

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Executive - 27 June 2018

Subject: Portland Street SRF

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 Portland Street. The report responds to the issues raised, and seeks the Executive's approval and endorsement of the final SRF.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

1. to note the comments received on the Strategic Regeneration Framework and the response to these comments;
 2. to agree the proposed amendments to the Strategic Regeneration Framework arising from the comments received; and
 3. to endorse the principles in the Portland Street Strategic Regeneration Framework update, with the intention that it will become a material consideration in the Council's decision making as the Local Planning Authority.
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Wards Affected: Piccadilly

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 redevelopment of the Portland Street area will act as a catalyst for new commercial investment within this and adjacent areas.</p> <p>The delivery of new city centre homes within the area will support the city's residential growth, providing high quality new homes within a distinctive neighbourhood and in close proximity to a range of employment opportunities. With planning consent granted for a new hotel that forms an initial phase of development, the SRF sets out the opportunity to deliver significant new commercial floor space alongside new homes,</p>

	<p>public spaces and enhanced leisure, hotel, retail and parking facilities, to support the city centres diverse and distinctive economy.</p> <p>The SRF will also support direct employment opportunities through the creation of retail and leisure space at street level in addition to those created through the proposed hotel.</p>
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	<p>The mixed use development positioned in the heart of the city centre is aligned with a number of the city's ambitions. The Portland Street SRF will facilitate population growth, as well as assisting the attraction and retention of the talent required to support Manchester's strong growth trajectory over a range of economic sectors.</p> <p>Residential development within the SRF area will create a well-connected neighbourhood, within close proximity to the range of employment opportunities offered within the city centre.</p>
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	<p>The SRF proposes additional uses at street level, setting out the potential for retail and leisure opportunities such as restaurants, cafes and local convenience stores. In addition to this, the framework also proposes community use space which could support the creation of a range of facilities in line with demand. All of these amenity facilities will support both the Portland Street area and the wider city centre.</p> <p>The development will take account visually of the Gay Village, and its proximity. This could include naming some of the new places and spaces after historical figures from the gay community.</p>
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	<p>The SRF area benefits from excellent public transport connectivity, sitting in close proximity to rail, Metrolink and bus services at Oxford Road and Piccadilly Rail Station. This demonstrates the area's strong public transport links, making the area and its amenities accessible to visitors, residents and commuters without a reliance on car usage.</p> <p>The framework includes new vehicle parking facilities, improving access to quality car parking provision and providing separate private provision for residents. The addition of high quality public realm alongside new residential, commercial and</p>

	<p>leisure amenities will ensure the area is a popular neighbourhood of choice to live, visit and work.</p> <p>Sustainable design and development principles will be tested at the planning application stage.</p>
<p>A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth</p>	<p>The Portland Street SRF area benefits from strong transport connectivity. The framework details the opportunities to further integrate the site with adjacent city centre neighbourhoods. Development of the site will enhance the connections between the Civic Quarter and Corridor Manchester.</p> <p>The framework area will also contribute towards the further realisation of the benefits attributed to recent key transport infrastructure investment schemes including improved cycling routes and the Cross City bus priority package.</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

None

Financial Consequences – Capital

There are no financial consequences resulting 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;

- Draft Portland Street SRF – November 2017
- Report to the Executive – Portland Street Development Framework – 13 December 2017

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 On 13 December 2017, the Executive endorsed, in principle, a Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) for Portland Street, and requested that the Strategic Director undertake a public consultation exercise in relation to it.
- 1.2 The framework provided the strategic context for the regeneration of a site at the heart of the city centre, detailing the opportunity for investment and future development of the Portland Street area.
- 1.3 The framework sets out the long term ambition to develop a mixed use neighbourhood which contains commercial development alongside new city centre homes, a multi storey car park, new active frontages comprising retail and leisure uses, and high quality public realm to transform the pedestrian environment.
- 1.4 This report summarises the outcome of the public consultation on the SRF.

2.0 The Consultation Process

- 2.1 Consultation letters were initially sent out to 405 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, on 12 January 2018, and comments were invited.
- 2.2 On the 15 January 2018, it was realised that an incorrect version had been uploaded onto the Council's website. This was replaced on the same day with the correct version of the draft SRF.
- 2.3 Following a public meeting attended by the Leader of the Council, it was agreed that the consultation boundary be extended, and consultation letters re-issued to a wider number of residents, businesses, and stakeholders. On 6 February 2018, 760 letters were sent out, providing notification that the consultation period had been extended by a further 4 weeks, to 22 March 2018.
- 2.4 A total of 31 responses were received to the consultation, broken down as follows:
 - 26 from residents, individuals and business owners.
 - 2 from statutory agencies.
 - 1 from a friends group.
 - 1 from a charitable organisation.
 - 1 from a Councillor candidate.

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:

- Impact on LGBT and Village community
- Impact on the business community and local economy
- Community uses and events space
- SRF document and consultation
- Development uses
- Residential development
- Connectivity and transport
- Architecture and design
- Safety
- General

The next section of the report summarises the comments received to the consultation.

Impact on LGBT and Village community

3.2 A number of comments were received relating to the SRF's impact on the Village and the LGBT community. These comments included:

- Thirteen comments received voiced concern that the SRF would negatively impact and detract from the Village's character, history and the LGBTQ community, inclusive of residents, businesses and charities. A proportion of these respondents added that they did not feel the community had been given the opportunity to shape the SRF, with two of these respondents requesting that the framework is reworked with increased community and stakeholder input on the proposals for the area.
- Four respondents commented that the framework failed to address the Village as a safe space for the community and as a place for individual to express themselves in unique ways. These respondents indicated that the development proposals for Portland Street would significantly impact on this.
- While it was noted that regeneration of the area may be needed, this should not be at the expense of the area's community spirit.
- The terms LGBT and LGBTQ + are not mentioned in the document, and the terms Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender used just once. This ignores the history and context of the area.
- The SRF fails to include a strategic approach designed to enhance the area's impact, such as the use of s.106 payments to ensure any development results in a positive contribution to the area, and specifically to the LGBTQ Community.
- Two respondents commented that the framework places a higher value on commercial returns and revenue generation than the existing community and cultural / historical assets.

- Whilst the SRF references the LGBTQ community under the 'Relationship to Surrounding Areas' section, given the proposals for new housing and hotel uses, the LGBT community requires assurance that they will not be pushed out of the city centre.
- Three respondents commented that the neighbourhood is an internationally renowned visitor destination and cultural attraction, which would suffer as a consequence of the proposed regeneration.
- The potential impact of development on the range of memorials within the Village is concerning. These include; the Transgender Memorial, the Beacon of Hope and Alan Turing's memorial bench in Sackville Gardens. All these memorials have special significance within the community.
- The proposals could have a potentially devastating impact on a minority community who fall within the protections of the Equality Act 2010.
- The new buildings will overshadow the Gay Village, forcing a more hetero-normative culture within the neighbourhood, driving up living costs and forcing out small independent businesses who have made the area popular, with the view that the people of the area were now being forgotten.
- Two respondents commented that delivering new homes on the site will weaken the area's ties to the LGBT community, as already demonstrated by titling the project 'Portland Village'.
- The SRF does not assess the existing and future needs of the LGBTQ community, subsequently this makes it impossible to reflect these requirements in the built environment. Examples of these could include age appropriate LGBTQ sheltered housing.
- The proposals should centre on creating a world class area for the LGBTQ community that retains its identity and delivers a vibrant hub both throughout the day and night.

Impact on the business community and local economy

3.3 A number of comments were received relating to impact on the existing business community and local economy. These comments included:

- Three respondents made specific reference to the night time economy within the Village. Two of these respondents indicated that by introducing new residential development to the area, this would adversely impact the existing nightlife venues which could ultimately lead to the venues being penalised or refused a license. A further respondent commented that the framework failed to acknowledge the area is predominately night-time dominated, and lacked any detail on how the day time economy could be enhanced.

- Five respondents expressed a concern that the development would be economically detrimental to the existing Village businesses. The Friends of Manchester Gay Village (FOMGV) commented that the Village is an internationally recognised asset that attracts visitors and businesses. Two individual respondents added that the SRF doesn't go far enough to guarantee the continued protection of the LGBT business community.
- Building commercial offices, retail units and new homes within the Village and removing the artwork opposite Vanilla is objected to.
- Three responses related to the Thompsons Arms, the public house located within Site 3 of the SRF area. Two responses indicated that it is an historical and iconic venue that acts as a safe space for the LGBT+ community which should be retained. The current leaseholder also requested further details on how the development proposals will affect the business, to ensure their trade and community impacts are not adversely affected.

Community uses and events space

3.4 Several comments were received in response to the consultation relating to the frameworks potential impact on current community uses and event spaces. These comments included:

- Thirteen respondents raised concerns on the impact the development proposals would have on the area's events. The proposed development of Sites 3 and 4 was specifically cited as being impactful on the Village's annual event calendar. Particular reference was given to Manchester Pride as a high profile, world renowned celebration which contributes significantly to the visitor economy of the city centre. One respondent indicated that whilst this point is acknowledged within the SRF, it is not properly recognised, nor is a suitable solution presented, adding that the framework would benefit from a standalone section within the document specifically focused on the impact on the existing space used to host events. It was also felt that a proper assessment of the economic, charitable and social impact of Pride's presence in the area should be made, to avoid the risks of it becoming side-lined. Another response indicated that if no proper assessment is made of what the local community consists of, drawing on existing rigorous research, any promise of community space has no robust basis. Two further respondents commented that the proposed replacement public space within the SRF is inadequate and unsuitable for Pride use. A further response added that a coherent plan to relocate the Pride main stage which is currently positioned within Site 4 should be included within the SRF.
- Site 3 also houses charity/community information booths during the annual Pride Celebration, where visitors can gain more information about the issues affecting the LGBTQ community, seek out support, and join groups/societies.

- The internal event space is not commensurate with the space currently provided in Site 4 for the outdoor stage used at Pride. It is somewhere between one-third and one-half of the area in comparison. Scale is not the only factor, but the ground floor of Site 3 must provide, in addition to perimeter commercial units, space for refuse, storage, servicing and, as the Area Schedule plan shows, parking also. It is unclear how this would yield, even for a temporary period, a space that could adequately accommodate an event space equivalent to that lost on Site 4.
- The need to provide a 2-storey clear height over the envisioned event space to provide a void is also a relatively costly build option, unless the space is to be used for more frequent events to improve viability. However this then creates tension with the commercial users and residents above. It is also unclear from the SRF if Pride would be offered the space for free. If it is not, any newly developed enclosed, serviced, lit space will be of a greater cost to Pride organisers than the outdoor space currently used.
- A more imaginative and flexible option could be realised by allowing Sackville Street to widen between Bloom Street and Major Street, that could be closed-off to provide a continued open-air event space. As Pride closes the network of streets during its operation, and without the bus station to require Major Street to remain open through Sackville to Portland Street, there is an ability to be more flexible with this area than present. As a design, this will provide the Village with a square and a focus. A widened pavement to one or both sides, depending on treatment of Sites 3 & 4, will provide better utility for outdoor seating in warmer months and more informal street activity, markets or other uses. This approach would also raise the commercial value of the units.
- In the scenario of a widened Sackville Street there is no need to engineer an event void in the ground floor, provide unutilised first floor airspace and the commercial layout can be reconfigured to a more efficient layout. Further, it may remove the necessity of raising the podium to second floor level, reducing build costs and improving the viability of the scheme. The two stepped blocks and central area are supported as an efficient arrangement that respects the former urban grain. Potentially this option could even encourage the grain to be returned to ground level and a real street, though some commercial floor space would need to be sacrificed and servicing / frontages will become more difficult to arrange, but not impossible.

SRF document and consultation

3.5 A number of comments received concerned the SRF document itself and the public consultation. These comments included:

- Two respondents commented on the extension to the public consultation and widening the number of consultees. One respondent welcomed this approach, whilst a second stated that this was a recognition of an issue in

the process, and lacked transparency on how this decision was reached and by whom.

- Four respondents felt that the SRF had been hastily produced. One of these respondents stated that there are inaccuracies and spelling mistakes which undermine the proposals, and page 3 of the document refers to an incorrect street. A second respondent stated that the document fails to set out a sustainable long term approach. The SRF was felt to be below the quality threshold expected, with the text too small, and with poor grammar in places. One respondent stated that it was difficult to read, and therefore produce constructive comments. On page 24, there is a label that says “Residential Flats” but no colour code and no indication on the diagram of where the flats will be.
- The information included relating to the Northern Powerhouse was not up to date and much of the text appeared to be cut and pasted without analysis, and using images which appeared to be culled from Google.
- The SRF demonstrates a lack of awareness and understanding of the area, which does not build a foundation for appraising development of this scale.
- The Gay Village needs proper border identification. It is suggested that this is from Portland Street to Whitworth Street and from Princess Street to Minshull Street.
- The replacement draft SRF caused confusion. The first framework published used the term “Portland Village” twice and “Portland Street Village” twice, and contained sections which were virtually unreadable as they were formatted incorrectly.
- The posting of two different versions of the SRF should have been acknowledged. This put the integrity of the consultation in doubt.
- A request was made to remove reference to this area as ‘Portland Street Village’, as there is no desirable village with a multi-storey car park at its heart. It would be more appropriate to refer to the area as Portland Place or Portland Town.
- A petition has been created and submitted in response to the consultation on the Portland Street SRF. This petition has been signed worldwide and by renowned figures.
- A survey was undertaken 5 years ago which indicated that at the time only 7% of people were satisfied with the long-term approach to the Gay Village. This concern has not been addressed by the Council.
- Both the Portland Street SRF and future SRFs need to clarify how spaces such as Sackville Gardens and the iconic Canal Street itself, will feature, be protected and enhanced.

- The SRF should be community-driven and produced with a genuine consensus borne out of cooperative and respectful consultation. The SRF should be redrafted following community consultation, so that the expectations of local stakeholders for the redevelopment of this area can be ascertained.
- The friends group (FOMGV) commented that they do not believe that the framework should be adopted in its current form. The group would welcome the opportunity to expand the SRF to make it inclusive of the Village.
- The friends group welcomed any action by the Council towards establishing a clear vision for the future of the Gay Village. Any vision should be sustainable and inclusive of the LGBTQ + community that has created the very distinctiveness that has historically, and continues, to draw people and businesses to the area. The creation of a long term vision for the Village should cover the next 10 – 20 years and protect the neighbourhood from uncoordinated and destructive development.
- The friends group welcomed the opportunity to have an open discussion with the Council regarding the development proposals. The friends stated that they would work proactively towards a shared vision that takes into account the concerns and interests of their members, residents, the users of the Manchester Gay Village, the LGBTQ + community and those who own and do business within the Gay Village.
- The framework makes it explicit that the Portland Street SRF area is adjacent to the Gay Village. The Village is referenced as context within the SRF, however this contrasts with the lived experience given the presence of the Thompsons Arms, the historic site of Albert Kennedy's death, the sign welcoming visitors to the Gay Village, all of which are within the SRF area.
- Two respondents requested the consultation period be further extended to allow the Village Action Group, and others within the Village to produce proposals outlining the community requirements as part of the regeneration of this area.
- The SRF does not contain any reference or acknowledgement to the cultural importance of Manchester's Gay Village. Whilst it could be argued that the development plans set out within the SRF are not for the Gay Village, Portland Street is very much an active part of the Gay Village. Both the recently approved housing development on Richmond Street and Kampus will impact on their surroundings, however, neither has acknowledged an impact on the Village.
- The SRF is mistitled, whilst bounded by Portland Street to the north, the area covered by this SRF is more commonly regarded as the Northern Gay Village.

- The report to the Council taken in December 2017, ignores the centrality of these sites to The Village throughout, but particularly in paragraph 1.5. This site is in the heart of The Village and there is nothing about this site that makes it essential to Piccadilly or the Corridor Manchester.
- The claims to “complement the surrounding areas” in 1.6 are inaccurate. This is not achieved in design, intent, intended use, or in any other perspective.
- The proposals for Sites 3 and 4 need to be reviewed and redesigned, taking on board the comments from this consultation. Designs should then be presented that are sympathetic to the local community, not simply an exercise in maximising floor space.

Development uses

3.6 Comments on development uses included:

- Three respondents raised the need for more green spaces. One respondent commented that the SRF was not aligned with the Council’s environmental policy objectives. A second respondent stated that the SRF illustrates an exaggerated number of trees in the imagery included, and the creation of a roof garden does not offset the loss of street level green space in what is the most polluted part of the city.
- Introducing new residential development and retail units into the Village has raised concerns about who the development will serve. Direct consultation with the LGBT and Village community may quell these concerns of gentrification within the Village.
- The proposals for Site 1 are largely supported, however the lack of requirement for building designs to include sustainable energy proposals is queried.
- The proposals for the Portland Street area will see the creation of a corporate business hub which is completely unrelated to the LGBT community.
- Four individuals and a statutory organisation expressed concern over the development of a new multi-story car park (MSCP). These comments questioned the appropriateness of positioning a car park in such a central location stating that this conflicts with the city’s parking strategy, and would not encourage the use of more sustainable methods of transport. The responses state that the site is well connected to public transport links and add that there may be more appropriate locations for a MSCP on the sites of existing surface car parks in close proximity to the inner ring road.

- The approach to car parking lacks imagination. For example, in San Francisco, excavating under Union Square enabled the creation of a car park underneath public space.
- A statutory consultee acknowledged the long term aspirational nature of the proposals for Site 3. The organisation expressed a desire to work in partnership with the Council and other relevant stakeholders to facilitate the relocation of the National Express coach station at the appropriate time.
- The aim and benefit of relocating the current National Express Coach Station is acknowledged, however the proposals are insensitive and unsuitable. It is unclear where the coach station would move to. If a location has been identified, the framework should include this information.
- Commercially-led development at Site 3 ignores the centrality of Bloom St to Village history and culture. This is a major thoroughfare, and a popular road with many local businesses and residents. The northern side of Bloom Street should be enhanced for local residents, and become a fully integrated part of the Gay Village.
- Commercial development should not be delivered, as these spaces stay empty for long periods of time.
- There are a number of hotels within close proximity to the Portland Street SRF area. It is unclear why another hotel is needed within this area.
- Two respondents commented that the residential development doesn't provide an offer suitable / practical for families. The respondents commented that the Council should seek to attract more families into the city centre, consistent with other European cities. One respondent added that there is an oversupply of luxury accommodation within the city centre.
- The community space detailed within the SRF which is referenced as a medical centre, ignores the popular and established medical facility within the Village. The consultation process should have included engagement with the facility directly.
- Ground Floor space and frontages should be reserved for Gay Village needs. This could include cafes, galleries, meeting spaces and retail amenities. The developments should include internal space that could be given over to exhibitions and other services, providing information on the history and resources of the Gay Village.
- The framework should consider an improved licensing process that facilitates the delivery of a vibrant outdoor cafe culture.
- The SRF should include the creation of community amenities, such as a museum, theatre, health facilities, youth and arts centres to enhance this culture.

- The city already experiences high rates of crime in the city centre, the introduction of elements such as a casino may worsen crime within the area. The SRF does not address improving safety both generally and in relation to the existing night time economy uses within the area.
- Opportunities should be explored to grow the Gay Village as a neighbourhood that provides a lively, thriving day time culture rather than just the night time economy businesses.
- The SRF fails to have a focus on place making, instead placing buildings around a car park. There is no robust justification provided within the framework as to why many of the elements including the car park and casino are needed.
- The need for dedicated night time economy space may no longer be needed nor desired, however the Canal side night life has suffered as a result of the change in uses. The SRF also disregards the areas night time economy.

Residential Development

3.7 Six comments were received relating to residential development. These comments were:

- The SRF should follow Manchester City Council guidelines which set out that 20% of new housing should be delivered as affordable housing.
- The SRF does not indicate a sufficient level of affordable housing or set out a desire to deliver homes of mixed tenancy and typology.
- The city has a number of high rise luxury apartments under development at present. There is no need for another similar development within the Portland Street SRF area. The framework does not reference affordable housing or whether the new homes will be focused on the LGBT community.
- The residential accommodation should include homes designed for older people. This wouldn't necessarily mean sheltered accommodation but homes suitable for those wishing to retire / downsize in the city centre.
- The residential development detailed within the SRF should include more family accommodation, there is a shortage of this within the city centre. Much of the new homes under development are aimed at the 25 – 34 age range, who are then forced to leave the city centre when they start a family.
- A mixed use development would work in this location, however this is predicated on a clear vision for planning and delivering improved

infrastructure and amenities such as a bandstand in Sackville Gardens, to meet the diverse needs of varied demographics.

Connectivity and transport

3.8 A number of comments were received in response to connectivity and transport. These included:

- The area is extremely well connected to public transport links and is accessible without reliance on car usage, and as such represents an opportunity for sustainable growth that aligns with the Manchester Strategy.
- Regeneration at Portland Street provides an excellent opportunity to reduce the number of car parking spaces and subsequent car usage in the heart of the city centre. This will be critical in order to deliver high quality, cohesive and legible public realm, along with new active frontages to the developments. A reduction in private vehicles would help to transform the pedestrian environment and encourage active travel throughout the area.
- Cycle parking infrastructure within the office, commercial and residential developments would also be required.
- Defining a street hierarchy across the Strategic Regeneration Framework area will help to promote pedestrian priority and cycle links whilst recognising, and mitigating through design, the requirement for certain streets to perform an important function as vehicular access routes and for servicing. The updated City Centre Transport Strategy has included developing a street typology matrix that could be used to help define a street hierarchy for the SRF area.
- The proposed demolition of the building currently occupied by Yates is welcomed and would potentially better align with Charlotte Street, which too has space for realignment at its corner. This could provide a more traditional crossroad arrangement, better for traffic, cyclist and pedestrian movements than the present staggered arrangements.
- The creation of a safe and welcoming space for all should be considered in all proposals. This could include the altering of road routes to improve safety and access, and vehicular restriction measures such as bollards to control access, improve pavement safety, air quality and sound pollution.
- A framework that includes publicly accessible amenities will be viewed as more successful than one that seeks to replace every car parking space 1:1. The city can either be green and cycle-friendly or prioritise vehicular use.

Architecture & Design:

3.9 Comments on architecture and design included:

- Development doesn't always require all existing buildings to be demolished. Development schemes should incorporate some of our rich historical buildings alongside new buildings.
- Two respondents expressed concern that the proposed indicative building heights and materials are not in keeping with the adjacent existing architecture. One of the respondents added that to ensure light penetration into the area, none of the new buildings should exceed the height of the existing Manchester One building. The second respondent added that the proposed development should be reflective of its setting.
- The high density concepts illustrated within the SRF display a bland architectural style. The proposals will also create dead spaces, such as the small public area proposed in Site 2 next to the Manchester One building.
- The SRF does not consider how the buildings, both existing and proposed will sit alongside one another and create a balanced built environment. The framework also lacks sufficiently cohesive proposals for issues such as traffic planning, improving accessibility and street-scaping including shared spaces, wider paths and pedestrianisation.
- The development of design proposals and the planning process for the Portland Street area should be informed and influenced by the culture of the Gay Village. New development should be required to adhere to this community identity through initiatives that include: clear signage which identifies the area as the Gay Village; the use of lighting and/or building colour schemes which reference the Pride Flag; the installation of a Manchester Bee in Pride Colours; Public artwork; and unique street furniture.
- The city centre already contains too much high rise development which is destroying the identity of Manchester.
- In its current use, Site 4 contains the only significant open space in The Village. It is inappropriate that the SRF sets out the principle for locating a tall building in this location. If a surface level car park is an undesirable use, an underground car park could be built.
- Delivering open green space on Site 4 as a concept of a "Village Green" would benefit the Portland Street area. This would help to provide a range of amenities including cycle parking and Village allotments.
- The isolation of the New York pub is not given any clear logic and risks becoming surrounded by buildings of scale and creating an oppressive and anti-social environment.

Safety:

3.10 Four comments received related to safety and the creation of safe spaces. These included:

- The framework fails to acknowledge that the SRF area is part of the safe space that is the Gay Village. Subsequently the framework lacks any clear concept of how to protect this safe space. The Council should note that many respondents to FOMGV focus on the importance of marking and respecting a clear spatial identity for the Gay Village.
- The area should be protected and promoted as a safe and inclusive area for everyone.
- The Portland Street SRF area deserves regeneration, which should be developed collaboratively, providing the community with a clear and present voice and the opportunity to fully input into the future of the area, which is seen as an area of safety and a sanctuary.
- The creative use of lighting, murals and the emphasis of architectural and other features of merit as well as the installation of CCTV and canal-side safety improvements all deserve serious consideration within the SRF.

Green Infrastructure & public realm:

3.11 Comments received relating to green infrastructure & public realm included:

- The SRF references 'new high quality public realm', but provides no specific details of what this might comprise aside from a potential roof top garden on plot 4. There is additionally no acknowledgement of the loss of existing tree cover that would result from the proposed developments.
- The SRF should promote the delivery of more green infrastructure within this part of the city centre, including more street trees in line with the policies and strategies detailed within the next bullet point.
- The requirement to promote green infrastructure within the area should be included as a Development Principle in section 8. In relation to policy context within the draft SRF (section 2), there is no reference to the following: Manchester Residential Quality Guidance (Section 2.5), draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (Section 10), Manchester's Great Outdoors - A Green Infrastructure Strategy for the City (2017), Manchester Tree Strategy (2017), and a number of Core Strategy policies.
- In relation to building designs, any cantilevered upper levels of new builds would prevent street tree planting below and should therefore be avoided. There should be more flexibility about the extent of building footprints to allow for opportunities to widen pavement widths (i.e. not sticking to established existing back of pavement links) which would allow for the planting of more and larger street trees.

- The SRF should provide opportunities to increase the area's tree cover and green infrastructure. An exercise quantifying the monetary (natural capital) value of the existing trees should be undertaken as part of the SRF to act as a baseline.

General:

3.12 A selection of general comments were made in response to the consultation. These comments included:

- Regeneration within Manchester's Gay Village is overdue, this development should be informed by consultation with those who have a passion for the area.
- The Portland Street SRF area requires investment alongside the development of a new approach towards community engagement, maintenance, cleansing, waste management and crime and disorder in order to create a sense of place and ownership.
- The SRF should prioritise the future protection and maintenance of the public spaces. This should indicate the provision of spaces for the LGBTQ community.
- The Gay Village and wider areas impacted by the SRF would benefit from considered regeneration. Any development proposals should include future-proofing the Gay Village as a central tenet and work towards creating a safe, sustainable and enriching environment.
- The friends group are supportive of the concept of regeneration subject to its alignment with protecting and improving Manchester's Gay Village for the benefit of all who use and do business in the Village, from all social, cultural, and economic backgrounds and of all sexualities.
- The Portland Street SRF has been a framework of considerable controversy as a result of people's passion for the area.
- The Portland Street SRF area needs upgrading, especially the bus station, the multi storey car park and the Bloom Street surface car park.
- The proposals presented will destroy the unique area that the gay village is and has been since the 1800s.
- The area must retain its vibrancy and build upon this strong identity.
- The fabric and character of the Gay Village needs support, and this proposal needs revisiting.
- The concept of regeneration, and change encourages growth and helps the evolution of the area.

- Full support would be offered to sympathetic, engaged and truly consultative proposals. This SRF does not fulfil those ideals. Proposals should be created that are more suited to the grain of the area.
- Evolution and some regeneration of the area is supported, however, the current format of the plans are fundamentally flawed and in my opinion do not provide the adequate framework for the future of Manchester's Gay Village

4.0 Response to consultation comments

A response to the comments raised during the consultation is given below. A number of revisions are proposed to the SRF, for Members' consideration.

4.1 Impact on LGBT and Village community

- It is suggested that the framework be amended to further illustrate the context and prominent role of the LGBT + community in this part of the city centre.
- The Council support the view that the Village is a neighbourhood of local and national significance. The SRF will be amended to strengthen the detail around the need for development within the Portland Street area to complement the existing Village community and uses. It is not the purpose of the framework to define the boundary of the Village, nor set out a strategy for its future. Neither is the intention of the framework to negatively impact on the existing community, its role, function or ethos.
- The Portland Street SRF boundary is defined as 'bounded by Portland Street, Sackville Street, Major Street and Abingdon Street'. Development within this location will not lead to displacement of the LGBTQ + community from the Village area, although it is recognised that site 3 included within the SRF is used annually for the Pride event, and that this site should not be developed until a viable and acceptable alternative is in place.
- The Council attend a range of forums on a monthly and bi-monthly basis with a number of Village stakeholders, including businesses, residents, and charitable organisations, in order to explore opportunities; take forward initiatives, and effectively manage the area as a collective community.
- The framework area sits on the edge of the generally recognised Village area, and in recognition of this, and the role of site 3 to the annual Pride celebrations, the framework will be amended to strengthen the linkages between the existing Village community and the proposed development within the Portland Street SRF area. It is essential to take a holistic view of any development within the city centre to ensure that it responds to the context of adjacent neighbourhoods and the wider city centre environment. Providing new development, including new homes, will bring more people into the area, adding to its life and vibrancy.

- Sackville Gardens which contains the Transgender Memorial, the Beacon of Hope and Alan Turing's memorial bench, sits outside of the Portland Street SRF site. The Gardens will not be impacted as a consequence of development at Portland Street, and will continue to provide a place to visit and spend time for both the LGBTQ+ community, city centre residents and visitors.
- In relation to s.106 funding, Section 9 of the SRF refers to delivery mechanisms, which includes reference to potential s.106, and the ability to strategically plan for area-wide improvements outside of plot boundaries.

4.2 Impact on the business community and local economy

- There are already residents living in the vicinity of the Village and its vibrant night time offer. Additional residents in the Portland Street SRF area will not be adversely impacted from this activity. However, the role and function of the Village in relation to the night time economy will be strengthened within the SRF.
- Both Vanilla and the referenced adjacent artwork sit outside of the framework area on Richmond Street, and therefore this artwork will remain unaffected by the development proposals.
- Investment and development into the Portland Street SRF area, and also at adjacent neighbourhoods including Piccadilly and Mayfield will have a positive economic impact on the Village and wider city centre. Development will facilitate the creation of new jobs in the city centre, and allow people to live in close proximity to these employment opportunities and the services provided by existing businesses. Introducing active frontages at street level will increase pedestrian footfall and provide opportunities for existing local businesses to expand or new organisations to locate themselves within the area.
- Canal Street sits outside of the SRF boundary and as such will remain unaltered, continuing to operate as an integral destination for leisure, office space and retail uses.
- The Council acknowledges the importance of the Village to a range of stakeholders that includes the LGBTQ + community, business owners, residents and visitors. The neighbourhood has a unique business base, thriving leisure sector and contributes to the wider tourism and visitor offer of the city centre. Development within the Portland Street area will not detract from the offer of the Village but instead help to provide an enhanced environment adjacent to the periphery of the neighbourhood.
- The short term development plans for the Portland Street SRF area sit within Site 1 at 55 Portland Street. This site includes an approved planning application alongside an existing application that has been submitted to the Council for consideration. The Thompsons Arms public house is located within Site 3, and as detailed within the SRF, any proposed development at this site

would need significant changes to the existing site conditions, as well as consultation with the existing owners and occupiers. The inclusion of Site 3 within the SRF area is, however, important to ensure a coherent approach is taken to the overall regeneration of the area. Over the longer term, Site 3 has the potential to deliver new commercial or residential-led mixed use development, complemented by ground floor leisure, retail and potential community uses.

- All Village stakeholders including businesses and residents have been invited to input into the proposals for Portland Street through the public consultation. Following comments received, amendments have been made to the framework, which are detailed within the conclusion section of this report.
- Development at Portland Street will provide key investment that will have a positive impact on the local environment and adjacent neighbourhoods. As pedestrian connections are improved through the area and new retail amenity added at street level, it is envisaged that this will have a complementary effect on existing local businesses.

4.3 Community uses and events space

- The Council fully supports the annual Pride weekend. This internationally renowned event attracts circa 40,000 people to the city centre and contributes around £20 million to the local economy.
- The open space referenced within the consultation is operational throughout the year as a surface level car park. During Manchester Pride celebrations, historically permission has been given for the event organisers to use the space. The Council acknowledges that any longer term development of Sites 3 & 4 would require the re-provision of space for event use during Pride and other community events. The Leader of the Council confirmed at the public meeting during the consultation period, that if at any time notice was given that this space was no longer available for Pride use, the Council would work with the community and organisers to identify and secure an alternative space to host the event. Furthermore, and separate to this consultation, the Council intend to engage with the Pride Committee, to help secure its long-term future.
- We also intend to engage more generally with businesses, residents, and users in the wider Gay Village area to develop a long-term plan for the future of the Village that maintains its defining characteristics of providing safe spaces for our LGBTQ + communities, and also looks at enhancing day time activity in the area as part of increasing its overall attractiveness and viability. Although not part of a physical planning framework, the Council will work with the Village community to look at the overall management of the Village, as part of the co-design of a long-term strategic plan, but also to see where there might be quick win improvements that can be made. These issues will be reflected within the SRF.

- The highway network provides important access routes within the area, which would have an adverse impact if they were permanently closed. It is therefore not proposed to close these roads.

4.4 SRF document and consultation

- The purpose of the SRF is to set an overarching strategic approach for commercially-led regeneration of the four key development sites within its boundary, and to set the parameters and intent for future development schemes.
- Of the four sites identified, only Site 1 is being considered in the short term with planning permission having previously been granted for this site, and a new planning application for a hotel at 55 Portland Street having been submitted. The design and use of the developments in the planning applications have been discussed with the Council, and statutory consultees, including Historic England and Places Matter. The remaining three sites (Sites 2-4) represent long term aspirational development proposals that will be subject to further detailed design and consultation with key stakeholders.
- As stated earlier, the referenced term “Portland Village” was included in error within an early draft of the SRF. The drafting error was quickly noted and the document replaced with the correct version of the SRF, which references the area as the Portland Street SRF throughout. It is not the intention of the framework to rebrand or impinge on the character and feel of the Village.
- The updated draft Portland Street SRF has been reviewed for accuracy and coherence to guide the long term regeneration of the Portland Street area.
- All comments received from the Village community and stakeholders have been carefully considered, and adjustments will be made to the SRF as a consequence. The consultation period was extended from 6 to 10 weeks to encourage further comment from the local community. Council officers have also continued to work with and support local forums including the Village Action Forum, Village Licensed Business Association and Chinatown Business Association, on local issues of concern. Initiatives within the area need to be community led, consistent with the Our Manchester approach, particularly in the context of strengthening the unique character and use of the Village as a place to live, work and spend time both during the day and evening.

4.5 Development uses

- The SRF is informed by current site uses. At present the SRF area is in need of investment to ensure it maximises its contribution to the local economy and community.
- The proposals for Portland Street are to deliver a mixed use neighbourhood that provides a mix of new homes, commercial space, retail amenity,

consolidated vehicle parking and enhanced public realm. This would provide a broader mixture of uses than is currently available.

- Investment at Portland Street would be complementary to uses in the Village. The current uses are not representative of a modern city centre neighbourhood with a balanced mix of uses. In addition, the existing office block at Site 1 does not hold specific architectural merit, and does not currently contribute to the character of the Village. The new retail, enhanced pedestrian routes, hotel and residential amenities will make the area more attractive to visit and spend time, which will benefit the adjacent Village businesses. The development will take account visually of the Village, and its proximity. This could include naming some of the new places and spaces after historical figures from the gay community. This will be reflected within the SRF.
- The development of the car park is a long term aspirational development proposal that is subject to a number of interdependent requirements. At such time that development of Sites 3 & 4 were in a position to progress, demand analysis would be undertaken to ascertain the requirements for a new car parking facility, and the number of car parking spaces.
- Support for the ambition of repurposing the current National Express Coach Station is noted.
- The proposals for Sites, 2, 3 and 4 represent longer term aspirational opportunities. At this stage no location has been identified for the re-siting of the Coach Station. Before any development proposals can be brought forward, it is a pre-requisite that a suitable alternative location for the National Express Coach Station be identified.
- The retail and amenity space will be delivered on an end-user demand basis. The SRF is not prescriptive on the type of uses or occupants within the units. The introduction of retail and amenity at street level will enhance the street landscape and serve the local community.
- The SRF provides an indication of what community amenities could be delivered in the area. Any medical facility, nursery or other community facility would be based on demand and would not seek to replicate or take away from existing community provision. Any proposed community provision would be subject to further consultation with the existing resident and business community.
- The number of people choosing to live in the city centre has increased significantly: from a few thousand in the late 1990's, to around 50,000 people today. This growth trajectory remains consistent, and over the next few years the number of new homes built, with a mixture of typologies, will increase further in the city centre. As well as a popular place to live that benefits from high quality cultural, retail and leisure amenities, the city centre is the region's economic hub. It supports over 140,000 jobs which is 40% of total

employment in Greater Manchester. Further development of this balanced mix of uses will see Manchester continue to develop as a leading international city.

- It is not the intention of the framework to rebrand or impinge on the character of the Village neighbourhood. Residential development is a key element of the place making of city centre neighbourhoods. Within areas such as Spinningfields and the Northern Quarter, the residential community is integrated with commercial, retail, leisure and night time economy uses.
- Ground floor space within the development will include a variety of amenities and facilities to serve the wider area, including the Village. The range and type of facilities will be subject to demand and viability.
- The Village incorporates Sackville Gardens which provides the local community with access to high quality city centre green space. Equally, the initial phases of development at Mayfield will see the delivery of a new 6.5 acre city centre park, a short walk away for those that live and work in the Village. Due to the position of the Portland Street SRF, the framework focuses on the enhancement of pedestrian routes and connectivity. At present there is scope to enhance these, thus better connecting key city centre districts.
- The framework proposes new public spaces that improves connectivity and permeability through the area, enhances the setting of both the proposed and existing buildings, and facilitates greater interaction at street level. Due to the location and high volume footfall, it is more appropriate that this space is delivered as hard landscaped public space that incorporates a range of planting including new trees.
- The SRF recognises the existing night-time uses within the Village, and new buildings will be constructed with appropriate sound insulation in recognition of this. The framework will be amended to reference this, and by utilising this approach, the potential for conflict between existing and new uses will be mitigated. Equally, measures will be implemented to ensure noise escape is also controlled from the new uses so as not to impact on existing businesses and residents.
- As a result of retaining the existing street pattern it is not possible to provide ground floor open spaces. The framework will, however, be updated to reference the potential to include additional green/public space, on the top deck of the multi storey car park in addition to the suggested areas on the podium level of Site 3. The combination of these spaces along with the covered space within the lower podium spaces of Site 3, could all provide suitable locations for event uses. The exact footprint of the events space will be determined during the detailed design of Site 3, although the principle for its inclusion will be stipulated as part of the SRF. The detailed design of Site 3 will be subject to further consultation as part of a detailed planning application at the appropriate time.
- All ground floor uses are active to promote shared spaces and a vibrant outdoor café culture.

4.6 Residential development

- The SRF does not prescribe the specific type and tenures of housing. This will be determined and shaped by demand at a time that a planning application is made for the residential phase of development. The Council has an endorsed affordable housing strategy which takes a citywide view of enhancing access to affordable housing across Manchester.
- The 250 residential units proposed within the SRF are indicatively expressed as a mix of: 2 studio apartments; 59 x1 bed apartments; 180 x2 bed apartments; and 9 x3 bed apartments. The residential element is indicated as a later phase of development which could only be achieved once a number of interdependencies have been resolved. The mix of apartments would be subject to demand analysis at the time of delivery to ensure that the homes proposed met demand.
- The future detailed design of residential development will be assessed against the relevant planning policies at the time and the Manchester Residential Quality Guidance which sets out principles relating to design, quality, and mix.
- The text on Page 6 of the SRF will be amended to clearly articulate the Piccadilly area's potential to deliver a significant proportion of new city centre homes, aligned with the city's residential growth requirements.

4.7 Connectivity and transport

- The proposals retain the historic street grids with buildings placed within this context. It is not considered that the proposed development will generate additional traffic. The proposals respect the current traffic hierarchy, with Sackville Street functioning as the major arterial route supported by the adjacent minor roads acting as feeders to this.
- The Council's car parking strategy seeks to deliver vehicle parking in the city centre in locations easily accessible from the ring road. Supporting examples of this include at Spinningfields, with planned future provision at Piccadilly Basin and Circle Square. The SRF area is well connected to rail, bus and Metrolink services, and it is expected that public transport patronage will continue to grow, reducing dependency on cars. However, there is existing demand for parking provision from businesses, visitors and local residents. Therefore, the provision of a new parking facility within the Portland Street SRF area will be dependent on need and demand.
- The consolidation of the parking offer, alongside the relocation of the National Express Coach Station, are, at this stage *aspirational*, and would be critical components to enabling the development of Sites 3 and 4.

4.8 Architecture and design

- The broad support for the proposals for Site 1 is noted. Any detail relating to building designs and the inclusion of sustainable energy proposals will be set out and assessed within the planning application rather than the SRF, which provides the strategic context and development principles for the site.
- The ability to create underground car parking at this site is not possible due to a number of complexities, including the presence of underground infrastructure, and the height of the underlying bedrock.
- The design, use and quantum of future developments at Sites 2, 3, and 4 will be established during the detailed design of those plots, at which point further consultation will take place with the local community and other stakeholders.
- The SRF illustrates how the mass of the proposed development mediates the heights between Portland Street and The Village. This height articulation is particularly sensitive and responsive to its immediate context.
- The SRF is an indicative design based on the urban grain of this particular city centre location, and the architectural style hasn't been developed or proposed for Sites 2, 3 or 4. The SRF illustrates the proposed massing and urban grain with an indication of proposed uses. Part of Site 1 has received planning consent and is currently under construction. Site 1 is also the subject of a separate planning application. The public space within Site 2 has been designed to accommodate the entrance to the proposed building to the side of Portland Tower. The existing tower has been wrapped at ground level to continue the back of pavement street line along all surrounding streets.
- The existing New York pub is particularly low in height for the context of its environment. The surrounding existing buildings along Abingdon Street are all in excess of 5 storeys. The proposed buildings have been limited in height to 5 storeys along Abingdon Street and Richmond Street in acknowledgement of this.
- The SRF proposes buildings of varying heights to mitigate between the larger scale buildings along Portland Street and the low rise buildings of the Village. The tallest building has been located adjacent to Portland Tower on Portland Street.

4.9 Safety

- It is envisaged that development at Portland Street will enhance safety. New routes and spaces will be activated and natural surveillance promoted. Any detailed designs submitted to the Council for consideration will need to adhere to the principles of 'Secure by Design'. This will include the appropriate use of lighting and effective management. It is felt that development with a mixture of uses, legible routes and public spaces that encourage footfall and people movement through the area will create a continually vibrant area that minimises the scope for anti-social behavior.

- The Council continues to work with the Village Action Forum and Village Licensed Business Association in developing an evolving strategy for the effective management and support of the night time economy within the Village.

4.10 Green Infrastructure & public realm:

- The existing tree coverage within Site 4 comprises 6 mature trees and 15 semi-mature trees on Site 3. The SRF proposes a total of 19 semi mature trees on Site 4 and a further 17 semi mature trees on Site 3. This will deliver a 171% increase in the number of trees within the area.
- The SRF will be amended to detail further opportunities to create green roofs to the surrounding low level buildings to Site 2. These areas could be accessed from the retail units proposed for the ground floor. This would mitigate the loss of green space within the private boundary of Site 2. There is also reference in Section 9 of the SRF, 'Implementation and Delivery' to ensuring delivery of high-quality landscaping within the boundaries of individual plots and area-wide public realm upgrades.
- Whilst there is no direct reference in the SRF to all of the policies highlighted in City of Trees response, there is clear reference in the Development Principles section (section 8) to development proposals having to provide high quality public spaces; public spaces being of an exceptional quality in compliance with the Manchester Residential Quality Guidance, and the creation of place. Section 8 of the SRF will be updated to further reference the ambition to promote the delivery of green infrastructure.
- There are no proposed cantilevered upper levels to buildings within the SRF area which would preclude planting trees along the pavements.
- Given the purpose of the SRF as a high level strategic documents, it would not be appropriate to quantify the monetary value of existing trees or prescribe the value of replacement trees. Consistent with the approach to residential units and commercial floor space this will be a components of a detailing planning application. The SRF does promote the principle for high quality public realm and green infrastructure that can be considered at the detailed planning stage.

4.11 General

- The consultation on the SRF provides the first opportunity for the community to offer their thoughts on the proposals for the Portland Street area. A total of 760 letters were sent to local residents, businesses and stakeholders requesting their views on the proposals.
- The Council works collaboratively with a number of agencies within the area including Greater Manchester Police to manage issues of crime, antisocial behaviour, street cleaning and grounds maintenance.

- It is not the intention of the SRF to detail a strategy for the Village. However the framework acknowledges its proximity to the Village and at the appropriate time, the detailed design of Sites 2, 3 & 4 will be subject to further consultation with the wider community on design, appearance, and uses.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 The Portland Street area is a key area of the city centre with significant potential to contribute towards the regeneration and growth ambitions of the city. It is a highly accessible location sitting adjacent to key public transport infrastructure at Piccadilly bus and rail stations. Regeneration of the area and delivery of a commercially led mixed use district will provide a range of employment opportunities, new homes and retail amenities.
- 5.2 The draft framework will be amended to further illustrate the context and prominent role of the LGBTQ+ community within the adjacent Village area.
- 5.3 The framework area sits on the edge of the generally recognised Village area, and in recognition of this, and the role of site 3 to the annual Pride celebrations, the SRF will be strengthened to detail the need for development that complements the existing Village community and uses, including the role and function of the Village in relation to the night time economy.
- 5.4 The updated draft Portland Street SRF has been reviewed for accuracy and coherence to guide the long term regeneration of the Portland Street area
- 5.5 The requirement for new buildings to be constructed to a high standard of noise insulation will be added to the SRF to ensure existing businesses and residents are not impacted.
- 5.6 The text on Page 6 within the SRF will be amended to clearer indicate Piccadilly's potential to deliver a significant proportion of new city centre homes aligned with the city's residential growth requirements.
- 5.7 The SRF will be updated to further reference the ambition to promote the delivery of green infrastructure within section 8 of the framework.
- 5.8 The SRF will be amended to take account visually of the Village, and its proximity. This could include naming some of the new places and spaces after historical figures from the gay community.
- 5.9 The Council will engage with the Pride Committee, to help secure its long-term future. We will work more generally with businesses, residents and users, to develop a long-term plan for the future of the Village that maintains its defining characteristics of providing safe spaces for our LGBTQ + communities, and also looks at enhancing day time activity in the area as part of increasing its overall attractiveness and viability. Although not part of a physical planning framework, the Council will work with the Village community to look at the overall management of the Village, as part of the co-design of a long-term

strategic plan, but also to see where there might be quick win improvements that can be made.

5.10 Recommendations appear at the front of the report.

6.0 Key Polices 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.