



MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL

Manchester Town Hall Complex Transformation Programme



St Peter's Square Public Realm Scheme

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Environmental Statement

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

November 2012



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Environmental Statement - Non-Technical Summary

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

Manchester City Council (MCC) (hereafter referred to as 'the Applicant') is seeking planning permission for the proposed public realm refurbishment scheme for St Peter's Square Public Realm, Manchester (hereafter referred to as 'the scheme'). The scheme is the final element of the wider Manchester Town Hall Complex Transformation Programme (MTHCTP) that is currently underway.

The scheme is located within the administrative area of MCC as shown in Figure 1. The application boundary of the site is shown in Figure 1. An area through the middle of St Peter's Square is excluded from the red line boundary (shown edged in blue), where works to the Metrolink tram route as part of the Second City Crossing project and public realm refurbishment is proposed to be undertaken by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM).

The scheme covers a total area of approximately 1.5 hectares (ha) and is situated in the centre of Manchester, adjacent to and around the Civic Quarter of the City of

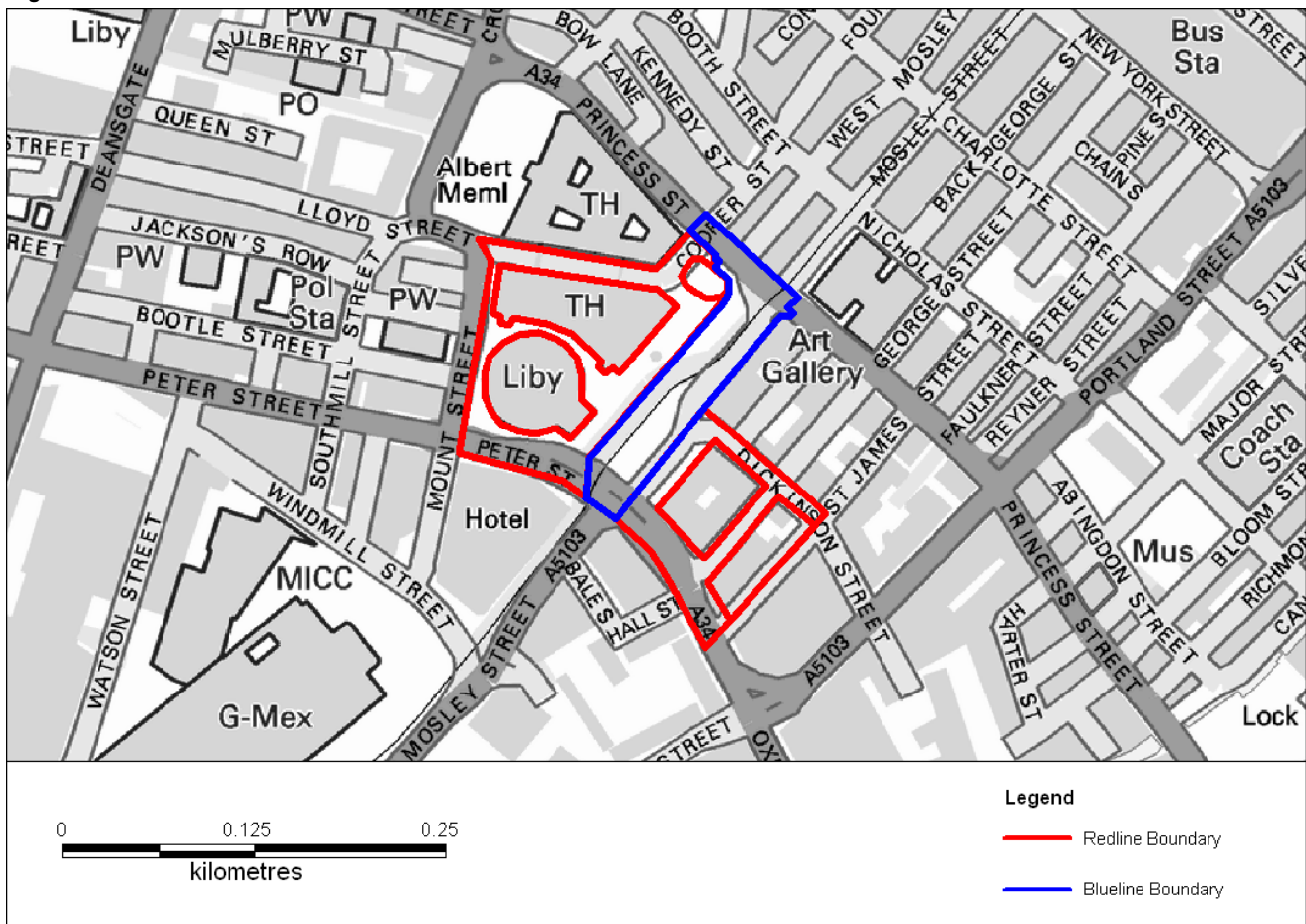
Manchester, which consists of the Town Hall (TH), Town Hall Extension (THx) and the Central Library (CL).

1.2 The Site

The site is bound to the north by the TH, to the north-east by commercial buildings on the north side of Princess Street, to the south-east by St James' Street, Century House and properties to the north along Mosley Street, to the south-west by the Midland Hotel and properties on the south side of Oxford Street, and to the west by Mount Street.

The site currently provides paved pedestrian access to a number of important buildings and facilities in Manchester, including the TH, CL, THx, the Midland Hotel and the St Peter's Square Metrolink Tram Stop. The Square's current main function is the Metrolink Tram Stop and two bus stops. Other features include the Peace Gardens, the Cenotaph and St. Peter's Cross which stands at the site of the former St Peter's Church and a variety of other land uses in and around the site, including offices, retail and food outlets, and hotels.

Figure 1: Site Location Plan



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1.3 Surrounding Developments

A number of developments are ongoing within and around St Peter's Square. These include the refurbishment of the CL and THx. The proposed works to St Peter's Square will provide the associated public realm improvements around these civic buildings.

TfGM proposes to construct a second Metrolink tram crossing through Manchester City Centre (known as Second City Crossing (2CC)) which will pass through St Peter's Square and relocate the existing Tram Stop to the north of the Square. The 2CC development area (shown edged in blue in Figure 1) is excluded for the red line boundary. The public realm refurbishment designed by Latz + Partner is proposed to be undertaken by TfGM.

An application for planning consent for the development of a glazed link structure adjacent to the THx and CL is currently being determined.

At present, the Peace Gardens are located opposite the southern Town Hall entrance in the north-eastern part of the site. An application was submitted in August 2012 by MCC for works to the Peace Gardens including the removal of existing trees, relocation of plaques and the infilling of the gardens and is currently being determined.

The Cenotaph and St Peter's Cross are currently located adjacent to the Metrolink tram lines in the central part of the site. A planning application for the relocation of the Cenotaph and St Peter's Cross was submitted by MCC in August 2012 and is currently being determined. The Cenotaph will be relocated to the north-east, outside the southern Town Hall entrance. St Peter's Cross will be relocated within the footprint of the former church.

The Peace Gardens, Cenotaph, St Peter's Cross, associated wall and seating and Library Walk works summarised above are required to enable the proposed scheme.

One St Peter's Square is currently being developed on the former site of Elisabeth House between Mosley Street and George Street. The site of the former Odeon cinema on Oxford Street is currently vacant and due for redevelopment. The redevelopment of these buildings does not form part of this application but the public realm surrounding the building does. The developer of One St Peter's Square and the future developer of the Odeon site will be required to refurbish the public realm in line with this application's landscape proposals.

1.4 The EIA Process

As part of this application process, URS Infrastructure & Environment UK Ltd (URS) has undertaken an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) on behalf of MCC for the proposed scheme. The findings of the EIA are reported in detail in the main Environmental Statement (ES) – Volumes I and II.

The EIA process identifies any significant environmental effects (beneficial and adverse) of a proposed scheme, by considering existing environmental characteristics and how they would be changed by the proposed scheme. The EIA has been carried out following standard, best practice procedures.

This document, known as the ES Non-Technical Summary (NTS), provides an overview of the findings of the EIA. Its purpose is to provide an overview of the main findings of the ES in an easily understood format. It describes the scheme, how the construction and operation are expected to affect the environment, and how significant adverse effects on the environment can be mitigated. This NTS has been prepared for a general audience including parties potentially affected by the scheme.

1.5 Scoping and Consultation

EIA scoping is a process that aims to identify relevant environmental effects to be included in the EIA and reported in the ES.

The EIA has included a programme of ongoing consultation, which is critical to the development of a balanced ES. Views of statutory and non-statutory consultees serve to focus the studies and identify those issues that require further investigation. Consultation also enables mitigation measures to be introduced during the project design process.

A Scoping Report (URS, 2012) was produced, and submitted to MCC on 3rd September 2012. A Scoping Opinion was subsequently received on 8th October 2012 confirming that the proposed scope was appropriate. The following environmental topics have therefore been assessed:

- Archaeology and Cultural Heritage;
- Townscape and Visual Amenity;
- Noise and Vibration; and
- Air Quality and Dust.

The noise and vibration and air quality and dust assessments were informed by traffic data from a separate

Transport Assessment, which has been prepared and submitted to accompany the planning application.

The following organisations and persons have been or are envisaged to be consulted on the design and throughout the EIA process:

- English Heritage and advisors;
- Security and Anti-Terrorism (Greater Manchester Police, Design for Security and Arup Security);
- Fire advisors for the THCTP (Arup Security);
- Ambulance;
- Access and Disabled Groups and advisors;
- Manchester Disabled Persons Group;
- Arboricultural Maintenance;
- Facilities Operations for Town Hall, Town Hall Extension and Central Library;
- TfGM;
- MCC Highways and Utilities;
- Cycle Development Officer and Maintenance Co-Ordinator with TfGM;
- JC Decaux;
- AMEY (public services provider);
- One, St. Peter's (Argent);
- MCC Planning and planning advisors;
- Environment Agency (EA);
- United Utilities (UU); and
- Electricity North West Limited (ENWL).

The Applicant has also consulted with members of the public throughout the design process and will continue to do so throughout the planning process. Indeed, at the earliest stages of the design process, the public were given the opportunity to comment on several public realm designs submitted by a number of leading architects as part of the widely publicised International Design Competition. This competition process and associated public consultation is discussed in more detail in Section 2 below.

1.6 EIA Methodology and Reporting

Once the scope of the EIA had been agreed, more technical information was collected to enable the likely impacts and effects of the scheme to be predicted and considered. The ES was prepared to explain the assessment process and its conclusions.

Effects are described as major, moderate or minor adverse or beneficial, or neutral, based on consideration of the scale of the impact (i.e. the change) and the sensitivity of the affected environmental feature (e.g. a listed building). Major and moderate effects are considered to be 'significant' and are therefore material considerations in the decision-making process.

The main ES (Volumes I and II) provides details of the methods used for the collection of data, the prediction and assessment of impacts, and evaluation of effects.

Avoidance of adverse environmental impacts has been a key consideration throughout the planning and design of the proposed scheme, including consideration of alternatives. Mitigation measures are also proposed where appropriate to reduce or remedy significant adverse effects where possible.

Where relevant the technical assessments consider impacts from three stages of the proposed scheme – construction (between the January 2013 and 2016), opening (in 2017) and operation (a future year chosen to allow the EIA to consider the effects of the proposed scheme when landscape planting has grown and taken full effect). Effects are compared against the 'baseline' scenario – the situation without the proposed scheme.

2. Alternatives and Design Evolution

2.1 Design Principles

The scheme has been designed to create different spaces within the Square through the use of paving, trees, lighting and seating.

The site is within/ surrounded by a number of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas and therefore the scheme has been designed to enhance these features, whilst protecting potential archaeology.

The scheme has been designed to meet the needs of a wide variety of users including pedestrians, public events and markets, public transport, vehicular access to Lloyd Street and commercial and civic land uses.

The scheme will change the space from being dominated by the road and public transport network to one that is mainly for pedestrians. The scheme will accommodate the surrounding developments, including 2CC and the relocated Cenotaph and St Peter's Cross.

2.2 Alternatives

MCC initially considered leaving the site in its current state. However, this would mean that the site would be disconnected from the surrounding revitalised land uses. This would be against MCC's vision for the transformation of Manchester Civic Quarter. It would also mean that pedestrian facilities, greenspace and car parking were not replaced/ improved.

Due to the type of scheme, MCC did not consider alternative sites. The St Peter's Square scheme is an important part of the wider improvements to the Civic Quarter, and therefore it must be located on this site especially in relation to the surrounding developments, such as the THx and CL refurbishment and the 2CC development.

Several 'Alternative Designs' were developed for the scheme through a competition process first launched in January 2010, with public consultation carried out on competition entries in July 2010.

The designs were evaluated by the Competition Judging Panel on the basis of their response to a detailed design brief. This evaluation process led to two shortlisted designs.

Both designs were subject to public consultation in March 2012. Comments from the March public exhibition on both designs were provided to, and considered by, the Competition Judging Panel. The winner of the competition was announced in May 2012. The design has since undergone a number of iterations with the Final Design shown in Figure 2 and submitted with this planning application.

3. The Proposed Scheme

The scheme involves the refurbishment of the St. Peter's Square Public Realm.

The area around the relocated Cenotaph will continue to be used for Remembrance Day events and individual contemplation, whilst the space alongside the THx will be ideal for café seating and market stalls. The open space in front of the CL will be available for open air events such as concerts and market and the new garden area near One St Peter's Square will provide a more intimate seating area.

Parking provision for approximately 17 cars will be made available on Peter Street and Mount Street. Works to Peter Street, Mount Street, Princess Street and Dickinson Street will consist of paving, tree planting, and provision of lighting and seating. Lloyd Street will become a shared space for pedestrians and vehicles, with controlled vehicle access, and resurfacing to tie into the Square. A total of 14 parking spaces will be available along Lloyd Street,

these spaces will be made up of seven disabled parking spaces and seven visitor parking spaces located on both sides of the road.

In general, the scheme comprises:

- resurfacing of the public realm in York Stone paving;
- planting of trees and other landscape features;
- highway alterations including closure of Mosley Street through the Square to all traffic, traffic control (using bollards) on Lloyd Street, narrowing of Peter Street and Oxford Street within the red line boundary to 9m (4.5m per lane);
- lighting; and
- provision of street furniture, including seating around CL, between the THx and tram lines and in the garden area by One St Peter's Square.

The proposal includes a number of highway alterations, which described in detail in the Transport Assessment.

Consideration is being given to fixing lights to surrounding Listed Buildings. This is subject to close discussion with MCC Planners, the Conservation Officer and English Heritage. If required, appropriate application(s) for Listed Building Consent would be made in due course.

Figure 2: Masterplan for the Scheme



3.1 Site Preparation and Construction

Construction is anticipated to take approximately three to four years, and will be undertaken by up to four parties in five zones, as follows:

- The first phase (Construction Zone 1) of construction is anticipated to begin in January 2013 and be complete in the summer of 2014. This will be undertaken by MCC and will form the final phase of the wider MTHCTP.
- The second phase (Construction Zones 3A and 3C) will begin in autumn 2013 and be complete by spring 2014. Zone 3A will be the responsibility of the developer of One St Peter's (Argent) and will include the public space surrounding the building. Zone 3C will be undertaken by MCC and will include the proposed highways alterations to Oxford Street.
- The third phase (Construction Zone 3B) will be undertaken between spring 2012 and autumn 2016, either during the construction of or following the completion of the proposed 2CC development.. The responsibility of this construction zone is unknown and will be confirmed during detailed design.
- The fourth phase (Construction Zone 3D) will be the responsibility of the tenant / developer of the site of the former Odeon cinema. The timescales are currently unknown but it is assumed that the works will be completed by 2016 given that the current planning permission for that site expires in 2013.

Construction staff parking will be off-site, with shuttle buses provided to site staff to minimise traffic generation.

Construction working hours will be restricted to 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 on Saturday, with no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

There is a potential requirement for working outside the hours stated due to restrictions imposed by 3rd parties. The EIA does not assess any work outside the normal hours because this will only take place in exceptional circumstances.

The contractor will also be required to have, and maintain an ISO14001 Environmental Management System and produce and maintain an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) which will facilitate the inclusion of sustainability into the construction and maintenance of the scheme.

Interim Options

A phased approach to construction will enable the Applicant to accommodate any timescale delays associated with other planning applications for the removal of the Peace Gardens, the relocation of the Cenotaph and St Peter's Cross, the development of the Glazed Link Building and 2CC. The Interim Options are as follows:

- Interim Option 1 – the Glazed Link Building on Library Walk is realised and the Cenotaph is relocated to its proposed location to the east of the TH. The former site of the Cenotaph is surfaced temporarily;
- Interim Option 2: the Glazed Link Building on Library Walk is realised and the Cenotaph remains in its current location. The proposed relocation site of the Cenotaph to the east of the TH will be surfaced temporarily in preparation for its eventual use;
- Interim Option 3: the Glazed Link Building on Library Walk is not realised (leaving Library Walk as a flat surface) and the Cenotaph is relocated to its proposed location to the east of the TH. The former site of the Cenotaph is surfaced temporarily; and
- Interim Option 4: the Glazed Link Building on Library Walk is not realised (leaving Library Walk as a flat surface) and the Cenotaph remains in its current location. The proposed relocation site of the Cenotaph to the east of the TH will be surfaced temporarily in preparation for its eventual use.

3.2 Planning Policy Context

The scheme has been assessed against relevant national, regional and local planning policies. Planning policy has been considered in each of the technical Chapters of the ES as appropriate for the consideration of environmental effects. The proposed scheme has been considered in terms of its compliance with relevant national, regional and local policy which includes the following:

National Policy and Legislation

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)

Regional Policy

- North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (2011)

Local Policy

- The Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012);
- The Guide to Development in Manchester – Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (2007); and
- Design for Access 2 (2003).

4. Environmental Impacts

4.1 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

The cultural heritage assessment has considered potential effects on archaeology (below ground remains), historic landscape character and built heritage (such as listed buildings).

A desk-based study has been carried out to gather relevant information on known archaeological remains, and on built heritage features such as Listed Buildings and structures, and Conservation Areas.

Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and the Midland Hotel work together to provide a unified public space around St Peter's Square, which is also a transport hub and a public meeting place. The Cenotaph, St Peter's Cross and the Peace Garden also contribute positively to the nature of the Square. Some surrounding buildings add historical architectural interest to the character to the Square, and are also important public buildings in their own right.

During construction the scheme has the potential to have adverse effects on archaeology although these are not considered to be significant. Mitigation measures will be undertaken if unexpected archaeological remains are encountered. No significant effects are anticipated on the settings of Listed Buildings or the character of Conservation Areas during construction.

At operation, there would be no effect on any buried remains. The scheme is considered to have significant beneficial effects on five Listed Buildings and two Conservation Areas once operational.

4.2 Townscape and Visual Amenity

The townscape and visual amenity assessment has considered potential effects on the existing city centre townscape character and features, and on views from a range of locations.

At construction, significant adverse effects have been identified on six townscape character areas, seven townscape features and 43 visual receptors, but these will be of a relatively short-term and reversible.

By opening, significant beneficial effects have been identified on four townscape character areas, eight townscape features and 27 visual receptors.

These significant beneficial effects will occur as a result of the uplift to public realm setting immediately adjacent to or in relative proximity to the townscape receptor including the introduction of high quality paving, lines of trees, seating with integrated lighting and proposed flower garden with water feature. The narrowing of Peter Street and Oxford Street at the interface with St. Peter's Square will also extend the appearance of the public realm.

A significant adverse effect has been identified at one visual receptor at opening, although this will be reduced to not significant following the maturation of planting included within the scheme.

4.3 Air Quality

Baseline air quality was established from existing sources of air quality monitoring data, such as local authority sources (e.g. Local Air Quality Management Reports), national air quality archive data (e.g. background maps) and other national air quality networks.

The effects of the construction activities are considered to be minor adverse and therefore is not considered to represent a significant effect.

The closure of Mosley Street will result in the removal of traffic from St Peters Square and will likely result in traffic re-routing along Princess Street and Portland Street

Baseline air quality monitoring data suggests that concentrations of road traffic pollutants along Princess Street and Portland Street may be elevated relative to air quality objectives. However, operational effects resulting from changes to road traffic routing due to the scheme and associated emissions are not considered to cause a significant effect.

To ensure that the environmental effects from construction plant emissions are minimised during the construction of the scheme, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be developed by the appointed contractor and agreed with MCC.

4.4 Noise and Vibration

The noise and vibration assessment described the methods used to assess the effects associated with the scheme; the baseline conditions currently existing at the site and in the surrounding area; the mitigation measures required to prevent, reduce or offset any significant adverse effects; and the likely residual effects after these measures have been adopted.

A noise survey was conducted on 27th and 28th September 2012 to determine baseline conditions at the site. Noise monitoring was carried out at four locations around St Peter's Square. This survey consisted of taking 30 minute measurement samples at the five measurements locations.

During construction, it is likely that significant adverse construction noise effects could occur at sensitive receptors in close proximity to the works. It is also likely that adverse vibration effects could occur, in terms of annoyance to occupiers of the closest buildings. However, these levels will not be of sufficient amplitude to cause cosmetic damage to buildings; therefore, the effects on buildings are likely to be negligible.

Upon completion of construction of the scheme the operational noise effects are expected to be limited to those attributable to the changes to road traffic.

St Peter's Square will be closed to all traffic and the traffic that currently uses St Peter's Square is most likely to be re-routed via Princess Street and Portland Street. However, the significance criteria require more than a doubling of traffic along either Princess Street or Portland St for these changes to be of more than minor significance (>3 dB), assuming traffic composition and speeds remain comparable. Therefore, the significance of these changes are likely to be minor adverse at worst.

Another change to road traffic flows will be the narrowing of Peter Street that is planned as part of the scheme. The narrowing of Peter Street is predicted to provide a 0.1 dB decrease in noise level. Therefore this change to the highway will not result in a significant effect.

4.5 Cumulative and Combined Effects

Cumulative effects are those that can occur when two or more developments affect the same environmental feature. These effects have been assessed by identifying other proposed developments nearby, and considering their potential effects.

Those developments identified as having the potential for significant cumulative effects with St Peter's Square Public Realm are:

- the development 2CC;
- demolition and redevelopment of Elisabeth House in St Peter's Square (known as One St Peter's Square);
- Cross City Bus Package (CCBP);
- Manchester Town Hall Complex Transformation Programme; and
- the redevelopment of the former Odeon cinema site (known as 'Landmark').

No significant adverse cumulative effects have been identified for noise, vibration, air quality and dust receptors, as a result of the construction of the scheme and other proposed developments.

There is potential for a significant, short term, temporary adverse effect on the setting of Listed Buildings around St Peter's Square due to the installation of hoarding around the location of the Cenotaph (which would be required if the Cenotaph was relocated before the overall public realm scheme was completed).

Significant adverse cumulative effects have also been identified for townscape and visual receptors, if the construction phases of the other developments in these areas overlap. However, these are considered to be short-term and temporary. No additional significant cumulative effects have been identified in relation to the Interim Options.

Combined effects from the scheme (i.e. the combination of different types of effect on an individual receptor, such as noise and dust effects on a property during construction) will be no more significant than those identified in individual technical assessments described above.

5. Summary of Environmental Effects

During construction, the proposed scheme will have significant adverse effects on some townscape and noise receptors, but these effects will be short term and temporary. There will also be significant short term, temporary adverse cumulative effects on some townscape and visual features due to other developments in proximity to St. Peter's Square. No significant adverse combined effects are anticipated from the proposed scheme.

Construction activities are likely to cause significant noise effects at sensitive noise receptors in close proximity to the works, but these will be relatively short term.

No significant effects on air quality, dust, vibration or heritage receptors have been identified as a result of construction of the scheme.

During operation, the proposed scheme will have significant beneficial effects on some townscape and visual receptors and on archaeology and cultural heritage.

6. Contacts and Availability of the ES

This Non-Technical Summary (NTS) provides an overview of the findings of the EIA. A full assessment of all the environmental impacts associated with the scheme is presented within the main ES.

The ES is available for viewing during normal office hours at the Planning Department of the MCC. Comments on the planning application should be forwarded to the MCC at the following address:

Manchester City Council

Planning,
City Centre Group (c/o A Mitchell),
P.O. Box 532,
Room 7034, Town Hall Extension,
Manchester, M60 2LA

Additional copies of the NTS are available free of charge and copies of the full ES can be purchased from the same address.