

## Manchester City Council Report for Resolution

**Report to:** Executive – 16 October 2019

**Subject:** Knott Mill Masterplan

**Report of:** Strategic Director (Growth & Development)

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### Summary

This report informs the Executive of the outcome of a public consultation exercise with local residents, businesses and stakeholders, on the draft Masterplan for the Knott Mill area, and seeks the Executive's approval.

### Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- i) Note the outcome of the public consultation on the draft Masterplan for the Knott Mill area.
  - ii) Approve the Masterplan for Knott Mill and request that Planning and Highways Committee take the masterplan into account as a material consideration when considering planning applications for the site.
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### Wards Affected

Deansgate

**Environmental Impact Assessment** - the impact of the decisions proposed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

All future development proposals for Knott Mill will need to be carefully considered in order to ensure that they help the city meet its zero-carbon target. All construction will be required to meet the highest standards of sustainable development. Given Knott Mill's highly accessible location within the city centre, a key priority will be to promote sustainable transport modes.

A number of responses to the consultation relate to environmental impacts including construction impact, flood risk, waste water infrastructure, sustainable urban drainage and opportunities for increased sustainable transport. These are set out in more detail in the environmental and connectivity sections of the report and have been taken into account for the final version of the Masterplan.

Our Manchester Strategy outcomes	Contribution to the strategy
<p>A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities</p>	<p>The Masterplan will provide a range of direct employment opportunities within a number of sectors and across a variety of levels.</p> <p>The Knott Mill area's proximity to First Street will improve linkages and access to the core of the city centre, and add to the employment opportunities presented within this part of the city centre.</p> <p>New residential development will be delivered within walking distance of city centre employment opportunities. Additionally, residents within the area will be connected to employment opportunities across Greater Manchester through easily accessible public transport links.</p>
<p>A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success</p>	<p>The Masterplan sets out the opportunity to create new homes, enabling people to live near employment opportunities. Development will also improve connectivity to surrounding areas which will enhance access to opportunities within the city centre.</p> <p>Delivering residential development at Knott Mill will both support the city's population growth and the attraction and retention of the talent required to support Manchester's strong growth trajectory across a range of economic sectors.</p> <p>The redevelopment proposals will support new job opportunities across a range of levels accessible to local people. In addition, opportunities for apprenticeships during construction will also be available.</p>
<p>A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities</p>	<p>The proposals set out within the Knott Mill Masterplan are aligned to and will support regeneration in the wider area. The proposals will contribute to the delivery of the Manchester Residential Growth prospectus and meet the growing demand for new homes in the city.</p> <p>The proposed public spaces, connections and pedestrian routes will improve access to job opportunities, key neighbourhoods and</p>

	amenities such as First Street, Castlefield and Hulme Park.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	<p>The Masterplan area is well connected to a number of city centre neighbourhoods and amenities within walking distance. Knott Mill is well served by public transport and, located at a key southern gateway to the city centre, is also easily accessible by walking or cycling.</p> <p>The introduction of enhanced active frontages at ground floor level will support the residential and business community within the Knott Mill neighbourhood, and also provide amenities to adjacent city centre districts including Castlefield, First Street and the emerging Great Jackson Street.</p> <p>The proposals to extend the existing riverside walkway adjacent to the River Medlock would both enhance pedestrian connections within the area, and also provide access to the river.</p>
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	<p>The neighbourhood benefits from strong transport connectivity. This includes excellent public transport links, with both rail and Metrolink stations within a two minute walk from the Masterplan area, reducing reliance on car usage.</p> <p>Improved connections will be provided to surrounding neighbourhoods as part of the masterplan.</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 directly from this report.

#### **Financial Consequences – Capital**

None directly 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 officers above.

- Report to the Executive – Whitworth Street West Development Framework - October 2008
- Draft Knott Mill Masterplan – June 2019
- Report to the Executive – Knott Mill Masterplan – June 2019

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 On 26 June 2019, the Executive endorsed, in principle, the draft Masterplan for Knott Mill and requested that the Strategic Director undertake a public consultation exercise in relation to it.
- 1.2 This report summarises the outcome of the public consultation on the draft masterplan.

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1 Knott Mill is located south west of the city centre, close to Castlefield, Whitworth Street West, First Street and the emerging Great Jackson Street regeneration area. It is adjacent to the River Medlock and close to Deansgate Railway Station and Deansgate-Castlefield Metrolink Station.
- 2.2 Whilst the area has experienced some regeneration, action needs to be taken in order for Knott Mill to make a full contribution to the economy and function of the area and wider city centre.
- 2.3 The Masterplan for Knott Mill has been produced by the Knott Mill Association, representing major land owners. It seeks to establish a strategy to guide future development in the area that both acknowledges its unique character and improves connections with neighbouring areas. The Masterplan sets out urban design principles in relation to: development uses, sense of place, street hierarchy and connectivity, public realm and amenity, height and density.
- 2.4 As also set out in the June report, the Masterplan area identifies three distinct zones within Knott Mill and the most appropriate uses and scale for each zone. These are:
  - **The Band-** The strip of mid-rise development along the northern edge of the Masterplan boundary, which includes a mix of recently developed buildings either side of the character assets of 8 Hewitt Street and the former St Peter's School.
  - **The Core-** The central, lower rise heart of Knott Mill, comprising remnants of the historic buildings of most character value.
  - **The Fringe-** Larger plots and large scale development opportunities along the river edge, linking with the higher density Great Jackson Street developments.
  - Development on the sites within the 'zone of influence' are included for context.
  - Deansgate Station and site redevelopment.

2.5 The Masterplan highlights the need for all development in Knott Mill to be carefully considered to help the city meet its ambition to be zero carbon by 2038.

### **3.0 The Consultation Process**

3.1 Consultation letters were sent out to 2,225 local residents, landowners, businesses, local community groups and stakeholders, informing them about the public consultation, how to participate and engage in the consultation process, and where to access the Masterplan document. The masterplan was made available on the Council's website, and comments were invited on this.

3.2 The formal consultation opened on 18<sup>th</sup> July and, following a six week period of consultation, closed on 29<sup>th</sup> August.

3.3 A presentation was given by the authors of the Masterplan to the Castlefield Forum, informing local residents and stakeholders about the proposals and consultation process and providing an opportunity to comment.

### **4.0 Consultation Comments**

4.1 The City Council has received a total of 30 responses to the consultation on the Masterplan, 20 of which were submitted via the Council's website and 10 via email or letter. The breakdown of respondents is as follows:

5 stakeholders  
19 residents  
3 businesses  
2 landowners  
1 developer

Online respondents were asked specifically whether they agree or disagree with the Masterplan proposals. The 20 online responses break down as follows:

Agree: 13  
Disagree: 6  
Neither agree nor disagree: 1

#### **General responses**

4.2 A range of comments were received which were generally supportive of the proposed Masterplan objectives and principles, although some areas of concern were raised. These comments included:

- The Masterplan is comprehensive and will help communicate a vision to make this area another one of the 'places to be'.
- The area is currently underutilised. Given the area's range of local assets, there is huge potential if the right investment is made.

- Recognition of the historic and more recent cultural significance of the area is positive.
- A family living in Knott Mill welcomed plans for improvements.
- Knott Mill needs to remain relevant and contribute in a meaningful way to the city. It needs to have a sustainable future and be capable of responding to the changing needs of existing and future occupants, neighbours and visitors.
- With new buildings on Deansgate Square (Great Jackson St), the area now needs to improve and respond. The area seems almost cut off from the conservation area of Castlefield, First Street and the rest of Deansgate.
- Network Rail welcomed the overall vision set out with the Masterplan.
- Transport for Greater Manchester is supportive of the Masterplan vision and urban design principles, particularly in relation to access, movement and street hierarchy.
- A landowner commented that a land interest is currently divided by the Masterplan boundary. It is requested that the boundary line is amended to ensure the entirety of the Deansgate Station site (and associated land to the north and south of the railway line) falls within the 'Zone of Interest'.
- Two respondents asked about the NCP car park at Little Peter Street and why it is not included. It was stated that excluding a site with a significant footprint from the Masterplan boundary does not have an urban design or planning rationale.
- Two respondents commented that Knott Mill is a city centre fringe location and increased footfall would have a negative impact on residents.
- Proposals could affect property prices and also mental/physical wellbeing.
- The proposals will have a negative impact on businesses already located within the Knott Mill area and may need to relocate.
- One respondent felt that the purpose of the masterplan was for landowners to increase the value of their assets. They went on to state there was a lack of place-making vision associated with it, while the document focuses on private land owners and fails to represent the best interests of its citizens.
- The Masterplan indicates a piecemeal redevelopment of each existing plot with no overall strategic balance for the area.

- There is a conflict of interest with the authors of the Masterplan and their ownerships.

## **Connectivity**

4.3 Several comments were received in response to the consultation relating to connectivity. These included:

- A number of respondents commented on the opportunity to promote sustainable transport modes and active travel, due to its highly accessible location close to key public transport connections. These include the opportunity to reduce parking, increase cycle parking, provide electric car charging points and introduce car clubs within new developments.
- It was noted that walking and cycling routes across the Masterplan area will improve permeability, such as the access from Whitworth Street and connections to other regeneration areas such as First Street and Great Jackson Street. The attractiveness of these routes should be improved, particularly under the railway viaducts. Provision of enhanced footpaths and roads should be included within the Masterplan.
- TfGM would like to ensure the east-west route and pedestrian bridge would also be available for cycle use.
- TfGM's response agrees that the area alongside Deansgate Railway Station, beneath the railway bridge, has the potential to become a welcoming, landscaped, vehicle free space.
- Controlled vehicular access should be considered at Bugle Street and Jordan Street.
- Two respondents raised concerns regarding the potential for increased traffic in the area as a result of development.
- Improved connections along and across the River Medlock will benefit the area.
- Measures to reduce rat-running were welcomed by a number of residents.
- Improved pedestrian access will diversify pedestrian flow from Deansgate. This will be important given the large number of new residents at the Owen Street development.
- Thought must be given to the design of appropriate servicing and vehicular access, including emergency vehicles.
- There is an opportunity to improve interfaces with neighbouring areas. These are currently impacted due to the river, a lack of signage and routes that aren't connected.

- One respondent expressed disappointment that the masterplan does not set out clear actions for improving interfaces with:
  - Old Deansgate, (half in and half out of the study area)
  - River Medlock including Brindley Flood Gate (falls outside of Gt Jackson St and Knott Mill framework areas)
  - Units under the railway arches on the other side of Hewitt Street which sit outside of study area. However they present an opportunity.
- The Masterplan should seek to enhance the passenger experience, accessibility, safety and legibility of Deansgate Railway Station and its accesses. This should also incorporate the integration of suitable access for servicing and maintenance of the station and railway structures.
- New development proposals should be accompanied by a car parking strategy which considers the promotion of sustainable forms of transport.

## Uses

- A number of respondents commented that the mix of uses is appropriate and welcome the proposals to create a range of office spaces to allow the area's existing businesses to remain and grow.

Specific comments on the types of uses included the following:

- One respondent added that Knott Mill has interesting characteristics but there is currently little reason to visit or pass through. Some attractive new uses could be considered.
- The recent planning consent granted for aparthotel use at 1 Alpha Place contradicts the principle of making spaces available for independent traders, as this accommodation provision will be taken by guests visiting for the night-time economy offer at the adjacent Deansgate Locks.
- Several respondents commented that independent retail and food outlets would be welcomed, but nightclubs or bars would not be appropriate. However, one respondent did comment that bars would be an acceptable use.
- The Masterplan should address the night-time character of the area. Currently, on-street parking is used by people attending bars and clubs in the city centre.
- The provision of new residential accommodation is supported, however this should be of mixed types and tenures.
- The delivery of further residential development could lead to pressures on amenities including post offices, childcare provision, schools and transport infrastructure.

- One respondent commented that the Masterplan is overly prescriptive in terms of uses. The Commercial Street and Constance Street area would require destination retail uses as there is no linkage through the area. Reference to active frontages should be less specific. Office use at ground floor level does not promote active frontages as they are often screened.
- Spaces for community and voluntary uses should be considered.
- One response highlighted that the Masterplan does not identify the arches as a location for active frontages and suggests they are unlikely to be redeveloped in the near future. There is an opportunity to identify the future potential for active frontage along the Site's southern boundary. The regeneration of the Deansgate Station site and works to the south of the railway will enhance its relationship with the street, through a new station entrance and/or active uses utilising existing arches. This will improve vibrancy along Hewitt Street.

### **Public Realm / Greening**

- A number of respondents requested that the Masterplan gives greater priority for tree planting.
- The quality of public amenity spaces is currently poor. Consideration should be given to the provision of outdoor green space. This could be within the surface level car park bounded by Commercial Street, Constance Street and Little Peter Street.
- The proposed open space at Constance Street / Commercial Street should occupy the whole of the site rather than share the area with a new building.
- The proposed public realm provision is extremely low in quantity and poor in quality- inappropriate for creating a city that is attractive to live, work and enjoy and the Council should have higher aspirations.
- Deansgate Station and cycle parking will need to be a key consideration in bringing forward any public realm enhancements.
- Future detailed design for public realm enhancements should be co-ordinated with other wider transport and highways improvement programmes.
- The aspiration to deliver improved pedestrian access in the north west corner of the Masterplan is supported. Proportionate contributions to public realm improvements by future proposals are also supported in principle.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour**

- Proposals should seek to have a positive impact on the range of antisocial behaviour which often take place during the weekends. This could be

achieved through a review of the on street and surface parking provision within the area and improved lighting.

### **Development design, heights and density**

- A number of respondents commented that buildings should be of an appropriate height, scale and design, in keeping with the identified character assets, and in a different form to the number of tower buildings currently under construction within the city centre. Specific comments included:
- One responded commented that retaining character buildings isn't a progressive approach.
- The proposals seem homogenous with other city centre proposals. The Masterplan should seek to do something different in the area such as make it a place for families.
- One respondent commented that there are now too many tall buildings in Manchester. The proposals are not suitable for this location, and will set a precedent for similar developments throughout the Castlefield and Deansgate area. However, a number of landowners felt that the proposed heights were too low.
- A landowner commented that the proposed height limitations will affect the viability of delivering development in this area. Another said that the proposed height (5-7 storeys) for the plot on the corner of Little Peter Street and Constance Street (no12 on page 44) should be amended in line with neighbouring plots (20, 23 and 24) which show potential for 10, 11 and 15 storeys. A joint venture with neighbouring plots would be more likely if the same approach is applied to this plot.
- The central combined triangular plots of Commercial Street, Constance Street and Little Peter Street are a far more attractive proposition for a landmark (tall) building than any other within the area.
- A developer requested that the Deansgate Station site is recognised in the revised Masterplan as having the potential for future high density development, in the context of excellent accessibility by sustainable forms of transport. The developer asked to be consulted as the Masterplan comes forward, due to the proximity of improvements to the Deansgate Station site.
- The remaining character and intimacy of Commercial Street/Jordan Street/Hewitt Street triangle should be retained. An underground car park with a public square at street level was suggested.
- Historic England were consulted as a statutory consultee, however did not wish to comment on the Masterplan at this stage.

## Environmental issues

4.4 Comments were received from United Utilities and the Environment Agency specifically relating to flood risk and water management within the Masterplan area. These are summarised below:

- United Utilities has significant wastewater infrastructure across the site, especially towards the east along Albion Street. Engagement with United Utilities should take place at the earliest opportunity to discuss potential implications for future development proposals. United Utilities have a free pre-application service for applicants to discuss drainage strategies and water supply requirements.
- The Masterplan should clearly set out the need to follow the hierarchy of drainage options for surface water in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which identifies the public sewer as the least preferable option. The Masterplan should clearly state the need to remove existing surface water connections from the public sewer and instead discharge surface water to more sustainable forms.
- Further references to relevant parts of the NPPF and Core Strategy should be included in the Strategic Planning and Regeneration section.
- The Masterplan should reference surface water management to ensure opportunities are not missed, for example, when considering space for new public realm. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) should be highlighted, such as green roofs and grey water recycling, to help reduce pressure on public water supply and the public sewerage system.
- There is insufficient reference to flood management and sustainable surface water drainage. There should be clear requirements to ensure maximum contribution from design and landscaping to reducing surface water discharge. Applying sustainable drainage practices as part of new development will increase resilience to climate change and potentially reduce the future carbon footprint of new development.
- The City Council should ensure landowners enter a legally binding development framework to ensure the multiple developments are coordinated and delivered in the most sustainable way. Planning applications will be expected to demonstrate how the drainage proposals relate to the wider development.
- All proposals within Flood Zone 2 will require a flood risk assessment to identify risks and any appropriate mitigation measures to ensure the safety of the development. This should cover types and uses of development.
- In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, any development within Flood Zone 2 should be subject to sequential testing. Development should not be permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower

probability of flooding. It is for the local planning authority to determine if the sequential test has to be applied and whether or not there are other preferential sites available at lower flood risk.

- The impact of climate change is likely to mean the current medium flood risk may become higher in certain parts of the Masterplan area over the lifetime of a development. Consideration should be given to residential development which is considered to have at least a 100 year design life.
- Setting back development from the walled channel of the River Medlock would provide improved access to the river for inspection and maintenance. The Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016 provide powers to control development within 8 metres from the bank where it could affect access. Any proposed layouts must give consideration to this.
- The Masterplan notes the current landscape and amenity quality alongside the main green infrastructure asset of the River Medlock is poor, with limited or in some cases no development free buffers or greenspace along the waterbody. Development of the area which would improve this situation is welcomed. New development along the river edge should also ensure there is improved natural light provision along the river corridor as part of detailed design, to encourage active usage throughout the year.
- Details should be provided on how development will conform with the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework policies in regards to a sustainable and resilient development within the Masterplan.
- As a result of Knott Mill's industrial heritage, it is likely that there may be elevated concentrations of soil and or groundwater contamination which may pose a risk. These should be addressed by following the relevant risk management framework and guidance on contamination, and investigations carried out by, or under the direction of a suitably qualified person.

#### 4.5 Other comments received on environmental issues include:

- The quality of the environment will be significantly improved including air quality, although there may be short term inconvenience during construction.
- The use of more photovoltaics is welcomed.
- Litter in the river is an issue.
- Construction and associated traffic will have a disruptive and detrimental impact on the residents of Hill Quays.
- Drainage within the area can be poor during heavy rainfall.

### **Masterplan document & consultation**

- One respondent commented that the Masterplan document is overly dense and provides irrelevant information relating to the detailed history of the Knott Mill area. The language used within the Masterplan document isn't easily interpretable for those without a planning background.
- Another commented that maps are difficult to interpret.
- One response stated that local residents should have been consulted earlier.
- Support is given for the identification of buildings as character assets. An explanation of how these were identified would be beneficial.
- Deansgate Quay is not mentioned within the Masterplan.
- The Grade II listed Castlefield (MSJ & AR) viaduct should be included in the listed structures plan on page 46.

## **5.0 Response to Consultation Comments**

- Responses to the specific comments raised as part of the consultation are set out below:

### **5.1 General Comments**

- The request to amend the boundary line to ensure the entirety of the Deansgate Station Site falls within the 'Zone of Influence' is noted and will be reflected in the revised Masterplan document. This will ensure the development proposals are fully coordinated.
- The NCP car park at Little Peter Street is part of the First Street Strategic Regeneration Framework and is identified as a development opportunity site to be developed in line with that framework. The Knott Mill Masterplan makes reference to the need to ensure connections are made with neighbouring areas.
- The city centre is undergoing unprecedented levels of growth and development. It is anticipated that the Masterplan proposals for additional employment and residential use will create increased footfall and enhance the vibrancy of the area. Investment in Knott Mill will ensure the area fulfils its potential as an intrinsic part of the city centre, able to play its part in meeting the demands from a growing economy and population.
- Respecting and enhancing the area's heritage and distinct character is central to the Masterplan.
- It is expected that successful regeneration of the area would have a positive impact on property prices. Proposals to enhance the area are

intended to improve its distinctive identity and attractiveness to residents and workers.

- A key aspect of the Masterplan proposals is to retain businesses within the area. Redevelopment will provide space for businesses to grow, expand and thrive, creating further local job opportunities.
- The purpose of the document is to provide a shared vision and comprehensive approach to redefining this important part of the city centre, building on its unique identity. The Knott Mill Association have worked with the City Council to produce the Masterplan with a view to avoiding development coming forward on a piece-meal basis.
- In response to the point raised about a conflict of interest, the City Council considers it important for the landowners to come together to coordinate development aspirations for the area in order to maximise regeneration opportunities, and ensure that all development is aligned and in keeping with the character of the area.

## **5.2 Connectivity**

- The Masterplan recognises the importance of maximising sustainable travel and reducing reliance on car use. The area is highly accessible, next to Deansgate Station, close to Deansgate-Castlefield Metrolink Station, within short walking distance to the rest of the city centre, and close to key cycle routes.
- The City Council fully agrees with the comments that Knott Mill's highly accessible location and proximity to a range of sustainable modes of transport should be a central consideration in forming and justifying future car parking strategies.
- The City Council fully supports the proposals to reduce reliance on car parking and promote active travel. Through the planning process, developers will be expected to provide adequate facilities such as cycle parking, showers, changing and storage.
- The City Council supports the need for electric vehicle charging points to be incorporated into future residential car parking provision and this will be referenced in the Masterplan.
- The request to ensure the pedestrian bridge across the River Medlock would be available for cycle use is supported in principle. This can be explored fully as part of the detailed design process.
- The feasibility of controlling vehicular access at Bugle Street and Jordan Street will be kept under review as the masterplan is taken forward.

- The Masterplan provides the opportunity to enhance the pedestrian and road quality as development proposals come forward. This may include addressing the quality of footpaths, roads and lighting.
- In relation to the points raised regarding potential increase in car use and traffic, it is not the intention of the Masterplan to increase traffic flows. The key priority will be to reduce car usage and surface parking, and promote sustainable travel throughout the area. As with other construction projects in the city centre, it is to be expected that there will be short-term increase in vehicular access. Measures to minimise disruption for residents will be addressed as part of a construction management plan required as part of any planning application.
- Vehicular access and servicing will be addressed through traffic management plans as part of the planning process and associated servicing and operational management plans.
- It is proposed that the points raised around the opportunities for improving key interfaces are referenced in the revised Masterplan:
  - **Old Deansgate** does sit half in the Knott Mill area and half in the Great Jackson Street Strategic Regeneration Framework Area. The buildings which front Old Deansgate are not considered as presenting opportunities for development. Notwithstanding that, Old Deansgate itself is a key connection between Great Jackson Street, Knott Mill and Deansgate and improvements to the public realm would be welcomed.
  - Although outside of the masterplan area, the City Council and Knott Mill Association would support works to improve the appearance of the **River Medlock** (it is understood the Deansgate Square proposals as part of the Great Jackson Street SRF, include the provision of an access ramp to allow the Environment Agency to access and maintain the river bed). The **floodgate** referred to is a listed structure. The City Council and Knott Mill Association would support works to improve the visibility of the floodgate from Old Deansgate.
  - It is agreed that the **Hewitt Street arches** present an opportunity to provide active uses and these should be considered, provided that they do not result in the unnecessary displacement of existing businesses. Opportunities to redevelopment these arches would need to be explored with Network Rail and the Arch Company.
- The City Council will encourage developers and landowners to engage with Network Rail and other stakeholders associated with Deansgate Railway Station and the wider site, in order to ensure there is an enhanced passenger experience and practical aspects such as access for servicing are fully considered.

### 5.3 Uses

- In response to the specific point raised about the aparthotel at 1 Alpha Place, this planning consent was granted before the drafting of the Masterplan.
- As referenced in the document, late night uses would not be considered appropriate, this approach is consistent with other city centre districts such as Ancoats where there is an 11pm weekday and 12pm weekend licencing condition in place.
- The point raised regarding the need to provide a mix of residential accommodation is noted. The Masterplan document does refer to the future residential offer to provide for a mix of homes and tenures.
- It is acknowledged that increases in the number of residents in the area has the potential to lead to increasing demand for public services and amenities. Investment in the Great Jackson Street area is being considered and planned on a city-wide basis, including in the neighbouring area of Great Jackson Street.
- The Masterplan is not intended to be overly prescriptive. It sets out how the focus for development should be for commercial uses, in order for Knott Mill to contribute to the continued economic success of the city centre. An element of retail and ancillary uses will be considered, as outlined in the Masterplan.
- As with other regeneration areas in the city centre, encouraging active frontages is an important aspect in enlivening places. Active frontages will be key to animating the area, through office use or independent retail/leisure, important in ensuring that it remains attractive to residents and businesses.
- The need for community spaces is noted and developers will be encouraged to consider this where appropriate.
- The City Council recognises the role of arches as a location for active frontages. A range of businesses already occupy these spaces. The revised Masterplan will make reference to the opportunity to create active frontages along the site's southern boundary. Network Rail is exploring the opportunity to redevelop the property between Deansgate and Bugle Street. This section of the viaduct could be amended on the plan to indicate 'future redevelopment opportunity'. The majority of the other arches are in the control of Arch Company.

#### 5.4 **Public Realm/Greening**

- The comments on the importance of tree planting and greening are noted. The revised Masterplan will make reference to the fact that the City Council will encourage developers to explore opportunities to maximise green infrastructure across the Masterplan area, such as green roofs and planting.

- In response to the requests to create a bigger open space at the Constance Street/Commercial Street site, it is important to note the site is within private ownership and scope to create a large open green space is limited. An element of public realm has been included in the Masterplan for this site as part of development aspirations, and the developers will be encouraged to maximise the area as part of the planning process. Public space is created at key nodes through parcels of land from adjoining ownerships being joined together.
- The City Council considers the Masterplan to align with its ambitions for Manchester to become a world class city. The proposals respect Knott Mill's industrial heritage, balancing character assets with the potential for appropriate new development. Due to the size of the area, Knott Mill's public realm proposals are not on a comparable transformational scale as in other areas such as Mayfield and Great Jackson Street. However, opportunities for public realm have been fully explored, and the maximum possible space has been allowed for this use. The inclusion of the riverside walkway, pedestrian bridge and improved streetscape will all significantly enhance an individual's experience of the area.
- It is acknowledged that public realm improvements to Deansgate Station and the wider site will need to be fully coordinated with future proposals for the wider Knott Mill area. The City Council will work with Network Rail and TfGM to co-ordinate future detailed design for public realm improvements in the wider area.

## **5.5 Anti-social behaviour**

- Anti-social behaviour issues occurring in the Knott Mill area have been raised with the City Council's Central Neighbourhood Team so that appropriate measures can be considered and be taken.
- The Masterplan proposes a range of appropriate active uses for day-time and evening to encourage greater footfall through the area and natural surveillance. The Masterplan principles to animate the area should therefore make a positive impact on reducing issues of anti-social behaviour. The intention of the Masterplan is to reduce levels of surface parking. Improved lighting will be considered as part of development proposals.

## **5.6 Development design, heights and density**

- The City Council is committed to ensuring the Masterplan proposals respect Knott Mill's character and rich industrial history. The intention is to balance new development alongside heritage assets, and to improve the local environment to enhance the setting of these assets.
- The approach to balancing the scale of development is considered appropriate, with the strip of mid-rise development along the northern

edge, the central lower rise heart, and stepping up to the larger scale developments along the river edge, in keeping with the heritage and character of the area.

- In response to comments requesting an increase in proposed heights and a landmark building to be considered for plots in the central core, it is considered appropriate for low to mid-rise developments to be located in the central area in order to complement the historic buildings of most character value.
- The Masterplan clearly sets out that Knott Mill will differ from surrounding development in that transformational redevelopment with towers will not be appropriate and that future development must build on and enhance the existing character of the area.
- The proposals respect the historical characteristics of the area and are balanced with what is considered to be an appropriate scale of new development. Any future proposals for Castlefield and Deansgate would also be expected to respect and respond to each character area within the local planning policy and conservation frameworks.
- It is considered appropriate for an additional comment to be included in the Masterplan to reference that the Deansgate Station site, outside of the Masterplan area, has the potential for future high density development.
- An underground car park would not be considered feasible or practical given the size and scale of the site.
- On the request to retain the character of Commercial Street/Jordan Street/Hewitt Street triangle, this land is within private ownership and it is not realistic to expect the entire site to be a public park. Character in this part of Knott Mill will be maintained through back of pavement development. As mentioned previously, public space is created at key nodes through parcels of land from adjoining ownerships being joined together.

## **5.7 Environmental**

- United Utilities submitted useful advice in relation to waste water infrastructure. The City Council will encourage all landowners and relevant stakeholders to engage with United Utilities at the earliest opportunity to agree an appropriate approach.
- In response to comments received on the management of surface water, the following additional text is proposed within the 'Framework Development and Urban Design Principles' section as 'Sustainable Drainage Opportunities':

*Development proposing new public realm should allocate provision for the management of surface water through the use of sustainable*

*drainage systems with multi-functional benefits as part of a high quality green and blue water environment. Development with such features should consider the topography of the site to understand any naturally occurring flow paths and any low lying areas within the proposal where water will naturally accumulate. The discharge of surface water via the River Medlock should be explored as a minimum.*

*New development will be expected to incorporate exemplary Sustainable Drainage methods and follow the surface water hierarchy. Applicants will have to submit clear evidence of why each option within the hierarchy has been discounted. The expectation will be for only foul flows to communicate with the public sewer.*

*Approved drainage schemes will be expected to be supplemented by appropriate maintenance and management regimes for the lifetime of any surface water drainage schemes.'*

- In addition, it is acknowledged that water efficiency measures should be fully considered in the design of new development within Knott Mill. The following text is proposed for inclusion:

*“The design of new development should consider the inclusion of water efficiency measures in the development of new buildings. New development can become more resilient to climate change by encouraging water efficiency measures including water saving and recycling measures to minimise water usage. Such a proactive approach is designed to mitigate and adapt to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for water supply in the city.”*

- The point raised regarding the need for unrestricted access to the River Medlock as a point to discharge surface water is acknowledged.
- It is not the purpose of the Masterplan document to set out details of legally binding frameworks with landowners. Developers bringing forward proposals will need to submit detail within their planning applications on their strategy towards sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDs) so that it can be considered by the Council, in consultation with United Utilities and the Environment Agency.
- The detailed response from The Environment Agency is acknowledged and provides useful guidance on key issues to consider, including the need for flood risk assessments for proposals within Flood Zone 2, setting back development from the walled channel of the River Medlock to improve access for inspection and maintenance, and the risk of concentrated land and water contamination. The Environment Agency will be re-consulted in order to discuss detailed implications as development proposals come forward.
- It is considered that the Masterplan does align with the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework policies on sustainable and resilient

development through for example, the promotion of brownfield development, development at the core of the conurbation, the delivery of new homes, supporting the reuse of existing buildings, and promoting development adjacent to a significant transport interchange.

- The support for the environmental improvements in the area is welcomed.
- Construction management plans as part of the planning process for future development will take into account potential impact on residents and other stakeholders in the area.
- The issue of tackling litter in the River Medlock will be raised with the Canals and Rivers Trust.
- Existing drainage issues are noted. The masterplan provides an opportunity to address drainage in a comprehensive way.

## **5.8 Masterplan document and consultation**

- The level of detail within the Masterplan document is provided in order to enable a comprehensive approach to guiding future development. The masterplan has a range of use, including to guide developers on the expectations from development and to inform planning decisions, as well as to inform local residents and other stakeholders on the proposals. This means that a level of technical detail is required. Historical context has been included to help shape and inform the next stage in Knott Mill's development. The area is rich in industrial heritage and it is crucial this distinctive identity is retained and enhanced in any future development proposals.
- Local residents were given the opportunity to comment on the proposals at a workshop consultation event, organised by the Knott Mill Association, with the Castlefield Forum. For transparency, the City Council takes a consistent approach to consulting on regeneration Masterplans and Strategic Regeneration Frameworks.
- The language and maps used in the plan follow the standard Masterplan and regeneration framework approaches used by the City Council across city centre regeneration areas, due to its role in guiding future development and the planning process.
- As described in the Masterplan, a review of the character of the area identified a group of nineteenth century brick built buildings, which are of a consistent age and quality, largely unaltered and built tight to the back of pavement. These are described in section 4.6 of the plan. These buildings have also had a role to play in the cultural history of Manchester. They make a significant contribution to the character of the area. It is these buildings that are identified as character assets in the Masterplan.

- It is noted that Deansgate Quay is not referenced in the document. Reference will be included in the Masterplan to recognise that Deansgate Quay is an immediate residential development and that proposed development within Knott Mill should ensure Deansgate Quay is fully integrated.
- The omission of the Castlefield (MSJ & AR) viaduct as Grade II Listed on the plan (on page 46) is noted and will be incorporated into the revised plan.

## **6.0 Conclusions**

- 6.1 Knott Mill is an intrinsic part of the city centre. Given its highly accessible location, the existing business base, creative talent, and the existence of development-ready sites, this distinctive area has significant potential to support the continued economic and population growth of the city.
- 6.2 The Masterplan sets out a proposed framework to coordinate sustainable development that is appropriate and sympathetic to Knott Mill's industrial heritage, whilst contributing to the continued growth of this part of the city centre.
- 6.3 Following the consultation, the resulting revisions to the Masterplan are proposed:
- An amendment to the boundary line to include the entire Deansgate Station site within the 'Zone of Interest'.
  - Additional text to be included in the section on Density to reflect the potential for high density at the Deansgate Station site.
  - Additional text in section 4.10 to emphasize the opportunity for sustainable and active travel, including cycling.
  - Additional text in 4.10 on reducing reliance on car usage, and a reference to electric charging point and car clubs.
  - Additional text in relation to improving key interfaces (Old Deansgate, River Medlock and Hewitt Street arches) to be added into section 5 on Urban Design Principles. Reference will also be made to Deansgate Quay.
  - Additional text to be included in 5.3.3 on maximizing green infrastructure such as green roofs and tree planting.
  - Additional text to the section on active frontages to make reference to the opportunities along the site's southern boundary.
  - The plan on page 46 will be amended to include the MSJ & AR viaduct.
  - Additional text on 'Sustainable Drainage Opportunities' is proposed to be added to the 'Framework Development and Urban Design Principles' section.
  - Additional text on water efficiency measures to be included.
  - Plan on page 63 to be amended to show the section of the viaduct between property Deansgate and Bugle Street as a 'future redevelopment opportunity'.
- 6.4 Recommendations are outlined at the beginning of the report.

## **7.0 Contributing to a Zero-Carbon City**

- 7.1 All future development proposals for Knott Mill will need to be carefully considered in order to ensure that they help the city meet its zero-carbon target. All construction will be required to meet the highest standards of sustainable development. Given Knott Mill's highly accessible location with the city centre, a key priority will be to promote sustainable transport modes.
- 7.2 A number of responses to the consultation relate to environmental impacts including construction impact, flood risk, waste water infrastructure, sustainable urban drainage and opportunities for increased sustainable transport. These are set out in more detail in the environmental and connectivity sections of the report and have been taken into account for the final version of the Masterplan.

## **8.0 Contributing to the Our Manchester Strategy**

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

- 8.1 The Masterplan will provide an increase in employment within the area, creating opportunities within a number of sectors and across a variety of levels.

The Knott Mill area's proximity to First Street will improve linkages and access to the core of the city centre, and add to the employment opportunities presented within this part of the city centre.

New residential development will be delivered within walking distance of city centre employment opportunities. Additionally, residents within the area will be connected to employment opportunities across Greater Manchester through easily accessible public transport links.

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

- 8.2 The Masterplan sets out the opportunity to create new homes, enabling people to live near employment opportunities. Development will also improve connectivity to surrounding areas which will enhance access to opportunities within the city centre, including jobs and training.

Delivering residential development at Knott Mill will both support the city's population growth and the attraction and retention of the talent required to support Manchester's strong growth trajectory across a range of economic sectors.

The redevelopment proposals will support new job opportunities across a range of levels accessible to local people. In addition, opportunities for apprenticeships during construction will also be available.

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

- 8.3 The proposals set out within the Knott Mill Masterplan are aligned to and will support regeneration in the wider area. The proposals will contribute to the delivery of the Manchester Residential Growth prospectus and meet the growing demand for new homes in the city.

The proposed public spaces, connections and pedestrian routes will improve access to job opportunities, key neighbourhoods and amenities such as First Street, Castlefield and Hulme Park.

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

- 8.4 The Masterplan area is well connected to a number of city centre neighbourhoods and amenities within walking distance. Knott Mill is well served by public transport and, located at a key southern gateway to the city centre, is also easily accessible by walking or cycling.

The introduction of enhanced active frontages at ground floor level will support the residential and business community within the Knott Mill neighbourhood, and also provide amenities to adjacent city centre districts including Castlefield, First Street and the emerging Great Jackson Street.

The proposals to extend the existing riverside walkway adjacent to the River Medlock would both enhance pedestrian connections within the area, and also provide access to the river.

#### **(e) A connected city**

- 8.5 The neighbourhood benefits from strong transport connectivity. This includes excellent public transport links, with both rail and Metrolink stations within a two minute walk from the Masterplan area, reducing reliance on car usage. Improved connections will be provided to surrounding neighbourhoods as part of the masterplan.

### **9. Key Policies and Considerations**

#### **(a) Equal Opportunities**

- 9.1 n/a

#### **(b) Risk Management**

- 9.2 Issues relating to flood risks and waste water infrastructure will be managed through the planning application process.

#### **(c) Legal Considerations**

- 9.3 If approved by the Executive, the Masterplan will not form part of the Council's Development Plan but would be a material consideration in the Council's decision making as the Local Planning Authority.