

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Resolution**

**Report to:** Executive – 1 June 2016  
**Subject:** Medieval Quarter Masterplan  
**Report of:** The Chief Executive

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**Summary**

This report provides details of a proposed masterplan for the Medieval Quarter, which is focused on providing enhanced public realm, in order to support the significant redevelopment taking place in the wider area. It also seeks approval to undertake a public consultation on the proposed designs; for the estimated costs of the works and the funding for the first phase of works; and to finalise Heads of Terms for the lease of the area comprising the footprint of the former Palatine Buildings on the Chetham's School of Music Estate.

**Recommendations**

The Executive is recommended to:

- i) Consider the proposals set out within the draft Medieval Quarter Masterplan as summarised in Section 4 of this report;
  - ii) Agree that the Chief Executive undertakes a public consultation exercise, with the outcomes of the consultation to be brought back to the Executive at a later date;
  - iii) Consider and approve the costs estimated for the proposals included within the Masterplan;
  - iv) To recommend to Council an increase to the capital budget of £2.0m for 2016/17, funded by Capital Fund from the residue of funds from the Irwell River Park scheme which were previously allocated to the Capital Fund; and
  - v) Agree that authority is delegated to the Chief Executive and Head of Development, in consultation with the Leader and Executive Members, to finalise the terms for the lease of the area comprising the footprint of the former Palatine Buildings (1B on the attached phasing plan).
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**Wards Affected**

City Centre

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of the contribution to the strategy
<p>A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities</p>	<p>The Medieval Quarter Masterplan will contribute to the success of City Centre North, which will be a regionally significant, new commercial quarter within the regional centre, assisting the wider city region in achieving its economic growth potential.</p>
<p>A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success</p>	<p>The scale of development potential and range of key assets within City Centre North will bring about significant employment opportunities. Improved connections to surrounding communities will be provided as part of the developments taking place in the area, helping local residents to access the jobs located there.</p>
<p>A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities</p>	<p>The draft Masterplan complements development at adjacent neighbourhoods including NOMA and Greengate.</p> <p>The new public realm delivered through the proposed Masterplan will improve linkages and access to key city centre job opportunities and attractions, including Manchester Cathedral, the National Football Museum and the Corn Exchange in addition to enhancing the setting of these key cultural and leisure amenities.</p>
<p>A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work</p>	<p>The Masterplan proposes significantly improved public realm, making the area more attractive to residents, workers and visitors. It will see the delivery of new and desirable public realm including expanding the area's green space and providing additional tree coverage, enhancing the amenities for residents, workers and visitors to the city centre.</p>
<p>A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth</p>	<p>The Medieval Quarter area benefits from excellent connectivity due to the location of key transport connections within close proximity including the recently renovated Victoria Rail Station and new Exchange Square Metrolink stop.</p> <p>The Masterplan prioritises pedestrian walkways and improved pedestrian connectivity, which will provide residents with improved linkages to surrounding neighbourhoods and city centre districts, as well as through the area itself. The new public spaces and connections proposed will significantly improve the environment of this part of the city centre.</p>

**Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for**

- Equal Opportunities Policy
  - Risk Management
  - Legal Considerations
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**Financial Consequences – Revenue**

Following completion of the lease with Chetham's School of Music, the Council will be responsible for cleansing the land occupying the former Palatine Buildings, in line with the rest of the public realm.

**Financial Consequences – Capital**

The recommendations in this report, if approved, will increase the capital budget by £2m. There is a £2m surplus from the original funding approved for the Irwell River Park scheme with Salford and Trafford Councils which has been allocated into the capital fund for some time.

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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.

Medieval Quarter Masterplan - May 2016

Report to Executive – City Centre North – 27 May 2009

Report to Executive – Corn Exchange – A New Vision – 14 March 2012

Report to Executive – Corn Exchange – A New Vision – 26 June 2013

Report to Executive – Corn Exchange – A New Vision – 11 September 2013

All held in Room 303, Town Hall

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Medieval Quarter is a strategically important area of the city centre. Sitting in close proximity to the city's retail hub and the Salford City border, the Medieval Quarter is rich in cultural and historical significance. The area is home to Manchester Cathedral and Chetham's School of Music, two renowned historical assets of the Manchester landscape, as well as the National Football Museum, one of the city's key visitor attractions. Developments within and adjacent to the Medieval Quarter are making the area even more important, both as a destination in its own right, and also as a gateway and route into the main retail and business core of the city centre.
- 1.2 However, whilst new developments are providing key opportunities, there are a number of issues with the current environment and public realm within the Medieval Quarter. A draft masterplan has been developed in order to try and address these, and provide a greatly enhanced setting for the area's assets. The draft masterplan is summarised in Section 4 of this report.

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1 A report was submitted to the Executive in May 2009 on the findings of a report about City Centre North, which included a vision and framework for the future role and function of the northern sector of the city centre.
- 2.2 The City Centre North (CCN) or Northern Gateway area covers over 71 hectares of land immediately north of the retail and commercial core of the city centre, with Victoria Station at its heart and spanning the boundaries of both Manchester and Salford City Councils. CCN is a major piece in the city centre jigsaw and has the potential to be a key driver for change, accommodating up to 20,000 new jobs.
- 2.3 Since the 2009 report, major development works have started in the area, which are re-defining the area and enlarging the central business district of the city, in line with the vision for the area. The developments include:
- **NOMA** - a high profile new investment location in the city centre, which will establish a major new business-led district for the city, unlocking an area covering some 8 hectares and transforming existing buildings and land into a new and instantly recognisable neighbourhood that will attract new businesses, retail, leisure and residential users. It will also deliver an enhanced public space connecting the area to the city centre. The development provides an opportunity to deliver 380,000 sqm of new or refurbished office floorspace, accommodating up to 15,000 jobs, over a 10-15 year period.
  - **Victoria Station** - A major £44m refurbishment designed to create a second world class rail gateway into Manchester, with the potential to play an increasingly important role in the city region's transport. The refurbishment is now complete and has transformed both the rail and Metrolink station facilities, complementing the increase in services supported by the rail electrification

programme, improved connectivity to Oxford Road and Piccadilly Stations as part of the Northern Hub and Metrolink Second City Crossing.

- **Second City Crossing** - The new investment at the station will allow Manchester Victoria's Metrolink stop to cater for increased passenger numbers and support a more flexible, reliable service across the conurbation. The stop currently serves 1.6 million passengers per annum and this number is forecast to grow to over 6 million passengers per annum as the network continues to grow. In addition, the new tram stop at Exchange Square, will increase footfall in one of the city centre's most important locations for leisure visitors, close to the Corn Exchange, Manchester Cathedral and National Football Museum.
- **Greengate** - On the other side of the river, the Greengate scheme is helping to reconnect the historic cores of Salford and Manchester via a network of high quality public realm spaces, linking new homes and commercial space to Manchester's core retail centre. The initiative is anticipated to deliver private sector investment in the region of £400 million, over 103,000 sqm of commercial floor space, around 3,000 new homes and potentially 5,000 new jobs.

#### 2.4 Further potential investments include:

- **Victoria Station Business Space:** Within the station itself, there is the potential to deliver new small business accommodation in the upper floors, over an area of approximately 3,200 sq m. This could provide the potential for new jobs in predominantly small and medium sized businesses keen to locate in the city centre.
- **New Victoria Site:** The station footprint includes a significant development site for new residential and commercial development, providing new homes and jobs.

2.5 The Medieval Quarter lies at the heart of CCN, and is the medieval heart of the city, containing impressive archaeological and architectural heritage assets. Significant progress has been made in transforming the area, in recent years, commencing with the initial investments made following the 1996 IRA bombing of this area of the city centre. This includes the National Football Museum, ongoing redevelopment projects at Chetham's School of Music and Manchester Cathedral, and the restoration of the Corn Exchange as a high quality specialist food retailing centre.

### 3.0 The Benefits of Public Realm Investment

3.1 Recent reports have shown the benefits of investing in the public realm, by both the public and private sector. Evaluations of public realm schemes in cities such as Sheffield (carried out by Genecon and EKOSGEN) have identified six types of benefit from public realm – attracting businesses, attracting visitors, improving productivity, increasing land/property values, increasing tourism and enhanced image.

3.2 Manchester City Centre has benefited from significant new public and private sector investment over the past 15 years, and many areas of the city have been boosted by the provision of high quality public realm including:

- **Spinningfields**, a new centre for corporate and HQ functions in the city centre, now the base for a number of leading national and international professional and financial service companies, with high quality public realm and residential development.
- **St Peters Square and the Civic Quarter**, with the enhanced public realm and refurbished Town Hall and Central Library, complementing the new commercial developments at One and Two St Peters Square, and other planned developments.
- **Oxford Road Corridor**, where the University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) have both been renewing their facilities to accommodate over 70,000 students and staff, in an area attracting science, technology and creative companies.
- **Bridgewater Hall, Manchester Central and First Street**, where the new Home facility at First Street, which incorporates the Cornerhouse Cinema and Library Theatre, complements the high quality public realm and the area's role in hosting cultural and business events.

3.3 All of these investments have resulted in an improved public realm, and in many cases, the public realm was the catalyst for new investment by the private sector.

#### **4.0 Medieval Quarter Masterplan and New Public Realm Proposals**

4.1 As outlined above, the Medieval Quarter is an important area in the City Centre North, with Manchester Cathedral, National Football Museum, Chetham's School of Music, Corn Exchange and the River Irwell all attractions in their own right. The area is also an important through route for a growing number of people - close to Victoria Station, NOMA, Greengate, the Corn Exchange, the new Metrolink stop at Exchange Square, the nearby Arndale Centre and shops, and major car parks.

4.2 The combination of the investment in and around Victoria Station, the new tram stop at Exchange Square, the restoration projects at Manchester Cathedral, Chetham's School of Music and the Corn Exchange and other surrounding developments present both a need and opportunity to invest in the Medieval Quarter's public realm, and its role as the location for some of Manchester's most important heritage visitor attractions.

4.3 Although the area is one of the most important historical parts of the city, many heritage assets are obscured and there is no sense of arrival at the Cathedral, which is also disconnected from Chetham's, while the historical

waterfront is poor and inaccessible. The route to and from Victoria Station is poor and the riverside is hidden. The links and shared space with the National Football Museum and the Corn Exchange is also poor and tired, and the public realm does not provide a quality dwelling place for visitors, office workers and shoppers.

4.4 As a result a draft Masterplan has been developed with looks to address the following key issues:

- Connectivity through the Medieval Quarter – to improve pedestrian linkages open up key vistas and improve the sense of arrival.
- Flexibility and functionality of external spaces – to create better connections between public spaces and provide more focus points.
- Recent changes to the urban context – including the highway changes at Victoria Street, Metrolink Second City Crossing and developments at Chetham's.
- Fragmented character/heritage quarter not clearly defined – the lack of visual and physical coherence in the public realm and lack of a strong identity for the area.

4.5 The Masterplan seeks to celebrate the pre-industrial heritage of the city, rejuvenating the area, and providing an improved setting for its unique cultural and heritage assets. It will look to link together the developments at these key assets, as well as opportunities to create new public realm in the area, which (along with the developments at Greengate) would help to reunite the historic centres of Manchester and Salford.

4.6 There are five main elements to the proposed works:

- **A new park on the River** – celebrating significant people and events in the story of Manchester and creating new pedestrian routes, reinstating linkages along Hunts Bank.
- **Improving the setting and connectivity of Manchester Cathedral** – including creating a new setting for the Cathedral main entrance; linking the Cathedral and Chetham's via an integrated visitor experience and reinstated Apple Market; and uncovering the historic riverfront.
- **Chetham's** – integration of the proposed visitor experience and of the 'Firsts Ditch' archaeological site into the wider Medieval Quarter landscape.
- **Redefining and Updating Cathedral Gardens** – with new defined spaces, sheltered external seating for the Corn Exchange, and external areas for the National Football Museum
- **Victoria Station** - an improved arrival route into the city from Victoria Station, including updated formal gardens in front of Chetham's.

4.7 The new public realm proposals within the masterplan will fundamentally change the visitor experience and open up and transform the Medieval Quarter. They are designed change the Medieval Quarter from a fragmented and incoherent area into of the most impressive destination in the city centre, enhancing the investment taking place in the area's key assets.

## **5.0 The Impact of the New Public Realm on the Medieval Quarter**

5.1 The new public realm works will make the Medieval Quarter one of the most high profile and iconic locations in the city, shared by business and leisure visitors, daily commuters and many workers from the new retail and office space being developed. It will also re-inforce the new residential developments being brought forward at NOMA.

5.2 The works will open up a new visitor experience for both the Cathedral and Chetham's and allow both organisations and the National Football Museum to organise outside events in the new space. Recent analysis suggests that the effect will be to increase both events and visitor numbers. It is expected that overall visitor numbers will increase by between 10%-20% as a result of the new public realm, although some visitors will go to more than one attraction. All of the venues attract significant numbers of international visitors and visitors from outside of Greater Manchester which increases the overall impact on the city economy. In effect, the new public realm will make the Medieval Quarter a must visit location for every tourist to Manchester. Using relatively conservative impact assumptions, expenditure will increase by almost £20m by year five.

5.3 In addition to extra staff recruited by the venues, it is estimated that the new public realm will result in an additional 172 jobs and over £5m Gross Value Added by year 5.

5.4 While the direct benefits of more visitors are important, the quality of the proposals for the Medieval Quarter will have an impact over the wider City Centre North area, supporting re-development plans around Victoria and NOMA in particular, and the further strengthening of Manchester's retail and hospitality offer, which account for one in five of all jobs in the city. These opportunities, all of which are well developed, involve many hundreds of million pounds of new investment and several thousand new jobs over the next 5-7 years.

5.5 Overall, the proposed public realm investments will have a transformational impact on this part of the city centre, capitalising on and stimulating other private sector led investment, and supporting an increase in visitor related expenditure and employment. The investment will also benefit local residents, in terms of jobs and investment, and as a space which local people are able to enjoy.



## **6.0 Costs and Funding**

- 6.1 The overall costs of the public realm proposals within the masterplan are estimated at £10.8m. Phase 1A, focused on Victoria Street, is expected to cost £3m (see attached phasing plan). The Phase 1A works include:
- The removal of existing roads, pavements, finishes and lighting in the area highlighted on the phasing plan, together with the diversion of services where required.
  - Making good of the river wall.
  - The provision of new hard (natural stone), soft landscaping and the planting of 12 new willow trees.
  - A significant allowance (£715,000) for new public art.
  - New street furniture, signage, lighting and servicing.
- 6.2 The Council has £2m funding to contribute to the first phase, provided from the original funding approved for the Irwell River Park scheme with Salford and Trafford Councils.
- 6.3 Manchester Cathedral are developing a bid to be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund for improvements to their West Wing (leading onto Victoria Street). The Cathedral are planning to include funding for improvements to the surrounding public realm as part of this bid, will be up to £1m, which could help to cover the additional funding required for the first phase. However, if this funding bid is unsuccessful, the scheme design will be revised in line with existing funding availability, for example, through revising the allowance for public art.
- 6.4 Phase 1A is the last piece of the original Manchester Millennium Masterplan to be completed, and is capable of independent improvement in advance of the other proposed phases. Further phases of improvement (areas 1C - 4) up to the remaining £8m will be subject to landowner and other third party stakeholder contributions being made.

## **7.0 Land Occupied by the Former Palatine Building**

- 7.1 A key requirement of the overall planning and redevelopment of Chetham's School of Music, the former Palatine Buildings on Victoria Street are being demolished. The City Council is in negotiation with Chetham's to take a long lease of the site of the former buildings following demolition, for the purpose of securing this site to implement a comprehensive public realm scheme. The land will be transferred to the Council on a peppercorn lease, which will contain a restrictive covenant limiting the use of the land for the purpose of open space for the benefit of the public. The land will only be transferred following the completion of the demolition and the laying out of appropriate landscaping of the cleared site. Following completion of the lease, the Council

will be responsible for cleansing the site in line with the rest of the public realm.

- 7.2 The principle of granting the land has been agreed between the parties and detailed terms will be agreed by the Chief Executive and Head of Development, in consultation with the Leader and Executive Members.

## **8.0 Conclusion**

- 8.1 The Medieval Quarter is now a focal point for visitors to the city centre where the attractions of the Cathedral, Chetham's School of Music and the National Football Museum are complemented by the quality of the retail offer, with the Corn Exchange re-development adding to the number of leisure destinations. Developments such as NOMA and the Victoria Station improvements are further growing and increasing the importance of the wider City Centre North area.

- 8.2 An enhanced public realm, befitting of the assets within the area and the surrounding developments, is crucial to ensuring the success of this part of the city centre. The draft Masterplan appended to this report is designed to achieve this.

- 8.3 Recommendations appear at the front of the report.

## **9.0 Contributing to the Manchester Strategy**

### **(a) A thriving and sustainable city**

- 9.1 The Medieval Quarter Masterplan will contribute to the success of City Centre North, which will be a regionally significant, new commercial district within the regional centre, assisting the wider city region in achieving its economic growth potential. Significant new jobs will be created as a result of the developments planned within City Centre North. Initial analysis also suggests that the public realm improvements proposed by the draft Masterplan will provide direct economic benefits through the attraction of additional visitors to the area.

### **(b) A highly skilled city**

- 9.2 The scale of development potential and range of key assets within City Centre North will bring about significant employment opportunities. Improved connections to surrounding communities will be provided as part of the developments taking place in the area, helping local residents to access the jobs located there, as well as in other parts of the city centre.

### **(c) A progressive and equitable city**

- 9.3 The draft Masterplan complements development at adjacent neighbourhoods including NOMA and Greengate. The new public realm delivered through the proposed Masterplan will improve linkages and access to key city centre job

opportunities and attractions, including Manchester Cathedral, the National Football Museum and the Corn Exchange in addition to enhancing the setting of these key cultural and leisure amenities.

**(d) A liveable and low carbon city**

- 9.4 The Masterplan proposes significantly improved public realm, making the area more attractive to residents, workers and visitors. It will see the delivery of new and desirable public realm including expanding the area's green space and providing additional tree coverage, enhancing the amenities for residents, workers and visitors to the city centre.

**(e) A connected city**

- 9.5 The Medieval Quarter area benefits from excellent connectivity due to the location of key transport connections within close proximity including the recently renovated Victoria Rail Station and new Exchange Square Metrolink stop. The Masterplan prioritises pedestrian walkways and improved pedestrian connectivity, which will provide residents with improved linkages to surrounding neighbourhoods and city centre districts, as well as through the area itself. The new public spaces and connections proposed will significantly improve the environment of this part of the city centre.

**10. Key Policies and Considerations**

**(a) Equal Opportunities**

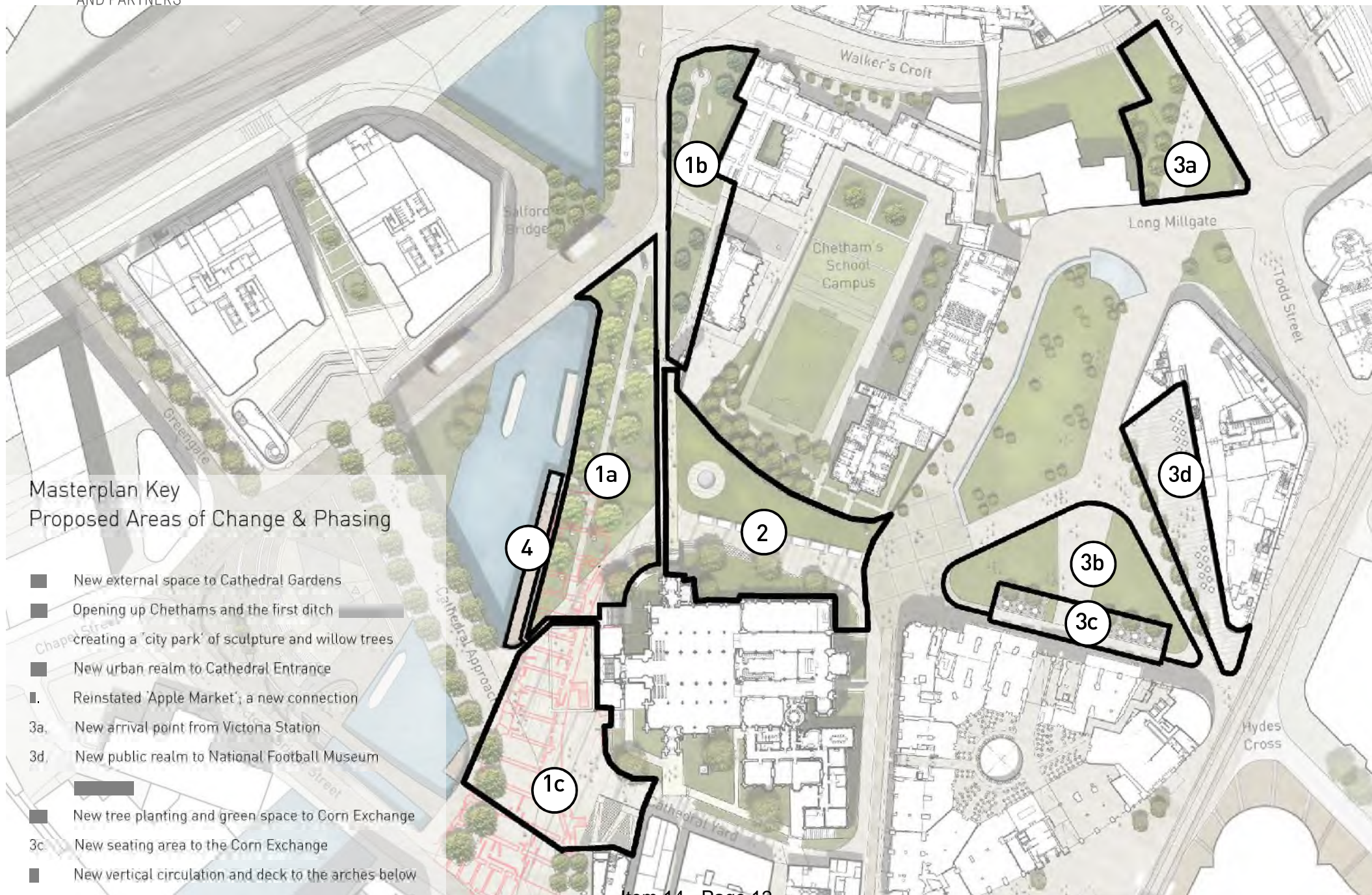
- 10.1 The Masterplan is aimed to ensure better connections from Victoria Station, through the area and on to other areas of the city centre, enabling better access to leisure attractions and job opportunities for all people.

**(b) Risk Management**

- 10.2 If the Masterplan is approved, risks will be monitored throughout the delivery of the public realm improvements.

**(c) Legal Considerations**

- 10.3 A lease is being drawn up between the City Council and Chetham's School of Music for the area comprising the footprint of the former Palatine Buildings. Executive approval is being sought for delegated authority for the Head of Development to conclude this arrangement.



Masterplan Key  
Proposed Areas of Change & Phasing

- New external space to Cathedral Gardens
- Opening up Chethams and the first ditch creating a 'city park' of sculpture and willow trees
- New urban realm to Cathedral Entrance
- 1. Reinstated 'Apple Market'; a new connection
- 3a. New arrival point from Victoria Station
- 3d. New public realm to National Football Museum
- New tree planting and green space to Corn Exchange
- 3c. New seating area to the Corn Exchange
- New vertical circulation and deck to the arches below