

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 20 June 2019

**Subject:** Peterloo Memorial Design

**Report of:** Director of Strategic Development

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**Summary**

This report provides an overview of the design process and the work undertaken as part of the design of the Peterloo Memorial.

**Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to note and comment on the report.

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**Wards Affected:** Deansgate

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**Alignment to the Our Manchester Strategy Outcomes (if applicable):**

<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	<p>2019 marks a once-in-a-generation opportunity to remember and raise the profile of the Peterloo Massacre. This important historic event for the city will be commemorated through the unveiling of a new public memorial and a coordinated programme of events over the summer, including a performance event on the day of the bicentenary on the 16th August 2019, to mark the 200th anniversary for the Peterloo Massacre.</p> <p>Beyond this the memorial will function as a key visitor destination, telling the location's historical story. The memorial will also provide opportunities for linked future events.</p> <p>The Memorial will provide an important visitor attraction, and remembrance place, for the city centre, as well as a place where events can be held, adding to the attractiveness of the city centre as a place to work in, live in, and visit. This can help support the ongoing growth of the city centre.</p> <p>In addition, the Memorial will be located close to</p>

	<p>Manchester Central, adding a point of interest for visitors to events held at the venue.</p>
<p>A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success</p>	<p>The delivery of a new memorial in the heart of the city centre will add to the visual attractiveness of its location. The performance being co-commissioned by the Council on the 16th August will involve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The commissioning of lead musicians and other artists to work alongside local historians, emerging practitioners, young people, community groups and choirs.</li> <li>• Connecting with contemporary audiences to convey the impact that the Peterloo Massacre had on those individuals 200 years ago.</li> <li>• Support young peoples engagement in the co-creation of the production and engage with people from diverse backgrounds, providing a space for young voices.</li> </ul> <p>There will be an ongoing opportunity for local school children and residents to learn from the historic events and participate in future events.</p>
<p>A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities</p>	<p>The Peterloo Memorial event will remember the gathering of 60,000 Greater Manchester residents in peaceful protest 200 years ago. It will provide a focal point for local residents to come together on the 16th August by the site of the original St Peter's Field. It will launch the new memorial by Jeremy Deller and provide an interpretation of the event.</p> <p>As detailed above, a number of local groups and resident volunteers are involved in the commemorative events on 16th August.</p>
<p>A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work</p>	<p>In addition to adding to the attractiveness of the city centre, the identified site for the memorial is in a particularly sustainable location. For the 60,000 city centre residents and 140,000 people working within the city centre, the memorial will be within walking distance. For those living in the wider Manchester and Greater Manchester region and visitors nationally, the Peterloo memorial will be easily accessible using sustainable modes of transport. The St. Peters Square and Deansgate-Castlefield Metrolink stops are within a few minutes' walk, as is Deansgate and Oxford Road Railway Stations. In addition, the location of the memorial sits in close proximity to key bus routes that serve the city including the free Metroshuttle service.</p>

A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The Civic Quarter, benefits from excellent transport connectivity. This includes strong public transport links, as outlined above, with both rail and Metrolink stations within a two-minute walk from the location identified for the Peterloo Memorial. This will reduce the need for car trips to the site, supporting the city's strategy of creating work class sustainable transport infrastructure.
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**Background documents (available for public inspection):** None

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 In 2012, as part of the redevelopment of the civic estate and St Peter's Square, a commitment was made by the Council to provide a permanent memorial to mark the events of the Peterloo Massacre in August 1819. The transformation of the square created a new destination which included the expansion of Metrolink, and the development of new offices and retail units. The Peterloo Memorial was also a key component of the Square's redevelopment.
- 1.2 As part of the transformation, £1million was set aside from the Town Hall Complex Transformation Programme budget allocation to fund the Peterloo Memorial, with a budget provision of £600,000 in 2018/19 and £400,000 in 2019/20 for the project.
- 1.3 Following the completion of works on St Peter's Square in June 2017, an appropriate location was sought for the Memorial within the area at which the event took place. The junction of Lower Mosley Street and Windmill Street was identified, as it allowed the Memorial to occupy a prominent position while still allowing Manchester Central Convention Complex (MCCC) to use the adjacent space for their business activities.
- 1.4 The ambition is for the Memorial to be installed by the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the massacre in August 2019.
- 1.5 This report summarises the development of the design of the Memorial since its conception.

## **2.0 Inception**

- 2.1 In 2016, the then Director of Culture appointed the artist Jeremy Deller to develop the concept for a fitting memorial to the Peterloo Massacre. The artist has a strong track record of working collaboratively with local communities on a range of public art projects.
- 2.2 The artist has since worked with the Council and other interested parties, such as the Peterloo Memorial Campaign group, to inform the design of the Memorial. Manchester Histories has also been a partner in the development of the Memorial; they are leading on a programme of events to commemorate the anniversary, and have access to a variety of cultural networks and interest groups.

## **3.0 Design formation**

- 3.1 The initial concept for the design for the Memorial was created in the summer of 2018. The principles and thinking behind the design were summarised as: a pyramidal form that invokes a burial mound or small hill; a meeting place to be interacted with; a focal point for gatherings; and a texturally diverse and colourful structure that is distinct from its surroundings.

- 3.2 A design team was formed, including a project architect (appointed through the artist), contractor and the Council project team, meeting regularly to consider all aspects of the design and the delivery of the Memorial.
- 3.3 Following the initial design proposal, a period of design refinement with key stakeholders, including the Ward Members for Piccadilly and Deansgate, was conducted. In response to their comments, the original design was amended so as to change the material for the structure, from tiles to stones, to lessen slip hazards, and also to incorporate symbols and text on the structure to commemorate the victims and show where the protesters had travelled from. A handrail was also included at this stage of the design.
- 3.4 The revised designs were revealed to Peterloo 2019 Network Members (a variety of cultural networks and interest groups) at two sessions held on Wednesday 31st October 2018 from 2pm - 4pm and 5.30pm - 7.30pm respectively. The session was scheduled and facilitated by Manchester Histories with Jeremy Deller attending both sessions to present his ideas for the Peterloo Memorial ahead of the public unveiling of the plans. A comprehensive consultation exercise was subsequently undertaken in collaboration with Manchester Histories, the Peterloo Memorial Campaign and the Council, with material shared in the library, from 1-3 November 2018 to allow the public to comment on the proposals. The designs were also made available online for a period of nine days for comment. A total of 670 responses were received from the online consultation and paper submissions from the event at the Central Library.
- 3.5 Resulting from the public consultation, 88% of people were supportive of the proposed location. 69% of all respondents were supportive of the design proposals. In addition to this a range of issues were raised via the public consultation. These were: design, accessibility (particularly around wheelchair access), location, up-keep, and the concept.
- 3.6 Based on the responses from the consultation, the list of issues raised were fed back to the design team prior to the submission of the full planning application for the Memorial on 21 December 2018.
- 3.7 An Accessibility Statement was submitted as a supplementary document to the planning application on 31 January 2019. This statement outlined what amendments had been made to the Memorial in response to the issues raised during the consultation stage, specifically around the accessibility of the structure. It also detailed the rationale behind why those changes were made, particularly around health and safety implications.
- 3.8 The design that was submitted included: a handrail; changes to the gradient and rise of the steps, as well as the colour for each level to demarcate each step level; and, a second, flat circle of coloured stones to be located on the ground adjacent to the stepped circle, which has the same material construction and text information as the top steps and platform (see attached plan at Appendix 1).

- 3.9 A meeting was held between the Council, the artist and the Peterloo Memorial Campaign group on 1 March 2019 to discuss the access elements of the design. A further amendment to the design was submitted on 13 March as a planning amendment, which included the addition of a 1500mm wide and 200mm tall step which would allow for wheelchair access onto the structure.
- 3.10 The design was presented to the Planning & Highways Committee on 14 March 2019. The Committee were informed of the concerns raised about access to the Memorial and what the Council had done to address these issues. A representative of the objectors addressed the Committee to say that whilst they supported the provision of a memorial, that it should be fully accessible and inclusive. They confirmed that they met with the applicant, Jeremy Deller, and the Council and that their concerns had been considered and revisions to the design had taken the issues raised into account. The artist, who was present at the meeting, affirmed that the structure was not meant to be figurative, but that it should be viewed and engaged with in a variety of ways. He also stated that whilst the structure was not perfect, the addition of the wide step meant that there would be meaningful access onto the Memorial for those who could not, or did not want to, ascend all the steps. The Planning and Highways Committee were advised that whilst revisions had made the structure more accessible, it would not be possible to achieve full access to the proposed Memorial and, due to the time left before the unveiling, that it would not be possible to rethink the structure. The site constraints were also acknowledged; due to the built-up nature of the vicinity around what was St Peter's Field, the site of the massacre, there would be limitations as to what could be done to the structure.
- 3.11 The application was subsequently approved.
- 3.12 The design team continue to meet regularly, and access issues have been discussed and reviewed on a regular basis. The Council has maintained dialogue with access groups and other stakeholders and will continue to preserve channels of communication. Further additions to the design since the Planning & Highways Committee include tactile paving that would help to slow down anybody travelling on wheels.

#### **4.0 Current Position**

- 4.1 The Memorial has been designed as a piece of commemorative public art and whilst there are elements of the sculpture that are interactive, it can also be viewed, appreciated and engaged with without the need to ascend it. Whilst the memorial does not need to be viewed exclusively from the top of the sculpture, recognising that the design inevitably means it will be climbed, adaptations to the design have been implemented to make it as safely accessible as possible. The specific features of the public artwork that provide information about Peterloo are all accessible. It is a misunderstanding of this memorial artwork to suggest that its sole or even primary purpose involves ascending it and that it cannot be viewed, appreciated or engaged with otherwise.

4.2 The design of the structure as it stands will be unveiled as part of a day of events and commemorations on 16 August 2019.