

Manchester City Council Report for Resolution

Report to: Executive - 30 May 2018

Subject: The Ramada Complex, Deansgate - Strategic Regeneration
Framework Update 2018

Report of: Strategic Director (Development)

Summary

This report informs the Executive of the outcome of a public consultation exercise with local residents, businesses and key stakeholders on the draft Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) for the Ramada Complex Deansgate. The report responds to the issues raised, and seeks the Executive's approval and endorsement of the final SRF.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to

1. Note the comments received on the Strategic Regeneration Framework and the response to these comments.
 2. Agree the proposed amendments to the Strategic Regeneration Framework arising from the comments received.
 3. Approve the Ramada Complex, Deansgate Strategic Regeneration Framework, with the intention that it will become a material consideration in the Council's decision making as the Local Planning Authority.
-

Wards Affected: Deansgate

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of the contribution to the strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	<p>The potential for development at this site will provide the catalyst for further investment within both the immediate area and the wider city centre. This investment will be centred on residential development, an internationally branded hotel and a range of retail amenities.</p> <p>The framework for the Ramada Complex, Deansgate details the sites potential to support a variety of complementary leisure uses for both visitors and residents. These include cafes, restaurants, bars, and small retail uses in addition to</p>

	<p>a hotel, all of which will provide new employment opportunities within the city centre.</p> <p>The framework will see the creation of a new mixed use destination utilising the potential of the Ramada Complex. The delivery of this will provide a range of new employment opportunities within the city centre. The framework sets out the vision to deliver a distinctive location which will support the continued growth of the city's economy.</p>
<p>A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success</p>	<p>Delivery of the SRF will facilitate the creation of a number of new jobs across a range of sectors. Both the Council and its development partners will seek to maximise local employment and training opportunities that result from this initiative, including apprenticeships through the construction phase.</p> <p>The expanded retail and leisure offer in addition to the creation of a new hotel will both attract new organisations to the city and facilitate the expansion of existing Manchester based businesses.</p> <p>The framework will provide new homes within close proximity to both the job opportunities created within both the SRF area and also key adjacent city centre neighbourhoods including the Retail Core, and NOMA. The addition of new homes will richly enhance the Ramada Complex, Deansgate and further integrate the site with the surrounding areas.</p> <p>The SRF details the planned transformation of the environment at this prominent city centre location through the delivery of buildings of distinct architectural quality as well as the provision of significant new public realm that complements the surrounding architecture.</p>
<p>A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities</p>	<p>The scheme will deliver new connections both within the site and to other parts of the city centre, providing improved access for local residents to the opportunities and amenities created within the area. The site will also benefit from a range of leisure opportunities, including new public spaces that are accessible to all members of the public.</p> <p>The framework complements development at adjacent neighbourhoods including the Civic Quarter, NOMA, and public realm enhancements at the Medieval Quarter,</p>

	<p>The SRF will deliver desirable residential development at the heart of the city centre, providing new residents with access to its key retail, cultural and leisure amenities.</p>
<p>A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work</p>	<p>The delivery of this development will result in the creation of a major mixed use scheme on a currently under- utilised site. As well as providing new residential accommodation, there will be public amenities including significant public realm, retail and leisure opportunities, which will create a desirable location to live and spend leisure time.</p> <p>Sustainability is one of the key principles of the SRF, and the development of this site will involve the regeneration of a major brownfield site, providing the opportunity to create a holistic approach to building design to minimise energy use.</p> <p>The development of the site will provide new and enhanced connections into the city centre from both the north of the city and Salford providing new routes for both pedestrians and cyclists.</p>
<p>A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth</p>	<p>Located in close proximity to Victoria Station, and the Shudehill Bus Interchange, the site benefits from excellent access to all forms of public transport. The development framework prioritises pedestrian walkways and improved pedestrian connectivity, which will provide residents with better linkages to surrounding neighbourhoods and city centre districts including the Retail Core, NOMA, the Medieval Quarter and Spinningfields.</p> <p>New public spaces and connections are proposed alongside high quality residential which 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

Financial Consequences – Revenue

The Council has an under lease of the car park within the site. This extends to 420 spaces. This lease expires in line with the expiry of the main head lease from the

Council to Urban and Civic. The passing rent paid by the Council for this is £82,443 per annum. The public element of the car park, comprising 340 spaces, is included in the NML car parking joint venture and its earning contribute to the dividend payable from the JV to the Council. The remaining 80 spaces are leased at a passing rent of circa £16Kpa to Urban and Civic to service the Ramada Hotel. The commercial negotiations will have regard to mitigating any loss of revenue, both temporary and permanently.

Financial Consequences – Capital

There will be a renegotiation of the current lease terms to provide for a fundable development lease. This may result in a capital receipt for the Council depending on the final terms of the commercial deal. At this stage, details in respect of how the Council intends to take value from the deal have yet to be concluded.

Contact Officers:

Name: Eddie Smith
Position: Strategic Director
Telephone: 0161 234 5515
E-mail: e.smith@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Dave Roscoe
Position: Planning Development Manager
Telephone: 0161 234 4567
E-mail: d.roscoe@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Pat Bartoli
Position: Head of City Centre Growth & Regeneration
Telephone: 0161 234 3329
Email: p.bartoli@manchester.gov.uk

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;

- Draft Ramada Complex Strategic Regeneration Framework – March 2018
- Report to the Executive – The Ramada Complex, Deansgate – 7 March 2018

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 On 7 March 2018, the Executive endorsed, in principle, an updated Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) for the Ramada Complex, Deansgate, and requested that the Strategic Director undertake a public consultation in relation to it.
- 1.2 The framework sets out the vision for a distinctive city centre destination that contains a range of high quality homes, alongside a new internationally branded hotel, both centred on the creation of world class public spaces that introduce new connections with the Medieval Quarter, and links to the River Irwell.
- 1.3 The SRF area also includes the site at 39 Deansgate, and the boundary extends into the Medieval Quarter masterplan area to allow for the contribution to place-making, building setting and connections to be properly addressed.
- 1.4 This report summarises the outcome of the public consultation on the SRF.

2.0 The Consultation Process

- 2.1 Consultation letters have been sent out to 148 local residents, businesses, and stakeholders informing them about the public consultation, how to engage in the consultation process, and where to access the SRF. The SRF was made available on the Council's website, and comments were invited.
- 2.2 The consultation closed on 21 April 2018, following a six week period of consultation.
- 2.3 A total of 5 responses were received to the consultation, broken down as follows:
 - from individual residents
 - 1 from Historic England
 - 1 from Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM)

3.0 Consultation comments

- 3.1 In response to the consultation, a range of issues were raised by respondents. These are all within the following categories:
 - General framework
 - Architecture and design
 - Building heights
 - Public realm
 - Connectivity
 - Heritage

General Framework

- 3.2 Three respondents welcome the redevelopment of this site in principle, with a further respondent broadly supportive of the framework. One respondent cited the existing uninspiring character of the current buildings, poor impact they have on the setting of the Cathedral and conservation area and lack of a positive contribution to the local townscape and vibrancy of the area illustrate the need for regeneration.
- 3.3 The central location of this site means it has the potential to make an important contribution to the regeneration of the city centre.
- 3.4 Historic England commented that the SRF should not be a prescriptive document but establish principles to inform and deliver the vision for the site and provide scope for creative design solutions. As such, at this stage it is difficult to assess fully the impact on heritage from the massing and scale illustrated. Full heritage assessments and comments would be provided as detailed planning applications are presented.
- 3.5 Historic England welcomed the redevelopment of the site however added that the merits of the previous scheme (2009) may be lost in the current proposals with greater impact on the surrounding historic environment.

Architecture and design

- 3.6 Four of the respondents provided comments that related to the architecture and design concepts set out within the framework. These comments included:
- 3.7 The poor quality designs presented by the architects seems to have been created without thought for place or context, either a new design or new architect would remedy this problem.
- 3.8 The SRF illustrates a building nearest the cathedral that slopes in the opposite direction to the other existing adjacent buildings including No.1 Deansgate and the Edge Manchester. This building should slope upwards away from the Cathedral side.
- 3.9 A majority of the surrounding architecture is either light coloured glass, white or light grey stone or brick. The tallest building illustrated within the SRF is red and does not look in keeping within this location.
- 3.10 The proposals set out within the Ramada Complex SRF illustrate nothing of interest and the detailing is extremely poor. The architects should look at 30 Park Place New York or the new Ministry of Justice buildings in The Hague to see how tall buildings can still be interesting.
- 3.11 This SRF area is so close to Manchester Cathedral and deserves something world-class; not inelegant, clumsy design.
- 3.12 The need to get people living within the SRF area that are likely to invest in the neighbourhood is acknowledged, however shiny glass towers that have

little character and zero continuity with the city's past are not the best way of achieving this.

- 3.13 Development should be focused on rebuilding as much as possible of what has been lost since the war, consistent with the approach of many European cities, where much of the communist architecture is being replaced.
- 3.14 Architectural compromises should be sought that deliver a mixture of lower building heights and exteriors designed constant with in older styles alongside taller buildings with contemporary interiors.
- 3.15 The architectural proposals set out within the SRF to replace the Ramada Deansgate, are objected to as an eyesore that show no design flair.
- 3.16 Replicating some older local buildings of particular note to the area is suggested. It would be a positive to see architecture that reflects the heritage of the area. This could reference either Victorian, industrial or medieval design in feel.
- 3.17 Historic England commented that the framework set out a more homogenous architectural design in comparison to the 2009 planning application proposals which suggests a less varied and vibrant character, with less relationship to the adjacent conservation areas, particularly the variety and rhythm of buildings commonly found in Deansgate, a problem compounded by the loss of enclosure to define this historic route.

Building heights

- 3.18 One respondent stated that the lowest buildings should be positioned on the side of the site adjacent to Manchester Cathedral and increase in size towards Blackfriars street in a uniform and coherent pattern.
- 3.19 One respondent did not welcome the concept of tall buildings on the Ramada Complex site believing it to be exchanging one eyesore for another. The current arrangement at the top of Deansgate is hideous, and almost anything would be an improvement, but buildings of significant height are not the best option here. The Cathedral needs priority returning to it, and should be surrounded by buildings of similar scale that don't dwarf it.
- 3.20 Historic England suggested that the height and massing within the SRF should refer back to the 2009 planning permission and, accordingly, is reduced at the northern end of the site.
- 3.21 Historic England commented that the indicative layout within the SRF shows development fronting the river, with taller tower elements on each of the corners of the triangular site. Previous proposals endorsed in 2009 set out development with greatest massing to the south, at the junction of Deansgate and Blackfriars Road, reducing to the north where it would be closer and have more impact upon the setting of Manchester Cathedral. The development provided links to the river while continuing to spatially define the historic route

of Deansgate, the straight alignment of which reflecting its Roman origin. Within the current SRF, linkages and pedestrian routes along the river receive less emphasis than before, with the focus now on new public space fronting onto Deansgate. The proposed form of development has the potential for a far greater impact on the setting of the Cathedral, with illustrations within the SRF indicating the risk that the design of taller elements may compete with the tower of the Cathedral in views from the north-east. The height of the tower at the northern end of the site has the potential to have an overbearing impact on the setting of the Cathedral.

Public realm

- 3.22 Two of the respondents provided comments that related to public realm within the SRF area. These comments included:
- 3.23 The proposals detail the opening up of the River which is a positive.
- 3.24 Sacrificing one of the proposed buildings and increasing the height of other buildings nearer Blackfriars Street would allow for an unhindered green space between Deansgate and the river, maybe with terraces down towards the river and a water feature in the square. A design like Parsonage Gardens would deliver a desirable green space within the area.
- 3.25 There is a positive opportunity to enhance the setting of the Cathedral and river environment which have been adversely affected by the quality of post-war development.
- 3.26 Historic England stated that the loss of frontage defining the historic alignment of Deansgate should be considered to assess whether the character of the resulting spaces create an environment of appropriate and useable design quality.

Connectivity

- 3.27 TfGM commented that the area benefits from excellent public transport connectivity being in within the city centre's retail core and in very close proximity to Metrolink, rail and bus services available at Exchange Square, Victoria station and Shudehill Interchange as well as the free Metroshuttle bus services which are routed along Deansgate. The location is therefore highly accessible without reliance on car usage and as such represents an opportunity for sustainable growth that aligns with a number of Manchester Strategy outcomes.
- 3.28 TfGM provided their support for the Council's aspirations for traffic movement in the city centre. This centres on the redirecting of traffic onto more efficient, better signed, strategic main roads as opposed to through the city centre.
- 3.29 TfGM noted that the SRF detailed a proposal SRF for a section of Deansgate (between St Mary's Gate and Victoria Street), to operate as one way southbound (except for buses) with a reduction on the width of the road is

supported. However it will be necessary to have a detailed understanding of any wider impacts of this traffic reassignment. Strategic modelling would enable the impact of diverted traffic on the local road network to be better understood. It is recommended that the following junctions are modelled at both weekday and weekends in addition to at different times of the day to fully understand any impact of the above proposals;

- Deansgate / Victoria Bridge Street
- Blackfriars / St. Mary's Gate
- Blackfriars / Chapel Street
- Chapel Street / Victoria Bridge Street

3.30 TfGM indicated that the retention of the existing Metroshuttle bus stops should be incorporated into the SRF.

3.31 TfGM commented, in line with Manchester's Residential Quality Guidance the Ramada Complex Deansgate is considered to benefit from excellent public transport accessibility. This should enable the provision of sustainable development with very low levels of car parking provision. Car club membership for future residents with designated car club parking spaces could also help to further reduce the overall demand for car parking within the development.

Heritage

3.32 The frameworks assessment of the character and historical development of the wider area which is greatly welcomed and helps place these proposals in their relevant historic context.

3.33 Views to and from the Cathedral would form an important component in the consideration of development at this site and we recommend that you consider Historic England's guidance on the setting of heritage assets and reference this within the SRF.

3.34 Reference to the s66 and s77 of the 1990 Planning (listed buildings and conservation) act should be included with the SRF.

3.35 The draft SRF should consider in more detail the potential for harmful impacts on the Cathedral, with more emphasis on creating an appropriate setting for this important Grade I building.

3.36 Development should protect and enhance the historic environment, respond to the area's local character and history and reflect the identity of its surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. The Council as local planning authority should look for opportunities to enhance or better reveal the significance of heritage assets including their setting and this is especially important in relation to the Cathedral.

4.0 Response to consultation comments

General framework

- 4.1 The SRF is not a prescriptive document. It establishes the principles to inform and deliver the vision for the site, but is not a detailed architectural proposal. Early consultation with the Council and Historic England will be sought in the detailed design development stages, in advance of a planning application coming forward. At this stage, a full analysis and justification around the arrangement of the buildings and distribution of height on the site will be provided.
- 4.2 A direct comparison between the 2009 planning proposals and the current SRF cannot be made. The development context has changed significantly since this period which includes the macro environment, surrounding city centre areas, planned development and policy. Early consultation with key stakeholders, such as the Council's Conservation team and Historic England, is envisaged at pre-application stage to inform design development and ensure potential impacts are fully mitigated.

Architecture and design

- 4.3 The SRF is not a detailed architectural proposal. It establishes the principles to inform and deliver the vision for the site within the SRF – all visuals included within the document are illustrative.
- 4.4 The vision and principles set out within the SRF are for a distinctive new city centre destination focused around a 'best in class' landscaped public space and buildings that accommodate high quality and distinctive uses. Early consultation with both the Council and Historic England will be a requirement at the detailed design development stages. Any detailed architectural proposals, including the materials proposed will be subject to public consultation in advance of a planning application being submitted.

Building heights

- 4.5 As acknowledged by Historic England and re-emphasised within this report that the framework is not a detailed architectural proposal or prescriptive design. Subsequently any potential harmful impacts on the Grade 1 listed Manchester Cathedral will be robustly tested as detailed designs are presented to the Council. The SRF and proposed location, mass and height of development has been informed by the identification of key heritage views. Further detailed analysis and assessment will be carried out during the design development process.
- 4.6 The site is suitable for the development of height, this principle is consistent with the 2009 planning consent. The scale of the buildings has been carefully considered to respect to the local heritage assets whilst providing a landmark scheme on this prominent site within the city centre.

- 4.7 The identification of key heritage views has informed the initial studies into location, mass and height of proposed development on the site. The opportunity for views towards the Cathedral to the northeast of the site have been considered and maximised, with the buildings and landscape positioned to provide a framed view from the centre of the site. This strong visual connection to a key heritage asset will create a desire for movement through the site. A full analysis and justification around the arrangement of the buildings and distribution of height on the site will be provided as part of the detailed planning application.

Public realm

- 4.8 The SRF provides a positive opportunity to create an area of public realm that enhances the understanding and appreciation of not just the Cathedral, but also the surrounding heritage assets and the river side.
- 4.9 The framework draws on the heritage of the site, re-instating an animated frontage to Deansgate and re-connecting the site to the River Irwell. The buildings will follow the precedent of presenting a hard edge to the river, with landscaped terraces allowing the opportunity to sit above the river's edge. The principles within the SRF include predominately 'soft spaces' within the new public realm.
- 4.10 In relation to the request to assess whether the character of the proposed public realm creates appropriate and usable public spaces, the pedestrianisation of the end of Deansgate outside the Cathedral, and the associated works to Victoria Bridge Street and Cathedral Approach create the need to review wider connections and permeability to the Ramada Complex site and beyond. Consequently, options for enhancing the public realm and permeability to the Cathedral and Cathedral Gardens are being explored aligned with the Medieval Quarter public realm masterplan. It is considered that there is the opportunity to create an area of public realm that could enhance the understanding and appreciation of not just the Cathedral, but the surrounding heritage assets and the river side. Clearly the potential impact of a new urban form in this area needs to be considered and options for defining the historic alignment of Deansgate will be fully considered through design development and further consultation.

Connectivity

- 4.11 The detailed planning application will be supported by a comprehensive Transport Assessment which addresses the transportation implications of the development proposals, along with a Framework Travel Plan that will set out a range of measures to promote sustainable travel to and from the site.
- 4.12 Restricting of northbound traffic movements along Deansgate adjacent to the site to buses only (between the junction with St Mary's Gate and Victoria Street) would reduce traffic flows along this section of Deansgate, enabling a more pedestrian and cycle dominated space to be created. To inform these proposals, preliminary assessment work has been undertaken to establish the

baseline traffic flows along Deansgate and surrounding roads, and to manually re-assign these based on the proposed changes to Deansgate described above. The wider implications of traffic movement restrictions together with any change in traffic flows associated with the development will be thoroughly tested before any proposals are implemented. Restrictions to the highway network would only be implemented if it could be demonstrated that there were no adverse impacts on the wider highway network. The tests will demonstrate the effects of the changes in traffic flows at a suitably refined scale.

- 4.13 It is agreed that separate detailed junction capacity assessments are undertaken in addition to the strategic modelling exercise for the four junction's suggested through the consultation. This would allow for a more detailed assessment of junction capacity as they respond to physical and traffic flows changes. These will be modelled for the weekday peak periods.
- 4.14 The request to retain the existing TfGM Metroshuttle stops is noted. The SRF has been amended to incorporate these stops.
- 4.15 It is noted that there is some flexibility within Manchester's Residential Quality Guidance (RQG) depending on the unique local conditions. At this stage of the design process it is expected that the development will be able to meet the parking levels as indicated in the RQG. As part of the detailed planning application, a Framework Travel Plan will be provided which will set out a range of measures to promote sustainable travel to and from the site. It is agreed that Car Club provision should form part of the offer for residents within the Framework Travel Plan.

Heritage

- 4.16 Historic England's support for the principle of redevelopment of the Ramada Complex is noted. An outline heritage appraisal has been completed by heritage consultants which identifies the surrounding heritage assets and key views. This baseline has informed the development of the principles set out in the SRF.
- 4.17 The SRF text has been amended to embed Historic England's guidance on the setting of heritage assets within the principles for the redevelopment of the site.
- 4.18 The SRF has been amended to refer back to the Local Planning Authority's special duties with regard to listed buildings and conservation areas under s66 and s72 of the 1990 Act.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 The Ramada Complex, Deansgate is a key city centre site with significant potential to contribute towards the regeneration and growth ambitions of the city. It is a central location sitting in close proximity to the retail core and Medieval Quarter. Regeneration of the area and delivery of a mixed use

neighbourhood will support residential demand through the creation of a significant number of new high quality homes, further enhance the visitor economy through the creation of a new hotel, and also facilitate the creation of a range of new jobs.

- 5.2 Connections form a fundamental component of the framework. The SRF sets out a strategy to improve routes into the city centre from Salford, enhance connectivity with the Medieval Quarter and retail core and introduce new high quality public realm fronting both Deansgate and the River Irwell. The SRF is aligned with the Medieval Quarter public realm masterplan and will complement this investment.
- 5.3 The SRF has been amended to incorporate the retention of the existing Metroshuttle bus stops.
- 5.4 The SRF has been amended to include reference to Historic England's guidance on the setting of heritage assets
- 5.5 The SRF has been amended to reference s66 and s77 of the 1990 Planning (listed buildings and conservation) Act
- 5.6 The SRF has been modified to provide reference to Local Planning Authority's special duties with regard to listed buildings and conservation areas

Recommendations appear at the front of the report.

6.0 Key Policies and Considerations

(a) Equal Opportunities

- 6.1 Not applicable

(b) Risk Management

- 6.2 Not applicable

(c) Legal Considerations

- 6.3 If approved by the Executive, the regeneration framework will not form part of the Council's Development Plan but would be a material consideration when development control decisions are made.