

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Resolution**

**Report to:** Executive – 11 September 2013

**Subject:** The Manchester Metropolitan University Didsbury Campus Estate: A Draft Regeneration Framework

**Report of:** The Chief Executive

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**Summary**

This report outlines proposals brought forward by the Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) for the future development of their Didsbury Campus estate which have been set out in a draft Regeneration framework. The report seeks the endorsement of the Executive to these proposals prior to the University embarking upon a period of consultation on this Framework with local stakeholders.

**Recommendations**

The Executive is recommended to:

- Endorse the draft Didsbury Campus Regeneration Framework as a basis for consultation with local stakeholders and note that the outcomes of consultation and a final version of the Framework will be reported to a future meeting of the Executive.

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**Wards Affected:** Didsbury West, Didsbury East

<b>Community Strategy Spine</b>	<b>Summary of the contribution to the strategy</b>
Performance of the economy of the region and sub region	The proposals for the Didsbury Campus offer the potential for executive homes to be developed on part of the site. Broadening this type of housing offer within the city and the city region helps contribute to attracting those businesses to the city region who have the potential to add significantly to the performance of the sub-regional and regional economy and create new employment opportunities.
Reaching full potential in education and employment	The draft Didsbury Campus Regeneration Framework provides the opportunity for new educational facilities to be developed on part of the land in the University's ownership.
Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect	Not Applicable

Neighbourhoods of Choice	The Didsbury Campus estate of the Manchester Metropolitan University offers the potential to help deliver the Manchester Residential Growth prospectus, helping contribute to and meet the demand for new homes in the city.
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**Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:**

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

**Financial Consequences**

There are no financial implications for the City Council arising from this report.

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

- The Rationalisation and Development of the Manchester Metropolitan University Estate, Executive, 24<sup>th</sup> July, 2013

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 At the July meeting of the Executive Members were informed of proposals for the City Council to work in partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) to bring forward proposals for the redevelopment of their estate which will progressively become surplus to the University's needs over the next year. Such an approach to working in partnership would enable the University to dispose of their surplus assets in a manner that, not only supports the University's corporate objectives, but also makes a significant contribution to the long term economic growth of the city, our residential growth ambitions, and our place making ambitions.
- 1.2 This report sets out a draft Regeneration Framework for the University's Didsbury Campus estate in South Manchester. It outlines a set of proposals for this site for the future development of this important site, which subject to the comments of the Executive, will then be subject to consultation in the Autumn. The outcomes of this consultation will be reported to a future meeting of the Executive along with a final version of the Framework to which approval will be sought.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The Manchester Metropolitan University's commitment to rationalise its estate into two versatile and sustainable campuses is part of a plan to improve efficiency and raise standards. The University is now reaching the final year of a £350m investment programme in creating new high quality learning environments, supported by key welfare and academic services administration in the city. Within Manchester the intention has been to unify MMU into one central campus, to bring the Didsbury, Hollings, Aytoun and Elizabeth Gaskell campuses together with the existing All Saints campus to create one sustainable, central learning environment.
- 2.2 In relation to the Didsbury Campus the University has three linked property assets: the main campus to the east of Wilmslow Road; the Broomhurst Halls of Residence to the west of Wilmslow Road; and the Simon Playing Fields (which lie to the west of the Halls of Residence), both of which are in the Didsbury St. James Conservation Area. Taken together these assets cover some 16.75 acres. Within the main campus one building is Grade II\* listed and a small number are Grade II listed. There are also a number of trees across the sites. The playing fields are not suitable for development due to restrictive covenants and their position on the Mersey Flood Plain.
- 2.3 Building on the successful relationship between the City Council and Manchester Metropolitan University both parties have been working together over the last 12 months to review the future of the Didsbury Campus and how this important South Manchester asset could make a significant contribution to the long term economic growth of the city, our residential growth ambitions, and our place making ambitions. As reported to the July meeting of the Executive initial discussions with the University indicated that a residential led scheme would be supported in this location. The site offers the city the opportunity to expand the number of executive homes in the city, helping to

expand the city's tax base. The Executive were also informed that, as part of these discussions, the University were asked to consider setting aside land within the Campus for educational purposes, in particular, a site for a primary school as any future residential development on this site will place increased demands for places in the Didsbury area.

### **3.0 The Didsbury Campus: A draft Regeneration Framework**

- 3.1 In order to bring forward proposals for the future development of the Didsbury Campus it was agreed with the University that the establishment of a Regeneration Framework for this site would create the necessary platform, which would then enable the site to be marketed. The creation of this Framework would also give residents, stakeholders and other interested parties an opportunity to engage and influence the future development of this important site in the city.
- 3.2 Annex 1 of this report sets out the Draft Regeneration Framework that has been developed for the University's Didsbury Campus Estate.
- 3.3 It is intended that this draft Framework, subject to the comments of the Executive, will then undergo a period of public consultation in the Autumn of 2013. It is anticipated that the final draft of the Framework will be submitted to the Executive in late 2013 / early 2014. Subject to the views of the Executive the University would intend to market the site with an agreed Framework in place and appoint a Development Partner who would then progress any planning applications, listed building consents and conservation area consents.

### **4.0 Concluding Remarks**

- 4.1 The long standing relationship between the City Council and the Manchester Metropolitan University has provided a very solid platform of partnership working within which the disposal strategy for the University's surplus assets is now being taken forward. The draft Didsbury Campus Regeneration Framework attached to this report has been developed within that context and it clearly reflects the potential that this site can make to the overall transformation of the city, making a lasting contribution to the delivery of our growth ambitions, and leaving a very positive legacy to the city.
- 4.2 Detailed recommendations appear at the front of this Report.

### **5.0 Contributing to the Community Strategy**

#### **(a) Performance of the economy of the region and sub region**

- 5.1 The proposals for the Didsbury Campus offer the potential for executive homes to be developed on part of the site. Broadening this type of housing offer within the city and the city region helps contribute to attracting those businesses to the city region who have the potential to add significantly to the performance of the sub-regional and regional economy and create new employment opportunities.

**(b) Reaching full potential in education and employment**

- 5.2 The draft Didsbury Campus Regeneration Framework provides the opportunity for new educational facilities to be developed on part of the land in the University's ownership.

**(c) Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect**

- 5.3 Not Applicable

**(d) Neighbourhoods of Choice**

- 5.4 The Didsbury Campus estate of the Manchester Metropolitan University offers the potential to help deliver the Manchester Residential Growth prospectus, helping contribute to and meet the demand for new homes in the city.

**6.0 Key Polices and Considerations**

**(a) Equal Opportunities**

- 6.1 Across the entire Manchester Metropolitan University surplus estate portfolio offer there is a commitment to ensure that the design standards throughout the redevelopment will comply with the highest standards of accessibility.

**(b) Risk Management**

- 6.2 Not applicable

**(c) Legal Considerations**

- 6.3 The City Council will receive a final version of the Didsbury Campus Regeneration Framework later in the year which will include the results of a public consultation. In due course a planning application will be made, together with applications for listed building and conservation area consents as required. In its role as Local Planning Authority, the City Council will consider and determine these applications.

## Annex 1



# Didsbury Campus Regeneration Framework *DRAFT*

September 2013



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## Foreword

Manchester Metropolitan University is committed to the City of Manchester and the wider City Region. As part of our commitment to deliver excellence in education, we are implementing an estate strategy which will create a major new campus at Birley Fields, linked to our existing accommodation at All Saints on Oxford Road.

Our estate strategy will lead to us vacating a number of existing property assets. We will aim to ensure that these surplus assets play a full role in supporting the University's future growth; in delivering Manchester's economic growth ambitions and ensuring that there is a lasting legacy to the local community in terms of beneficial use.

Our Didsbury assets provide a unique opportunity to meet the City's need for high quality executive housing, to preserve and enhance important listed buildings, and to deliver new and improved education and community facilities. This Draft Regeneration Framework for our Didsbury property demonstrates how these aims can be delivered.

Through the autumn period, we will seek the views of the community and other stakeholders before finalising the Framework.

**John Brooks**  
**Vice Chancellor**  
**Manchester Metropolitan University**

## 1 Introduction

Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) is constructing a new campus at Birley Fields in Manchester, close to its existing main campus at All Saints on Oxford Road. When the new campus is complete (targeted for autumn 2014), the University will relocate its Faculty of Education which is located in Didsbury.

The University has three separate landholdings in Didsbury:

- The Main Campus - to the east of Wilmslow Road
- The Broomhurst Halls of Residence - to the west of Wilmslow Road
- The Simon Playing Fields - lying to the west of the Halls of Residence.

The location of these is illustrated below:



All of these sites will be surplus to the requirements of the University and the University is seeking to secure beneficial re-use of the sites. This Draft Regeneration Framework outlines the key features of University's assets, how their development can deliver important benefits to Didsbury and the wider City area, and establishes some key development principles.

The Regeneration Framework will be an important guide for any potential purchasers of these important surplus assets as it will establish the nature of development that will be appropriate and acceptable and define key development parameters.

The Framework places the opportunity presented by the University's assets in the context of the wider needs and priorities for Didsbury, South Manchester and the wider City Region. The assets present an opportunity for a comprehensive package of proposals which meet a critical need for high quality housing development as well as much needed education, sporting and community facilities.

## THE MAIN CAMPUS

The Main Campus provides an opportunity to develop high quality executive homes for which there is a particular need in South Manchester. Residential use is compatible with the beneficial use of the listed buildings on the campus and with the heritage and landscape value of the site.

Much of the site provides an opportunity for new development and should accommodate large, high quality family housing.



## BROOMHURST HALLS OF RESIDENCE SITE

The site is suitable for residential use, including family housing, apartments and care home or retirement home use. However, as part of a comprehensive approach to the redevelopment of the University's assets, the Halls of Residence site presents an opportunity to accommodate a new primary school.

## SIMON PLAYING FIELDS

It is proposed that the Playing Fields are retained and used by the school and by the local community including local sports clubs.

## CONSULTATION

The University is consulting the local community and stakeholders on this Regeneration Framework. This will inform a final version of the Framework which will be presented to the City Council's Executive for approval.

The Regeneration Framework will inform the University's disposal process and guide potential purchasers, particularly of the Main Campus site.

## 2 MMU Didsbury: Strategic Context

All of the University's surplus assets provide opportunities for alternative development which support the strategic priorities of the City of Manchester and the City Region. This section considers the key strategic policy and priorities that are relevant to the future development and use of the University's assets in Didsbury.

### SUPPORTING MANCHESTER'S STRATEGIC GROWTH STRATEGY

This Regeneration Framework promotes the development and use of the University's surplus assets in a way which supports the City's growth strategy, especially through their potential to provide high quality housing in Didsbury and to provide education and sports facilities which benefit the community.



### Residential Growth Prospectus (2013)

The City is committed to supporting economic growth and delivering new homes to respond to forecast population and employment projections. The emerging Residential Growth Prospectus encourages and guides the delivery of new housing across the City. It details how the Council will work to accelerate housing growth at the same time as delivering attractive and successful neighbourhoods where increasing numbers of people will choose to live, close to employment opportunities and all the other attractions of a successful and growing city. It sends a strong message to the market that the city is open for business in terms of housing development and that the Council is keen to work proactively with its partners to increase the pace of housing delivery to support wider economic sustainable growth.

### South Manchester Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) (2008)

This document identifies that the South Manchester housing market is stretched in all sectors. There is an identified significant need for large family homes for sale. There is a lack of land to create new housing and therefore significant challenges in delivering a wider housing choice in South Manchester. The Framework refers to the need to maximise the potential of the limited number of key development sites. It recognises Didsbury as a popular, high value neighbourhood, with much of the recent activity in the apartment and buy to let sectors. It suggests that the pressure created by these markets has limited the amount of new-build family accommodation coming to the market and that one of the principal issues for South Manchester is therefore to ensure a continued supply of high quality family housing.

### **Greater Manchester Strategy (2009)**

This document defines the City Region's approach to economic development recognising that the focus of public intervention needs to rebalance itself to respond to opportunities rather than being mainly driven by need. It seeks to transform the quality of the City Region's residential offer, suggesting that the structure of the existing housing stock shows a huge concentration in the lowest Council Tax bands. It recognises that the City Region has to be known as a place that offers high quality housing in places where people at all levels of the market, including the highly skilled and talented, will choose, and can afford, to live and invest. In turn, this will assist to drive economic growth and competitiveness.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY**

This Draft Regeneration Framework needs to be seen in the context of the Manchester Core Strategy, the core component of the emerging Local Development Framework, as outlined below:

### **Manchester Core Strategy (2012-2027)**

This reports that South Manchester contains some of the most expensive residential property in Manchester, a higher proportion of affluent households than any of the other SRF areas and an above average proportion of the higher educated workforce. The Core Strategy identifies a vision for the City, which includes the following of particular relevance:

- To provide a wide range of quality housing and an attractive environment where locally distinctive character is conserved and enhanced
- Its distinctive historic environment is understood, valued, cared for and its potential fully realised

The Core Strategy identifies five spatial objectives, one of which relates to the need *“to provide for a significant increase in high quality housing provision at sustainable locations throughout the City, to both address demographic needs and to support economic growth”*.

Under this objective, the Strategy seeks to deliver approximately 60,000 new dwellings in Manchester between 2009 and 2027, including 3,240 in South Manchester (c.5%), as per Policy H6. The small allocation for South Manchester reflects the lack of land available for new residential development this area. Policy H6 for South Manchester indicates that outside of the defined District Centres priorities will be for housing that meets identified shortfalls, including family housing, as well as housing that meets the needs of elderly people. Policy H6 also states that it is important to increase housing choice by adding to the stock of larger housing units to complement new housing on higher value sites to retain or attract high income earners by releasing under-occupied property.

Policy EN3, in respect of Heritage, does encourage new developments to preserve, or where possible, enhance the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance. The residential conversion of the Didsbury Campus heritage assets to apartments offers one viable means of



retaining and enhancing these key city assets whilst also broadening and deepening the housing offer in South Manchester.

## PROVISION OF SCHOOL PLACES

A further strategic agenda of importance relates to the provision of school places. The Council considered a report in January 2013 on "School Organisation and Capital Investment Strategy". It identifies that "Manchester's child population is growing rapidly". Between 2008 and 2012, there were an additional 7,385 primary school places created in Manchester schools.

Further additional capacity is needed over the period 2013-16. By 2015/16 there is forecast need for an additional 8,182 places. Of this number, funding has been secured for 6,084, leaving 2,098 places requiring funding. Of the 8,182 additional places required, 2,071 places (25% of the total) are in South Manchester.

There is a further expectation that child population will continue to grow beyond 2016, placing further pressure on school places.

Without provision of sufficient school places, the City's aspirations to develop high quality, effective neighbourhoods will be constrained.

### 3 Development Issues and Opportunities

This section considers the development issues and opportunities presented by the University's surplus assets in Didsbury.

#### LOCATION AND SCALE

The Didsbury assets are located close to the centre of Didsbury, one of Manchester's and the City Region's prime suburban residential neighbourhoods, located approximately 7km south of the City Centre and close to Junction 5 of the M60 and is only 6km from Manchester Airport.

The Campus is very close to Didsbury Village, with its wide range of shops, restaurants and amenities. To the immediate south is Tower Business Park and less than 1 km to the east is the Parris Wood Entertainment Centre, East Didsbury Station and the recently opened Metro Station and Park and Ride. The Campus is also close to areas of open space and recreational facilities including to Didsbury Park and Fletcher Moss Park and Didsbury Cricket Club. It is highly accessible to the Mersey Valley. Some of these key local facilities are illustrated on the below plan.



#### OWNERSHIP AND AVAILABILITY

Manchester Metropolitan University owns the freehold of all three assets. The Simon Playing Fields are subject to a covenant restricting use to playing fields.

#### SITE CONDITIONS AND ECOLOGY

The University has commissioned studies to consider the environmental and ecological issues across the surplus assets.

- The topography of the main campus and the Broomhurst Halls of Residence is relatively flat
- There are no environmental designations/landscape areas within or immediately adjacent to the site
- The sites comprise a number of mature trees which are protected due to the Conservation Area status

- There is potential for bat roosts due to the mature trees and the buildings on the site
- There are no indications of previous industrial uses on the sites
- The main campus and the Broomhurst Halls of Residence are in Flood Risk Zone 1 (low risk). The Simon Playing Fields are in Flood Risk Zone 2/3 and are also at risk of reservoir flooding
- There is the potential for air quality/noise issues associated with Wilmslow Road and parts of the site adjacent to Wilmslow Road fall within the Air Quality Management Area



## HERITAGE CONTEXT

There are important heritage assets on the University's Main Campus. The University has commissioned initial work to consider the value of the site from a heritage perspective. This work identifies a number of key principles that should govern any development of the site having regard to heritage considerations.

*The overall site masterplanning should seek to reinstate some of the original character of the site through demolition of the post-war buildings on the site, redevelopment with smaller-scale buildings that responds to the existing topography and landscape qualities and positioning of the listed and historic buildings within the site.*

*New development should draw influence from its context in terms of scale, form, height, materials and architectural language but there is scope to employ a contemporary approach to new design. This is subject to it not adversely impacting on the character, appearance and special interest of the listed buildings on the site. Where The Grove was developed locally as small area with a distinct character in its own right and of its time, there is an opportunity to develop a new layer of architecture within the Didsbury site that represents an evolution of the housing typology across the conservation area.*

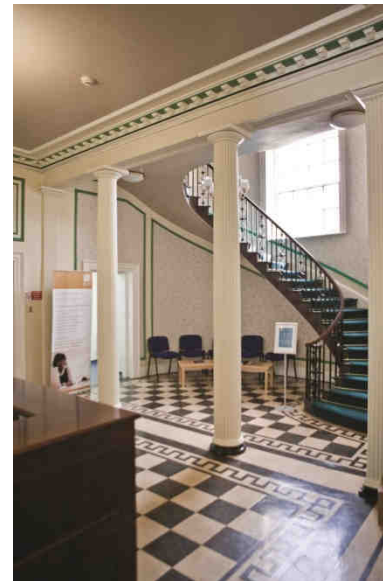
*Any associated landscaping associated with new development should take into account the historic, open and suburban nature of the site and its context. Areas of hard standing detract from the character of the site and in developing access routes, car parking and other spaces, the topography and layout of the site should be taken into account in order to keep such areas to the rear of the site. Areas of hard standing could be off set with new planting and screening in other areas. The overall objective is to reinstate a more verdant, open feel to the site and draw existing hard landscape away from the historic buildings on the site where appropriate.*

*Development should be focused away from Wilmslow Road, as the principle route through the conservation area so as to make the distinction between the*

*site's main historic street frontage and any new development to the rear. Views across the site are an important consideration, particularly from views from the north, west and south. Visual relationships between existing buildings and any planned development will need attention and the site's masterplanning should seek to avoid significant overlapping of the historic buildings and any new context in views.*

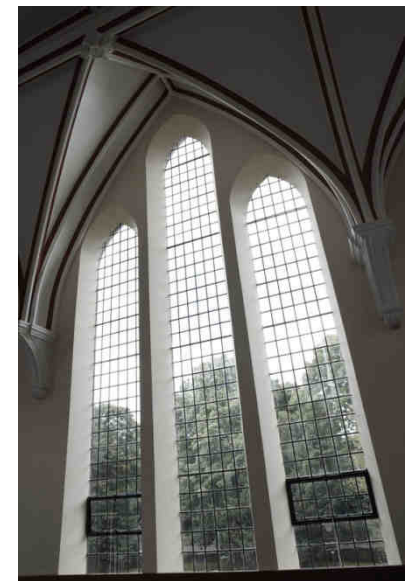
*With regard to the listed buildings themselves (but particularly the Grade II\* Administration Building), any alteration or conversion will need to be handled with sensitivity and careful consideration. The general approach should be to respect and protect the existing historic character, appearance and significance of the buildings and to approach any alterations from a perspective of minimal intervention.*

*National and local policy strives for change to designated heritage assets to be positive and beneficial and not cause harm to the assets themselves. As set out above, it is considered that there is scope for alteration of the site and potential for redevelopment. Policy seeks to ensure that development proposals that have an impact on the historic environment are fully informed as to the special*



*interest and significance of designated heritage assets.*

*Further investigation in relation to potential new uses of the*





*site's listed buildings should be undertaken so as to inform the feasibility of conversion and in striking a balance between new uses and protecting and enhancing significance.*

## TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAYS

A study has been undertaken into the traffic and highways issues which would impact development of the University's assets following the ending of educational use. Key issues and conclusions include the following:

- Any future use of the Main Campus (notably for housing) will generate fewer peak time car journeys than is generated by the existing educational use
- There are currently four vehicular access points to the site (main access off Wilmslow Road on the western site boundary, a minor access point off Wilmslow Road to the southern boundary, a minor access point off Sandhurst Road along the site's northern boundary and an access point off Didsbury Park)
- Pedestrian/cycle access is also via these points and there are additional pedestrian/cycle only access points
- Currently, parking on surrounding residential streets and local congestion is a concern. Didsbury Campus attracts a high number of mature students many of whom are car owners and there is an above average car ownership rate in Didsbury on the whole
- Parking demands from any new development on the Main Campus should be wholly accommodated on site to mitigate off-site impacts

- A review of accident data suggests that there are no significant safety concerns on the local highway network
- The site is accessible by sustainable modes of transport, with cycle lanes, 4 bus stops within the recommended 400m walking distance of the site and East Didsbury Rail and Metro Stations within 800m walking distance of the site
- Development of the Broomhurst site may add to vehicular traffic on Wilmslow Road and any impacts will need to be mitigated and managed

## PLANNING POLICY

In addition to the strategic policy agendas outlined in Section 4, future development of the University's surplus assets will need to have regard to the local planning policies.

- The sites lie within the Didsbury St James Conservation Area. The greatest concentration of listed buildings in Manchester, outside the City Centre, is to be found in this conservation area. Key development requirements include the following

*The quality of the built environment, as well as the setting of buildings, is of a very high standard, and a similar high standard will be expected of any scheme which proposes new buildings, extensions, or other major developments.*

*The existing well-treed suburban character of the conservation area should be maintained, and any development proposals should respect this. The construction of large floorplan buildings without substantial landscape intervening would inevitably damage the quality of the setting.*

- The Simon Playing Fields lie within the designated Green Belt
- Wilmslow Road is designated as an Environmental Improvement Corridor
- Nearby Didsbury Park and Fletcher Moss Park are designated as Leisure Improvement Areas
- There are local and national cycle routes nearby, including along the new Metrolink line across Didsbury Park to Dene Road
- There is some limited community use of the University sports hall on the Main Campus, which also includes two outdoor tennis courts. Development proposals will need to have regard to Policy EN10 as follows. Examination of adherence to this policy will need to have regard to the proposal for the University's Simon Playing Fields being made available for new school and community open space and sports use

*Proposals on existing open spaces and sport and recreation facilities will only be permitted where:*

- *Equivalent or better replacement open space, sport or recreation facilities will be provided in the local area;*  
*or*
- *The site has been demonstrated to be surplus for its current open space, sport or recreation function and the City wide standards .... are maintained, and*  
*it could not fulfil other unsatisfied open space, sport or recreation needs, and a proposed replacement will remedy a deficiency in another type of open space, sport or recreation facility in the local area;*  
*or*
- *The development will be ancillary to the open space, sport or recreation facility and complement the use or character.*

## 4 Site Characteristics

Here we describe the extent of the University's landholdings in Didsbury and the key characteristics of each site.

In Didsbury, the University has three separate but linked ownerships.

### THE MAIN CAMPUS - CHARACTERISTICS

The Main Campus is bounded by Wilmslow Road to the west and south, by Sandhurst Road to the north and by the rear of properties fronting Didsbury Park to the east. The site area is some 3.99 hectares (9.86 acres) and there is currently some 21,432 sq metres of accommodation on the site across a range of buildings of differing age and design.

There are three listed buildings on the site:

- The Administration Building, dates from 1790 and is Grade II\*
- The Chapel/Student Union is Grade II
- The properties 801-803 Wilmslow Road are Grade II

There is a Lodge building located at the access point to the site on Wilmslow Road which has an important relationship to the Administration and Chapel Building.

The site is currently used for teaching, with linked facilities, associated offices and social space. None of the non-listed buildings are considered to have particular architectural merit. The site includes a sports centre and tennis courts. There is currently parking for some 200 vehicles on the site.

Vehicular access is currently provided in three places along Wilmslow Road, from Sandhurst Road and from Didsbury Park.

The site benefits from a number of mature trees and landscaping.

### THE BROOMHURST HALLS OF RESIDENCE - CHARACTERISTICS

The Broomhurst Halls of Residence are located on the opposite side of Wilmslow Road from the Lodge. The Residences primarily serve the University's students on the Main Campus and will not be required when these students relocate. The building and site is therefore also surplus to requirements.

The site covers an area of 0.63 hectares (1.57 acres) and the existing building provides 3,722 sq m over 7 storeys. There is also a small bungalow on the site. The Halls are accessed from Wilmslow Road, with an access partly shared with the adjoining medical/health centre.

The site contains a number of car parking spaces. It is bounded by mature trees to the west and south and there are trees and landscaping to the Wilmslow Road frontage.

To the west, there is a pedestrian access to the Simon Playing Fields.

### SIMON PLAYING FIELDS - CHARACTERISTICS

The Simon Playing Fields form a recreation area linked to the Halls of Residence but with the vacation of the Halls, the Playing Fields are no longer required by the University.

The Playing Fields extend to some 2.16 hectares (5.33 acres). They lie at a lower level than the Halls and Wilmslow Road. They are surrounded by mature trees with other playing fields to the south. Didsbury Toc H Rugby Club is located to the west of the Fields and is accessed from Ford Lane.



## 5 Development Principles

This section presents the key development principles which should guide the future development of the University's surplus assets.

**This Framework promotes a comprehensive approach across all of the University's assets. This approach responds to the needs of Didsbury, of South Manchester and of the City. It responds to the requirements of the development market but also to the planning policy and housing policy requirements, to heritage considerations and to the needs of the area for new school places and for community open space and sports facilities.**

### LAND USE

The three University assets are suitable for the following uses:

- The Main Campus - should be redeveloped for high quality housing. This will respond to a critical need in South Manchester as identified in key policy documents. Housing use will enable the beneficial use of the key listed buildings and redevelopment of the remainder of the site provides an opportunity to develop high quality, large family housing, including 4 and 5 bedroom properties with gardens.

Retail uses are not considered appropriate as such uses are considered to be detrimental to the shopping core of Didsbury Village and would be contrary to the strategic policy objectives as presented in Section 2.

- The Broomhurst Halls of Residence site - is suitable for residential use, including family housing, apartments and care home or retirement home use. However, as part of a comprehensive Framework for Didsbury, the site also has potential to accommodate a new primary school. A school would help to meet

unmet demand for additional school places in Didsbury and South Manchester, demand which will increase with the promotion of the Main Campus for family housing.

- The Simon Playing Fields - will be retained as playing fields. Future use by a new School may be appropriate and the land can also meet the needs of local communities and sports clubs. The transfer of some or all of the land to local sports clubs and organisations may support the effective, long term maintenance and management of the pitches.

### DESIGN GUIDANCE

Any development on the surplus sites should meet the highest architectural and urban design standards, reflecting the Conservation Area status, the character of Didsbury and the City's economic and housing policy objectives.

### MAIN CAMPUS

The Main Campus provides a unique opportunity to create a high quality residential development, while respecting and enhancing the heritage assets on the site:

- The re-use of the listed buildings must reflect their heritage value and any development work must respect key heritage assets while having regard to the importance of sustaining long term economic use of the properties
- Any new development on the site should achieve high design standards. New development should be sited so it enhances and does not detract from the setting of the listed buildings

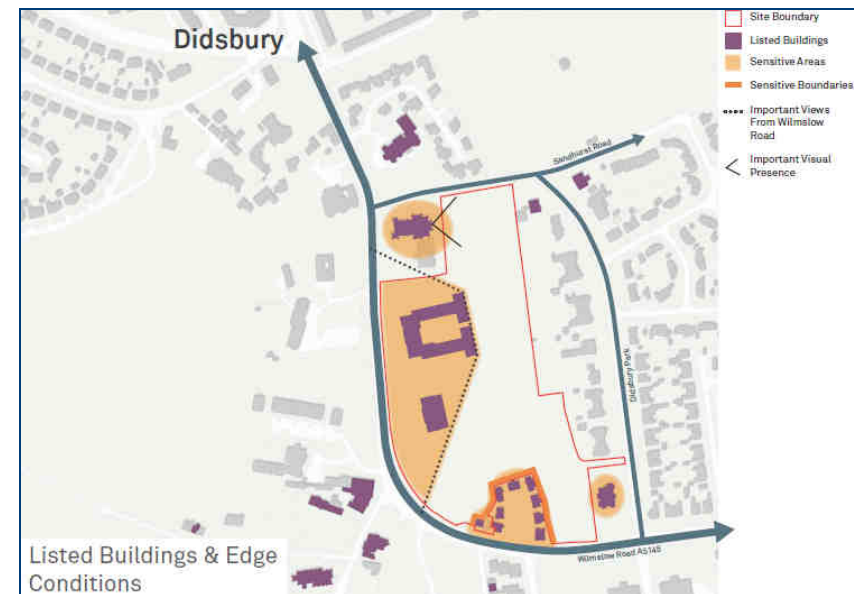
- New development should reflect the listed buildings and wider conservation area and be compatible in terms of massing and use of materials
- The mature landscape character of the site should be maintained and, where possible, enhanced. In principle, the quality trees on the site should be retained and incorporated into the design to support the objective of overall development quality
- Vehicular access and car parking on the site should be managed in a way which is not detrimental to the heritage features, including the setting of the listed buildings, nor to the overall quality of development targeted
- It is proposed that access to the site is achieved through the existing access points for both vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, unless a case can be made for alternative access which is deemed suitable in highways terms
- Design of new development on the site should seek to retain and improve permeability and connectivity to the South of Didsbury Village improving accessibility between the Centre and the existing communities that surround it

For the Main Campus site, the following analysis identifies the principal constraints on the site, current and proposed access and the urban design principles that should guide future development.

#### • Listed Buildings and Conservation Context

As illustrated below, the heritage assets both within and surrounding the site are a key consideration for site redevelopment. These should be viewed not as constraints, but as opportunities to create a distinctive sense of place and identity. Maintaining and enhancing the setting and curtilage of the Grade II\* building will be critical and the vistas to and from Wilmslow Road at the front of the building will

need to be reinforced. There are also a number of sensitive heritage assets immediately adjacent to the site's boundary which are integral to the masterplanning of the site. It will be important to ensure that their heritage value is not diminished and is enhanced where possible through careful and considerate high quality urban design. The residential properties on Lime Grove and the Didsbury Methodist Church both about the site boundary and will have masterplanning implications for the Main Campus to ensure that their heritage setting is respected.

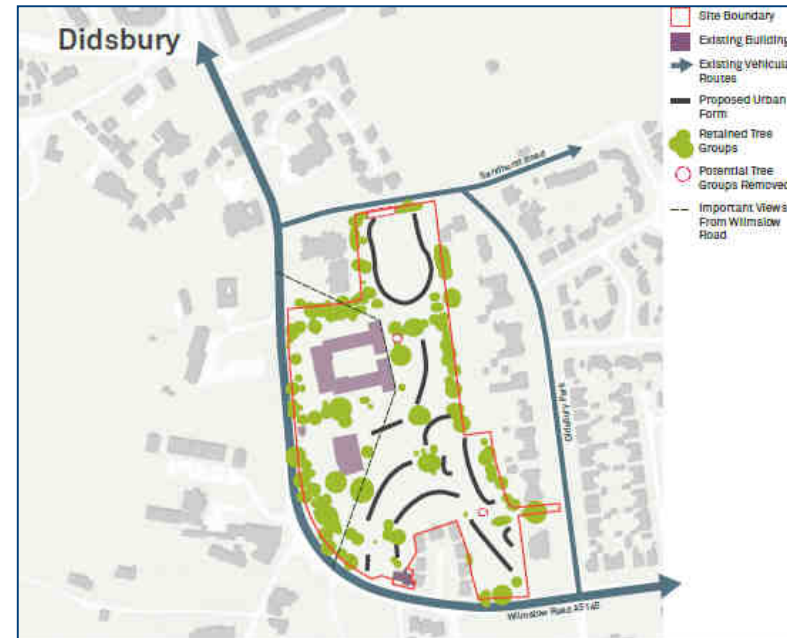
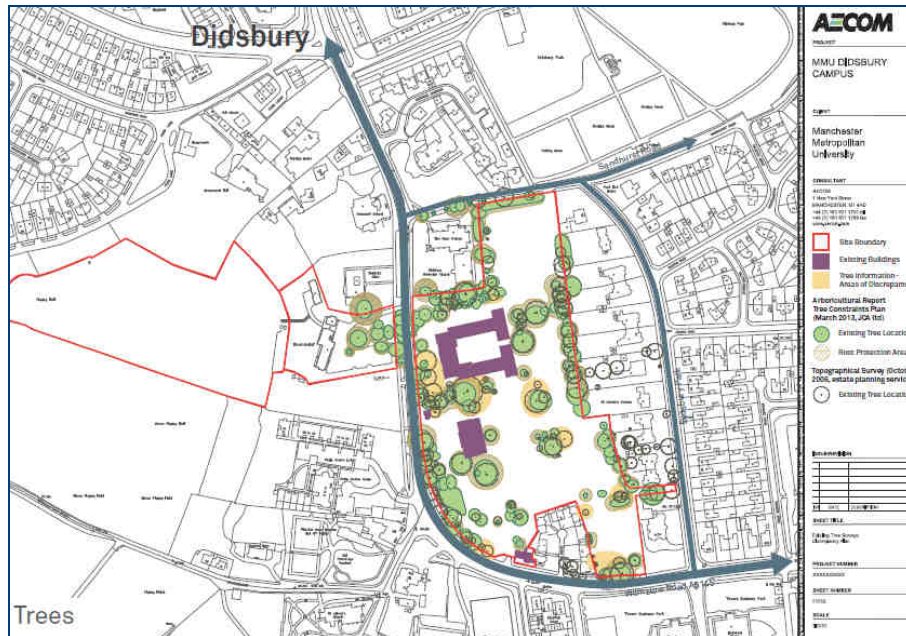


#### • Trees and Landscaping

The site is home to in excess of 150 individual trees across the Main Campus and the front of the Broomhurst Halls of Residence site. These comprise a diverse range of species, the majority of which are mature in age. The site is located within the Didsbury St James Conservation Area which provides protection to the site's trees. A

large proportion of the trees are identified as being 'most desirable' or 'desirable' in terms of retention. Enhancing tree lines and protecting root protection areas will be a key consideration for the site's redevelopment, particularly along the boundaries with Wilmslow Road and the residential properties along Didsbury Park, as well as around the Grade II\* building, where the more established and desirable tree clusters exist.

sense of place that is respectful of both the heritage environment and the surrounding environment.

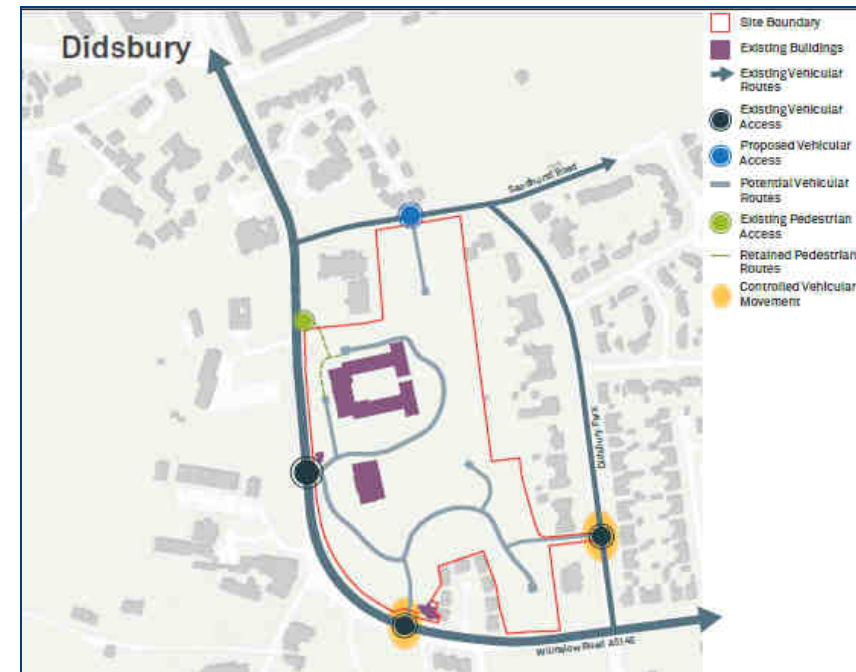
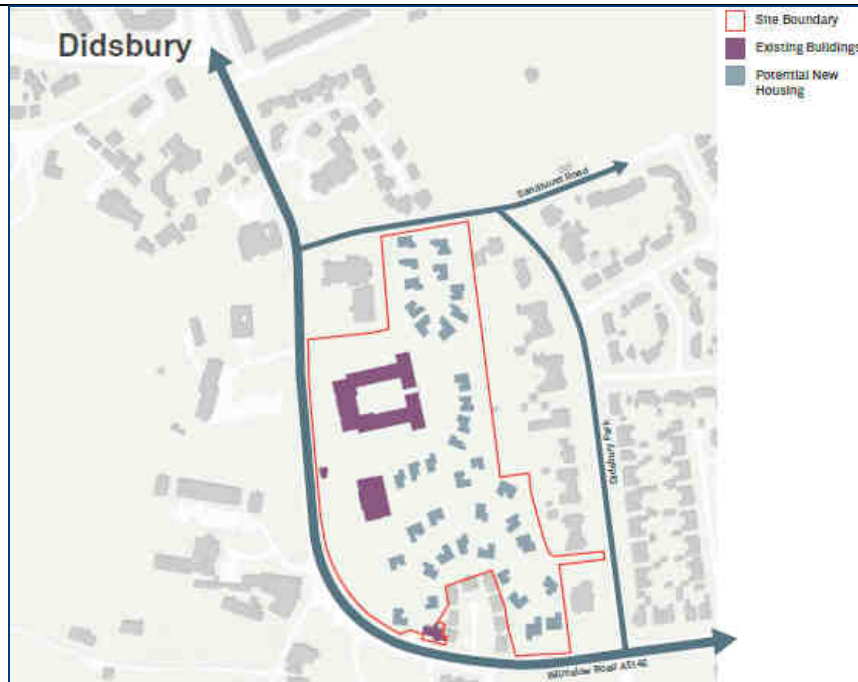


• **Design Considerations**

The parkland characteristics of the site are integral to its overall fabric and distinctiveness and should be preserved and enhanced as an overarching theme of the site's redevelopment proposals. Priority will be given to enhancing the setting of the principal Listed Buildings and their high profile frontage onto Wilmslow Road. New, high quality residential development will be located to the rear. The form and structure of the site should create a unique identity and

The urban grain should reflect an informal, loose and organic arrangement rather than a prescribed and intense grid-based urban environment. This will help to emphasise the formality of the principal Listed Buildings through shaping the new residential development appropriately and sensitively around this. The proposed grain should also be in keeping with the surrounding neighbourhoods. The scale and massing of new development will reflect existing built form in the locality and again will be considered in the context of enhancing the profile, setting and visual prominence of the principal Listed Buildings.





• **Access and Movement**

Access into and movement across the site will be a key consideration. The emphasis will be upon making best use of existing access points where possible, retaining the existing access point off Wilmslow Road to the west as the main entrance to create an attractive and high profile gateway to the site. Other entrance points will provide access to particular pockets of development across the site to prevent any potential for ‘rat running’. Movement across the site will be via low key informal routes for pedestrian/cycle use incorporating shared surface spaces which are ‘secondary’ to the structure and grain. Bespoke and consistent materials will be used to provide high quality routes to connect the site internally and also with its external surroundings to promote integration.

**BROOMHURST HALLS SITE**

On the Broomhurst Halls site, development should have regard to its surroundings and the Conservation Area context. Any development should minimise any traffic impacts along Wilmslow Road.

**SIMON PLAYING FIELDS**

On the Simon Playing Fields, any investment made should support the recreational needs of the school and local community requirements. It is not envisaged that any ancillary buildings will be suitable such as for changing facilities. Use should be made of existing built facilities nearby or new accommodation provided on the Broomhurst site.



## 6 Next Steps

This draft Regeneration Framework will be submitted to the Council Executive in September 2013 for its views and consideration. The Executive will be asked to support a period of formal public consultation during October and November 2013.

It is anticipated that a final Framework will be submitted to the Executive for its approval in December 2013.

With an agreed Framework in place, the University proposes to appoint a development partner who will progress any planning applications, listed building consents and conservation area consents as required. These applications will be subject to further informal and formal public and stakeholder consultations.