

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Executive – 3 July 2020

Subject: Refresh of the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework – Poland Street Zone

Report of: Strategic Director - Growth & Development

Summary

On 12 February 2020 the Executive received a draft refreshed Neighbourhood Development Framework (NDF) for Ancoats and New Islington. The revised elements were in relation to the back of Ancoats, referred to as the Poland Street Zone, and the former Central Retail Park. On this basis, the Executive approved that a programme of public and stakeholder consultation should be undertaken.

Public consultation on revised proposals for the Poland Street Zone involving local residents, businesses, land and property owners, public and statutory bodies and community sector organisations was undertaken between March and May 2020. Following this exercise, a final draft of the Ancoats and New Islington NDF Poland Street Zone has been produced and is appended to this report for approval.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

1. note the comments received from stakeholders including local landowners, residents, businesses and statutory consultees;
 2. approve the final version of the refreshed Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework Poland Street Zone to guide and co-ordinate the future development of the area, with the intention that it will be a material consideration in the Council's decision making role as Local Planning Authority;
 3. approve an extension to the remit of Manchester Life Strategic Development Company Limited (MLSDC) to undertake feasibility work relating to City Council owned sites within the Poland Street Zone as set out in this report; and,
 4. authorise the City Solicitor to complete all the necessary documentation to give effect to the recommendations as set out in this report.
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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

The revised Ancoats & New Islington NDF Poland Street Zone recognises that future development within the area will need to respond to the City Council's objective of achieving zero-carbon target and will be expected to move towards this aspiration through the active utilisation and deployment of leading building technologies. The City Council will use its land interests in the area to deliver this outcome.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of the contribution to the strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The proposals contained within the refreshed Ancoats and New Islington NDF Poland Street Zone offer the potential to bring forward mixed - use development that will contribute to the creation of jobs within the area and provide a range of residential accommodation for the growing population of the City.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the City's economic success	The further development of Ancoats will provide additional commercial space to meet demand from existing and newly established businesses, thus creating and sustaining employment opportunities within this area of the City Centre.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The proposals contained within the refreshed NDF Poland Street Zone offer the potential to help deliver the Manchester Residential Growth Strategy and meet the growing demand for new homes in a range of tenures that are close to quality amenity space and within easy access of employment opportunities. The creation of additional commercial space will help create new and sustain existing employment opportunities.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The refreshed NDF Poland Street Zone reaffirms the Council's commitment to deliver zero carbon growth and sets out the intention of creating sustainable neighbourhoods with strong connections to public transport infrastructure; enhanced active travel routes and improved public realm and public open spaces.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The NDF Poland Street Zone will help guide and coordinate the eastwards expansion of the City Centre and create a seamless link to the neighbourhoods of East Manchester, contributing to the vibrancy and attractiveness of these areas.

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy

- Risk Management
 - Legal Considerations
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Financial Consequences – Revenue

There are no direct financial implications for the City Council arising from this report.

Financial Consequences – Capital

There are no direct financial implications for the City Council arising from this report.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy, please contact one of the contact officers above.

- Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework, report to Executive 29 October 2014;

- Refresh of the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework, report to Executive 14 December 2016;
- Refresh of the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework, report to the Executive 12 February 2020;
- Manchester Zero Carbon 2018 – Manchester City Council’s Commitment, Executive, 13th March 2019;
- Council Resolution on Declaring a Climate Emergency, Executive, 24th July 2019;
- Eastlands Regeneration Framework, Executive, 24th July 2019; and
- Delivering Manchester’s Affordable Homes to 2025, Executive, 11th September 2019
- Central Retail Park, Executive, 13th September 2017

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework (NDF) was originally approved by the City Council's Executive in 2014 in order to enable the City Council to provide development objectives in this key location on the north - eastern edge of the City Centre in line with adopted planning policy.
- 1.2 A further refresh of the NDF was approved by the Executive in 2016. This was in response to a significant surge in development activity in the core of the Ancoats Conservation area and the sites surrounding New Islington Marina. The updated document provided refreshed guidance relating to the form and nature of development, permeability and connectivity as well as reflecting the progress that had been made towards delivering the original objectives contained within the 2014 NDF.
- 1.3 The 2016 document broke the area down into 6 distinct zones, each with specific characteristics that required their own planning principles and illustrative masterplan. One of these Zones was identified as Character Area 3, Back of Ancoats, referred to as the "Poland Street Zone", which spans the area bounded by Oldham Road, Bengal Street, the Rochdale Canal and Butler Street/ Rodney Street and has over the past 12 -18 months become the focus of developer and landowner interest. As a consequence, this section of the NDF has been refreshed to reflect the updated planning policy context as well as progress made in the wider area since 2016.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Ancoats is made up of a number of distinctive mixed-used neighbourhoods, including New Islington, that sit on the north eastern edge of the extended City Centre. They act as the link between the City Centre and the East Manchester neighbourhoods of Miles Platting, Lower Medlock Valley and Holt Town.
- 2.2 The neighbourhood formed the bedrock of Manchester's growth as an industrial power during the 19th and early 20th century, before falling into long term decline following de-industrialisation in the latter part of the 20th century. From the early 1990's onward the City Council has worked in conjunction with government agencies, businesses, community stakeholders and developer partners to develop and deliver comprehensive regeneration strategies in the area.
- 2.3 The recession of the late 2000's threatened to seriously derail the momentum of regeneration that had been built up through significant public sector investment made by the City Council and Government Agencies and private sector investment by a diverse group of developers, including Urban Splash. However, the City Council, working in conjunction with Homes England and Manchester Life and other third party developers has been able to re-energise development activity in recent years and a significant number of residential and commercial development schemes have been delivered in the area.

Since 2016 nearly 2,000 new homes have been delivered in the area, together with 227,410 sq. ft. of new commercial office/ workspace and 57 ground floor commercial / retail units.

2.4 As a result of this there are few remaining development opportunities remaining in the heart of the Ancoats Conservation area or within the New Islington Marina area. Consequently, interest is now extending into Character Area 3, otherwise known as the Poland Street Zone.

2.5 In order to ensure that the City Council has articulated a vision for this area that can help guide development interest a review and update of the existing NDF, Poland Street Zone has been commissioned. The review and update has taken account of updated Council strategies and adopted planning policy and is intended to provide a robust framework to ensure that compatible residential and commercial development opportunities are maximised; and that connectivity and public amenity opportunities are not lost.

3.0 Public Consultation Approach

3.1 In February 2020 the Executive endorsed a draft version of a refreshed Ancoats and New Islington NDF – Character Area 3, Poland Street Zone, to act as a basis for public consultation. The consultation programme ran from 4 March to 15 May 2020, a period of just over 10 weeks and was managed by staff from the Strategic Development Team with support from external consultancy firm Counter Context Limited.

3.2 A range of consultation material was produced with consistent branding and messages, which included:

- An updated Ancoats and New Islington consultation web page on the manchester.gov.uk website, providing details of the draft updated Ancoats and New Islington NDF relating to the Poland Street Zone and download links to the relevant documents with a dedicated feedback form to submit comments.
- Letters to all local residents (465 addresses) within the study area consultation boundary.
- Letters to local businesses within the study area registered on the Manchester City Council Business Rates Database.
- Letters to property and landowners delivered to all freehold and leasehold interests registered at the land registry within the consultation boundary area. All letters provided web-link details to the consultation page as well as details of the planned consultation events. The letters to landowners were sent via recorded delivery.
- Consultation notification emails to key public and statutory stakeholders.
- Consultation notification emails to non-statutory stakeholder groups including community groups.
- Press release and news articles on the manchester.gov.uk website, supported by social media.
- A dedicated email address and telephone information line.

- 3.3 Initially the consultation had been due to run from 4 March to 15 April 2020. Unfortunately, the timings of the consultation coincided with the outbreak of Covid-19 in the United Kingdom and the introduction of social distancing measures to combat the spread of the virus. Two public consultation events had originally been scheduled for Tuesday 17 March (local residents and businesses) and Wednesday 18 March (landowners, developers and businesses) to provide an opportunity for attendees to discuss the draft revisions to the NDF, Poland Street Zone with members of the Residential Growth Team.
- 3.4 As a result of the fast-moving situation, in mid-March 2020, the consultation events were cancelled. Cancellation notices were shared on social media, also sent out by post and notices were put up at the venues. Interested parties with questions about the consultation were encouraged to make contact via a dedicated telephone number and email address.
- 3.5 Recognising that the cancellation of the drop in events may affect people's ability to engage in the process, the consultation was extended by a further 4 weeks to 15 May 2020.
- 3.6 Due to the cancellation of the public consultation events, an additional letter was mailed on 25 March 2020 advising residents of the extension to the consultation period and reiterating the ability to make comments via the webpage.
- 3.7 Businesses and landowners were also informed of the cancellation of the drop in events and the extension of the online consultation period via a second letter on 25 March, which also offered the opportunity for a teleconference on the proposals if required.
- 3.8 All statutory, non-statutory and community groups were also informed of the extension to the consultation period and the cancellation of the drop in events.
- 3.9 Local Members were briefed via email on the consultation process in February 2020 and a subsequent email was sent in March informing them of the cancellation of the drop in events and the extension to the consultation period.
- 3.10 An online meeting was held with the Friends of Ancoats Green who then provided feedback and responses via the on-line consultation.

4.0 Consultation Outcomes

- 4.1 A total of 130 responses were received, and the website attracted 3,615 visits. 119 responses were via the online questionnaire and a further 11 responses were via email.
- 4.2 120 of the responses were from people who live, work or visit the area frequently. A further 2 responses were from local community group Friends of Ancoats Green. 4 responses from or on behalf of local landowners including

Crown Industrial Estates, Manchester Life Development Company, Northern Group and Urban Splash.

4.3 Detailed responses from statutory stakeholders and internal departments were received from Canal & Rivers Trust, Homes England and United Utilities together with Manchester City Council's Flood Risk Management Team.

4.4 Feedback from the consultation programme has been largely positive. Recurring themes and comments include:

- Strong support of the vision and priorities contained within the draft NDF update and the strategy to maximise opportunities for future development;
- Strong support for the proposals linked to reduced car use and improved connectivity and pedestrian and cycle routes through the area;
- Further comments were made in relation to car parking and how this is managed in terms of on street parking and centralised parking provision to service the area and support businesses and residents;
- Strong support for the objectives of maintaining the character and conservation status of the area and ensuring that appropriate consideration is given to this in future developments;
- Highlighting the need for flood management and sustainable drainage solutions where appropriate;
- Highlighting the need for design to positively address the waterways corridor and link to wider green and blue networks;
- Highlighting the need to consider flexibility on building massing and heights at certain locations in the area;
- Support for the delivery of affordable housing across a range of typologies and tenures;
- Highlighting the need to ensure live work mix is balanced appropriately to ensure that either use is not detrimental to the other;
- Support for potential of green streets and open green spaces that could be used for a variety of activities. However, concern was expressed about the possible loss of public open space at Ancoats Green.

5.0 Adjustments to the Framework

5.1 Following the submission of the draft NDF Poland Street Zone update in February 2020, Appendix 1 of this report now sets out the final Ancoats and New Islington NDF, Poland Street Zone, with a set of updated design proposals that will help guide the future development of this area as an attractive and successful live/ work neighbourhood.

5.2 Feedback submitted as part of the consultation process has been carefully considered with a range of amendments made and the Framework strengthened where appropriate.

5.3 Overall the comments and feedback raised via the consultation process have been supportive and consistent with the themes contained within the draft Framework document. As such the proposed amendments include:

- Further clarity in reference to the height and massing of buildings. Acknowledging that height should be informed by the character of the area but allowing for variation in height and massing that reflects quality of design and the eclectic form, massing and use mix synonymous with Ancoats;
- Maintaining the scale of Ancoats Green but reshaping it to improve the quality, function and connectivity of the space; and
- A stronger focus on how and where parking in the area is provided to ensure a more pedestrian/cycle friendly environment is created.

6.0 Implementation and Next Steps

6.1 Subject to approval by the Executive at today's meeting, the Ancoats and New Islington NDF, Poland Street Zone update will become a material consideration in the Council's decision-making role relating to future planning applications as Local Planning Authority. The NDF, Poland Street Zone will continue to form the basis for discussions between the City Council and third-party developers, setting out a vision for the area that will contribute to the co-ordinated delivery of development activity.

6.2 Extending the Remit of Manchester Life Strategic Development Company

6.2.1 At the Executive meeting on the 13th September 2017 approval was given to the acquisition of the former Central Retail Park site by the City Council and the establishment of a partnership with Manchester Life to work with the Council in relation to the future masterplanning, use and redevelopment proposals for the site. That partnership – Manchester Life Strategic Development Company (MLSDC) - has been established and a draft development framework for the site has been produced and will be the subject of a public consultation exercise.

6.2.2 Following the completion of the masterplanning work at Central Retail Park it is proposed that the remit of MLSDC is extended to include the Poland Street Zone. This will enable MLSDC to undertake feasibility work in relation to Council land interests in this area, which will inform future developments proposals.

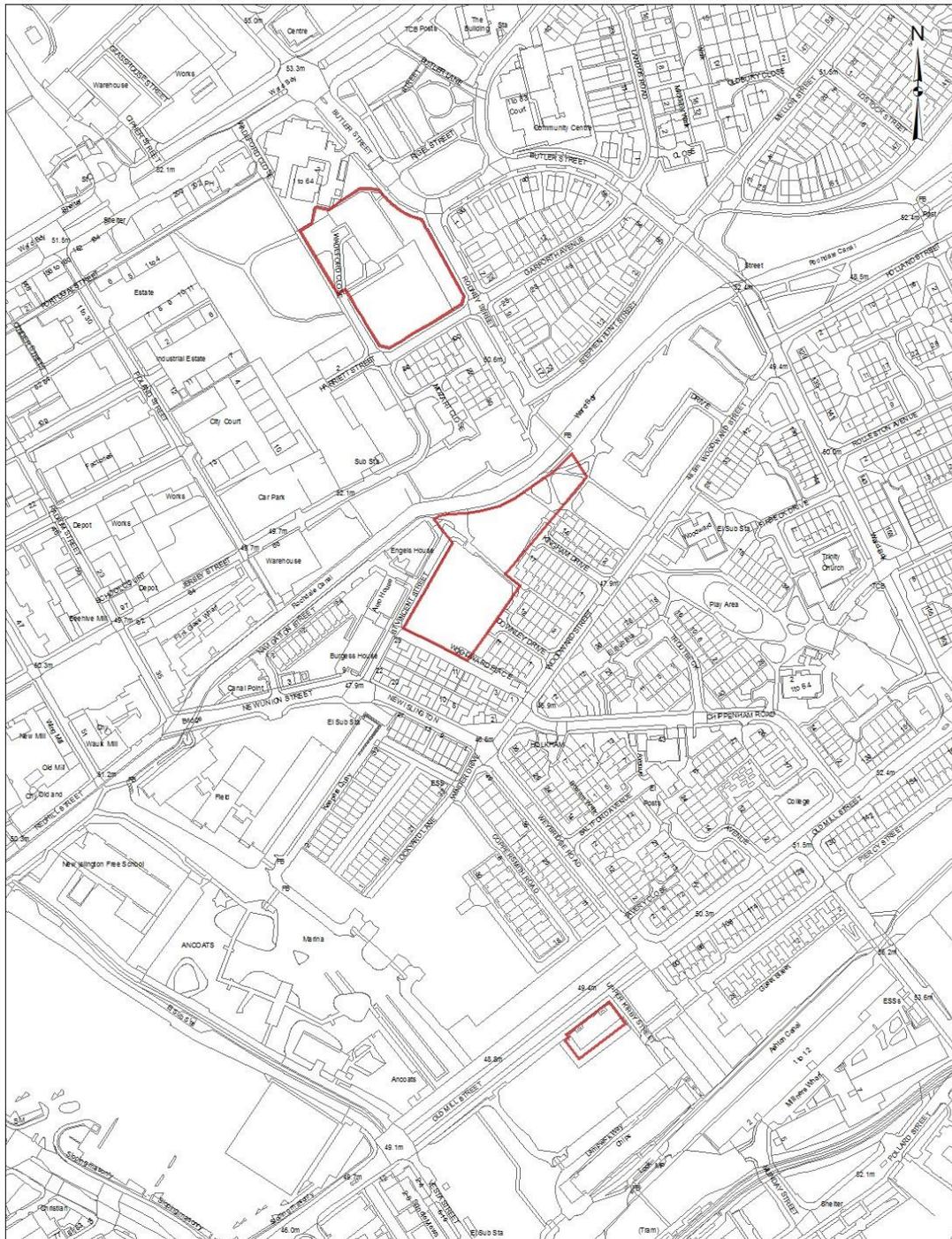
6.2.3 A further report will be brought to a future meeting of Executive with the detailed outcomes of the feasibility work for the Poland Street Zone.

6.3 Affordable Housing

6.3.1 It should be noted that the February 2020 meeting of Executive approved the use of three sites within the Ancoats and New Islington Framework area for the delivery of affordable housing, these being the former Ancoats Dispensary; vacant land adjacent to Butler Street; and vacant land adjacent to Downley

Drive; as identified on Map 1. By way of an update, detailed surveys and feasibility work is currently being undertaken in relation to these sites and, once this work is concluded a report will be brought to a future meeting of the Executive setting out detailed proposals for the delivery of affordable homes on these sites.

Map 1: Location of Sites for Affordable Housing



A3 Scale 1:2,300

**PLAN FOR IDENTIFICATION
PURPOSES ONLY**

Development Team
Growth & Development Directorate
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7.0 Contributing to a Zero-Carbon City

- 7.1 As set out above, the revisions to the NDF, Poland Street Zone establishes that future development in Ancoats will be required to respond to the City Council's Zero Carbon policy through the use of low carbon technologies and solutions in the design and delivery of buildings and infrastructure.

8.0 Contributing to the Manchester Strategy

(a) A thriving and sustainable city

- 8.1 The objectives will contribute to the delivery of residential and commercial development that will support the city's economic and residential growth objectives and contribute to the continued growth of the local and regional economy.

(b) A highly skilled city

- 8.2 The objectives confirm that Ancoats will continue to provide new commercial space in line with adopted planning policy to meet demand from existing and newly established businesses, thus creating and sustaining employment opportunities. The draft revisions to the NDF, Poland Street Zone also support the objective of re-purposing vacant and underutilised sites in the City Council's ownership to provide new homes meeting the needs of a growing workforce who wish to live close to the Regional Centre.

(c) A progressive and equitable city

- 8.3 The revised NDF, Poland Street Zone offers the potential to meet Manchester's residential growth targets, contributing to and meeting the demand for new homes in and around the city centre in a range of types and tenures. The continued development of Ancoats will deliver high quality public opens space and the provision of accessible facilities for the local community.

(d) A liveable and low carbon city

- 8.4 The revised NDF, Poland Street Zone will support the delivery of high quality residential development using state of the art technologies to reduce the carbon footprint and create neighbourhoods with a range of amenities to support its residents close to the conurbation core.

(e) A connected city

- 8.5 The continued development of Ancoats will create a seamless connection between the city centre and the neighbourhoods of East Manchester, contributing to the vibrancy and attractiveness of these areas.

9.0 Key Policies and Considerations

(a) Equal Opportunities

- 9.1 The revisions within the NDF, Poland Street Zone have been consulted on with a wide range of stakeholders, enabling all interested parties to engage in the process.

(b) Risk Management

- 9.2 Not applicable at this stage of the process.

(c) Legal Considerations

- 9.3 Once the NDF, Poland Street Zone has been approved by the Executive it will become a material consideration for the City Council as Local Planning Authority in the assessment of future planning applications.
- 9.4 In respect of extending the remit of MLSDC, the City Solicitor will work with the relevant staff within the Growth and Development Directorate to negotiate and finalise any amendments which may be required to the corporate/commercial documentation.
- 9.5 The City Solicitor will support the team in taking the proposals forward to ensure compliance with all relevant legislative and constitutional requirements.