

Manchester City Council Report for Resolution

Report to: Executive – 16 March 2022

Subject: Outcomes of the public realm consultation on development and public realm strategy for the Back of Ancoats (Poland Street Zone Public Realm Strategy)

Report of: Strategic Director (Growth and Development)

Summary

This report presents the findings from the recent public consultation exercise that will inform the final version of the Poland Street Zone Public Realm Strategy for consideration and approval. The Draft Strategy was considered by the Executive in January 2022 and approved as a basis for consultation with local and statutory stakeholders. The final version of the Strategy is intended to support the delivery of the previously adopted Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework (NDF) and to help facilitate future development in the part of Ancoats bounded by Bengal Street, Oldham Road, Butler Street and the Rochdale Canal in the northeast of the extended city centre. A plan is attached at Appendix 1.

In July 2020, the Executive approved a refreshed Ancoats and New Islington NDF as a material consideration for the Local Planning Authority in determining all future planning applications relative to the Study Area. The Executive covering report that accompanied the final framework document highlighted several constraints to delivery and recommended key activities that supported the delivery of the NDF objectives. The Poland Street Zone Public Realm Strategy represents a significant strand of this activity, articulating a co-ordinated approach to public realm delivery and a series of mechanisms for maximising developer contributions, with the intention of supporting the provision of appropriate public realm and core neighbourhood infrastructure.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

1. Note the comments received from stakeholders, including local land and property owners; residents; businesses, along with public and statutory consultees: and how they have been responded to in the final draft;
2. Approve the final version of the Poland Street Zone Public Realm Strategy as a material consideration in the Council's decision making as a Local Planning Authority;
3. Note the Delivery Strategy set out in this report and authorise the Strategic Director - Growth and Development to further develop and implement this strategy, in dialogue with key stakeholders, including potential funding bodies,

investors and developer partners, landowners and existing businesses.

4. Note that a further funding package from Homes England for off site infrastructure in the Ancoats neighbourhood has been agreed subject to further Treasury approvals and an agreed grant funding agreement with the Council. This is in addition to the previously reported £4.7m from Brownfield Land Fund will be utilised to fund the majority of the capital works in accordance with the Delivery Strategy.
5. Note that the Delivery Strategy will require the City Council to implement a number of area-wide public realm improvements and to work in partnership with investor and developer partners to this end.

Wards Affected: Ancoats and Beswick

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the decisions proposed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city
<p>The Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework and the draft Poland Street Zone public realm strategy recognise that future development within the area will be required to contribute to the City Council’s objective of achieving a zero carbon target by 2038 through the active utilisation and deployment of leading building technologies.</p> <p>The Ancoats Mobility Hub (AMH) is a key component in delivering a highly sustainable neighbourhood. It will directly reduce car trips and on street parking in this area, promoting a modal shift to cycling, walking and the use of public transport networks. The logistics hub within the building will provide a central location for parcel deliveries with ‘final mile’ delivery via a fleet of electric vehicles.</p> <p>The City Council is and will continue to use its land interests in the area to deliver the zero-carbon target for the city and this will be integrated into all aspects of the public realm delivery strategy. As we move into the delivery and implementation phase opportunities to minimise the whole life carbon impact of the new public realm will be explored. This will be achieved through various means including careful consideration of the materials to be used and also through designs of streets and open spaces that do not require carbon-intensive maintenance and watering.</p>

Our Manchester Strategy outcomes	Contribution to the strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The proposals outlined in the Poland Street Zone draft public realm strategy supports the opportunity to create a new mixed-use neighbourhood including new jobs and employment opportunities and easy access to the regional centre economy for residents.

A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	The Poland Street Zone will continue to provide direct employment opportunities and also meet the demand for housing from residents who wish to live close to the Regional Centre.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The draft Poland Street Zone public realm strategy and the approved Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework offers the potential to drive forward the Manchester Residential Growth Prospectus and meeting the growing demand for new homes in the city, through the provision of high-quality neighbourhood infrastructure to serve the local community.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The vision for the Poland Street Zone is to create a high-quality sustainable neighbourhood within the extended city centre. The draft public realm strategy will support the creation of a new neighbourhood in a sustainable location, adjacent to the city centre and the range of jobs, culture and leisure opportunities contained therein.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The draft public realm strategy will underpin the delivery of the Ancoats Mobility Hub and promote connectivity with core public transport infrastructure across the city and the wider GM conurbation.

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

The Public Realm Strategy for the Poland Street Zone proposes that a long-term stewardship plan for the area will be developed in consultation with relevant City Council services who have responsibility for the management and maintenance of the public realm. The stewardship plan is a condition for the Homes England funding.

The Council will need to maintain the quality of the new streets and open spaces, but the ongoing maintenance costs will not be known until the design for the public realm is complete. The Council will examine potential funding routes to achieve this over the long term, including estates management charges.

Any estate charging or other proposed funding mechanism with stakeholders will be brought to a future meeting of the Executive for approval.

Financial Consequences – Capital

The appended Public Realm Strategy for the Poland Street Zone reports a total estimated cost of c£16m, for delivery of all proposed projects and interventions. However, the representative costs provided assume the delivery of the Strategy in full. The proposed approach to delivery outlined in this report will utilise funding from Homes England which is subject to Treasury approval. £4.7m is already secured from Brownfield Land Fund. All opportunities to source additional S106 funding from developers as part of their planning applications will be explored in accordance with Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010.

Any resulting programmes of work to be undertaken by the City Council will be brought forward for approval through the Executive and via the Capital Strategy and Capital Programme processes as and when required.

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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.

- Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework July 2014
- Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework, report to

the Executive October 2014

- Refresh of the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework, report to the Executive December 2016
- Refresh of the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework Poland Street Zone, report to the Executive February 2020
- Refresh of the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework Poland Street Zone, report to the Executive July 2020;
- Mobility Hub proposal for the Back of Ancoats, report to the Executive November 2020;
- Development Strategy for the Back of Ancoats, Progress report to the Executive September 2021;
- Development and public realm strategy for the back of Ancoats, report to the Executive January 2022:
- Manchester Zero Carbon 2018 – Manchester City Council’s Commitment, report to the Executive March 2019;
- Council Resolution on declaring a Climate Emergency, report to the Executive July 2019;
- Eastland Regeneration Framework, report to the Executive July 2019;
- Revised City Centre Transport Strategy, report to the Executive October 2019 and City Centre Engagement Outcomes, report to the Executive February 2020;
- Draft City Centre Transport Strategy, Report to the Executive September 2020.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Ancoats neighbourhood is located on the eastern edge of the city centre and is part of the Eastlands Regeneration Framework area, a refresh of which was taken to the Executive in 2018. Ancoats is an important part of the growing city centre and its importance is further enhanced by the opportunity to complete investment in the area, within a sustainable public realm strategy.
- 1.2 The Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework (NDF) was approved by the Executive in 2014, to enable the City Council to provide development principles in line with adopted planning policy in this key location on the north-eastern edge of the city centre. It was further updated in 2016 and broke the area down into several character zones.
- 1.3 The area has become the focus for developer interest and because of this an illustrative masterplan was commissioned and paid for by four major landowners in the area (Manchester City Council, Manchester Life Development Company, Urban Splash and Northern Group). This document provided an aspirational guide to the further development of the area based on the principles of the 2016 NDF.
- 1.4 To ensure that the NDF reflected these aspirations, a further review and update of the NDF Poland Street Zone was undertaken in 2020. This review and update took account of updated City Council strategies and adopted planning policy, and provides a framework to ensure that compatible residential and commercial development opportunities are realised, and that connectivity and access to quality public amenity space area is maximised. This document proposes 1500 new residential units can be delivered in the area.
- 1.5 The NDF highlighted the provision of supporting public realm, a clear approach to place making and connectivity through the area and a coordinated approach to parking requirements and street design as central to the NDF vision for a distinctive and successful residential led neighbourhood that meets the needs of the local community. It is now essential that the City Council establishes a coordinated approach to public realm provision in the back of Ancoats to support the work of the City Council and its partners in delivery of the wider place making ambitions.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The area referred to as the Ancoats Phase 3 is located within the north-eastern fringe of the city centre, and forms part of the wider Ancoats neighbourhood. The area between Great Ancoats Street and Butler Street is a conservation area and is home to a number of listed and architecturally important buildings. The area is surrounded by the neighbourhoods of Miles Platting in the East, New Cross to the West, the core of Ancoats and the city centre to the south and New Islington.
- 2.2 Developer interest has for the last 20 years focused on the core of Ancoats in the area between Great Ancoats Street and Bengal Street. There are now

limited development opportunities remaining in this area. The Poland Street Zone as referred to in the NDF, also known as the Back of Ancoats, is now the subject of developer interest and represents the final elements of the regeneration of Ancoats.

- 2.3 The area is currently characterised by low value, low density light industrial units, surrounding an area of green space that has been the focus of anti-social behaviour and does not reflect the quality of open space elsewhere in the city. The breakdown of the grid street pattern in this area has resulted in there being no clear street hierarchy and consequently it is difficult for pedestrians to navigate. This is further manifested in the fact that the area suffers from being used as a “rat run” for vehicles seeking to avoid Oldham Road and Great Ancoats Street. The poor physical quality of the area is also compounded by commuter and fly parking during the day adding to traffic movements. There has been very limited new build development activity in the area as sites are unviable and unlocking their redevelopment requires a high level of public and private co-ordination.
- 2.4 The aforementioned NDF for the Poland Street zone approved in July 2020, responded to the increase in developer activity by establishing development and design principles for the area that recognised the need to establish place making objectives that underpin a public realm strategy that supports delivery of 1500 new homes and provides the infrastructure to create a sustainable urban neighbourhood.
- 2.5 A number of other sites in the neighbourhood are owned by developers, and there have been recent transactions to demonstrate further the developer interest in the locality. As such, it is now essential that the City Council moves to establish a formal public realm strategy to ensure that all future development can be delivered alongside investment in place-making to support the creation of a sustainable neighbourhood of choice with up to 1500 new residential units within the area.

3.0 Public Consultation Approach

- 3.1 In January 2022, the Executive endorsed a draft Poland Street Zone Public Realm Strategy for public consultation to be undertaken throughout February 2022.
- 3.2 The consultation programme ran from 31 January – 27 February and was resourced by staff from the City Council and public affairs consultants Counter Context.
 - A Poland Street Zone Public Realm Strategy consultation web page on the www.manchester.gov.uk website, providing details of the draft Poland Street Zone Public Realm Strategy, download links to all relevant documents, and online feedback from a dedicated email and phonenumber for comments and feedback;
 - 2,742 leaflets were sent via Royal Mail standard delivery to all land and property owners and residents within the study area, promoting the

- availability of online material and encouraging feedback;
- Two drop-in events were held on 14 February 12 – 2.30 pm and 5 – 7 pm at Halle St Peters. These were joint consultation events with the “This City” Rodney Street scheme.
- The Leader of the Council and the Executive Members for Housing and Regeneration and local Members were briefed by the Director of Growth and Development and the interim lead for the Eastern Gateway;
- A press release was circulated to relevant business pages and media organisations to promote the start/end of the consultation period and the drop in events that were scheduled;
- Social media accounts were used to promote both the online consultation and the drop in events;
- An email briefing and link to the Poland Street Zone Public Realm consultation web page was provided to key public and statutory stakeholders; including Homes England, Transport for Greater Manchester; Historic England, United Utilities, The Environment Agency, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service and Greater Manchester Police;
- One to one briefing sessions were held with key Manchester City Council departments including Planning, Highways, Neighbourhoods, Park, and Public Realm team;
- One to one briefing sessions were held with developers and landowners in the area and they were also invited to attend the drop in events and the public realm consultation materials was also shared with all parties.

4.0 Public Consultation Outcomes

- 4.1 During the consultation period a total of 88 responses were received, including 81 responses from the general public, 2 responses from landowners/developers and 5 responses from statutory consultees and stakeholders.
- 4.2 Feedback from the consultation was positive, with key themes as follows:
- **Transport and Movement** - the amended street hierarchy and approach to traffic management and reduction of rat running through the area was welcomed
 - **Ancoats Green and Green Space** - improvements to Ancoats Green and the establishment of the park as the “green heart” with a clear pedestrian link to Jersey Street and the Rochdale Canal were supported, with the caveat that existing trees were retained, and the size of the green was not reduced
 - **Ancoats Mobility Hub** - there were a number of comments in relation to the Ancoats Mobility Hub, albeit not part of the consultation residents expressed some concern about the long-term use of this site in the centre of Ancoats.
 - **Amenity provision** - there was a number of comments regarding the provision of amenities in the area to reflect the areas growth and the influx of residents in recent years
 - **Trees** - concern was expressed regarding the potential of trees being

removed as a result of the strategy and there were particular comments regarding the retention of mature trees. The City Council will look to replace and replant at least 2 trees locally for every tree that may be lost

- **Crime and Anti-social behaviour** -respondents requested further information on the measures being taken to address crime and anti-social behaviour in Ancoats, including requesting further safety measures are introduced such as CCTV and more street lighting.

5.0 Adjustments to the Public Realm Strategy

- 5.1 In light of these comments, the Public Realm Strategy has been reviewed and the document will be strengthened where appropriate.
- 5.2 Overall, there was strong support for the vision and principles set out in the draft Public Realm Strategy, most notably around support for rebalancing movement towards active travel and taking decisive action to address rat-running and ensure that streets and spaces are pedestrian and cycle friendly.
- 5.3 Consistent with feedback received during the consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Development Framework in 2020, Ancoats Green emerged as a key issue for local people. While there was considerable support expressed for the draft strategy's recognition of Ancoats Green as the heart of the neighbourhood, there were several requests that any changes are "light touch." Ancoats Green will be protected and improved with further tree planting. The Public Realm Strategy provides a significant amount of additional, accessible, and safe green space.
- 5.4 The final version of the Public Realm Strategy will include an Implementation strategy for the public realm and will address the long-term stewardship of the area. The Public Realm Strategy will enable investment in open spaces for a variety of uses. Spaces will be designing to be accessible and safe. It is the intention that the Public Realm Strategy will propose a mechanism for securing sustainable contributions that will be ringfenced for public realm management and maintenance in the long term.

6.0 Delivery of the Public Realm Strategy

- 6.1 Accompanying the Public Realm Strategy will be a Delivery Plan that identifies a series of costed projects and interventions in a programmed schedule of activity. The City Council will determine how external Public Sector funding sources will be drawn down and allocated. Landowners, developers, and stakeholders will be engaged in the wider plan. Appropriate contributions to delivery, maintenance and long-term stewardship of this new neighbourhood will be agreed with them.
- 6.2 The Delivery Plan has been developed in conjunction with Planning, Highways, Neighbourhoods and Public Realm colleagues to ensure that upgrades to the public realm can be appropriated and that all works can be correctly sequenced to correlate to development activity as it comes forward.

6.3 Brownfield Land Funding of £4.7m has been secured for public realm works as previously reported. In addition, a further £28.069m has been agreed with Homes England. This is conditional on Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT) approval. The funding will enable the delivery of the Ancoats Mobility Hub and further offsite infrastructure.

6.4 A number of delivery mechanisms have been considered as part of the Public Realm Strategy to:

- Provide a framework within which public realm improvements can be programmed and sequenced with development activity.
- Alignment of public realm works with public funding constraints to ensure drawdown and spend of funding within agreed timescales.
- Ensure that contributions from developers can be fully maximised within the confines of existing policy and legislation (local and national); and
- Respond to the constraints and practicalities of delivery e.g., to ensure that economies of scale are realised and that standards of construction are maintained.

6.5 The Delivery Plan will provide a series of costed projects and interventions to form the basis of further consultations with landowners and developers and interested parties and funding bodies. These projects will be delivered through various mechanisms including:

- Enabling Activity – the Public Realm Strategy proposes interventions that are required to take place as enabling activity to facilitate improvements across the area. The prioritisation and early programming of these activities remain critical to successful delivery.
- Area wide projects – the Public Realm Strategy proposes a number of area wide improvements that will require a level of central coordination and commissioning.
- Public realm works secured via planning conditions - where a development proposal necessitates improvements to the public realm, the City Council will seek to secure upgrades by way of planning conditions as part of the planning process. In these instances, the City Council will specify materials and design standards prior to the discharge of these conditions
- Public realm works secured via planning permission – works to the public realm that fall outside of the remit of permitted development will be submitted for Planning permission. The programming of these works will be aligned to adjacent development activity and funding stream requirements

- Permitted development works – works that can be undertaken without planning permission

6.6 In many cases areas of new public realm, such as sections of pavement or carriageway, will be delivered by private developers as they bring forward their own residential or commercial schemes. To ensure such spaces are constructed to the correct quality and using the appropriate materials, officers will publish a design toolkit setting out the materials palette to be used, as well as recommendations on soft landscaping, planting, and drainage. This design toolkit will in effect form an appendix to the strategy, and it will help guide the discussions between developers and Planning Service as they bring their proposals forward through the pre-application process. By providing this clarity as to the Council's expectations, it will ensure adoptable areas are built to the correct standard and give developers greater certainty as they come to design and cost their schemes.

6.7 The aim of the Public Realm Strategy and the supporting Delivery Plan will be to provide officers with a practical toolkit to assist in the successful delivery of public realm and will form the basis of ongoing consultation with landowners and developers as part of the planning process.

7.0 Costing Strategy

7.1 The Public Realm Strategy for the Poland Street Zone, accompanying project proposal and delivery plan are supported by a series of representative cost estimates for the proposed upgrades to the public realm. The representative costs have been developed to provide a basis for grant submissions to both Homes England and Greater Manchester Combined Authority for Grant Awards for the Public Realm works and as a basis for consultation with landowners and developers.

7.2 The estimated costs for the delivery of the Public Realm Strategy have been prepared in accordance with the adopted NDF, the accompanying illustrative masterplan and the Public Realm Strategy. Subject to further amendments outlined in Section 5 of this report, the representative total cost of identified public realm projects and interventions has been calculated at c£16m. However, it should be noted that NDF and the Public Realm Strategy present only one option for a potential form of development that aligns with the core vision and development and design principles. Whilst it is envisaged that the basic proposals for the public realm articulated in this strategy will remain unchanged, the necessary mitigation measures for individual developments will be addressed on a scheme-by-scheme basis and in accordance with the Delivery Plan.

8.0 Legal Considerations

8.1 It is proposed that once adopted the Poland Street Zone Public Realm Strategy will be used as a material consideration for the City Council in considering all future planning applications relevant to the study area.

8.2 To note, the use of Section 106 planning obligations is only permitted when such obligations are a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, b) directly related to the development and c) fairly and reasonably related to the development in scale and kind (Section 106 TCPA 1990, regulation 122 of CIL Regulations)

9.0 Contributing to a Zero-Carbon City

9.1 Explain how this helps to make climate breakdown and the environment an integral part of activity throughout the Council, including all decision making?

10.0 Contributing to the Our Manchester Strategy

(a) A thriving and sustainable city

10.1 The proposals outlined in the Poland Street Zone draft public realm strategy supports the opportunity to create a new mixed-use neighbourhood including new jobs and employment opportunities and easy access to the regional centre economy for residents.

(b) A highly skilled city

10.2 The Poland Street Zone will continue to provide direct employment opportunities and also meet the demand for housing from residents who wish to live close to the Regional Centre.

(c) A progressive and equitable city

10.3 The draft Poland Street zone public realm strategy and the approved Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework offers the potential to drive forward the Manchester Residential Growth Prospectus and meeting the growing demand for new homes in the city, through the provision of high- quality neighbourhood infrastructure to serve the local community.

(d) A liveable and low carbon city

10.4 The vision for the Poland Street Zone is to create a high-quality sustainable neighbourhood within the extended city centre. The draft public realm strategy will support the creation of a new neighbourhood in a sustainable location, adjacent to the city centre and the range of jobs, culture and leisure opportunities contained therein.

(e) A connected city

10.5 The draft public realm strategy will underpin the delivery of the Ancoats Mobility Hub and promote connectivity with core public transport infrastructure across the city and the wider GM conurbation.

11. Key Policies and Considerations

(a) Equal Opportunities

- 11.1 The Poland Street Zone Public Realm Strategy and subsequent planning arrangements will all be prepared and introduced through appropriate consultations, giving all stakeholders opportunities to engage in the process.

(b) Risk Management

- 11.2 Not applicable

(c) Legal Considerations

- 11.3 The City Solicitor has been represented in all discussions relating to the development of the strategy and will continue to advise the City Council in all discussion relating to the use of S106 and developer input into the Poland Street Zone area.