

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee – 7 November 2023

Subject: Oxford Road Corridor

Report of: Strategic Director (Growth and Development)

Summary

This report provides information on how the Oxford Road Corridor facilitates and promotes innovation, commercialisation and employment growth in Manchester.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to consider and comment on the information in the report.

Wards Affected: Ardwick; Hulme; Piccadilly

<p>Environmental Impact Assessment -the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city</p>	<p>The Oxford Road Corridor Vision 2030 document identifies net zero and sustainability as one of five key strategic priorities. Oxford Road Corridor partners have ambitious plans to achieve net zero by 2038 supporting city-wide and GM targets. The partners hold significant expertise and research capability and are committed to working together to accelerate the delivery of their plans, to communicate innovative interventions and roll out best practice across the area and wider region.</p>
<p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments</p>	<p>The Oxford Road Corridor’s 2030 vision is to transform lives through research, innovation, skills and education. The partnership is committed to working with skills providers and businesses, and as employers to develop career pathways and addressing skills gaps to ensure a more diverse and representative workforce.</p>

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the Our Manchester Strategy/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	<p>The Oxford Road Corridor's 2030 strategy is informed by the Our Manchester Strategy. Its key strategic priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and innovation • Employment and skills • Zero carbon and sustainability • Place-making • Place-marketing <p>These priorities align and support the delivery of the Our Manchester Strategy</p>
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

There are no direct financial consequences.

Financial Consequences – Capital

There are no direct financial consequences.

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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.

- City South Strategic Development Framework – Manchester City South Partnership, 2007.
- Corridor Manchester – A Decade of Opportunity – Strategic Vision to 2025.
- Oxford Road Corridor Vision 2030, January 2023.
- Oxford Road Corridor Strategic Regeneration Framework. March 2018
- Oxford Road Corridor Strategic Regeneration Framework Guidance for Upper Brook Street, former Elizabeth Gaskell Campus, former Salvation Army site and Birchall Way. October 2019
- Oxford Road Corridor Enterprise Zone Impact Evaluation and Future Modelling Summary, January 2022, ekosgen consulting
- Manchester Science Park Strategic Regeneration Framework Update: August 2018
- Manchester Science Park SRF Greenheys Site Addendum, 23 December 2022.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Oxford Road Corridor area covers approximately one square mile, stretching out south from St Peter's Square in the city centre. It has a unique concentration of knowledge, business and cultural assets (see attached map). Two of the UK's largest universities, the UK's largest NHS foundation trust, leading cultural institutions and a cluster of digital, technology and life science businesses are based on the Corridor.
- 1.2 For almost two decades, Corridor partners have been working together to build on the area's strengths and align investment plans behind a shared strategic vision to create jobs and growth opportunities for the city. The plans are underpinned by key research specialisms in life sciences, advanced materials, digital, tech, and creative. This report provides an overview of the partnership's history, governance, strategy, key schemes and impact, and considers future growth opportunities.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Manchester City South Partnership developed its first strategic regeneration framework in 2007, with a core objective "to maximise the economic potential of the area by harnessing the investment currently being made by our universities, health trust and the private sector. We want to stimulate future improvement and growth at key locations within the area and capture tangible economic benefits".
- 2.2 In 2008, the Oxford Road Corridor was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. The company is non-trading and acts as a strategic body. It comprises five member organisations: University of Manchester (UoM); Manchester Metropolitan University (Man Met); Manchester City Council (MCC); Bruntwood; and Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT). The company's board also includes representation from the Royal Northern College of Music and Manchester Museum (on behalf of cultural organisations located on the Corridor).
- 2.3 The company's board is chaired by Professor Malcolm Press (Vice-Chancellor, Manchester Metropolitan University). Board Directors include Cllr Bev Craig (Leader of Manchester City Council) and Pat Bartoli (Director of City Centre Growth and Infrastructure, Manchester City Council); Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell (President and Vice-Chancellor, University of Manchester); Mark Cubbon (Chief Executive Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust); Darren Banks (Group Director of Strategy, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust); Chris Oglesby (Chief Executive, Bruntwood); Esme Ward (Director of Manchester Museum) and Linda Merrick (Principal, Royal Northern College of Music). A team of three officers provides policy, administration and marketing support.

3.0 Main issues

3.1 Policy context

- 3.1.1 As highlighted at the beginning of this report the Oxford Road Corridor's Vision 2030 aligns closely with the Our Manchester Strategy; and the area and partnership will play an important role in supporting the delivery of the new emerging Manchester Economic Strategy.
- 3.1.2 The Oxford Road Corridor is identified in the Greater Manchester (GM) Places for Everyone plan as a key growth area that, due to its scale, presents opportunities for the whole city-region. The GM Local Skills Report and Labour Market Plan identifies the Oxford Road Corridor as an asset of national and global importance which is helping to drive the skills agenda.
- 3.1.3 The GM Innovation Plan, co-created with Government in November 2022, recognises the area as a highly concentrated innovation zone that plays a central role in driving GM's innovation ecosystem. The Government's Levelling Up UK White Paper committed to increasing public research and development investment to £20bn by 2024-25 and total UK investment to reach 2.4% of GDP by 2027, with every region of the UK experiencing an uplift in investment.

3.2 Planning and delivery

- 3.2.1 The Oxford Road Corridor has an adopted Strategic Spatial Framework and several site specific Strategic Regeneration Frameworks. The frameworks enable the right mix of development to be brought forward supporting the wider strategic vision for the area. The Oxford Road Corridor does not directly deliver capital projects. Different delivery arrangements are in place for each project depending on land and building ownership and the most appropriate delivery model in line with the respective procurement guidelines. Positioning individual schemes within a broader strategic and place context has allowed partners to attract significant levels of external grant funding and private investment. The section below details some of these schemes and the wider economic impact.

3.3 Investment, impact and key schemes

- 3.3.1 Over the last 15-years partners have invested over £2.6Bn, which has helped to transform the area, creating over 45,000 jobs and increasing annual economic output by c£2.5Bn. The area now accounts for:
- 86,000 jobs, £4.8bn annual GVA, and 7,100 businesses.
 - 14,750 jobs in health and life sciences, advanced manufacturing, and tech sectors in the Enterprise Zone area.
 - 26% of Manchester's employment in the cultural and creative industries.
 - 27,500 graduates and post-graduates supplied into the labour market every year. Including 50% in STEM and Design, Creative & Arts subjects.

- Over 18,000 people participate in health research trials annually, and over 2,500 staff across MFT services directly support clinical research activity.

- 3.3.2 The Corridor is now home to one of the largest clinical academic campuses in Europe, with strengths that include cancer, diagnostics, genomic medicine, clinical trials, and digital health. Major R&D assets that build on the discovery and translational research capability at the University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University include the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Manchester Biomedical Research Centre, the Manchester Clinical Research Facility, the Manchester Academic Health Science Centre, and the recently launched Christabel Pankhurst Institute for Health Technology and Institute of Sport. These R&D assets sit alongside the clinical and research excellence of the Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust, which has five hospitals on the Corridor. The Corridor is home to 50% of Manchester's total life sciences businesses.
- 3.3.3 The University of Manchester is a world-leader in developing new and existing materials. The ambition for the Oxford Road Corridor is to be at the centre of international commercialisation for a wide range of 2D and advanced materials linked to new industry 4.0 manufacturing methods. More than £120m of capital funding was invested to establish the National Graphene Institute (an academic-led research centre, developing the new physics of 2D materials) and the Graphene Engineering Innovation Centre (which works with industry to rapidly develop and scale up new 2D materials applications).
- 3.3.4 These centres of excellence, along with the Henry Royce Institute for Advanced Materials and Man Met's Fuel Cell Innovation Centre, provide an attractive set of laboratory to market facilities and a community of leading materials scientists and engineers. The commercial offer for advanced manufacturing has been enhanced with the completion of the BASE building on Manchester Science Park, which will provide specialist premises for light manufacturing and materials science businesses building on the existing business cluster. Manchester Metropolitan University's PrintCity facility has an extensive range of 3D printing and additive manufacturing facilities, and strong links with local SMEs through to global multinationals, as well as with the GM Growth Company.
- 3.3.5 Digital is a fast-growing key growth sector on the Oxford Road Corridor. Digital Futures at the University of Manchester brings together more than 2,000 academics who are pioneering research and working with industrial partners in areas such as fundamental data science and artificial intelligence, digital trust and security, digital health, fintech and legal-tech. Programmes have been developed – the AI Foundry and Cyber Foundry – that support the growth and development of companies working in digital through access to the asset base at the University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University, and other regional universities. This has been further boosted through support of a Centre for Digital Innovation (led by Manchester Metropolitan with three other regional universities) funded through GM Innovation Accelerator funds and complemented by the DISH (Digital Innovation Security Hub) an MCC

established facility located close to the Oxford Road Corridor and providing support programmes and networking opportunities for SME's and start-ups.

- 3.3.6 The availability of digital talent generated by the two universities on the Oxford Road Corridor is a major factor in the city's success in attracting inward investment and growing new digital firms. This offer has recently been enhanced through the School of Digital Arts at Manchester Metropolitan University, which is now a leading provider of courses in film, animation, UX, design, photography, sound design, gaming, AI and more.
- 3.3.7 The Oxford Road Corridor is home to many of the city's most iconic music venues, galleries, and theatres. Culture is at the heart of the partnership's approach to place-shaping, reflected in a significant programme of capital investment in recent years, including at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester Museum, the Whitworth and HOME. The diverse cultural ecology on the Corridor creates an environment which helps drive the area's knowledge and innovation strengths. It acts as a conduit to exchanging ideas, and brings a diversity of thought that drives productivity, jobs growth and wider societal benefits.
- 3.3.8 Promoting the area's culture and lifestyle offer to residents and visitors complements the capital investment. Each month 'what's on' guides are curated and promoted via the partnership's website (www.oxfordroadcorridor.com) and social media channels. A tri-annual zine is produced and distributed across the city, including the city's library network. This gives a voice to the diverse range of organisations and people on the Corridor, and encourages visitors to explore the area.
- 3.3.9 Oxford Road Corridor partners have made significant investment in public realm to open up their estates and introduce new green space. For example, the Brunswick Park development by The University of Manchester improves east-west connectivity between Oxford Road and Upper Brook Street with new landscaping, seating areas and pedestrian and cycle paths. The project was made possible by the Cross City Bus Priority Scheme, delivered by TfGM in partnership with the Corridor partners, which has seen general traffic limited and over 4km of segregated cycle lanes developed. Over a million cyclists use the infrastructure annually.
- 3.3.10 The Oxford Road Corridor Enterprise Zone was formally designated in 2016. Its focus is on attracting and developing businesses within the life sciences, health innovation, med tech, ICT, and advanced materials sectors, providing a strong platform for the development of an innovation cluster. All business rates growth generated above baseline are retained for 25 years to reinvest in the area to support further growth.
- 3.3.11 The Enterprise Zone covers two neighbouring sites: Manchester Science Park's central campus, owned by Manchester Science Partnerships, and the city's main hospital site, owned by MFT, which has seen the development of Citylabs 1.0 & 2.0. Since Enterprise Zone status was secured, the area has

reported strong development levels, driven by high levels of occupier demand that has allowed an impressive portfolio of premises to be delivered.

3.3.12 Businesses have reported high levels of investment since locating in the Enterprise Zone area, and cited advantages of being near the universities, hospitals and other similar businesses. Overall, there has been an uplift of approximately 3,000 jobs over five years due to a combination of newly developed floorspace and higher take-up of existing space – an average of over 600 jobs per year, making an important contribution to jobs growth within the city. It is estimated that the Enterprise Zone makes a GVA contribution of £320m per annum.

3.4 Future development and opportunities

3.4.1 The Oxford Road Corridor presents a unique opportunity of national significance to counterbalance innovation led growth in the south-east and support the ambition set out in the city's new emerging economic strategy.

3.4.2 The Oxford Road Corridor is committed to ensuring that the area continues to grow in a way that is fair, inclusive and in-line with zero-carbon commitments.

3.4.3 An independent assessment of the area's development pipeline shows the potential to create over 25,000 high quality new jobs in priority sectors such as health and life sciences, advanced materials, digital and creative and increase annual GVA by £1.9bn. An overview of key schemes is detailed in this section.

3.4.4 ID Manchester (IDM) is situated on 8 hectares of land on the University of Manchester's former north campus. Located adjacent to Manchester Piccadilly Station, it is Europe's most ambitious, sustainable and inclusive innovation district development. IDM is aiming to create over 10,000 high quality jobs in spin-outs and start-ups, SMEs that are scaling up, and global R&D businesses new to the city.

3.4.5 IDM will be the northeast gateway to the Oxford Road Corridor, driving innovation, collaboration, and commercialisation based on proximity to R&D assets. A Joint Venture between University of Manchester and Bruntwood Sci-Tech will develop the site and deliver the vision. Bruntwood SciTech will be investing over £1bn into the scheme over the 10 year development lifetime of the project.

3.4.6 Market outlook data highlights a UK wide shortage of lab and biomanufacturing space, and at a GM level there is evidence to indicate that there is unsatisfied demand. This presents an opportunity for the Oxford Road Corridor and reiterates the importance of bringing forward additional life sciences space to complement the area's research asset base. Including the Upper Brook Street site (UBS) runs along the eastern boundary of the Oxford Road Corridor area. It is a 4.3 hectares site located immediately south of IDM. UBS represents a significant opportunity to connect the Oxford Road Corridor into IDM, Piccadilly and Mayfield to the north of IDM, and East Manchester,

completing a regeneration arc and opening up opportunities to local residents in Ardwick, Longsight and Rusholme, Hulme and Piccadilly.

- 3.4.7 The masterplan intends to transform the currently vacant site with over 2 acres of new public realm and green spaces, a new public square, as well as a series of high-quality new buildings providing for approximately 700,000sq. ft of life sciences accommodation, purpose-built student accommodation, and 25,000sq. ft of active ground floor uses. UBS will deliver 5,800 new direct and indirect jobs, and a total of around £138m GVA contribution to the local economy through construction alone. An initial private investment of c.£450m is planned and the site will generate an additional £9.3m per annum in business rates.
- 3.4.8 The Manchester Science Park SRF offers the potential to increase net floorspace from circa. 320,000 sq. ft to circa 1.3 million sq. ft., accommodating 5,500 jobs. Council approval of an addendum to the SRF in December 2022 allowing the redevelopment of the Greenheys building has paved the way for the relocation of the UK Biobank. UK Biobank is the world's most significant source of data and biological samples for health research.
- 3.4.9 Biobank have received £127.6m from the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Infrastructure Fund to fund the move to a larger, faster, and more efficient, purpose-built facility at the Science Park. This internationally significant health research resource adds to the critical mass of assets on the Oxford Road Corridor. It will create new employment opportunities and provide a dedicated resource to promote further industry engagement focusing on SMEs and start-ups, building on the company's existing relationships with pharma and data science companies.
- 3.4.10 The former Elizabeth Gaskell Campus (EGC) is a 1.9 hectares site located immediately adjacent to the existing MFT estate and Citylabs campus, at the southern edge of the Oxford Road Corridor. It is in the single ownership of Nuffield Health. The EGC will be an employment-led development, leveraging its clear advantages in terms of location and scale. The primary use will be buildings that support the commercialisation of health research and life sciences, as well as science, technology and innovation.
- 3.4.11 First Street is a 9.5 hectares site located at a prominent gateway position at the northwest of the Oxford Road Corridor. The overall vision for First Street is to deliver a quality cultural and visitor destination alongside targeted commercial and retail development, hotel and residential accommodation. The area will be home to a new hub, as part of the government's Places for Growth programme, which will host 2,500 civil servants, including more than 700 roles which will be relocated from London to Manchester. First Street is in close proximity to Man Met's new Science and Engineering campus due to open in 2024. Its unique location within the city centre and Oxford Road Corridor, supported by the mix of uses delivered to date, mean it is ideally placed to attract businesses within key growth sectors.

- 3.4.12 Circle Square is a 4 hectares site located on the former BBC site on Oxford Road alongside the Manchester Technology Centre. Already home to leading global tech firms and fast growing start-ups, Bruntwood SciTech is expanding Circle Square with a new 347,000 sq. ft office building and tech hub, which will attract 1,400 jobs. ID Manchester is located immediately to the east of Circle Square, creating the opportunity to connect the two developments and creating a much larger footprint of commercially-led, mixed use developments within the Oxford Road Corridor.
- 3.4.13 Oxford Road Corridor partners have invested heavily in their estates in recent years, transforming the area through new public realm, green spaces and improving permeability. The partnership is bringing forward plans which will complement this investment, focusing on the spatial relationship and connections between estates and key gateways. Improving wayfinding and interpreting the area's unique academic and cultural history will help create a better sense of place and encourage greater levels of active travel.
- 3.4.14 The Greater Manchester Mayoral Combined Authority is one of eight areas asked by Government to co-develop Investment Zone proposals. Government expects to see local areas aligning their IZ proposals with existing and planned public and private investment in the area, including current and future infrastructure plans. All proposals should include a degree of match funding from the private sector and research institution partners.
- 3.4.15 Each IZ is expected to have a clear spatial focus or 'core' across a sensible economic geography, where interventions should focus on facilitating co-location of businesses, fostering collaboration between industry and research institutions, and driving innovation in companies. IZs should have a credible and ambitious planning offer to accelerate development, strong local leadership and build upon existing partnerships. The Oxford Road Corridor is well placed to support the development and delivery of the GM IZ, and plans are in development to designate IDM as part of the final scheme.

3.5 Conclusion

- 3.5.1. The Oxford Road Corridor presents a unique opportunity of national significance to counterbalance innovation led growth in the south-east and support the ambition set out in the city's new emerging economic strategy. The Oxford Road Corridor is committed to ensuring that the area continues to grow in a way that is fair, inclusive and in-line with zero-carbon commitments. Its plans are underpinned by world-leading research and a clear long-term strategic vision for the area driven by a mature partnership with a strong track record of delivery.

4.0 Recommendations

To consider and comment on the information in the report.

5.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Oxford Road Corridor map.