting, diverse ornamental gardens and an enhanced, consolidated central lawn. An extensive tree canopy will increase urban greening, improve visual amenity and provide areas of shade, helping combat urban heat Island effect and contribute to long-term climate resilience and usability of the space.

Species selection has focused on robust, climate adaptive planting capable of thriving in the challenging urban conditions and changeable climate we now experience while supporting biodiversity through the provision of nectar pollen habitat and seasonal interest. The tree planting strategy makes a connection with Manchester's wider Green Infrastructure network, a celebration of 'The Botany of Manchester'. This not only adds to the city-wide network of canopy cover, habitat opportunities and pollinators/urban wildlife but also create a compelling piece of public storytelling as to how our network of green spaces are evolving and working together.

Blue Infrastructure and SUDs Management

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) are integrated into the design from the outset. Surface water discharge rates will be reduced through on-site attenuation and controlled discharge to deliver a significant betterment (50% improvement - from 50.5 l/s to 25.2 l/s for a 1in1 event) over the existing rates – reducing pressure on the existing combined sewer network.

Where possible surface water run-off will be managed as close to source as is practicable, water being directed into the planting beds which, where required, have been designed as rain gardens. Another approach has been to integrate permeable surfaces with water attenuated in the build ups below ground – this occurs within the play area. To deal with the demand for surface water storage collected over such a large area, there will also be two further below ground attenuation tanks which will store water during heavy rainfall. The combination of these approaches will reduce pressure on existing drainage infrastructure, improve water quality and contribute to climate change resilience.

The proposals seek to make visible the water cycle through the landscape, making visible the movement of water to the raingardens which, alongside proposed interpretation boards will convey to the public the purpose and benefits of such an approach. The blue strategy also capitalises on the redundant water storage tanks which previously served the fountain feature within the gardens. These tanks will now store rainwater for irrigating the planting and lawn area within the gardens. This reduces the requirement for potable water demand and supports the long-term establishment of planting.

By incorporating the blue water design into the foundations of the landscape design, the proposals will improve flood resilience while delivering attractive, multi-functional green spaces.

PLANIT

Climate Resilience, Health and Wellbeing

The redesign of Piccadilly gardens responds directly to the challenges of climate change through increased tree canopy cover, SUDS integration, climate resilient planting and an enhanced green space provision. These measures combined will help mitigate overheating, manage more intense and frequent heavy rainfall events and improve the environmental performance of the site over its lifetime.

It's essential to the successful outcomes of this project to create an inclusive and accessible space that encourages walking, social interaction and everyday use by the whole population. The enhanced public realm will provide opportunities for recreation, play, relaxation and informal gathering within a much-improved greener setting. These will contribute to improve health and well-being, strengthening resident connection between the urban city centre environment and the natural world around them.

Summary

The green and blue infrastructure strategy delivers a multifunctional landscape that integrates biodiversity, sustainable water management, climate resilience and placemaking. The gardens will bring substantial planting and tree cover, rain gardens, SUDS features, and a large central lawn, creating a greener healthier and more resilient public realm that supports people and nature more positively into the future as part of Manchester's wider environmental ambitions.

This statement is to be read in conjunction with Civic Engineers Combined Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy Report (July 2026) - 4475-CIV-XX-XX-RP-C-30001-S2. Extract of proposed drainage strategy is shown below, refer Civic supporting information for more detail.

