

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Executive – 14 October 2020

Subject: Former Central Retail Park Development Framework

Report of: Strategic Director (Growth & Development)

Summary

This report informs the Executive of the outcome of a public consultation exercise with local residents, businesses and stakeholders, on the draft Development Framework (DF) for the former Central Retail Park, and seeks the Executive's approval for the Framework.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- i) Note the outcome of the public consultation on the draft Development Framework for the former Central Retail Park.
 - ii) Approve the Development Framework for the former Central Retail Park area and request that Planning and Highways Committee take the framework into account as a material consideration when considering planning applications for the site.
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Wards Affected Piccadilly, 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 Neighbourhood Development Framework (NDF) recognises that future development within the area will need to respond to the City Council's aim of achieving zero-carbon targets and will be expected to move towards this objective through the active utilisation and deployment of leading building technologies. The City Council will use its land interests, particularly the former Central Retail Park site within the NDF 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 Development Framework (NDF) offer the potential to bring forward mixed - used development that will contribute to the creation of jobs within the area. The proposals set out in the former Central Retail |

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| | Park Development Framework (DF) will create a new and distinct commercial district which create jobs and opportunities, diversifying the economy, particularly in the TMT industry. |
| A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success | The development of the former Central Retail Park DF 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 DF offer the potential to help deliver the Manchester Residential Growth Strategy, by meeting 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 DF 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 DF 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

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.

- Refresh of the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework – Poland Street Zone, report to Executive 3 July 2020
- Refresh of the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework, report to Executive 12 February 2020
- 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;
- Central Retail Park, Executive, 13th September 2017;
- 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
- Draft Central Retail Park Development Framework – February 2020

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 On 12 February 2020, the Executive endorsed, in principle, the development strategy for the former Central Retail Park, and requested that the Strategic Director for Growth & Development carry out a public consultation on the draft framework. The former Central Retail Park site sits within the wider Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework area. This report summarises the outcome of the public consultation.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The former Central Retail Park (CRP) was acquired by the Council in 2017, with aspirations to bring forward a mixed-use, commercially-led development that would be the city's first net zero-carbon business district. Its strategic position on Great Ancoats Street and proximity to the Northern Quarter, Ancoats and Piccadilly makes it a positive location for the development of in demand office space.
- 2.2 The former Central Retail Park site sits within the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework (NDF) site. The former Central Retail Park DF was refreshed this year and was presented at Executive in February 2020. This refresh is in response to emerging developer interest starting to focus on Ancoats. On this basis, there is a need to review and update the guidance and development objectives for the area to ensure they respond to the City's aspirations for this part of Ancoats; in particular, the need to deliver commercial floor space in line with adopted planning policy that will meet increasing demand from a number of key growth sectors, including those in the tech industries, for example.

3.0 The Consultation Process

- 3.1 The consultation on the CRP ran for 8 weeks from Monday 3 August 2020 to Friday 25 September 2020. A range of consultation material was produced with consistent branding and messages to engage and inform the target audiences which included:
- Postcards distributed to all local residents living within the study area consultation boundary plans, as well as businesses in the area (6,670 addresses).
 - An updated Central Retail Park consultation webpage on the Council website, providing details of the draft updated CRPDF, download links to relevant documents and a dedicated feedback form to submit comments and feedback.
 - Consultation emails distributed to:
 - Manchester City Council officers
 - Local ward councillors
 - Statutory bodies
 - Key local organisations, including landowners, community or services groups and key occupiers

- All emails provided the web link to the consultation page and draft framework document as well as details of how they could provide their feedback.
- A dedicated email address and telephone information line, managed by Counter Context.
- Consultation notification emails with a link to the CRPDF consultation webpage and document download were provided to key public and statutory stakeholders including: Historic England, National Grid, Electricity North West, United Utilities, GMFRS, North West Ambulance Service, GMP, Homes England, TFGM, Environmental Agency, GM Ecology Unit, Manchester Climate Change Agency, Canal and Rivers Trust, Northwards Housing, Cycle Forum, Manchester Climate Change Agency, and Great Places Housing.

3.2 The anticipated start of the consultation coincided with the outbreak of Covid-19. As a result, the start date of communication and engagement with local people was adjusted and the consultation strategy was redesigned.

3.3 The consultation was extended by two weeks ending on Friday 25 September 2020.

4.0 Consultation Comments

4.1 To date the online consultation has received 598 number of responses. The breakdown of which includes:

- 471 who describe themselves as local residents
- 19 who describe themselves as local business owners
- 8 who describe themselves as landowners
- 2 who describe themselves as from a statutory body
- 106 who describe themselves as working in the local area
- 142 who describe themselves as a regular visitor to the local area
- 16 who describe themselves as belonging to a local interest group

4.2 There were also 15 submissions via the dedicated email address.

Public Realm and Greenspace

4.3 Responses cited the lack of greenspace in the city centre. Several requested that the site be turned into a city centre park. The impact of Covid-19 and the lockdown were seen as pertinent to the argument for new greenspace.

Zero-carbon objectives

4.4 Many support the zero-carbon objective, but some thought that the framework would not be able to meet the goals with the amount of buildings proposed. Many felt the best way to achieve zero-carbon would be to have fewer buildings or no buildings at all.

A large number of people requested the development facilitates more walking routes to the city centre. Some asked that any development of the site be

cycling and walking friendly, that it includes safe cycle storage and is well maintained. There were suggestions including EV charging, underground EV parking and solar panels on rooftops.

Development heights, density and massing

- 4.5 There were a wide range of comments relating to the design and size of the new buildings. The comments range from requests for the development to match the scale of Oxygen Tower at 32 storeys to requests for development to be lower-rise in this area. A number of people suggested that there shouldn't be anything too high that would dominate the skyline, suggesting 6-7 storeys at most. Those that commented on the design and size referred to high quality design and materials, being carbon neutral, and having plenty of green space around them. Requests have been made for the development to be sympathetic to the area in terms of its design style.

Development and proposed uses

- 4.6 Demand for office space was questioned particularly in light of the shift towards home working during the lockdown. There were a few requests for social and/or affordable housing and for a leisure offer/facilities, local amenities and community events. There were requests for spaces to be made available for independent shops and cafes.

Traffic and Highway Safety

- 4.7 A number of comments were concerned that the proposals would create more traffic, particularly private vehicles. Antisocial behaviour and personal safety was raised as an issue.
- 4.8 One respondent wanted to see active uses outside of working hours and during the weekends. There were requests that the interim use of the site not include a temporary car park.

Statutory Consultees

- 4.9 We have received responses from the following statutory consultees;

Historic England

- 4.10 Historic England (HE) commented that the majority of the site is likely to be relatively uncontentious from a heritage perspective. However, the western edge of the site, which adjoins Ancoats and the Rochdale Canal, is highly significant. Development along this edge of the site will impact on a series of mills of international significance, three of which are listed at grade II* (Doubling Mill/Fireproof Mill, Royal Mill and Decker Mill).
- 4.11 The significance of the mill buildings from both an architectural and historic perspective derives partly from their scale and monumental nature, and the imposing and striking impression this creates when viewed across the

Rochdale Canal. Any new development will need to preserve this visual and physical pre-eminence, and particular consideration will need to be given to building heights and design, as well as the configuration of the open spaces network.

- 4.12 HE positively noted the considerations set out in principle 7, that alongside the Rochdale Canal, buildings should step down to respect the height of the adjacent mills of Ancoats, creating a balanced and welcoming route into the site. However, they had initial concerns with the visualisations, which do not appear to fully follow this principle, and show a series of buildings of equal and competing heights.
- 4.13 They felt that further thought would need to be given to the relationship to the mill buildings as part of any detailed planning application and assurances around these buildings.

United Utilities (UU)

- 4.14 UU noted that they have a range of infrastructure assets and associated easements within the development framework area, therefore early engagement with them is considered essential to ensure any detailed masterplanning exercise takes account of water and drainage infrastructure. UU highlighted their pre-application advice service as an opportunity to address issues early on in the process to avoid complex delays further in the development.
- 4.15 UU wished to strongly identify the need for the management of surface water drainage and the hierarchy of drainage strategies and the inclusion of SuDS. This should be strengthened in the framework and they would welcome the consideration of flood management and sustainable surface water drainage within the Development Framework and reference to specific local and national policy and guidance would be helpful. They felt that there should be a holistic approach towards drainage design with collaboration between professions and the delivery of exemplary drainage solutions should be embedded into high quality blue and green environments. The opportunities and challenges posed by the Shooters Brook and Rochdale Canal should be explored and UU would welcome early discussions regarding this.

Canals and Rivers Trust (CRT)

- 4.16 The site is considered by the CRT to have an important relationship to the area's waterways and is an important canal side site. Wider public realm within the site should be fully considered and integrated with the canal, with towpaths providing excellent walking opportunities. Wayfinding across the site and connections with wider city centre locations should be improved. The principle of stepping down heights and densities of building towards the Canal is welcomed, however the document should be amended to limit heights to 6-8 storeys to reflect the height of the existing Ancoats Mill. They suggested that the sustainability strategy is amended to include "*adjoining*

the site...” to allow off site mitigation to be considered. In respect of any new pedestrian bridge across the canal, agreement would be required from CRT.

Electricity Northwest

- 4.17 Electricity Northwest stated that they strongly support the objectives in the draft framework, as this will provide an opportunity to set out zero carbon development.

Stakeholder Consultees

- 4.18 We received the following responses from stakeholder consultees;

New Islington Free School

- 4.19 The Free School provided comments regarding the height of the buildings and their proximity to the school and the risk of the school being in the shadow of these new buildings. They requested reassurances that the school and the field and play area will not be overlooked, to ensure safeguarding of pupils.
- 4.20 There also had concerns about the access roads to and through the site, and the need for the school site to remain secure.
- 4.21 They pointed out that the map is not reflective of the school grounds, and appears to remove teaching space, which would be unacceptable to the school. The school response noted that the map indicates 'school drop off' as part of the Aldi car park, but that this is an unofficial arrangement. They requested that the council makes this the official parking point and allow it to accommodate additional cars.
- 4.22 There are ongoing concerns regarding the activities around the school grounds and adjacent to the exit gate. The school would like assurances that the privacy, safety and safeguarding of the school is a priority.

Northwards Housing

- 4.23 Northwards Housing gave concerns about the quantum of office space in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic and the shift towards home working, which may suggest that more affordable housing could be provided.
- 4.24 Northwards stated that they would like to see more explicit links with key stakeholders in north Manchester such as Yes Manchester (providing local skills / training / job opportunities), local supply chains, high schools and North Manchester Business Network should be considered. Also, the scheme should consider bespoke business start-up support to local people to take up the commercial space.
- 4.25 They welcomed the zero carbon objectives, but felt that they were challenging. There noted a need to create safe walking and cycling routes,

and safe shared spaces with natural surveillance to limit ASB opportunities. More sustainable routes to school and families should be considered, including walking and would currently need to cross the busy Great Ancoats Street.

- 4.26 The response raised questions about accessibility. It noted that Manchester is an Age Friendly City and, given levels change significantly across the site, this will need to be carefully considered to meet all residents and visitors' needs.

Optimised Environments

- 4.27 Optimised Environments are a local consultancy firm who have produced the refreshed New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework – Poland Street Zone. This response was generally supportive of the framework, but felt that more consideration needed to be given to the mix of uses in terms of how routes through are animated and safe beyond the working day.
- 4.28 Specific comments were made on the design elements including; the need to avoid the step back from park edge and better to use that space elsewhere within the plan to create meaningful and useable open space and better integration between the park and the main space, which is considered too hard. A greater variety of footprint may add interest and aid flexibility of delivery. The benefits of the canal edge are not properly exploited; the hotel plot orientation means it only benefits from views on one edge whilst blocking longer views meaning the canal will have limited impact on internal views/spaces.

Piccadilly and Ancoats & Beswick ward members

- 4.29 The ward Councillors stated that they have always been of the view that this space could deliver more positive outcomes for Manchester and have continued to support the development of a plan which delivers an environmentally sound, vibrant and active new piece of the city.
- 4.30 Councillors stated that the site must reflect the goals of green space and carbon-neutral growth as a responsible city, and increase permeability across Great Ancoats Street, so residents on both sides can benefit from shared amenities. The envisioned square would add another hard landscaped space to our city, whereas a purpose built green space would provide Ancoats with the much needed social infrastructure for residents from across the city to enjoy. The request that a purpose built green space is provided.
- 4.31 They support a residential element and would like this to contribute to the genuinely affordable and accessible housing goals of the city.
- 4.32 They support the plans to bring high-end jobs and services, building on our shared industrial heritage. They seek a commitment from the Council to promote local hiring practices by businesses to ensure that education, training and hiring opportunities are accessible to all.

- 4.33 Piccadilly Ward Members undertook their own consultation exercise in the form of an online feedback form which resulted in the following feedback from 245 respondents, 52% of which lived in the city centre, 39% the rest of Manchester and 9% from further afield:
- 99% thought the area should include public green space.
 - 80% thought the housing on the site should be genuinely affordable for local people.

5.0 Response to comments

- 5.1 The following section provides responses to specific comments made as part of the consultation.

Public Realm and Greenspace

- 5.2 In response to the requests to develop a public park and significant greenspace on the site, there is a commitment to significant public realm investment across the city centre, as well as a number of established city centre parks and gardens. This includes ensuring quality public realm space within new developments and more significant construction of new public parks. The nearby development of Mayfield will provide the first public city park for 100 years for the city and its residents. This new park, which is within walking distance of the former CRP site, will include 6.5 acres of green space including re-naturalising the River Medlock and de-culverting to incorporate green and blue infrastructure. The wider Ancoats and New Islington NDI proposes a network of enhanced public spaces that will draw people towards the green and blue infrastructure in the area.
- 5.3 The development framework proposes to enhance and improve the existing park at Cotton Field, which is in close proximity, and to encourage active linkages through and between the two sites, making use of this important green space. The works being undertaken at Great Ancoats Street will also improve access to the new park at Mayfield.
- 5.4 As part of all developments, the Council recognises the importance of good public realm which includes both green spaces as well as hard and soft landscaping to make useable spaces. This will increase natural surveillance in these areas, improve safety and ensure active spaces that can be used at all times. Any development proposals will be expected to include a mixture of public space and this will be tested at the planning stage.
- 5.5 Following the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council is acutely aware of the importance of public spaces and is actively reviewing the re-purposing of space in the city centre to allow for outdoor recreation and leisure space. However, we should be cognisant of the importance of our economic recovery and the vital role developments such as the former Central Retail Park will play to bring jobs and growth to the city.

Zero Carbon objectives

- 5.6 From the outset of the development of the framework, it was clear that achieving a net zero carbon development was a key objective. The report to Executive in February 2020 crystallised the Council's commitment to this with the objective of delivering a net zero carbon commercially- led, mixed-use development on the former Central Retail Park site;
- 5.7 Sites in the Council's ownership, such as this, have the potential to deliver a net zero carbon outcome. The Council's land interests and planning processes will be used to deliver, and influence adjoining landowners to achieve a net zero carbon outcome.
- 5.8 The provision of EV charging points, cycle storage, solar panels and other sustainability approaches can be incorporated into the detailed designs on the scheme. Local and national planning policy requires new developments to consider such sustainability objectives and these will need to be addressed as part of any future planning application.

Development heights, density and massing

- 5.9 The design principles recognise its urban setting in terms of its density and scale, with development to be structured around meaningful, people focussed public realm. The contribution of a key building of height on the corner fronting the Oxygen tower would provide a 'gateway' into the site. Furthermore, this will achieve the significant quantum of commercial space required to make a viable scheme but also to attract a greater density of business activity to this new district.
- 5.10 There are also topography issues and significant level changes across the site. Through creative use of height and scale, the site can be used most efficiently and ensure the public realm is accessible.
- 5.11 The framework references that buildings should step down to respect the height of the adjacent mills of Ancoats. Both CRT and Historic England raised concerns that this isn't recognised in the visualisations and that reference is made to buildings potentially being a storey higher than the adjacent mill buildings. The visualisations are indicative and each component of the development will be subject to more detailed planning applications. The impact on the setting and character of the listed mill buildings will be fully considered as part of any forthcoming planning application.
- 5.12 The framework is intended to outline the vision and principles for any future development. Individual planning applications would enable the Council to ensure development meets the quality standards for the city. All planning applications would themselves be subject to further public consultation.
- 5.13 These proposals would be required to be supported by detailed technical analysis that assesses potential impacts on amenity. Any identified impacts would be required to be fully justified and the Local Planning Authority would assess submissions in accordance with adopted Planning Policy.

Development principles and proposed uses

- 5.14 In response to the comments raised about the demand for office space in the city centre, including in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Executive report in February 2020 outlines the detailed analysis undertaken demonstrating the need for more city centre office space.
- 5.15 In preparation of the SRF, it was acknowledged that the area's principal function should be to support new commercial floor space with a sustainable retail and leisure offer, principally focused at street level.
- 5.16 The city centre is the region's economic hub, providing a strategic employment location, with a significant growing population. At present there is an undersupply of both Grade A floor space and residential accommodation. Therefore, it remains critical to ensure a strong pipeline of both residential and commercial development. The impacts of Covid-19 are being closely monitored at a national, regional and local level to understand any impacts on the city's population, key sectors and wider economic growth. At the same time, growth of the city centre will be important to the economic recovery of the city following the pandemic. Although there may be a short-term slowdown in demand and delivery, it is expected (based on indications from property agents) that growth will resume in the medium-long term. Demand for the proposals set out within the framework will be robustly assessed as part of the planning process to ensure alignment with demand.
- 5.17 There has been an increase in 'north-shoring' as businesses look to relocate their core business and headquarters out of the South East and London. The issues of office accommodation are more acute since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, with the potential for businesses to need more space for employees. As well as Grade A office space with large floor plates, there could be smaller office environments for those business who wish to progress following organic growth from the nearby Northern Quarter, for example. This new commercial district would capitalise on an increasingly strong brand encompassing the Northern Quarter and Ancoats, making commercial development in this location is an attractive proposition.
- 5.18 This part of the city is now increasingly a destination of choice for office occupiers, particularly for businesses in the Technology, Media and Telecoms (TMT) sector. These organisations are being attracted to the character of the Ancoats area. The adjacency of the Northern Quarter, which is also popular with businesses who operate in the TMT sector but has limited space to accommodate such occupiers, is key in driving forward a commercial led development opportunity of scale on this site. New types of office spaces that encourage agile and collaborative working and that contribute to the wellbeing of the workforce are key to attracting the TMT sector into new purpose-built workspace in a wider neighbourhood setting that is attractive to the workforce talent it needs.

- 5.19 Market testing undertaken at the time of preparation of the DF indicates that there is an opportunity to encourage both global and local players in the TMT / digital and creative sectors to consider the former Central Retail Park as a potential regional base given its location within the city and the attractiveness of this location to recruit talent to work there. This attractiveness is driven by the site being immediately adjacent to both the amenities and the TMT / digital and creative businesses already in the Northern Quarter and Ancoats neighbourhoods, proximity to two major transport hubs, and an accessible Metrolink stop
- 5.20 There were a number of comments in relation to the provision of affordable housing. The Manchester Residential Growth Strategy aims to address affordable housing delivery across the City to ensure that the right homes are provided in the right location. This includes a development strategy which uses City Council owned land to underpin financially viable schemes ensuring truly affordable housing is delivered with a Registered Housing Provider partner.
- 5.21 As part of the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood it is proposed that, three initial sites in City Council ownership will be set aside for this purpose. It is proposed that land adjacent to Butler Street, land adjacent to Downley Drive and the former Ancoats Dispensary, will be used to promote affordable housing. This land could deliver up to 145 new homes.
- 5.22 A number of comments were received asking for leisure facilities, local amenities and community events. There were also requests for spaces to be made available within the development for independent shops and cafes. A strategic approach has been taken to activating the public realm, this could include active ground floor uses, retail opportunities along Great Ancoats Street and opportunities for a dedicated activator tenant offering leisure/retail uses. These uses could be focused around the public realm creating nodes of activity.

Traffic and Highway safety

- 5.23 The development is well located to capitalise on various modes of transport including active modes. It is expected that the majority of trips will be made via walking or using public transport including the nearby Metrolink connections.
- 5.24 Active modes of transport will be further promoted through the ongoing development of important linkages across Great Ancoats Street. The Council is currently introducing improvements to crossing points and traffic calming measures to downgrade the highway to vehicular use to make this more attractive for walking and cycling.

Miscellaneous

- 5.25 One raised a concern around the area being vacant at weekends. The vision for the area is a vibrant distinct commercial district that is well connected to nearby residential areas and it is expected that the area will attract visitors

even when the offices are closed. This is fundamental to the development and embedded into the vision; principle 8 of the framework, directly refers to the need for 'activation' of the public realm.

- 5.26 This includes active uses and frontages that front onto the public realm to extend activity into the evening and at the weekend through the development of pocket squares and spaces for play.

United Utilities

- 5.27 Surface water management and inclusion of sustainable drainage is a policy requirement and so will be addressed as part of the public realm strategy, and delivered via each planning application. The framework is a material consideration in planning decisions although it does not constitute planning policy. All development proposals will be assessed in accordance with adopted policy and up to date guidance. A revision to the framework is proposed, to provide reference to water the management priorities as set out in United Utilities consultation response.
- 5.28 United Utilities will be consulted in respect of individual development proposals and opportunities to enhance drainage will be considered in respect of individual scheme feasibility and viability.
- 5.29 For relevant sites, landowners and developers will be expected to engage with relevant parties at an early stage to seek to acquire riparian rights to discharge water. However, it is recognised that this will rely on third party agreement and so may not be possible in all cases, if it risks compromising timely and viable delivery of the frameworks regeneration objectives.
- 5.30 The inclusion of above ground SUDS will be considered as part of the public realm strategy.
- 5.31 A revision to the framework is proposed, to highlight the requirement for future development to provide a robust approach to its flood risk and drainage strategy. This should highlight how the proposals will not increase flood risk, and have an ambition of reducing the impact of increased surface water drainage on the sewer network.

New Islington Free School

- 5.32 Consultation was undertaken with the school through discussions and meetings with school governors, officers and representatives from the masterplanning team during the development of the framework and prior to the public consultation.
- 5.33 The initial queries raised including the shared access, accurate depiction of the school and its grounds within the framework, proximity of new buildings and security were reflected as far as possible in the DF. The purpose of the DF is to establish development principles with more detailed plans to follow which would be the subject of further consultation through the planning process.

5.34 The school is a valuable partner that plays an important role in the life of the area. A separate response has been made to the New Islington Free School in relation to their concerns and a meeting has been arranged with Council officers to discuss further.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 The central vision for the area is *“to become an exemplary net zero carbon commercial district with the ability to attract new businesses and talent to Manchester. The development should bring together activities and people to create a vibrant mixed use neighbourhood...”*. The DF represents a significant opportunity to deliver this objective.

6.2 Subject to agreement by the Executive, it is suggested that the development framework is amended to:

- Highlight the proximity of public space in adjacent areas.
- Note the requirements for the development to be more walking and cycling friendly, particularly in how it links through to adjacent districts.
- Greater capture the aspiration to deliver zero carbon objectives.

6.3 Consultation will need to continue with residents and stakeholders throughout future development phases as specific development proposals come forward.

6.4 Recommendations appear at the front of this report.

7.0 Key Policies and Considerations

(a) Equal Opportunities

7.1 The consultation was undertaken with accessibility in mind in terms of accessible formats of information and the website. The proposals will provide new connections to surrounding neighbourhoods, providing improved access to local residents and the opportunities within the wider NDF area. In addition, there is a commitment to ensure that design standards throughout the development will comply with the highest standards of accessibility

(b) Risk Management

7.2 The development partners are required to develop, instigate, monitor and manage an appropriate and robust risk management strategy. Risk is therefore monitored and managed throughout the delivery of the development.

(c) Legal Considerations

7.3 If the update to the framework is approved by the Executive, it will become a material consideration for the Council as Local Planning Authority.