

# TRAFFORD WHARFSIDE STRATEGIC MASTERPLAN

CONSULTATION DRAFT  
JULY 2026



TRAFFORD  
COUNCIL

in association with



OLD  
TRAFFORD  
REGENERATION  
MAYORAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION

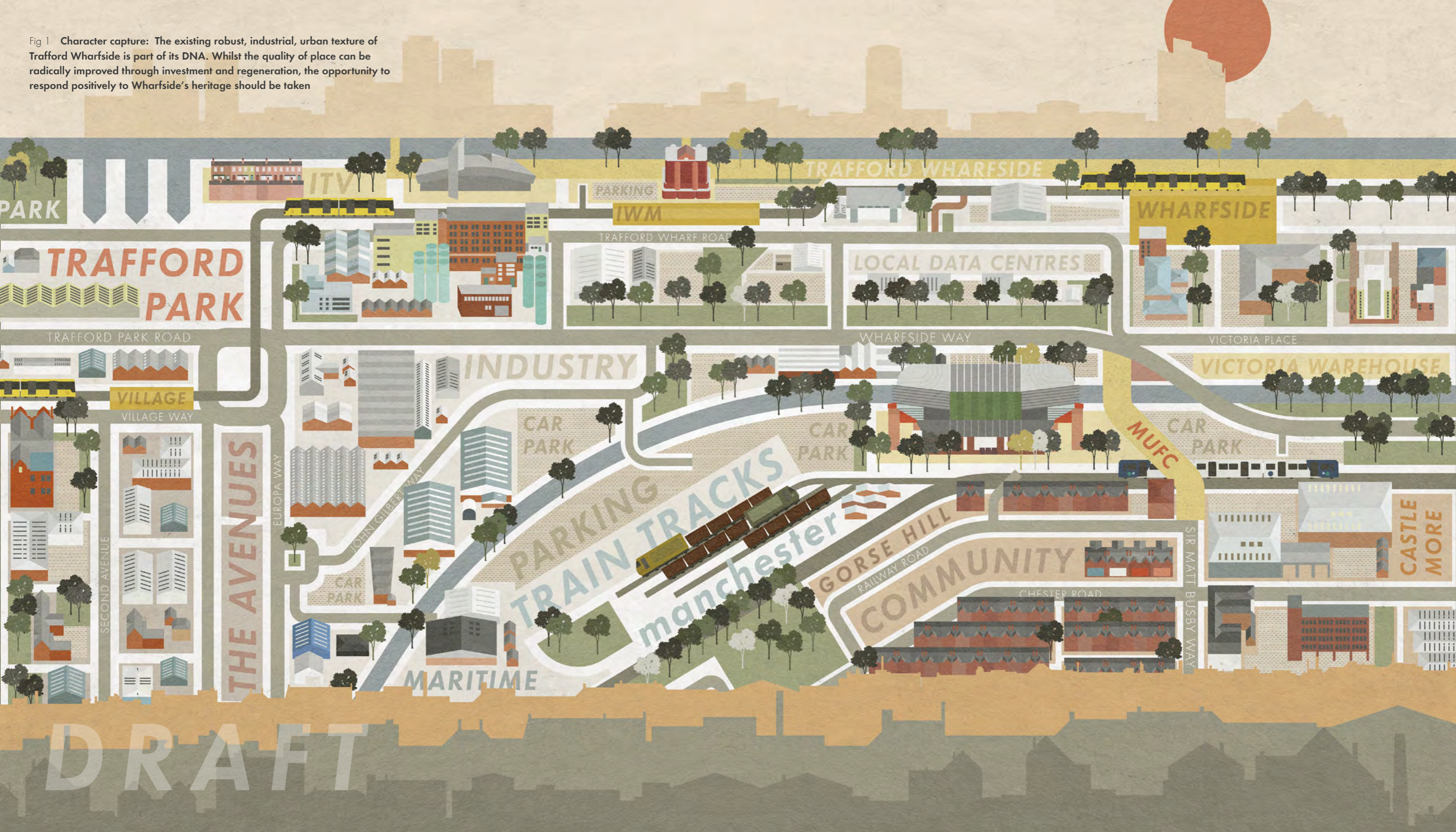
GMCA GREATER  
MANCHESTER  
COMBINED  
AUTHORITY



Transport for  
Greater Manchester

Allies and Morrison

Fig 1 Character capture: The existing robust, industrial, urban texture of Trafford Wharfside is part of its DNA. Whilst the quality of place can be radically improved through investment and regeneration, the opportunity to respond positively to Wharfside's heritage should be taken



# CONTENTS

lead consultant  
**Allies and Morrison**

supported by  
**SLA LANDSCAPE** **JLL** **CIVIC ENGINEERS**

<b>1 INTRODUCTION..... 8</b>	<b>5 ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN ... 100</b>
1.1 Introduction ..... 10	5.1 Introduction ..... 102
1.2 Purpose and status..... 12	5.2 Illustrative public realm framework ..... 104
1.3 Wharfside Strategic Masterplan structure ..... 16	5.3 Placed-based guidance..... 124
1.4 Working in partnership..... 18	5.4 Wharfside Waters ..... 126
1.5 Engagement and consultation..... 20	5.5 Wharfside Central ..... 134
<b>2 THE OPPORTUNITY ..... 24</b>	5.6 Stadium District ..... 144
2.1 The economic opportunity..... 26	5.7 Wharfside South ..... 152
2.2 A vision for Trafford Wharfside ..... 29	5.8 Waters Meeting..... 160
2.3 Constraints and opportunities ..... 32	5.9 City Threshold..... 168
2.4 Land ownership and land assembly..... 38	<b>A APPENDIX</b>
2.5 Character, history and heritage ..... 40	<b>WHARFSIDE IN CONTEXT ..... 178</b>
<b>3 STRATEGIC MASTERPLAN ..... 46</b>	A1 Planning policy context..... 180
3.1 Introduction ..... 48	A2 History and heritage ..... 184
3.2 Urban framework ..... 50	A3 Public realm context ..... 188
3.3 Character, place and movement..... 54	A4 Socio-economic context..... 190
3.4 Parameter Plans..... 61	A5 Property market analysis ..... 192
<b>4 PHASING AND DELIVERY ..... 88</b>	A6 Development context..... 196
4.1 Delivery ..... 90	A7 Activities and land use..... 198
4.2 Development capacity - jobs and homes..... 95	A8 Existing movement context..... 200
4.3 Infrastructure and phasing ..... 99	A9 WSM and Streets for All ..... 206
	A10 Strategic vehicular access..... 208
	A11 Infrastructure ..... 214





Fig 2 **Illustrative masterplan for Trafford Wharfside - a new city district for Trafford and Greater Manchester, with Manchester United's new state-of-the-art stadium at its heart**

**T**

# INTRODUCTION

1.1	Introduction	10
1.2	Purpose and status	12
1.3	Wharfside Strategic Masterplan structure	16
1.4	Working in partnership	18
1.5	Engagement and consultation	20

***DRAFT***

***DRAFT***

# 1.1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1.1 Introduction

**In the heart of Greater Manchester, Trafford Wharfside is one of the country’s most important and highest profile regeneration opportunities. This Wharfside Strategic Masterplan (WSM), prepared by Trafford Council in association with the Old Trafford Regeneration Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC), the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), sets out a clear yet flexible regeneration framework.**

The WSM outlines a long-term and high-level vision for the future physical, social and economic regeneration of the Wharfside area. It will be used by both the public and private sectors to help guide investment decisions and future developments over the next 15 years and beyond.

The WSM covers an area of approximately 150 hectares. Immediately south of The Quays and east of Trafford Park industrial estate, the WSM area sits at the north-eastern corner of Trafford Council administrative area and is less than 2 miles west of Manchester City Centre. The western boundary of the area is formed by Trafford Park along Europa Way. The Manchester Ship Canal defines its northern extent with the Manchester to Liverpool southern rail route converging from the south defining this triangular regeneration zone.

In early 2025, Manchester United announced plans for a new 100,000 seat purpose-built and state-of-the-art stadium to replace their existing Old Trafford Football Stadium. In considering the benefits of different stadium options, Oxford Economics estimated the development of a new stadium and wider regeneration of the entire Wharfside area could lead to the creation of 47,900 additional local jobs and around 15,000 new homes.

This WSM has been prepared in response to Manchester United’s proposed location for the new stadium, which has been informed by detailed consideration of numerous options for refurbishment or redevelopment. Whilst it outlines a framework rather than a blueprint, the strategic masterplan has been prepared with input from key partners and stakeholders. The WSM’s vision, objectives and principles, together with the suggested flexible urban framework outlined within it, have been prepared to respond positively to both the area’s opportunities and in response to the feedback and inputs received from key stakeholders.

DRAFT



## 1.2 PURPOSE AND STATUS

### 1.1.2 Purpose

The WSM is a non-statutory masterplan which has been prepared with three principal and interrelated purposes:

1. The WSM forms the principal evidence base supporting the Trafford Wharfside site allocation in the emerging replacement Trafford Local Plan;
2. Supported by the extensive stakeholder and community engagement which has informed it, the WSM will be a material consideration in the determination of major planning applications in the Wharfside area; and
3. The WSM outlines a longer-term vision for the transformational regeneration of the Wharfside area well beyond the Plan period.

### 1.1.3 Process

The WSM has been prepared in response to national planning policy, Trafford Council's statutory planning policy framework and in response to other regeneration policies and initiatives seeking to deliver investment, jobs, homes and economic growth in this important part of the city region.

The early phases of drafting the WSM benefited from extensive stakeholder engagement including liaison with neighbouring authorities, the GMCA, TfGM, Manchester United, The Peel Group and other principal landowners.



Fig 3 Trafford Wharfside in its strategic context



Fig 4 Trafford Wharfside strategic masterplan boundary

#### 1.1.4 Status

The Wharfside area is already identified as a strategic regeneration opportunity in the GMCA's Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan 2022 to 2039. Further, Trafford Council are in the process of preparing a replacement Local Plan and the WSM forms a key piece of evidence in the process of allocating the Wharfside area for mixed-use development.




Benefiting from extensive community and stakeholder engagement, the WSM is a material planning consideration and will be an important point of reference against which proposals for new developments within the WSM's boundary will be considered.

The WSM will replace recent guidance and strategies which explore the opportunities at Trafford Wharfside, namely the Trafford Wharfside Development Framework and the associated Trafford Wharfside Masterplan which were consulted upon jointly in 2024.

The WSM provides an authoritative but long-term flexible framework for investment and growth. Its structure is outlined below in paragraph 1.3. The Council recognises that development proposals will come forward which differ from the vision and guidance outlined here. In that context, it will be important for applicants to demonstrate how their proposals respond positively to the spirit of the guidance.

A consultant team led by Allies and Morrison has been responsible for drafting the WSM. The consultant team also included JLL, Civic and SLA. The process of WSM production was overseen by a steering group of senior officers at Trafford Council and the Project Director of the Old Trafford Regeneration Mayoral Development Corporation.

#### Key

- Site boundary
-  Train station
-  Disused train station
-  Tram stop

DRAFT

## 1.3 WHARFSIDE STRATEGIC MASTERPLAN STRUCTURE

### **PART 1: Introduction**

This introductory section sets the WSM in context and provides a review of the policy, environment, land ownership, property and socio-economic context within which it has been prepared.

### **PART 2: Opportunity**

Here, the WSM's vision and objectives are outlined underpinned by its particular constraints, opportunities and Wharfside's unique history and heritage.

### **PART 3: Strategic Masterplan**

This section establishes the strategic development framework for the masterplan. Flexibility is key for long-term masterplans of this nature to remain useful, relevant and deliverable. Whilst an illustrative masterplan has been developed for the entire Wharfside area (see Part 3) the WSM embeds significant flexibility through the outlining of several layered and themed strategies, captured in a series of parameter plans.

### **PART 4: Delivery and phasing**

The final part of the WSM outlines, at a high level, how the masterplan will be delivered. This includes

the role to be played by key partners and the broad strategic development phases through which Wharfside's regeneration will be implemented.

### **PART 5: Illustrative Masterplan**

Underpinned by an illustrative masterplan covering the whole of the Trafford Wharfside area, this section provides illustrative information on each of the WSM's character areas. With 3d views providing a speculative glimpse into the future, additional information is outlined on the potential mix of uses and important elements of retained and new infrastructure. Artist impressions provide a sense of how key views, spaces, streets and major sites might look and feel.

The information in this section is illustrative but does communicate Trafford's vision and aspirations for the WSM area as a whole and the individual identified character areas within it.

### **PART 6: Movement and infrastructure**

More technical content and strategy guidance relating to movement, transport and infrastructure provision is outlined here.

**DRAFT**

**DRAFT**

## 1.4 WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

### 1.4.1 An ongoing collaboration

In preparing this WSM, Trafford Council has been supported by key partners throughout. Principal amongst these partners are the Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC), Manchester United Football Club and the wider local community. The background to and role of the MDC is outlined below followed by headline information relating to the hugely significant benefits of the new stadium. A summary of community involvement to date together with a summary of early discussions with wider stakeholders follows in section 1.5.

### 1.4.2 Old Trafford Regeneration MDC

The MDC was formally established on 23 January 2026. Chaired by Lord Coe and with broad public and private sector expertise and, importantly, land acquisition powers, the MDC will co-ordinate multi-million-pound efforts to transform the area as a key part of the Greater Manchester Strategy and its 10-year growth and delivery plan.

At its core, the initiative is a globally inspired, community-focused program designed to transform the district into a world-class destination while deeply supporting local residents.

The MDC, working in partnership with Trafford Council, Manchester United, the GMCA, TfGM, Salford City Council, Manchester City Council, local communities, strategic landowners and developers, will be the principal delivery agent across Trafford Wharfside. Sharing the same red line boundaries, the WSM plays a central and fundamental role in setting the MDC's agenda. The MDC's Project Director was part of the WSM Steering Group.

### 1.4.3 A new stadium for Manchester United

Manchester United's ambitions to deliver a state-of-the-art purpose-built new stadium is the focal point for Trafford Wharfside's long term regeneration and transformation.

Manchester United officially unveiled initial design concepts for their new 100,000-seat stadium as the centrepiece of a wider regeneration opportunity in March 2025. The Club's decision to build a new stadium is the catalyst for the Wharfside area's wider long-term regeneration. Supporting studies suggest Wharfside's regeneration would deliver an estimated £7.3 billion annually to the UK economy and create up to 92,000 new jobs. Alongside strategic opportunities and benefits, this WSM looks closely at how local benefits can be delivered for the benefit of those who already live and work in and around Wharfside.

How can the area be better connected? How can the area's riverside environments be improved? How best can a diverse range of new homes be delivered? What improvements to local services will be required to support this level of growth? The WSM explores these and many more issues.



Early visualisation of how the new Manchester United Stadium might look from the inside, designed by Foster + Partners

# DRAFT

# DRAFT

# 1.5 EARLY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

## 1.5.1 Stakeholder engagement

Engagement has been central in the WSM preparation programme. Initial scoping, analysis and early WSM drafting stages were informed by an extensive programme of stakeholder engagement. Discussions were held with a wide range of stakeholder organisations including officers and Members from Trafford Council, senior officers from Salford and Manchester City Councils, and representatives from TfGM and the GMCA.

In addition, briefings and liaison sessions were arranged with major landowners including Manchester United, the Peel Group and other private landowners and developers. Discussions also took place with other key stakeholders including the Imperial War Museum North (IWMN), ITV Studios, and local business interests.

These sessions were hugely important in helping to understand strategic policy aspirations for the area, as well as gaining a better understanding of everyday operational considerations, constraints and opportunities.

Discussions with these and other key stakeholders will continue to be an important part of the regeneration process. As major schemes come forward, Trafford Council will expect discussions and engagement with such stakeholders to inform investment decisions and the scheme design development process.

## 1.5.2 Community engagement

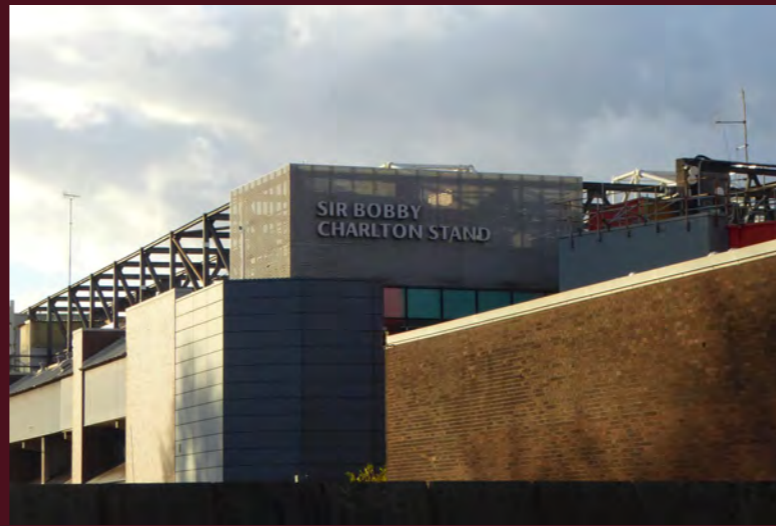
At this draft stage, there has only been a limited amount of local community engagement. On Thursday 23 October 2025, between 3pm and 6pm, a community drop in event took place at the Gorse Hill Studios in Cavendish Road, Stretford. The majority of attendees to this staffed informal drop-in session were Gorse Hill residents. Some local business stakeholders attended and representatives from the IWMN were also present. An estimated total of around 30 individuals attended the event, and the key issues raised can be summarised as follows:

- Concerns for existing businesses on Sir Matt Busby Way and Chester Road about what the transformation of the Trafford Wharf site means for them;
- Concerns for antisocial behaviour, rubbish, traffic and parking associated with new stadium and the impacts of event days on local residents;
- Desire for improvement to existing green spaces (the Bridgewater Canal corridor and Nansen Park) in addition to new public spaces;
- The need for community infrastructure alongside development given the already stretched nature of local services and facilities; and
- The desire to see the delivery of local affordable housing as part of any housing mix.

A full programme of community engagement around the draft WSM will take place later in 2026.

# DRAFT





DRAFT

DRAFT

# 2

## THE OPPORTUNITY

2.1	The economic opportunity	26
2.2	A vision for Trafford Wharfside	29
2.3	Constraints and opportunities	32
2.4	Land ownership and land assembly	38
2.5	Character, history and heritage	40

*DRAFT*

*DRAFT*

## 2.1 THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Trafford Wharfside stands as a flagship regeneration area representing a transformational 150 hectare economic opportunity with a vision to create thriving local communities anchored by global institutions and industry, driving a new economic engine for Trafford. Catalysed by Manchester United's proposed new stadium development, this gateway site on the Manchester Ship Canal commands exceptional development potential, benefiting from unique asset convergence that generates millions of annual visitors and worldwide recognition. The new stadium and regeneration is projected to contribute a £7.3 billion boost to the UK economy by the time the Masterplan has been fully delivered [source: Oxford Economics].

The area serves as a critical catalyst within Greater Manchester's ten-year growth strategy (2025-2035) designated as part of the Western Gateway Growth Location - one of six nationally significant sites targeted to deliver £1 billion of annual investment and unlock transformative economic benefits across all ten boroughs. With Greater Manchester already proving to be the UK's fastest growing economy and leading foreign direct investment attraction, Trafford Wharfside positions itself at the heart of these plans. Trafford Wharf has been awarded £26 million from the Good Growth Fund to deliver 382 new homes. Stockport has secured £56.3 million which will deliver 680 new homes. Manchester City Council has been awarded a total of £39.8 million across two schemes from the £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund.

The recent establishment of a dedicated MDC for Old Trafford, following the successful Stockport model that attracted £600 million in private investment, provides the institutional framework to drive forward the biggest sports-led regeneration scheme since London 2012. This forms part of the broader Western Gateway Mayoral Development Zone, leveraging Greater Manchester's unique devolved powers to pioneer large-scale development delivery at unprecedented pace and scale.

Trafford Wharfside sits within Greater Manchester's £100 billion economy and is strategically positioned, with direct access into Manchester city centre, to be the fastest growing urban economic engine in the UK outside of London. Neighbouring MediaCity's £5 billion digital ecosystem and Trafford Park (Europe's largest industrial park) creates unparalleled business collaboration opportunities. The area benefits from Greater Manchester's position as the UK's largest tech cluster outside London, with the region's businesses and universities providing access to world-class research capabilities. The new stadium alone is projected to increase annual visitor numbers by 1.76 million, with over 40% being high-spending international visitors who have nearly three times the economic impact of domestic visitors [source: Oxford Economics].

As one of the largest current sports-led regeneration projects in the UK, Trafford Wharfside presents extraordinary scope for comprehensive mixed-use development that will establish a new benchmark for urban transformation. The area's long-term regeneration will deliver positive economic impacts which extend across the Greater Manchester city-region and beyond. With direct access to Manchester Airport's global connectivity to over 200 destinations, and integration within the region's talent pipeline of 120,000 students, the area offers investors and businesses an unparalleled platform for international growth and innovation.

Manchester United's international brand serves as a powerful catalyst for attracting business investment and corporate partnerships that extend well beyond the sporting venue to benefit the entire regeneration area.

The development opportunity directly aligns with Trafford Council's Corporate Plan priorities, particularly delivering "A thriving economy and homes for all" through the creation of quality housing and employment opportunities. With Trafford requiring an additional 19,077 net dwellings by 2039 and needing 858 affordable homes annually, Trafford Wharfside represents a critical opportunity to support these housing objectives while simultaneously driving economic growth. The masterplan's focus on mixed-use development has the opportunity to significantly address the borough's housing needs across all tenures, supporting Trafford's ambition to create neighbourhoods where residents can both live and work within sustainable, well-connected communities.



DRAFT

DRAFT



## 2.2 A VISION FOR TRAFFORD WHARFSIDE

Trafford Wharfside is poised for transformational regeneration on a historic scale, offering unprecedented opportunities to deliver positive social, economic, and environmental change.

Trafford Council has a number of agreed corporate objectives, all of which will help to deliver the vision for Trafford Wharfside as a place where all residents, businesses and communities can thrive. These objectives include providing the best start for Trafford's children and young people; supporting healthy and independent lives for everyone; creating a thriving economy and homes for all; addressing the climate crisis; and providing culture, sport and heritage for everyone. Given the vast scale and breadth of opportunities across the entire WSM area, all objectives are directly relevant.

**Anchored by its world-class sporting and cultural institutions and served by an improved public transport network, Trafford Wharfside will be an integrated, high-quality, vibrant and diverse neighbourhood. Its thriving communities, connected by ecologically rich blue and green infrastructure, will transform its proud industrial legacy into a powerful new economic engine for Trafford and the wider city region.**

To translate this long-term aspiration into tangible benefits, the following WSM strategic objectives will help guide investments, operations and decision-making:

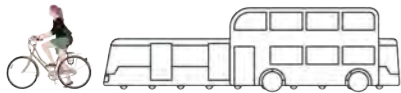
- Placemaking and identity
- World class stadium and entertainment
- Movement and transport
- Green and blue infrastructure
- Housing and community
- Economic development and job creation
- Education and learning
- Infrastructure, viability and delivery

# VISION DRAFT



Define a collection of distinctive and characterful Wharfside neighbourhoods that seamlessly integrate world-class sporting, cultural and leisure attractions with new business and education clusters and diverse residential communities.

**PLACEMAKING AND IDENTITY**



Prioritise enhanced active travel provision and improved public transport network capacity to better integrate and connect Wharfside with the surrounding area and wider Greater Manchester. This will be delivered through interventions ranging from small scale improvements to the radical remodelling of key junctions. The reuse of existing, and provision of new, bridges will deliver improved connections between existing and new communities.

**MOVEMENT AND TRANSPORT**



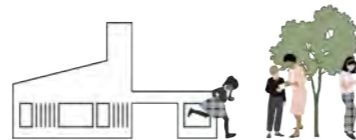
**WORLD CLASS STADIUM AND ENTERTAINMENT**

Maximise regional economic growth by establishing a new world-class stadium and a surrounding high-quality leisure and entertainment district as a major international visitor destination, significantly boosting Manchester's visitor economy.



Deliver approximately 15,000 new and distinctive homes of mixed type and tenure cultivating inclusive, mixed and sustainable communities for the long-term.

**HOUSING AND COMMUNITY**



**EDUCATION AND LEARNING**

Provide opportunities for local education institutions to expand their offer to help improve access to education, apprenticeships and employment opportunities for local young people.



**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION**

Catalyse investment in existing and new businesses – most particularly in the sport/leisure and tech sectors – to support approximately 48,000 new local jobs with many thousands more in the wider supply-chain.



Work with public and private sector partners to secure the necessary infrastructure investment and ensure a viable, phased delivery strategy that is adaptable to evolving market and socio-economic conditions. This will include early establishment of a local sustainable energy network to which all major developments should be connected, together with necessary community facilities including school spaces and health facilities.

**INFRASTRUCTURE, VIABILITY AND DELIVERY**



**GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE**

Establish a network of high-quality green and blue infrastructure, including a major city park, smaller public spaces and improvements to existing green and blue assets (including the Bridgewater Canal corridor) to enhance nature, resilience, connections and community well-being.

**OBJECTIVES**

## 2.3 CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

### 2.2.1 Constraints

The site's historical and ongoing industrial uses have resulted in several current constraints, see Fig 5. As a regional freight hub and part of a strategically important industrial location, Trafford Wharfside's principal constraints relate to the area's (ongoing) industrial legacy and the tension this creates with the WSM's vision - this being transformation of Wharfside into a new integrated, high-quality, vibrant and diverse city district. Principal constraints which the framework outlined in the WSM seeks to address include:

- A poor relationship between the site and the Manchester Ship Canal. A major reason for this is the raised and segregated nature of the Metrolink track infrastructure between Wharfside and Imperial War Museum Metrolink stops.
- The degree to which the White City Circle severs the Wharfside area from the city districts to the east and creates a hostile barrier.

- The use by heavy industrial traffic of Wharfside Way and Trafford Wharf Road to gain access to and egress from Trafford Park, and the associated noise and vibration disturbance this causes.
- The neglected and inaccessible Bridgewater Canal corridor environment.
- The area's two Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) zones to the north-west and south-west Wharfside.
- The barriers created by Warren Bruce Road, Europa Way and the railway corridor.
- Despite having some major cultural and sporting assets and attractions, access to them and between them is generally poor.

Many of these constraints can however be addressed and in doing so, opportunities can emerge.

#### Key

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Acoustic pollution / disturbance             | Metrolink impact on waterfront and public realm |
| Impermeable edge with limited connection     | COMAH zone                                      |
| Local assets hard to access                  | Unwelcoming road crossing                       |
| Bisected by busy traffic                     | Air pollutants from industry and infrastructure |
| Mature trees and green spaces                | Heavy / industrial vehicle usage                |
| Restricted access on / off canal             | Indirect routes to / from existing assets       |
| No pedestrian access onto canal              | Low visibility and connections to MSC           |
| Blue infrastructure hidden and underutilised | Land fill                                       |
| Metrolink tram stop                          |   |



Fig 5 Site constraints

### 2.3.1 Opportunities

Contextual analysis highlights Trafford Wharfside's enormous potential, as demonstrated in Fig 6. With a creative approach to placemaking and working in partnership with the stakeholders, many of the constraints identified above can be addressed and transformed into opportunities. These have the potential to make significant contributions to the long-term implementation of the vision for Trafford Wharfside. Some of the principal opportunities presented by the Trafford Wharfside area include:

- The re-provision and relocation of Old Trafford Football Stadium presents unique opportunities to outline a new urban structure for a transformed Trafford Wharfside.
- Opportunities to connect and integrate Trafford Wharfside with the surrounding area through improvements to existing and the creation of new bridge connections. These include improved connections towards the Third Avenue shops, at Waters Meeting, a new bridge connection with Avondale Road, improved connections with Civic Quarter across Chester Road and the planned introduction of the Clippers Quay foot and cycle bridge.

- Delivery of a direct visual and physical link and connection between the new Manchester United stadium and the Imperial War Museum North (IWMN) – potentially via a major new city park which would serve the local and wider community.
- Transformation of the White City Circle to radically improve provision for more sustainable modes of transport. This could include remodelling or removal of sections of highway in the long-term.
- Reimagining the nature of the Metrolink infrastructure alongside the Ship Canal so the line is not a barrier between development parcels and the water.
- Consider the roles that Metrolink stops at Wharfside, Imperial War Museum and Village can play to integrate into the Wharfside area to support its long-term transformation.
- Plan for a potential new railway station / interchange serving the Wharfside area.
- Retain and improve existing green and blue infrastructure elements across the area - particularly the Bridgewater Canal corridor - and the opportunity to celebrate Wharfside proud industrial legacy.
- Celebrate the cultural assets of Wharfside, promoting a 'cultural mile' concept connecting key destinations including IWMN, The Lowry, Manchester United's stadium and Old Trafford Cricket Ground.

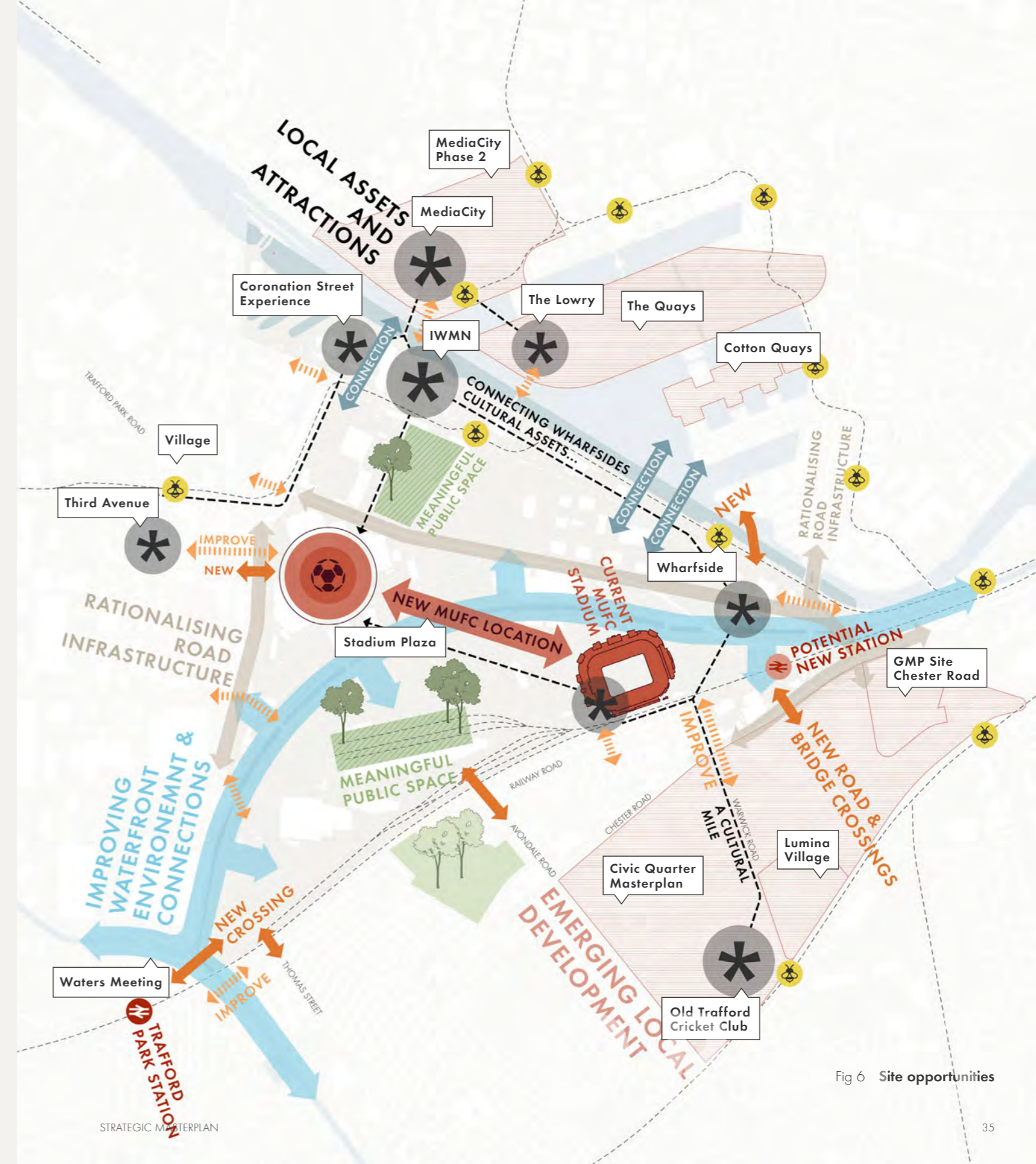


Fig 6 Site opportunities

DRAFT



Illustrative masterplan for Trafford Wharfside - a new city district for Trafford and Greater Manchester, with Manchester United's new state-of-the-art stadium at its heart

## 2.4 LAND OWNERSHIP AND LAND ASSEMBLY

### 2.4.1 Existing land ownership pattern

The 150 Ha Trafford Wharfside area presents a complex ownership structure with many separate landowners. However, with the six largest landholders controlling over 60% of the total area, the key stakeholders in Wharfside's short- and longer-term future are clear. While this concentration offers opportunities for strategic coordination, the broader fragmented nature of ownership - particularly across the central portion with multiple freehold and leasehold interests - will very likely result in a degree of piecemeal, phased development requiring careful orchestration.

Manchester United, as the single largest landowner, is a key stakeholder in developing the wider vision for the Wharfside area whilst they continue progressing with the design of their new stadium and surrounding area. Ensuring alignment between such emerging proposals and the broader Trafford Wharfside vision is critical to achieving coordinated development outcomes and optimising connectivity across the entire site.

The ownership complexity, with minimal public sector control, presents both opportunities and challenges. Initial discussions with major landowners reveal varying objectives - from active development considerations to established businesses seeking to remain due to substantial operational investments. This diversity of landowner aspirations necessitates a robust coordinating framework to ensure individual development phases contribute to the overarching regeneration vision.

Success will depend on establishing clear governance mechanisms and planning frameworks that can align disparate landowner objectives while maintaining development quality, connectivity standards and development viability considerations. The phased nature of delivery requires strategic coordination to ensure early development phases enable, rather than constrain, future opportunities, creating a unified destination that maximises the economic and social benefits for all stakeholders and the wider community.

### 2.4.2 Land assembly and CPO

The Council is committed to supporting the delivery of this strategically important growth through collaborative partnership with landowners, developers and other stakeholders. The WSM outlines a clear and comprehensive vision and strategy for Wharfside's transformation. In so doing, the WSM increases certainty and reduces risk for the development industry.

The land in the Masterplan area is in numerous ownerships and is subject to various occupiers. In this regard, it is hoped that all land and interests needed to deliver the objectives of the Masterplan and the associated public benefits will be acquired by agreement and through negotiation. However, where necessary and appropriate the OTR MDC and/or Trafford Council will consider the use of their statutory powers, including Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers and the ability to over-ride third party rights and covenants, to bring land forward for development so that the public benefits associated with the regeneration can be secured and optimised.

Left to right: Apartments at Media City, Manchester United stadium and local industry on shipping canal front.



DRAFT

DRAFT

## 2.5 CHARACTER, HISTORY AND HERITAGE

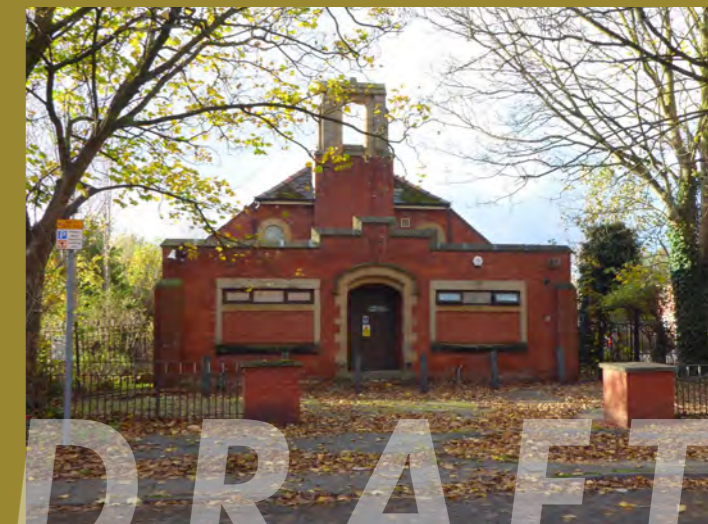
### 2.5.1 Development in context

Defined by layers of evolution, the remnants of a powerful industrial heritage sits alongside an emerging contemporary urban character. Large-scale warehousing and industrial buildings shaped by function, efficiency and movement are located to the western side of the site.

Historic assets such as Victoria Warehouse provide a tangible connection to this industrial past, with their robust brick façades and strong structural rhythms acting as enduring landmarks within the townscape. Alongside this heritage, the area is also defined by nationally significant cultural institutions, including the IWMN and the ITV Coronation Street Experience, which introduce a civic and cultural dimension to the area along the dock edge.

More recent development adds a further layer of character, with contemporary employment, research and production spaces – such as laboratory and analytical facilities like Kratos Analytical – reflecting the area's continued association with innovation, industry and specialist workspaces. Together with new residential, leisure and mixed-use developments, these elements create a dynamic and evolving place.

The resulting character is one of contrast and continuity, where historic warehouses, cultural landmarks and modern “sheds” and workplaces sit side by side, shaping a distinct urban environment that respects its industrial roots while supporting a diverse and contemporary future.



DRAFT

DRAFT

'...the Estate was a beautiful deer park. Avenues of magnificent chestnut, lime and alder trees led to Trafford Hall...There was a lake, one eighth of a mile long, with a wooden island in the centre, and impressive stands of beech trees, through which wandered the herds of deer.'

**Trafford Park Tramways 1897 - 1946 (1996). Ted Gray.**

The primary residence of the de Trafford family within the Trafford Park estate, known as Trafford Hall, was built in **1762**.



In **1885**, the Manchester Ship Canal Company was created to oversee the construction of the Canal project.

In **1887**, work begins on the Canal.



Construction of the Manchester Ship Canal

The Manchester Ship Canal was completed and officially opened in **1894**. Construction took six years and cost just over £15 million (equivalent to £1.7 billion in 2025) and was the then largest river navigation canal in the world

Marshall Stevens



Marshall Stevens becomes Provisional Manager of the Ship Canal Company from **1885**.

The first tram to run in Trafford Park was a gas-powered tramway which began operation in **1897**. This tramway was commissioned by the Trafford Park Estates Company to carry both people and freight around the industrial park.

The de Trafford family sold the Trafford Park estate in **1893** for £360,000 to Ernest Terah Hooley, a speculator and financier from Risley Hall.

Trafford Park Estates Ltd took over ownership of the Trafford Park estate from Ernest Terah Hooley in **1897**.

British Westinghouse Iron Foundry, 1901



A sketch of Pomona Gardens 1880s

The construction of the canal replaced the riverbed on two sides of the estate, and the large river terminals were constructed there. Trafford Park becomes an island estate.

In **1896**, Trafford Park Estates Ltd was founded to manage and develop the land, marking the official creation of the Trafford Park Industrial Estate.



Old Trafford Toll Bar in the 1910s

Associated Electrical Industries Ltd. in the 1930s



Westinghouse Electric opened its Trafford Park factory in **1902**.

World War I begins in **1914**. Trafford Park Industrial Estate's focus moves from peacetime productions to support the wartime effort and the Ministry of Munitions.

In **1918**, World War I ends.

### WWI TIMEFRAME

The Hovis Mill in 1910



### 1900

Old Trafford Football Stadium (home of Manchester United) was opened in **1910**.



Trafford Park is awake!



Waters Meeting, 1900s

Ford opens its factory in Trafford Park in **1911**. During World War I, the plant was used to produce munitions in addition to vehicles.

The end of the war was accompanied by a rapid return to peacetime production. Overall employment fell back from wartime levels of over 70,000 to about 54,000.

Trafford Wharf in the 1930s



World War II begins in **1939**. Factories switch primarily to aircraft and engine production.

World War II ends in 1945.

### WWII TIMEFRAME



Bomb damage in the 1940s

Trafford Park is bombed in **1940**, known as the Manchester Blitz.



Associated Electrical Industries finishing for the holidays in 1960

Ford Factory ceases operations in **1946**. It is taken over by Platts Brothers of Oldham, for the manufacture of textile machinery.

The Industrial Reorganisation Corporation (IRC) was set up by the Labour government of Harold Wilson in **1966** with the aim of modernising and restructuring key British industries to improve their global competitiveness.

The IRC encouraged mergers to create national industries formed of multiple companies, but these new conglomerates frequently closed older, less efficient sites, such as those in Trafford Park, to avoid duplication.



Old Trafford 1970s

During the **1960s**, many long-established factory names disappeared due to factors such as general national decline of traditional industry, foreign competition and economic recession, leaving mass unemployment in the area. By **1973**, this run-down of industry had produced 1.5 acres of surplus land next to the Parkway.

The Trafford Park Industrial Council is formed in **1971** to support firms within Trafford Park and tackle the Park's decline and encourage improvement.



Manchester United after winning the FA Cup in 1983

Proctor and Gamble Factory in the 1970s.



In **1979**, Trafford and Salford Councils jointly issued a draft District Plan which covered the Park and Salford Docks area. The Plan proposed several changes: converting the remaining estate railways into space for road widening or landscaping, establishing a network of cycleways and dedicating the Bridgewater Canal to recreational use.



In **2004**, the BBC unveils proposals for MediaCity.

In **2010**, a Metrolink to MediaCity opens connecting the Quays to the wider Metrolink network.

The Trafford Park Line of the Manchester Metrolink in March **2020**.



### 2000

The Lowry opens in **2000**.

The Trafford Centre opens in **1998**.



Trafford Park continued to be a hugely important and successful business location. The Trafford Park Development Corporation (TPDC) was formed in **1987**, giving government control to the area's planning, over local authorities.



The UEFA Parade, 2000s



The Imperial War Museum North (IWM North) opens in **2002**.

### TODAY



DRAFT

DRAFT

3

# STRATEGIC MASTERPLAN

3.1	Introduction	48
3.2	Urban framework	50
3.3	Character, place and movement	54
3.4	Parameter Plans	61

*DRAFT*

*DRAFT*

# 3.1 INTRODUCTION

## 3.1.1 Masterplan structure

The WSM is presented here in two parts, at two levels of resolution. Initially, this section presents the Strategic Masterplan as a series of area-wide frameworks captured in a series of strategic parameter plans. These plans outline those elements and components of the Strategic Masterplan considered to be fundamental to the area's transformation. Whilst fundamental, flexibility in their application may still be required. Alternative layouts which deliver equivalent benefits and respond positively to the aspirations and intentions of the Strategic Masterplan may be acceptable.

Working within these parameters, the Strategic Masterplan is followed by an Illustrative Masterplan. This greater level of detail helps demonstrate how different parts of the Wharfside area might emerge and evolve. The Illustrative Masterplan is place-based and includes studies which explore how each of Wharfside's six 'places' might look and feel.

The result is a Wharfside Strategic Masterplan which is both flexible in the framework and guidance it provides whilst also firm and confident in the parameters it sets. Delivering the vision for Trafford Wharfside will take a long time - and during this time market conditions and policy priorities will change. To ensure the long-term transformation of Trafford Wharfside is delivered in a sustainable, contextually responsive and high-quality manner, flexibility must be provided in terms of how connections are made, the mix of uses that should come forward and the scale of development considered to be appropriate.

## 3.1.2 Strategic Masterplan components

The Wharfside Strategic Masterplan has been prepared on the basis of a detailed understanding of the area's constraints and opportunities. These inform key principles which underpin the masterplan and these key principles are captured in an Urban Framework for Wharfside.

The Wharfside Urban Framework is the masterplan's key diagram. It captures all principal and fundamental elements of the masterplan for Trafford Wharfside. In so doing, it provides the basis for each of the topic-specific parameter plans which follow.

The Wharfside Strategic Masterplan has a number of components, as follows:

- **Urban Framework** - an overview of the key principles and elements within the strategic masterplan.
- **Character and place** - zones which combine to create an integrated and distinctive 'place of places'.
- **Movement** - the movement network including active travel, public transport connections and route hierarchy.
- **Public realm** - the network of public spaces and routes which connect Wharfside's places with each other and with surrounding neighbourhoods.
- **Land uses and activities** - the land use framework for new development across Trafford Wharfside.
- **Height and variety** - covering an area 50% larger than The Quays, Trafford Wharfside will cover the full spectrum of development scales and densities.
- **Infrastructure** - the environmental and community infrastructure required to support Wharfside's long-term transformation.



DRAFT

## 3.2 URBAN FRAMEWORK

### 3.2.1 Principles of a framework

The WSM framework is visionary and ambitious in scope and scale, whilst being deeply pragmatic and contextually responsive. A series of six key principles have informed and underpinned the evolution of the WSM framework, as outlined below and in Fig 7. These principles support the emergence of a new WSM urban framework for the entire Trafford Wharfside area, the key components of which are summarised on the following page and in Fig 8.

1. **Existing infrastructure assets** Wharfside is already supported with, and served by, significant urban infrastructure – two canals, passenger and freight railway lines and multiple Metrolink lines, one of which passes right through the area. The masterplan framework capitalises on these investments.
2. **Existing cultural and economic assets** Wharfside is home to the IWMN, the ITV Studios and major music venues. Major businesses including Whitworth Bros, Kratos, and Equinix are economic drivers. The masterplan framework incorporates these assets.
3. **New Manchester United stadium** The framework provides a generously scaled and well-connected stadium zone. Whilst public transport capacity will need to improve, major roads and proximity to a network of public transport hubs provide good levels of accessibility.
4. **New connections** WSM’s urban framework retains existing and creates new connections with the surrounding area, including a new bridge link to Gorse Hill. Maintaining and creating these connections is fundamental to the successful integration of the Wharfside area and its establishment as a new city district.
5. **New public realm network** Given the scale of growth envisaged, WSM delivers a new city-scale public open space - ‘Central Midfield’ - which is accessible to all and adds value to adjacent developments to help support delivery. This is supported by a network of smaller community spaces and improvements to the canal corridors. The Processional Route - the new stadium’s grand axial approach corridor - will be a major new open space in its own right. The route will be an integral part of a potential new ‘Trafford Cultural Mile’ linking the area’s major cultural and visitor destinations.
6. **New city districts** Delivery of WSM will create a place of places – multiple city districts connected by a high-quality public realm network. Each district will be distinct and unique whilst also being responsive to its particular context.

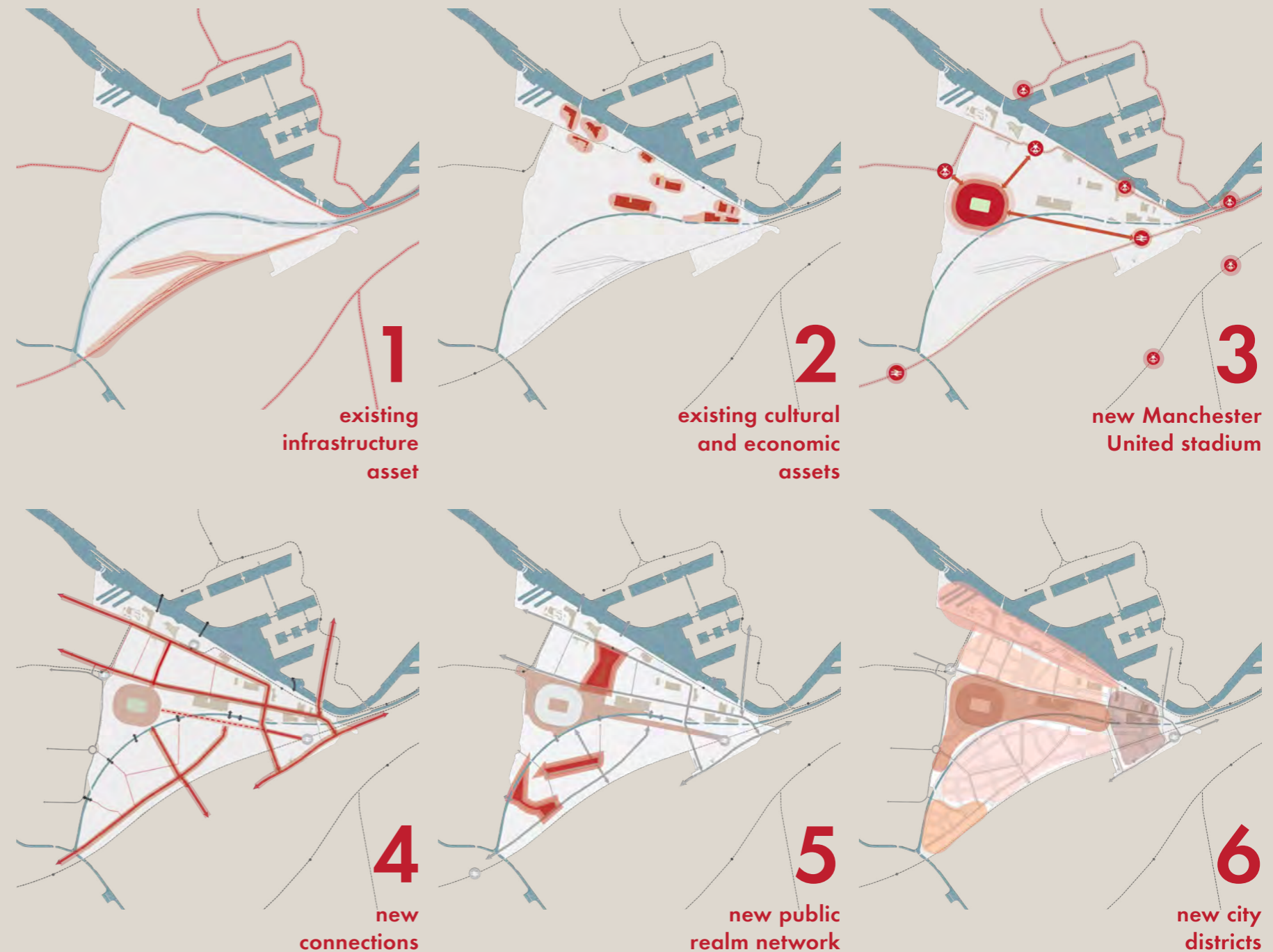
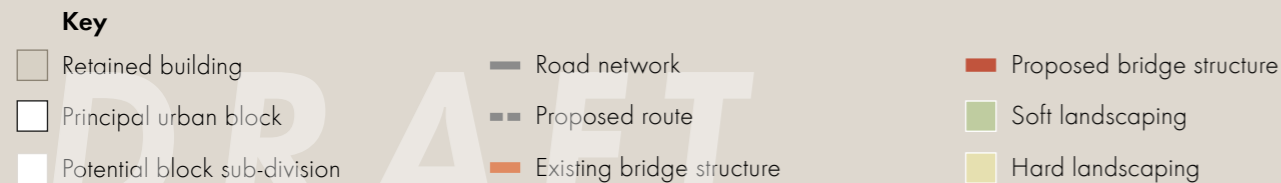


Fig 7 WSM key principles underpinning the framework



Fig 8 WSM Urban Framework - key components



### 3.2.2 Urban Framework - key components

Emerging from these six framework principles, the WSM's Urban Framework is presented in Fig 8. Supported and enabled by transformational increases in the local public transport network, the Urban Framework is designed to support event and non-event day access, movement and placemaking. Key components of the WSM Urban Framework include:

- 1 Flexible stadium zone with high quality public realm and active base frontage around stadium zone and the stadium itself.
- 2 Stadium approach - the Processional Route - a key element of the stadium district with a concentration of sport, commercial leisure and entertainment facilities and attractions, helping to extend the dwell time within the stadium zone.
- 3 'Central Midfield' a city-scale public open space, connecting IWMN with the new stadium. It is sized and located to facilitate good quality pedestrian connections to the Manchester Ship Canal frontage, utilising existing routes either side of the Imperial War Museum Metrolink stop.
- 4 Celebrating and improving green and blue infrastructure, particularly along the Ship Canal and Bridgewater Canal corridors as Wharfside's primary environmental but underutilised assets.
- 5 Flexible framework which takes account of existing economic assets and, where possible, land ownerships.
- 6 White City Circle transformation is a long-term opportunity for radical transformation of this major road junction. This would address the severance between the huge regeneration opportunity at Wharfside and the city of Manchester, and facilitate the delivery of important and much needed bus priority measures.

- 7 Metrolink to more directly support access to the new Stadium District, with consideration of the roles that stops at Wharfside, Imperial War Museum and Village can play, along with Park & Rides such as Parkway.
- 8 Wharfside Way and Europa Way narrowing and realignment to support stadium relocation and reinstate a more place-based road network to enable significant public realm improvements in association with potential enhancements to the Village Metrolink stop.
- 9 Potential new rail station / interchange creating a major high-density gateway to Wharfside with tall buildings and radically improved public realm which integrates with the Civic Quarter.
- 10 'Waters Meeting' will be a later phase of development and will be particularly suited to accommodate some large family housing types.
- 11 Local parks will support new residential areas. There is an opportunity at Waters Meeting to incorporate new and improve existing green infrastructure into planned new developments to create a connected network of ecologically rich spaces which help to celebrate Wharfside's industrial legacy whilst also respecting land ownership boundaries to facilitate delivery.
- 12 Trafford Park link with the opportunity to utilise existing bridges and structures to open up new links towards Trafford Park railway station.
- 13 Avondale Road link will deliver a new every-day connection with the nearby Gorse Hill community. The link would be managed to ensure event-day disruption is kept to a minimum.

Supported by strategic measures to help divert and remove traffic, traffic management measures will be required to help limit the impacts of event-day activities on local neighbourhoods.

Potential future metro and underground network in Greater Manchester presents a significant opportunity to improve connectivity and boost public transport capacity. Options will be explored for the area to be served by the future network as plans develop.

## 3.3 CHARACTER, PLACE AND MOVEMENT

### 3.3.1 Character and place

Trafford Wharfside extends across 150 Ha. The area is approximately a mile wide, east to west. The distance between the Village Circus and White City roundabouts is greater than the distance between Deansgate and Piccadilly stations. In the years to come, a transformed Trafford Wharfside will not be one place, it will be a place of places.

WSM is not a blueprint, rather a flexible framework for the area's transformation. Developments will come forward in response to the priorities and opportunities presented in this masterplan; they will not be expected to precisely mirror the forms, heights and uses envisaged.

However, Wharfside's existing assets – the Ship Canal, Imperial War Museum North, Bridgewater Canal, key existing and successful businesses – will play a major role in defining the emergence of a number of distinct and characterful places. These 'character areas' will reflect differing qualities based on the scale and density of development, street types and hierarchy, prevalent land uses, existing buildings and occupiers to be retained, and landscape and public realm, as well as cultural and leisure activities.

Six character areas have been identified in the WSM and are briefly summarised below. This is followed by important WSM principles relating to movement and transport which have been derived through close collaborative working with TfGM.



Illustrative views of places and spaces across Trafford Wharfside



DRAFT

DRAFT

**Wharfside Waters** A high-density, predominantly high-rise residential neighbourhood located along the Manchester Ship Canal waterfront. It is anchored by major cultural institutions such as the Imperial War Museum North and ITV's Coronation Street, with strong links across the Ship Canal to The Lowry and MediaCity in Salford.

**Wharfside Central** A medium- to high-density, mixed-use neighbourhood centred around a new city park - 'Central Midfield'. While predominantly residential in character, key streets and routes will benefit from public facing commercial and community uses and discrete clusters of educational, technological, and commercial uses will emerge.

**Stadium District** A medium- to high-density neighbourhood anchored by the new Manchester United stadium. Sport, leisure, and entertainment uses will be central to establishing a strong visitor economy in this area. The stadium structure will be Wharfside's principal and prominent landmark, surrounded by high quality public realm with a year-round managed programme of activities and events. Managing clear views to the structure is a priority.

**Wharfside South** Nestled between the Bridgewater Canal and the railway line and connected to Gorse Hill by a new road bridge to Avondale Road, this new high-density mixed residential neighbourhood will benefit from a celebration of the area's industrial past. Wharfside South will be a linked and varied neighbourhood, with routes providing connections to more traditional housing in Waters Meeting to the south-west, the Stadium District to the north and the high-density City Threshold to the east.

**Waters Meeting** A lower-scale mixed tenure and family friendly residential neighbourhood comprising homes, low-rise apartment buildings, community facilities (likely to include a new primary school) and accessible green spaces for local community use. Development and public realm should capitalise on the area's potential new links to Trafford Park Station and its unique relationship with the Bridgewater Canal environment and the Waters Meeting Canal Junction in particular.

**City Threshold** A high-density gateway area located at the intersection of several existing and emerging neighbourhoods. Centred around a potential new train station/interchange and addressing a radically improved and remodelled White City junction, City Threshold will accommodate apartments alongside retail and entertainment uses with high quality public realm. Improved linkages north to Salford, east to Pomona Island and the city centre beyond and south towards the Civic Quarter will ensure the area is fully integrated with the local area and wider city.



Fig 9 WSM character areas

### Key principles

The opportunity to deliver a fully integrated, connected and sustainably accessible new neighbourhood is at the heart of the vision for Trafford Wharfside.

This will be achieved through the delivery of radical enhancements in both active travel provision and the capacity of local public transport networks. This will ensure that Wharfside is better integrated with, and connected to, the surrounding area and wider Greater Manchester. Interventions will range from small scale improvements, the reuse of existing and provision of new bridge connections, through to exploring the radical remodelling of key junctions and enhanced public transport.

Wharfside’s strategic position within the wider city region must be carefully considered. Improvements, investments and measures will be required which extend well beyond the immediate Wharfside area. These improvements will be supported by management measures to help protect neighbourhoods and communities nearby from the adverse traffic and movement impacts of event day activities.

The WSM’s key movement and transport principles have been agreed collaboratively with TfGM and are outlined in Fig 10. These key principles are important, and their spirit and intention are captured in the WSM’s parameter plans below.

However, it should be recognised that routes and configurations shown in the WSM, particularly those around the proposed new stadium, will need to be informed by detailed transport modelling, crowd modelling and safety analysis.

- 1. People first and accessible to all**  
Daily needs are met within a short walk, wheel, cycle or public transport journey. The public realm will be designed to be safe, attractive, and accessible.
- 2. Future ready**  
The transport network will be designed through a carefully phased approach to provide sufficient network capacity and consistent, high quality access to the new stadium and Wharfside neighbourhood, with flexibility to respond to future technological change and innovation.
- 3. Bee Network integration**  
Wharfside is fully integrated into the Bee Network, creating an interconnected system that facilitate car-free and car-lite lifestyles.
- 4. Green and resilient**  
The potential of blue and green ways will be embraced. Natural systems (e.g. SuDS) will improve resilience against extreme weather events, and biodiversity will be enhanced through new green spaces.
- 5. Flexible and adaptable**  
The demand from multiple land uses and event days will be managed efficiently without compromising the people-first environment.

Fig 10 Key movement and transport principles for the WSM

### A wider Movement and Transport Framework

The long-term regeneration of Trafford Wharfside will have far-reaching impacts on, and implications for, the local and wider city region movement network. To support the delivery of the WSM, a wider Movement and Transport Framework has been developed in partnership with TfGM.

This Framework provides the necessary geographic and strategic context, setting out the transport vision, key principles, and emerging priorities for movement within and around the Old Trafford Regeneration (OTR) area. It identifies critical challenges and opportunities associated with the masterplan’s implementation and outlines key interventions to prioritise a sustainable, first-class, and effective transport network.

By integrating seamlessly with the Bee Network, this approach ensures that new jobs, homes, and community spaces are well-connected and accessible to all. Aligned with the Trafford Local Plan, the WSM Vision, the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan, and broader local policies, the Framework serves as a critical tool for accelerating investment in transport services and infrastructure, thereby enabling the delivery of significant growth objectives.

### Movement and transport parameters

The Movement and Transport Framework acts as a vital supporting document for the WSM. Building on the foundations it provides and in the context of the WSM’s urban framework, a series of parameter plans regarding movement and transport have been established. These plans address:

- **Active travel:** Prioritising permeable, safe, and attractive routes for walking, wheeling and cycling.
- **Public transport:** Enhancing capacity and connectivity across rail, tram, and bus networks.
- **Vehicular access:** Rationalising existing infrastructure to prioritise sustainable modes and access.

Parking strategy guidance is also provided with a view to implementing controlled, consolidated, and sustainable parking solutions.

Additional information and contextual and technical reflections are provided within Appendix A8, A9, A10, and the Movement and Transport Framework.

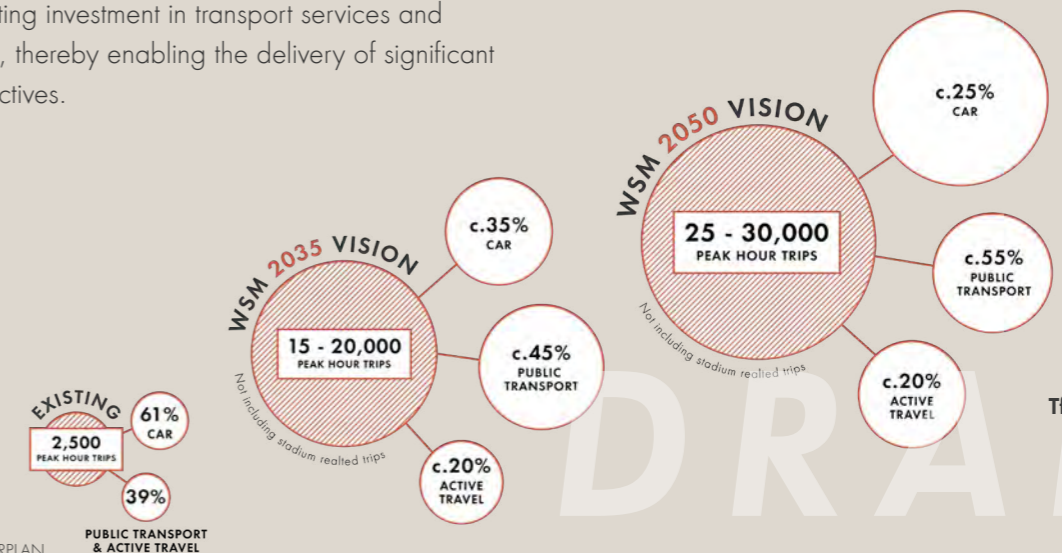


Fig 11 Potential trip increases as outlined in the TfGM’s Movement and Transport Framework

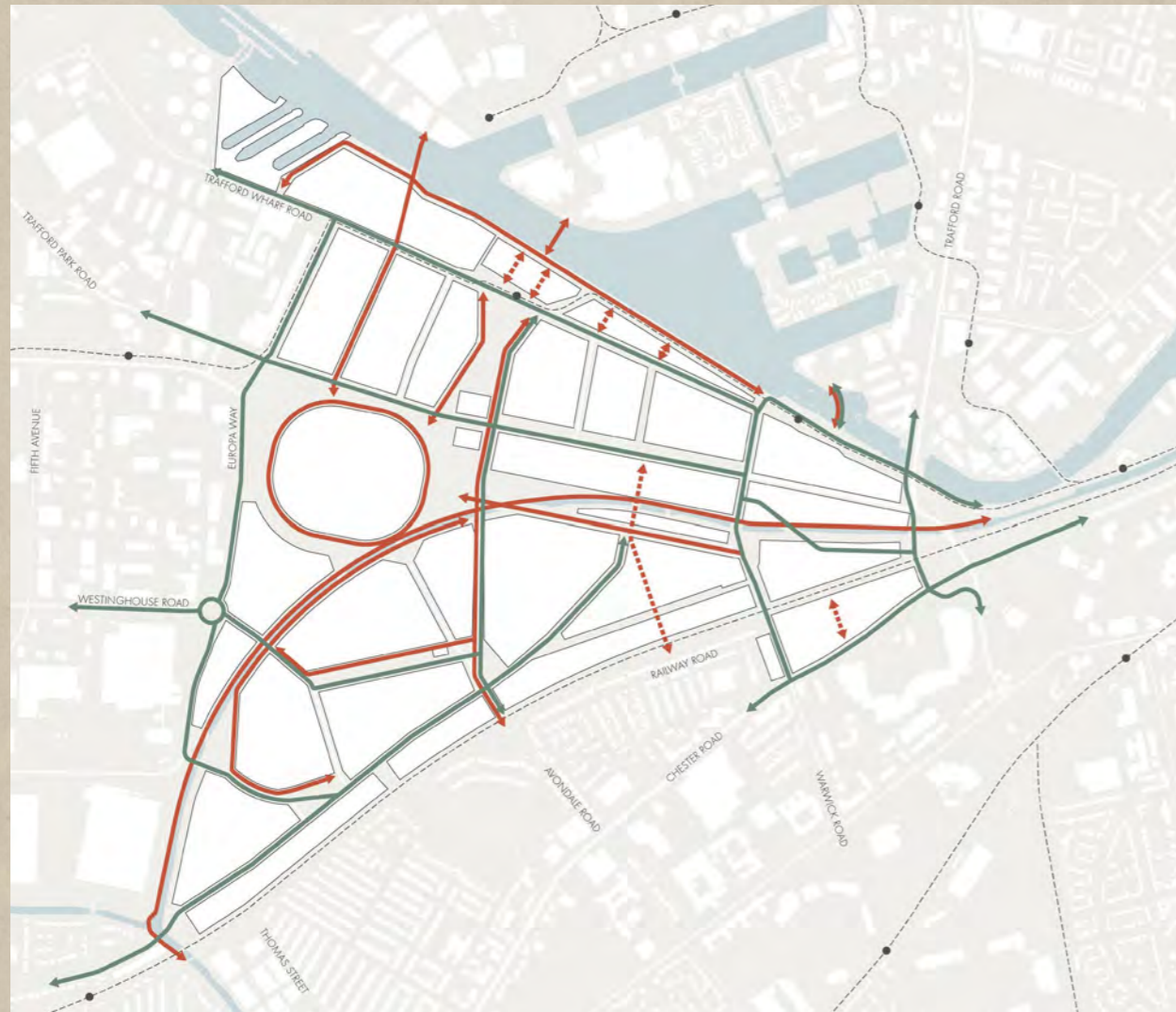


Fig 12 Active travel: long term arrangement

#### Key

- Pedestrian route
- - - Potential pedestrian route
- Cycle route

## 3.4 PARAMETER PLANS

### 3.4.1 Active travel

Walking, wheeling and cycling will be central to achieving the future masterplan. The prioritisation of active travel routes and provision of high-quality infrastructure to support it will enable people living and working in the area to live active, healthy, sustainable and low-car lifestyles. It will also be essential to facilitate large volumes of people moving through the area on event days.

As shown in Fig 12, priority pedestrian and shared leisure routes will include:

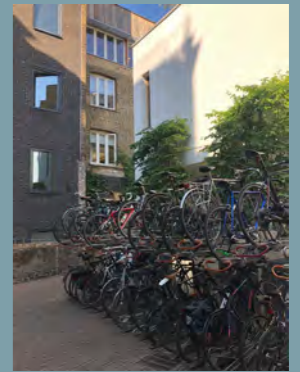
- The Ship Canal frontage, benefitting from remodelled Metrolink infrastructure.
- The Processional Route connecting Sir Matt Busby Way with the stadium.
- The northern and part southern Bridgewater Canal towpaths.
- A central north-south route through 'Central Midfield' connecting the Ship Canal with the Gorse Hill community via new railway and canal bridges.

New and improved active travel routes should connect with the surrounding network including the proposed Clippers Quay bridge link, Irwell River Park and the Civic Quarter area. Trafford Wharfside would also be a natural extension of the city's CyanLines initiative.

As also shown in Fig 12, dedicated key cycle routes will include:

- East-west cycle provision along Trafford Wharf Road and Wharfside Way.
- A prominent east-west axial route parallel to the railway connecting the Processional Route with Trafford Park station area and beyond towards the Trafford Centre utilising disused railway routes.
- North-south routes along the Europa Way axis, with safe, direct connections across a transformed Village Circle.
- A central north-south cross route through 'Central Midfield' to the new Avondale Road bridge.
- To the east, the Sir Matt Busby/Sir Alex Ferguson axis and remodelling of White City Circle junction including priority use of Trafford Road Swing Bridge.

Improvements should align with Trafford Council's Design Code and Streets for All (see Appendix A9) to fully promote and provide for active travel whilst retaining essential service access and vehicular movement.



The above images show various approaches to cycle parking - stacked parking and parking simple bike racks integrated into the public realm using landscaping



Fig 13 Long term public transport arrangement

**Key**

- Bus priority corridor
- Water taxi
- Indicative location for neighbourhood Mobility Hub / MSCP
- Indicative location for event day priority Mobility Hub / MSCP
- Train station
- Train line
- Ship Canal Walk improvements
- Metrolink line
- Metrolink stop
- The Trafford Centre - Crumpsall
- Ashton-under-Lyne - Eccles
- Altrincham - Bury
- Altrincham - Piccadilly/Etihad Campus
- East Didsbury - Rochdale Town Centre
- Manchester Airport - Victoria
- East Didsbury - Shaw and Crompton

3.4.2 Public transport

The Wharfside area will be served by an enhanced public transport network across all modes, building on the area's excellent existing public transport accessibility, see Fig 13.

**Bus network improvements**

Buses offer flexibility with great potential for delivering short-term service and capacity improvements. WSM improvements include:

- Enhance existing Wharfside Way and Trafford Wharf Road services through improved frequency, better facilities and greater bus priority measures.
- Network expansion on non-event days via Avondale Road bridge to ensure new communities and existing communities to the south are well connected.
- Greater priority measures associated with White City Circle remodelling.

Event day bus movements will need to be managed to enable efficient bus operation and movement of large crowds. This will likely include closure to buses, along with general traffic, on Wharfside Way, Europa Way and the new road link across the rail line. It is anticipated that increased service frequencies would be required on event days.

**Metrolink network improvements**

Patronage will significantly increase and patterns of use will change due to the relocation and enlargement of Manchester United's stadium and wider population growth. WSM improvements to the Metrolink network include:

- Capacity and service frequency improvements to accommodate increasing future demand.
- Better integration of the track into the public realm alongside the Ship Canal, with new and improved crossing opportunities.
- Improve infrastructure around Wharfside, Imperial War Museum and Village Metrolink stops to provide a



Stretford Kingsway in Manchester where priority is given to to SuDS, active and sustainable transport measures. © CIVIC



better connection with the Stadium District, supported by a remodelled Village Circle junction.

- Opportunities to increase capacity are being explored, such as the viability of tunnelled options for Metro services. This could enable new connections between existing Metrolink lines thus enhancing those services and could serve to release capacity on the rail network.

**Rail network improvements**

- Potential new rail station / interchange near Sir Matt Busby Way, accessible from north and south.
- Explore passenger capacity improvements, supported by reduced rail freight services.
- Improved connectivity to the existing Trafford Park rail station through enhanced active travel route across the Waters Meeting canal junction.

Mobility Hubs, with integrated cycle and car hire facilities, will be located to support this high-quality and dramatically improved public transport network.

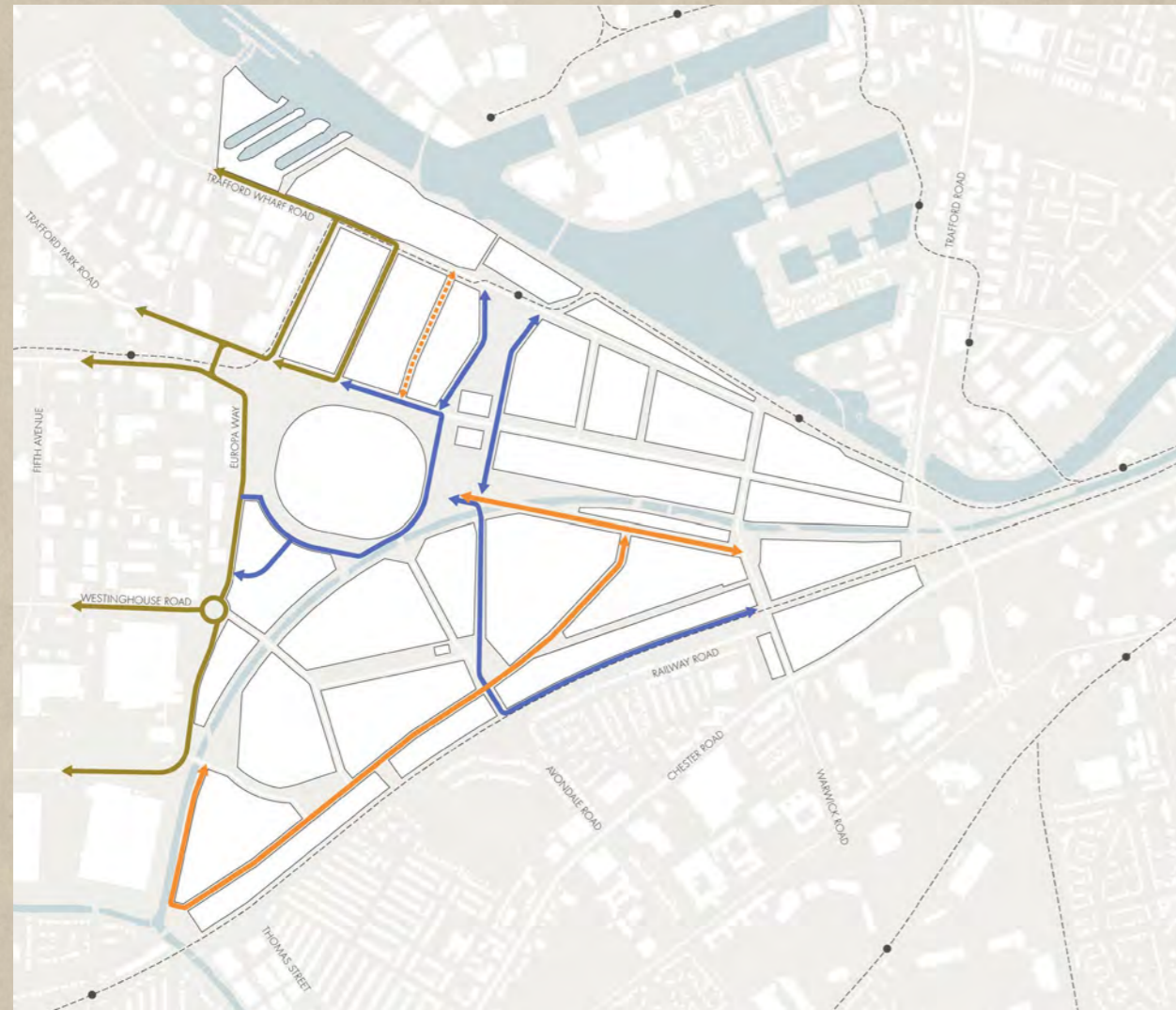


Fig 14 Long term arrangement for vehicle access

**Key**

- Industrial traffic
- Servicing only (restricted) traffic
- Servicing & residential traffic

DRAFT

3.4.3 Vehicle access

The masterplan seeks to minimise vehicle movements through the area to deliver an integrated, sustainable and multi-modal movement network. Rebalancing of streets will prioritise sustainable modes over motor vehicles, although it is recognised that local vehicle access will need to be retained for some purposes; for example, residents' parking, people accessing disabled parking, and delivery / servicing needs. Industrial traffic will be managed to access and egress Trafford Park from the south rather than through the Wharfside area. Detailed traffic management plans will be required for event days, but principles for long-term vehicle access arrangements are outlined in Fig 14.

On non-event days, Wharfside Way, and to a lesser extent, Trafford Wharf Road will operate as local access routes to the area for motor vehicles. Access to neighbourhoods and destinations within the masterplan area will be provided through secondary and tertiary streets, designed to prioritise sustainable modes whilst providing necessary vehicle access. A new road bridge over the rail line at Avondale Road will provide vehicle access to the southwest corner of the masterplan.

On event days, the safe and efficient movement of crowds will necessitate the closure of Wharfside Way and Europa Way to general traffic. People attending events will be encouraged to travel by public transport and active travel to minimise vehicle movements to/from the area. Parking for event days will be largely accommodated on the edge of or outside of the masterplan area. As with non-event days, essential local access will be provided through the network of secondary and tertiary streets with non-car modes prioritised. On event days, the new road link via Avondale Road could be closed to general traffic and buses to create a pedestrianised link to the stadium from the south.

A service route will be provided from the east towards the stadium, along a route adjacent to the railway and connecting with Sir Matt Busby Way.

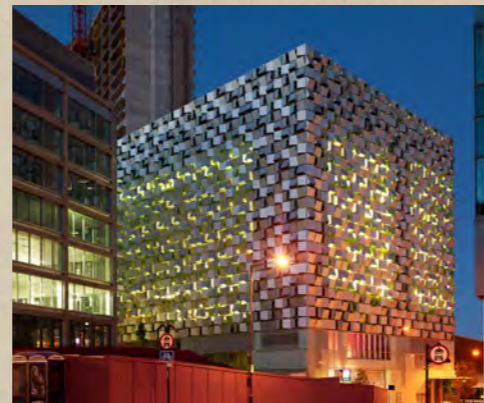
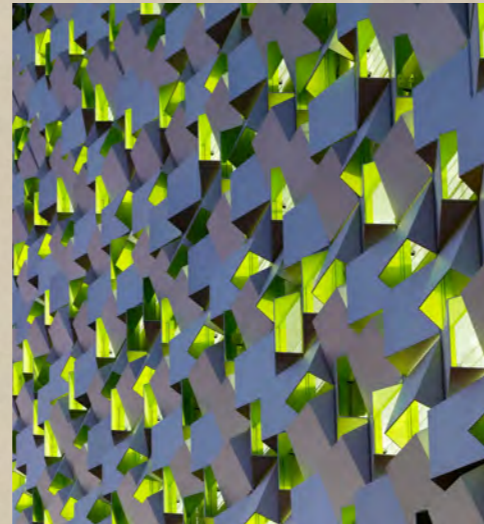


The surrounding images show the public realm improvements in Altrincham town centre. The scheme was completed in July 2023 and has involved junction improvements, re-grading and re-paving the busy high street and the introduction of rain gardens as SuDS features to break up the hard feeling of existing surfacing.

© CIVIC



DRAFT



Photographs of Sheffield's city centre multi-storey car park on Charles Street - infrastructure as an integrated part of the city street

© Allies and Morrison

### 3.4.4 Parking

To deliver high density development and quality public realm within the masterplan area, it is necessary to reduce the land allocated to car storage. Surface car parking currently dominates much of the masterplan area. Existing surface car parks must be consolidated and removed to make best use of available land.

The following principles will guide the parking strategy for the masterplan:

- Residential parking needs to be provided separately from stadium parking within the masterplan.
- Stadium parking can be interchangeable with leisure, cultural and retail parking.
- Disabled parking for all neighbourhoods must be provided close to building entrances, likely on-street or in podiums.
- On-street parking will be controlled - largely allocated to Blue Badge spaces, car club spaces, deliveries / servicing and visitor parking.
- Parking will require a management and enforcement regime, agreed by the relevant authorities, with regular monitoring and review.
- Residential parking can be provided in consolidated Mobility Hubs offering multi-modal connectivity and other facilities like last-mile delivery, cycle hire, EV charging and car clubs.
- Some development plots will be able to meet their own car parking needs on site via appropriate and well-designed design parking provision - e.g. podium parking with active frontages.
- Parking space rental/ownership needs to be largely separate from home ownership/rental. This allows people to rethink their need for a car and supports

people to live low car lives, particularly in areas with good access to public transport and local facilities. Residents should be able to give up a communal parking space if they no longer need it or take one on if they decide they do need a car.

- Electric vehicle charging needs to be provided across the masterplan area with a range of charging infrastructure to meet anticipated demand.
- There is potential to provide a more flexible approach to parking for lower density residential development at Waters Meeting.

#### Parking strategy

As construction begins on the new stadium and surrounding development, there will be a need to rationalise the significant levels of car parking across the area. A cohesive Parking Strategy will be required to ensure this change is carefully managed and implemented in phases over an extended period, avoiding a sudden loss of parking supply and minimising potential impacts.

Parking provision will change alongside the development of the area, reflecting changing travel patterns, land use, and the increasing availability of alternative transport options.

A key element of this approach will be the delivery of capacity improvements to the public transport network serving the area, alongside enhancements to active travel infrastructure. Together these measures will expand the range of transport options available for journeys to and from the masterplan area. This will support a gradual shift away from private car use, enabling people to transition towards more efficient and sustainable modes of travel.

Partnership working between key stakeholders, including Trafford Council, TfGM and Manchester United, will be essential to the successful delivery of the parking strategy.



DRAFT

DRAFT

## Sharing parking

Notwithstanding the need to distinguish dedicated stadium parking from residential parking, sharing parking between uses is a key opportunity at Trafford Wharfside. This is both feasible and efficient if different uses have different periods of peak demand. For example, the hotel and residential demand overnight will ease in the morning as people leave and head to work at the same time as the demand for parking associated with the community, leisure, and office use would be expected to increase. Event day parking associated with the Manchester United needs to be provided separately from residential parking, but these spaces could accommodate demand associated with other uses. Fig 15 shows that most land uses will be able to share with others. Note that not all spaces need to be shared, allowing, for example, some residential spaces to be allocated to particular homes, and some residents to make use of spaces which, during the day, may be used by visitors to other land uses.

The sharing of parking can be controlled through allocation and pricing. Once the parking spaces are constructed, there are many ways in which spaces can be operated to ensure efficiency and adherence.

## Supporting low-car lifestyles

Low parking provision within the masterplan area will be supported by improved local amenities, and enhanced public transport and active travel networks. In addition, low-car lifestyles should be supported by a masterplan wide Framework Travel Plan. This allows Travel Plans for individual plots to be coordinated across the masterplan, making it easier for developers to promote measures

to residents and businesses, and easier for the Council to monitor. There are likely to be economies of scale for implementing initiatives that benefit more than one development plot e.g. car club, cycle hire schemes. To fund the Travel Plan, best practice is for developments to commit to a per-household fund to provide free public transport passes / car club membership. The Travel Plan includes a mechanism for monitoring and feedback, which provides an opportunity for flexibility and adaptation over the life of the masterplan.

## Parking delivery and mobility hubs

Parking in the low-density residential area in the south-west of the masterplan area is likely to largely be on-plot, comprising of a mix of undercroft, parking courts, on-street parking and some individual on-plot parking for houses. Visitor and blue badge spaces and loading bays will also be required. The type of parking provision will be dependent on the type, scale and location of housing proposed on plots, to be confirmed as individual sites come forward. In this area, any parking accommodated within the streetscape will be managed through implementation of a Controlled Parking Zone.

A network of mobility hubs will serve local business, residents and visitors, providing integrated access and transport services including cycle hire and parking, shared micro-mobility options, parcel lockers as well car hire/sharing and car parking. Located in close proximity to public transport facilities, these hubs will be distributed across Wharfside with 10 minute walking catchments between them. Hubs are a critical part of the integrated access and movement strategy for Trafford Wharfside's regeneration and are key to supporting car-free/car-lite

Land use	% shared (indicative)	Residential	Stadium	Hotel	Community	Leisure	Office	Retail
		Can car parking spaces be shared between...						
Residential	40 - 70%		No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Stadium	95%	No		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hotel	0 - 4%	No	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Community	100%	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Leisure	50 - 100%	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
Office	85 - 100%	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Retail	100%	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	

Fig 15 Sharing parking

living and working. Parking provision for medium-high density residential areas will primarily be accommodated within neighbourhood Mobility Hubs, although some on-plot parking may be provided where required.

Parking for high density residential areas is likely to be solely accommodated within neighbourhood Mobility Hubs. These should be provided close to residential areas, as well as key strategic and connector roads to minimise vehicle movements on low-traffic streets within the masterplan.

Event-day priority Mobility Hubs are primarily intended for use on event days, with other land uses such as employment, leisure and retail utilising these at other times. These should be located at the periphery of the masterplan with attractive and accessible walking and wheeling routes linking them to the stadium. On event days, Park and Ride will play a key role in managing local parking demand and facilitating sustainable, multi-modal travel. The future masterplan will be highly accessible from the wider area by bus, tram, potential new rail connections, and potential future metro/ underground. New and existing park and ride locations will be essential to intercepting private car journeys prior to reaching the masterplan area.

## Car parking standards

Car parking provision for new development at Wharfside will be provided in line with the relevant parking standards set out in Trafford Council's Local Plan. These are maximum standards, and lower provision than these standards will be supported where appropriate.

## Cycle parking

Cycle parking will be provided in accordance with standards outlined in Trafford Council's Local Plan. These are minimum standards, and provision above these standards is encouraged and supported.

The Government's Cycle Infrastructure Design (LTN 1/20) guidance should also be considered when providing cycle parking across the masterplan area. There should be secure provision for long-stay cycle storage, with different types of stands to accommodate different needs, including spaces for cargo bikes, adapted cycles and trikes. Conveniently located short stay bike parking close to building entrances will benefit visitors and cycle courier deliveries. Provision should be made for charging electric bikes. Providing high quality, convenient, secure and uncrowded cycle parking is key to making it attractive to users.



Fig 16 Public realm framework

## Key

- Soft landscaping
- Hard landscaping

## 3.4.5 Public realm and public open space

An overview of WSM's principal public realm components is outlined in Fig 16. Whilst there is flexibility in how these elements will be designed and delivered, they are all considered important parts of the public realm framework.

Set to eventually be home to more than 30,000 new residents as well as thousands of workers, the regeneration of Trafford Wharfside will require a significant investment and improvement in the quality of its public realm. This will include sustainable drainage measures, hard and soft landscaping and retention of existing and planting of new trees. All major new developments will be expected to contribute to this long-term investment and improvement.

The public realm framework for Trafford Wharfside is presented in Fig 16. Key spaces in this Framework are identified on the plan and described below. Note that some particularly important and high-profile opportunities are further highlighted as 'Big Moves' in the WSM's Illustrative Masterplan, Section 4.

Soft landscape public realm strategy components include:

- 1 'Central Midfield'** A 3 ha city-park connecting the new stadium and IWMN with the wider community.
- 2 Neighbourhood Park** A community space which celebrates the area's industrial heritage.
- 3 Existing GI** Existing major green infrastructure elements should inform Wharfside's transformation.
- 4 Nansen connection** Ecological connections formed between existing green spaces and corridors.
- 5 Bridgewater Canal** A major environmental and ecological asset where improvements are needed.
- 6 Waters Meeting** A special quiet contemplative space and Wharfside gateway where canals converge.

- 7 White City Circle** Radical junction remodelling could deliver profound landscape enhancements and improved connectivity.

Hard landscape public realm strategy components include:

- A Ship Canal Walk** A key leisure route with potential graded widening of the route to better connect with the water and more frequent crossing points across the Metrolink tracks to better connect the Ship Canal Walk to Wharfside Way and the wider Wharfside area.
- B Processional Route** A formal hard landscaped axis, lined on both sides with public facing commercial and leisure activities. This axial route will be centrally aligned with the stadium structure creating a dramatic arrival experience.
- C Stadium forecourt** A hard landscape and fully accessible space designed for event-day communal activities. The space east of the stadium will be designed for events and major gathering - the stadium's principal 'front door' space. The space to the west will be more for circulation - a new threshold with Trafford Park. This will require high-quality landscape design and treatment.
- D Avondale Square** A public space marking the convergence of key routes. This will be a key community space at the threshold between the existing communities of Gorse Hill to the south and Wharfside's new communities.
- E Sir Matt Busby Way** A prominent and important new space at the apex of the Processional Route.
- F Stadium approaches** Secondary stadium approach routes, with views aligned to the stadium.

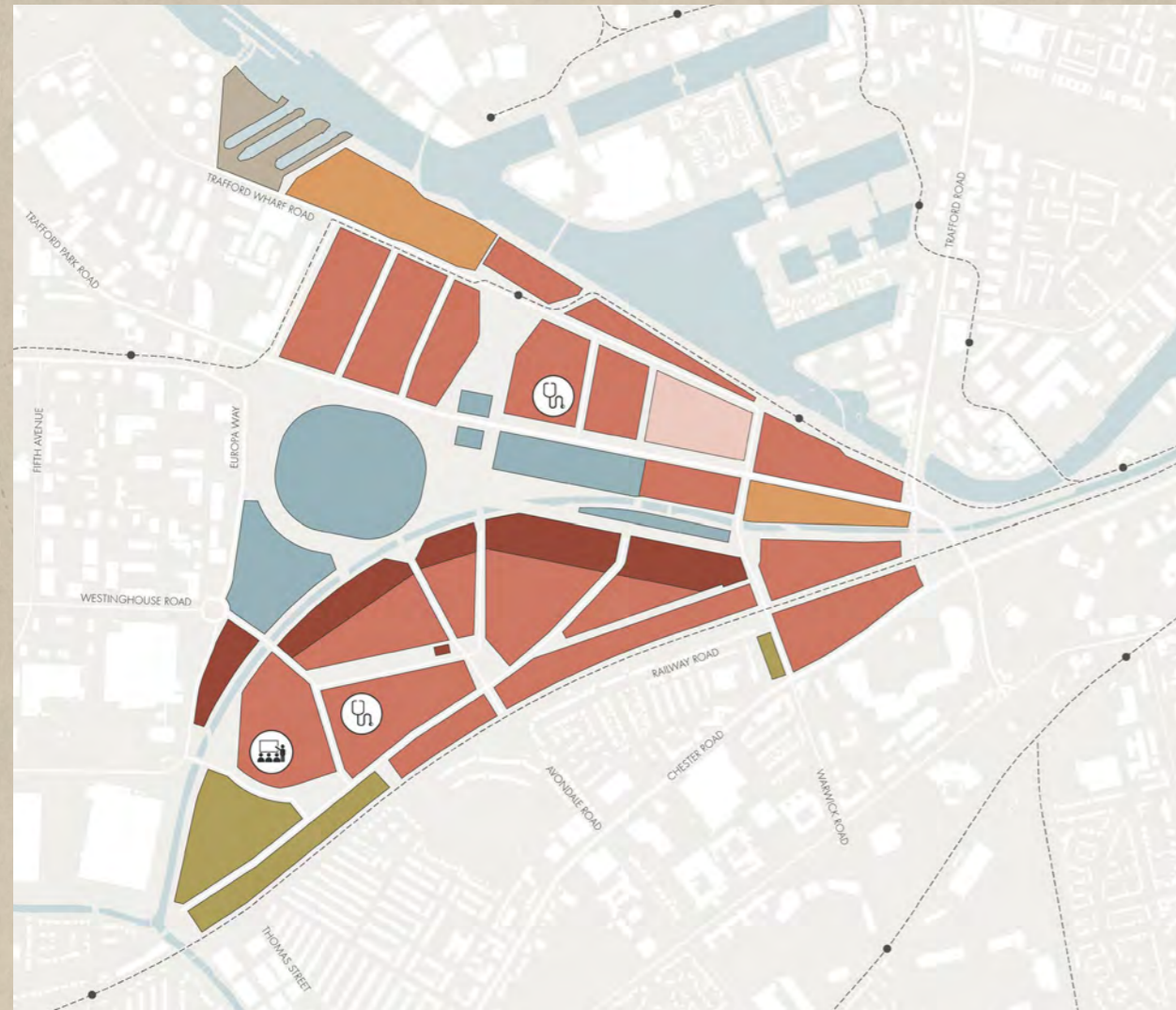


Fig 17 Land use plan

**Key**

- Mixed use residential (housing led with commercial / community use)
- Residential (primarily housing)
- Mixed use with commercial (commercial led with residential)
- Sports / commercial (stadium related hospitality, dining and retail etc.)
- Cultural
- Education
- Technology & innovation (tech offices, R&D, digital enterprises & education)
- Industrial & logistics (manufacturing, distribution, employment)
- Health centre

3.4.6 Land use strategy

The flexible and high-level land use strategy for Trafford Wharfside is set out in Fig 17. Key elements include:

**Sports / commercial (Stadium zone)**

The new Manchester United stadium will be located to the west of the existing stadium, on the north side of the Bridgewater Canal. Whilst visitors will approach the stadium from all directions, the main 'processional' approach will be from Sir Matt Busby Way to the east. This axial route will be dominated by commercial leisure and retail uses. Including a 'Fan Zone', the stadium will be encircled by commercial and leisure uses geared towards serving event- and non-event day visitors. Complementing the facilities and attractions at Media City and the nearby IWMN, the stadium will emerge as one of the city's principal visitor destinations, attracting significant numbers of visitors throughout the year. Whilst the Stadium zone will be suitable for some high-density residential development, commercial leisure uses associated with stadium-related trips will predominate.

**Mixed use with commercial**

High-density mixed-use commercial-led development uses will frame the stadium and its processional approach on the south side of the Bridgewater Canal. These uses will take advantage of their canal-side setting and be predominantly commercial in nature to complement the leisure and retail uses associated with the stadium's more immediate environment. High density apartment-based residential uses within this mix will be appropriate. Care must be taken in the design and specification of new dwellings near the new stadium to ensure new residents are not unduly disturbed by noise and disruption associated with event-day activities.

**Mixed-use residential**

High-density often tall residential led development will provide a mix of housing tenures (including affordable), types and sizes. Prominent routes, including those towards the stadium, will benefit from active ground floor frontages suitable for retail, leisure and community uses including community health facilities. Hotels and commercial uses will also be an appropriate part of the mix. Urban format education uses including schools will also be appropriate where the required play space standards can be met.

**Technology and innovation**

Building on the important role played by key existing businesses, a technology and innovation hub should emerge in the heart of the Wharfside area. This will play an important role in supporting the retention of existing and creation of new high-quality jobs. The hub will take advantage of prominent street frontage locations in close proximity to public transport facilities. Higher and further education uses will be appropriate in locations within and surrounding the tech hub.

**Culture**

The area already benefits from nationally significant cultural venues. Working alongside the new stadium venue, these existing facilities play an important role in creating a diverse visitor profile. There is an opportunity to curate a new 'Trafford Cultural Mile' route linking all of these assets. New high-density developments within the immediate vicinity of these venues should be designed to take account of their operational patterns so that they can continue to operate successfully.



Stratford Waterfront in East London, a space shared by the V&A East Museum, UAL's College of Fashion (LCF), BBC Music Studios and Sadler's Wells East. The top right image shows the view looking onto the London Stadium from LCF.

### Industrial & logistics

West of the ITV Studios site is an historic but still operational dock complex. This use and its historic association with Trafford Park play an important role in the area's industrial character and success. Retention of these docks is a short to medium term priority. They may provide an important resource during the long and logistically complex stadium and wider Wharfside construction period as phases of the masterplan are delivered. Development proposals will be considered on their merits, but new development should not introduce uses in this location which might negatively impact on the quality of the strategically important industrial activities within Trafford Park.

### Residential

The delivery of new family homes including some more traditional housing types is important in the context of this long term and radical transformation opportunity. The area to the southwest of the Wharfside area, towards Waters Meeting and bordering the Gorse Hill community to the south, is only likely to come forward for development in the very long term. This location is particularly well suited for the delivery of family-oriented housing in this quieter part of the site. Whilst some community uses might also be appropriate at prominent corners, this will be an almost entirely residential and lower density neighbourhood.

### Education and health

The population increase associated with very significant levels of housing development across the WSM area will result in the need for the provision of additional school places and local health facilities. As development phases come forward, detailed discussions will be required with the Local Education Authority and local health care providers to agree the appropriate level of provision. Education uses, and specifically the provision of new school places, are considered a suitable land use across the majority of the WSM area as part of major mixed-use development proposals. However, the requirement for additional school places is likely to be most acute in the later phases of development. The land use strategy envisages redevelopment proposals for the existing Freightliner and MIFT sites incorporating the need to locate a new primary school. All major new developments will be required to make financial contributions to address the need for new school places created by housing developments, the level of which will be determined by pupil yield calculations.

DRAFT

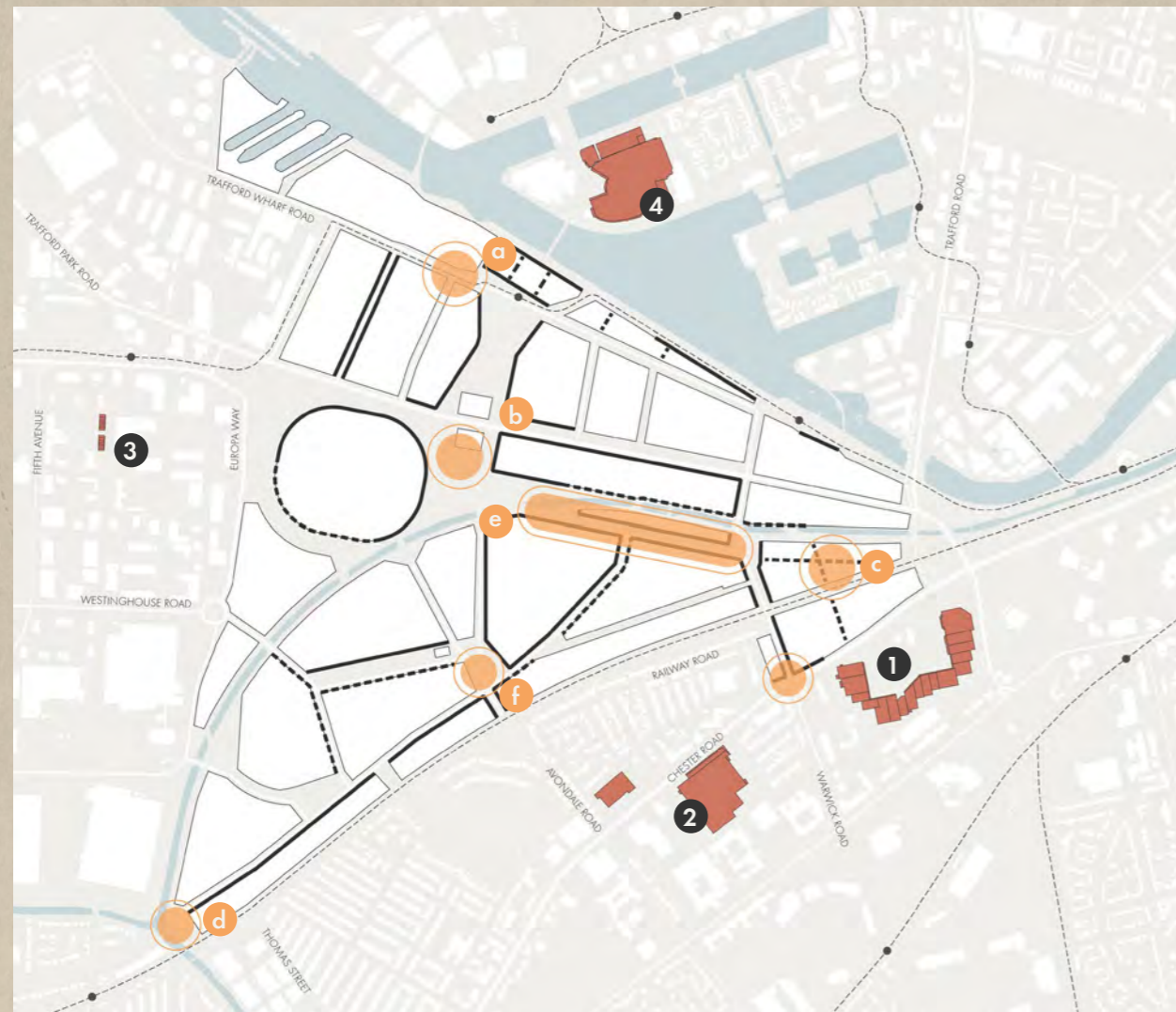


Fig 18 Active frontages and local centres

**Key**

- Potential ancillary retail
- Active frontages
- Local retail locations

## 3.4.7 Activity clusters and frontages

**Existing retail context**

There is a considerable amount of existing retail floorspace (see Fig 18) – both convenience and comparison – which already serves the Wharfside area:

- 1 White City and Castlemore Retail Park** Out of centre format retail park, including a large M&S Foodhall, Aldi
- 2 Chester Road food retail** Large Tesco Extra and Lidl – out of centre format
- 3 Third Avenue, Trafford Park** Local retail parade – convenience offer
- 4 Quayside Shopping Centre** Comparison shopping

Through proposed improvements to existing, or the creation of new connections to areas which surround Trafford Wharfside, there will be improved linkages to each of these four retail locations. With the exception of Castlemore Retail Park which, in its current form, sits within the WSM area and is earmarked for redevelopment, these locations will continue to play an important role in meeting retail needs of those who will live and work within the transformed Trafford Wharfside area. Footfall and trips to, and the money spent at, these facilities should increase as phases of redevelopment within Wharfside are delivered.

**WSM retail and commercial clusters**

A key part of the vision for Trafford Wharfside is to deliver a new world-class stadium within a high-quality sport, leisure and entertainment district so that the area emerges as a major international visitor destination. Delivering this vision will therefore see a significant amount of retail and commercial leisure floorspace within, most specifically, the Stadium District. However, with thousands of new dwellings coming forward across Wharfside, the opportunity for new clusters of retail, commercial and community uses serving local needs along primary routes will emerge.

The WSM urban framework is flexible, but key locations where it would be beneficial for new commercial and community activities serving new local needs include:

- a Imperial War Museum Metrolink stop, Trafford Wharf Road** Event-day movements from north to the stadium in the south, via Imperial War Museum Metrolink stop, will be significant. A cluster of retail/commercial uses in this area which also addresses the ‘Central Midfield’ open space, would be appropriate.
- b Southern end of Central Midfield** On the fringes of the fan zone, the intersection of the southern end of the narrowing Central Midfield and Wharfside Way would also be an appropriate location for a retail cluster.
- c Station cluster** In the longer term, alongside a potential new rail station / interchange, this is a natural location for a cluster of retail, commercial and community uses.
- d Waters Meeting** Also a longer-term opportunity, WSM’s southern-most tip at Waters Meeting is an appropriate location for a small clustering of commercial uses. Canal routes converge here and there is a bottleneck of potential active travel routes between Trafford Park Railway Station and the WSM area. These characteristics make the location particularly appropriate.
- e Stadium District and Processional Route** The WSM envisages a formal axial stadium approach from the east. The layout and location of this street arrangement is flexible, but this area is likely to be Wharfside’s principal cluster for bars, restaurants, entertainment and commercial leisure uses.

**f Wharfside south** Connectivity with the Gorse Hill community to the south is critical and this will be achieved via a new road bridge on the axis of Avondale Road. The northern side of this new bridge marks a point of convergence for a number of routes. This area will emerge as a community hub and point of orientation, supported by a concentration of commercial and community uses.

### Active frontages

Active street frontages (Fig 18) with public-facing retail, commercial and community uses at ground floor level will enliven key routes across Wharfside. The location of these frontages, serving only local needs, will be determined by the future street network but will broadly reflect the following patterns of distribution:

- Along the Manchester Ship Canal frontage and routes that connect to it.
- Along the frontages which define the street edges of 'Central Midfield'.
- Main streets around the 'fan zone', north of the Processional Route.
- Around the stadium base itself.
- Along Sir Matt Busby Way.
- Along routes leading to the potential new railway station.
- Along the Processional Route.
- Along key streets which converge at the new Avondale Road bridge and the route towards Waters Meeting.

For the avoidance of doubt, any future formal centre(s) will be designated via the Local Plan and in the interim applications would need to satisfy national and adopted local policy

DRAFT



Photographs of King's Cross in London showing pockets of activity focused in soft and hard public spaces. Homes front onto the spaces.

© Allies and Morrison



DRAFT

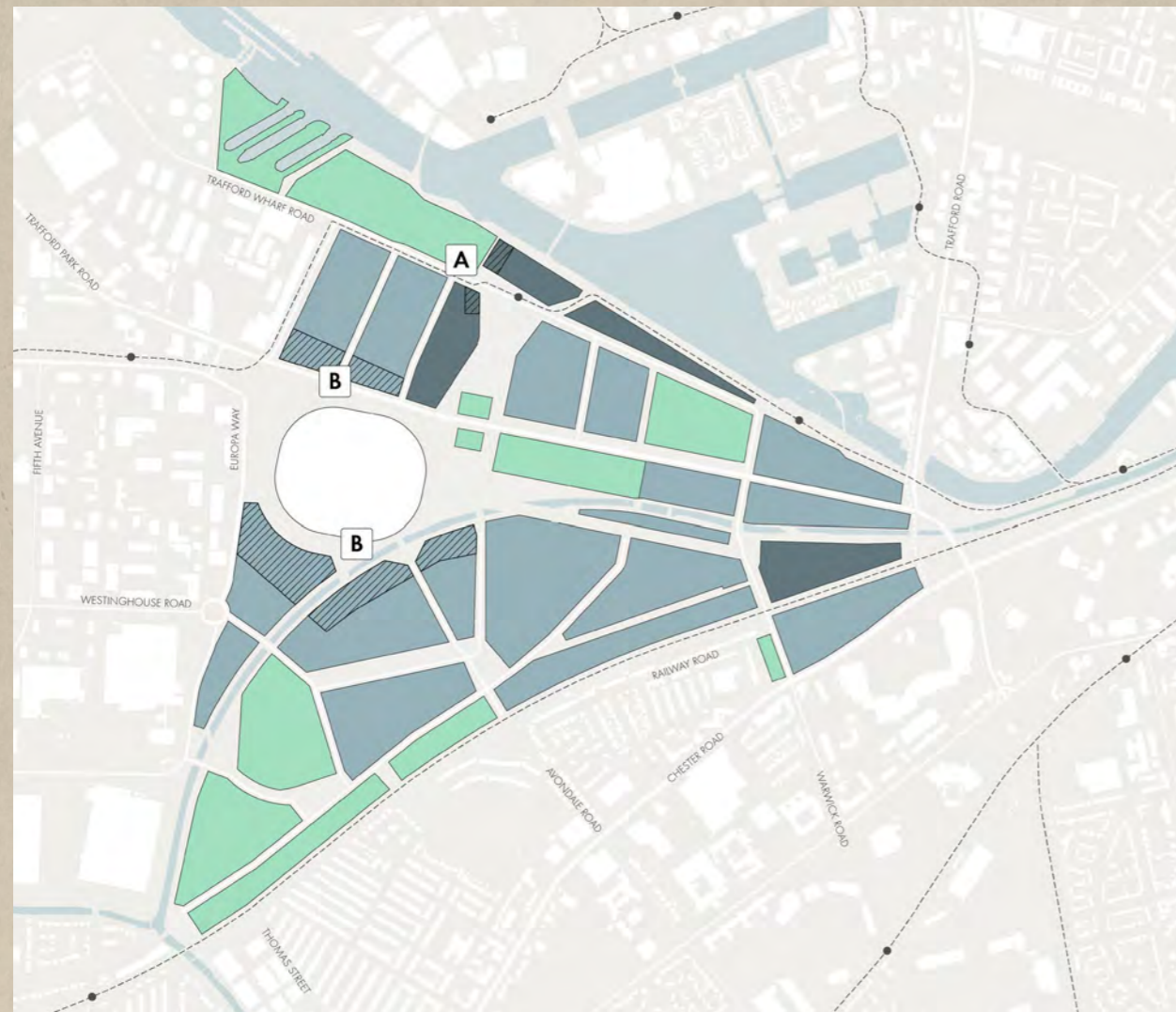


Fig 20 Proposed building heights

**Key**

- Tall - Up to 40 storeys
- Mid rise with tall - 6 to 25 storeys
- Low to mid rise - 2 to 6 storeys
- Restricted height - height limitations to protect view corridors

DRAFT

3.4.8 Height and variety

The principle of tall buildings in the Trafford Wharfside area is already established. The emerging Trafford Local Plan Policy BE2 confirms Wharfside as being suitable for new tall buildings in the context of there being a strategic masterplan in place. Guidance around some of the key design considerations relating to tall buildings is outlined in the Trafford Design Code. Tall buildings are defined, under emerging Policy BE2, to be either six storeys or more, or 30 metres or more in height.

The urban character of the areas which surround Trafford Wharfside is varied and contrasting. To the north, the high-density developments at Media City and The Quays provide a dynamic skyline. To the south, the established Victorian and Edwardian residential neighbourhoods of tight-knit two-storey terraced housing characterise the Gorse Hill neighbourhood. To the west, the sheds and warehouses of Trafford Park dominate. Pomona to the east provides the prospect of tall waterfront residential buildings.

Variation in building height, form, and orientation must be provided in new developments within Wharfside to protect local amenity, ensure good levels of daylight and sunlight and create a distinctive local townscape. Within this context, a flexible proposed building height framework is outlined in Fig 20.

Applications for proposals which exceed these heights may be acceptable subject to detailed design considerations and technical assessments in relation to daylight, sunlight and overshadowing and townscape and visual impact, especially in the 'restricted height' areas.

The quality of new public realm around new major developments, including tall buildings in particular, will be a very important consideration in determining their success.

**Tall – Up to 40 storeys**

- Land fronting the Manchester Ship Canal east of the Imperial War Museum is the most appropriate WSM location for tall buildings.
- Buildings heights of up to 40 storeys may be considered appropriate. This upper limit, which is considerably higher than the existing tallest buildings in the vicinity, will depend on viability considerations and should not be seen as a target but as a guide which provides flexibility.
- New development will create a confident new waterfront environment with a strong and dramatic character, strengthening the Ship Canal's and Salford Quay's role as the city's principal western threshold.
- Whilst new development will require variety in buildings heights within this 'tall' zone, heights will rise as development parcels widen to the west.
- These tallest buildings can extend to the western park front parcels which will provide a strong built edge to this new large city park, defining a key route and connection to the new stadium to the south.
- Buildings of up to 40 storeys may also be appropriate in the City Threshold zone adjacent to the potential new railway station, where new tall buildings will help to create a new commercial centre which addresses the remodelled White City Circle immediately to the east.

**Mid-rise with tall – 6 to 25 storeys**

- The majority of the central areas of Trafford Wharfside where residential-led mixed use developments predominate will be characterised by high-density but varied building heights which range between 6 to 25 storeys.

- Variety of building heights will be a key characteristic across the central area of Wharfside. Buildings within this height category should not all rise to the upper end of this range. Rather, a variety of building heights should add interest to local townscape, be used to ensure good levels of daylight and sunlight are enjoyed in new developments and help to aid urban legibility.
- Heights should be managed to maintain longer views towards the new stadium from Salford and Manchester city centre.
- Heights should be managed to maintain local views to the stadium from key approach routes within Wharfside.

**Low- to mid-rise – 2 to 6 storeys**

- Lower building heights typically ranging from 2 to 6 storeys will characterise areas of central and northern Wharfside where existing buildings are being retained. This includes the proposed tech hub area around Kratos and the IWMN and ITV buildings to the northwest.
- The potential reuse and refurbishment of the cable warehouse building on the north side of the Bridgewater Canal will also likely result in buildings being typically lower in this part of Wharfside.
- The Waters Meeting area, south of the new stadium which borders the existing Gorse Hill community to the south will be the other main area where building heights are generally of a more modest and domestic scale.

**A Restricted height - IWMN**

- To protect the setting of the Imperial War Museum North, heights of adjacent new development should step down to maintain views towards this landmark building.

**B Restricted height - New stadium**

- Development in the immediate vicinity of the proposed new stadium should step down to maintain views and maintain prominence of the stadium structure of Wharfside’s principal landmark.

**Landmarks**

Two special buildings will have landmark status within the WSM area:

- Manchester United Stadium
- Imperial War Museum North

The scale and form of new development around these landmark buildings should enable views towards them from the north and east to be managed and maintained to help aid legibility and foster urban identity.



**Projects pursuing variety - (top) Keybridge House in Vauxhall, London; (left) St Andrews, Bromley By Bow; (right) Lock Keepers, London**  
© Allies and Morrison



**DRAFT**

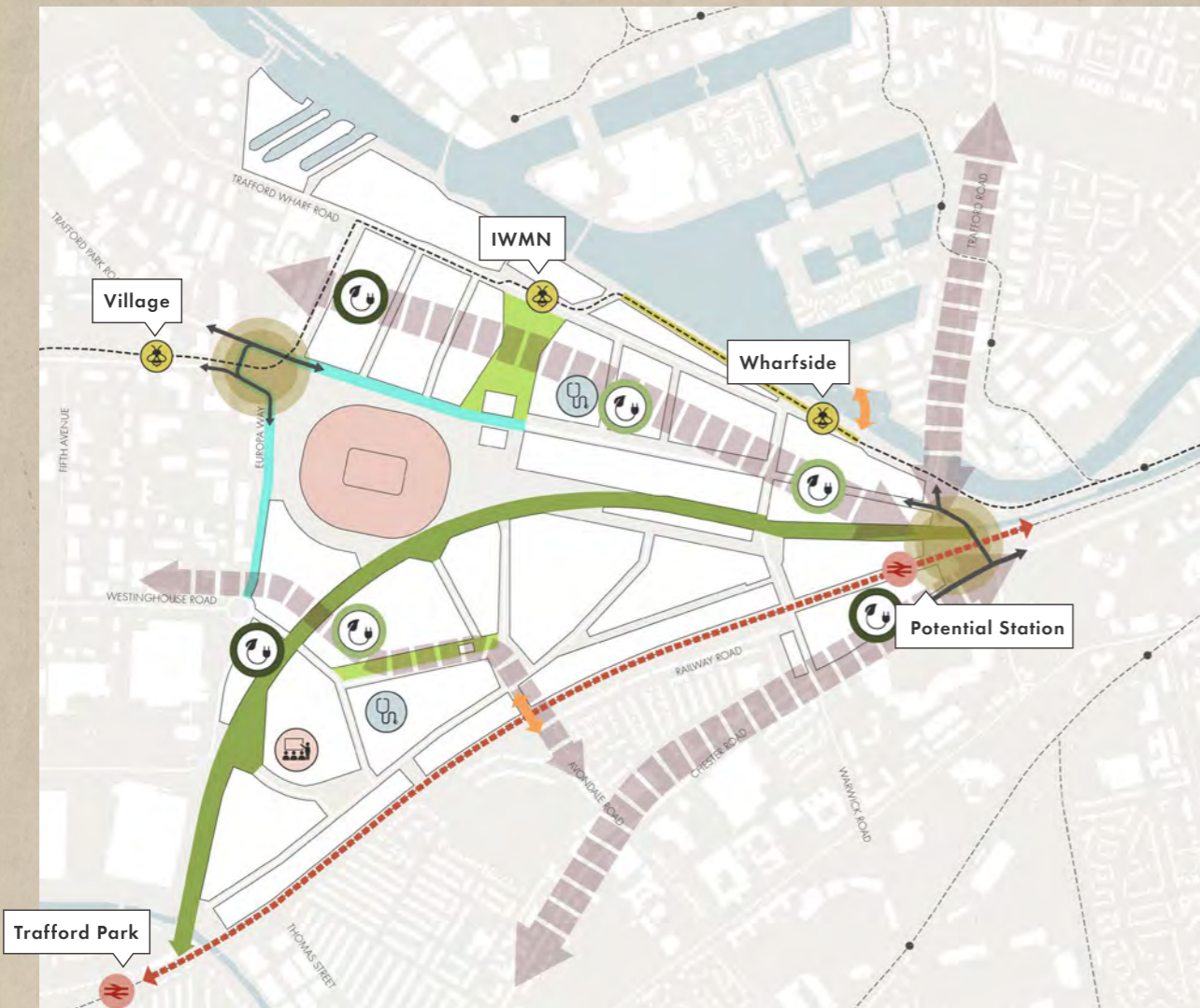


Fig 21 Infrastructure plan

**Key**

- Priority areas for road narrowing
- Major junction remodelling
- Bus Priority Corridors
- Rail line and station
- Metrolink stop
- Metrolink crossing improvements
- Mobility hub
- Education
- Health centre
- Key green spaces
- Bridgewater Canal green route
- Stadium
- Proposed bridge connection

DRAFT

3.4.9 Infrastructure provision

Comprehensive change and transformative growth at this scale requires significant investment in existing, and the provision of new, infrastructure. This includes investment in hard urban infrastructure - energy provision, improvements to public transport, road upgrades, new junctions and bridge connections. It also includes the provision of and investment in community infrastructure - new school places, local health care provision and public open space.

Particular elements of infrastructure which are integrated into the Wharfside Strategic Masterplan include:

- **Heat energy network** More advanced work is progressing on the establishment of a heat energy network to support new development in the adjacent Civic Quarter. A high-level assessment of the potential options for carrying a similar approach forward in the Trafford Wharfside area has been undertaken. Opportunities to tap into waste heat from nearby data centres presents opportunities within and in the surrounding Wharfside area.
- **Connections** The WSM's urban structure aligns with, and makes improved connections to, the wider area's route network. Particular new connections and junction improvements will be required. Examples include the proposed bridge connection to Salford's Clippers Quay; a new road bridge connection with the Avondale Road axis; exploiting existing structures to create improved connectivity with Trafford Park Station; radically improved sustainable travel provision at the White City and Village Circles; and improved Bridgewater Canal crossings.
- **Public transport improvements** Complementary improvements to the local public transport network across all key modes are required. For Metrolink, network capacity upgrades, improved crossing facilities along the Ship Canal Walk and improvements to all stops serving the stadium on event days are all key infrastructure priorities. For rail, a potential new station / interchange west of White City Circle and

improvements to Trafford Park Station are longer-term opportunities to increase public transport capacity and connections with the city centre (whilst recognising that reusing existing disused station infrastructure might also present opportunities). Buses offer the most immediate opportunities to deliver capacity and service improvements to support Wharfside's transformation - with more frequent and new services penetrating the whole area and connecting communities with new facilities. The provision of mobility hubs would support such improvements. The scope and nature of any such improvements will need to be agreed with TfGM and all key transport stakeholders.

- **Public open space** Creation of a city-scale public park which serves existing and new communities and provides a visual and physical connection between the new stadium and the IWMN. A network of smaller spaces will be required - with opportunities to celebrate the area's history in their provision. A coordinated programme of environmental improvements along the Bridgewater Canal corridor will improve the local environment and align with wider city initiatives.
- **Community facilities** Investment in and improvements to primary and secondary education facilities will be required to secure the provision of additional school places will need to be agreed with Trafford Council as the Local Education Authority. Local health care facilities will also need to be strengthened, either through funding improvements in existing facilities or provision of new facilities as agreed with the Trafford Local Care Organisation and the Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust.

Note that the infrastructure flagged in this section and shown on Fig 21 is critical and essential community, transport and other infrastructure required to support the successful long-term integration and sustainable delivery of the masterplan. Some individual elements of infrastructure may be required to support specific new developments which may not be flagged in this section.



# 4

## PHASING AND DELIVERY

4.1	Delivery	90
4.2	Development capacity - jobs and homes	95
4.3	Infrastructure and phasing	99

*DRAFT*

*DRAFT*

## 4.1 DELIVERY

### 4.1.1 Governance and development corporation

The establishment of the Old Trafford Regeneration MDC represents a transformative approach to delivering comprehensive regeneration at Trafford Wharfside. The MDC will serve as the dedicated delivery vehicle for this flagship development, providing the focused coordination and consistent delivery capacity essential for managing a project of this scale and complexity.

The MDC framework offers significant advantages for coordinated delivery, including the ability to harness resources across local and national government, create diverse investment propositions, and engage with multiple development partners simultaneously. The MDC's operation will span electoral cycles to provide investor confidence while maintaining democratic accountability through board representation from both public and private sectors.

### 4.1.2 Strategic delivery approach

The majority of sites within Trafford Wharfside are in private ownership, requiring careful coordination between the MDC, Trafford Council, and private landowners to achieve comprehensive development outcomes. The Council will work closely with the newly formed MDC to facilitate site delivery through multiple complementary mechanisms that balance private development rights with strategic placemaking objectives.

This collaborative approach includes encouraging early pre-application engagement from developers to ensure alignment with masterplan objectives, continuing to produce and evolve planning policies and frameworks that reflect the area's changing context including the Wharfside Masterplan, new Local Plan requirements, and Trafford Design Code standards. The partnership provides clear and consistent advice to developers to secure high-quality development while using planning conditions to minimise disruption to residents and businesses during construction phases.

### 4.1.3 Infrastructure and community benefit

Strategic use of planning obligations will secure community benefits including contributions towards education and healthcare provision for the new community, high-quality public realm, public open space provision, affordable housing delivery, and local employment opportunities, all delivered in accordance with national and local planning policy frameworks. The masterplan approach enables individual development parcels to come forward without prejudicing adjacent sites or area-wide delivery while ensuring comprehensive infrastructure provision.

The MDC's enhanced powers, including potential compulsory purchase capabilities where necessary, provide delivery certainty while the preference remains for negotiated development partnerships that can accommodate both transformation and operational continuity.

### 4.1.4 Market delivery

The delivery strategy recognises that comprehensive regeneration will occur through phased development over multiple years, requiring flexible approaches that can respond to market conditions while maintaining strategic objectives. The masterplan framework allows individual development parcels to progress at different timescales while ensuring co-ordinated infrastructure delivery, public realm creation, and community facility provision that serves both new development and existing communities.

Trafford Council retains Local Planning Authority status and plan-making responsibilities, with the MDC serving as a key stakeholder in planning applications and collaborative partner in policy development. This structure maintains democratic oversight while providing the focused delivery capacity essential for managing complex land assembly, masterplanning, site preparation, and infrastructure development across the 150 hectare site.

DRAFT

DRAFT

#### 4.1.5 Investment and partnership framework

The MDC structure positions Trafford Wharfside as a flagship development opportunity capable of attracting major public and private investment through enhanced market confidence and streamlined delivery processes. The combination of democratic accountability, specialist expertise, and long-term commitment provides the stability essential for securing development partnerships while the Western Gateway Mayoral Development Zone designation offers additional investment incentives and regulatory streamlining.

Where necessary, Trafford Council will intervene to ensure Development Plan allocations are delivered in appropriate timescales and facilitate comprehensive development delivery, always seeking agreement-based solutions that respect existing landowner rights while achieving strategic regeneration objectives. The delivery framework balances the need for coordinated placemaking with the practical realities of multiple ownership, varied development timescales, and the requirement to maintain successful existing operations during the transformation process.

This comprehensive delivery approach, combining MDC powers with collaborative planning frameworks and strategic intervention capabilities, creates the foundation for realising Trafford Wharfside's potential as one of Europe's most significant mixed-use regeneration projects while ensuring benefits for both new developments and existing communities throughout the delivery process.

#### 4.1.6 Delivery and phasing

Trafford Wharfside's comprehensive transformation is a long-term prospect. Economic and political cycles will pass. As regeneration schemes come forward, there will be many delivery phases, determined by individual landowners and developers.

Much will depend on the delivery of Manchester United's new stadium. An immensely complex project given the need for the existing Old Trafford to continue to host football matches whilst the replacement stadium is constructed.

Liaison with Wharfside's existing principal landowners and active developers during the preparation of this WSM has provided some high-level appreciation of development objectives and potential timescales for development.

This informal feedback has helped to inform a strategic phasing overview. The two phasing plans outlined here correlate to the development phases outlined in the emerging Trafford Local Plan. The first plan presents a strategic overview of when planning permission might be secured across the area. The second plan presents, over the same phasing periods, a strategic overview of when developments might be delivered and completed.



## 4.2 DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY - JOBS AND HOMES

### 4.2.1 Phasing by planning consent



Fig 22 Phasing by planning consent

#### Phase 1: 0 to 5 years 2025 to 2030

- 6,500 to 7,000 homes
- Circa 18,500 new jobs\*

Principal development zones in Phase 1 include the stadium and stadium district and the area around 'Central Midfield'.

#### Phase 2: 6 to 10 years 2031 to 2035

- 850 to 1,000 homes
- Circa 2,400 jobs\*

Principal development zones include pockets of land north of the Bridgewater Canal and north of the proposed stadium.

#### Phase 3: 11 to 15 years 2036 to 2040

- 5,800 to 6,200 homes
- Circa 8,400 jobs\*

Principal development zones include the areas south of the Bridgewater Canal - the existing Freightliner and MIFT sites together with pockets of land in the vicinity of White City Circle.

#### Phase 4: 16+ years (beyond the Plan period), 2041+

- 650 to 800 homes
- Circa 700 jobs\*

The principal development zone is the statutorily protected Maritime rail freight site.

\*Job numbers are estimated on the basis of potential new floorspace and do not include jobs associated with the new stadium, jobs associated with the construction period and new jobs in the wider supply chain.

DRAFT

DRAFT

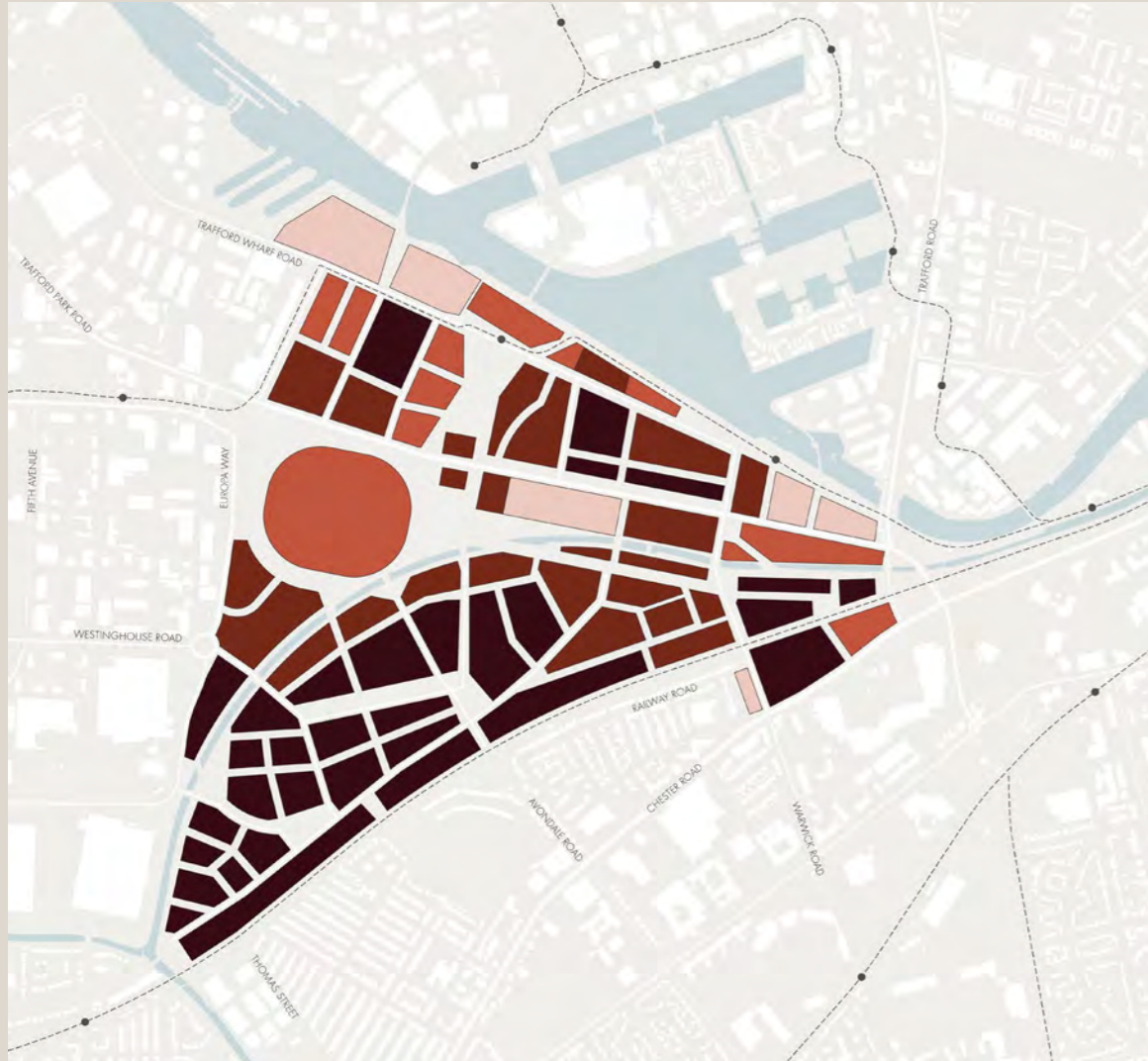


Fig 23 Phasing by delivery

DRAFT

## 4.2.2 Phasing by delivery

### Phase 1: 0 to 5 years 2025 to 2030

- 550 to 800 homes
- Circa 2,600 new jobs\*

Principal development zones in Phase 1 include redevelopment of the recently consented Hilti headquarters.

### Phase 2: 6 to 10 years 2031 to 2035

- 3,200 to 3,600 homes
- Circa 3,950 jobs\*

Principal development zones include the Stadium and addressing the Ship Canal and those which frame 'Central Midfield'.

### Phase 3: 11 to 15 years 2036 to 2040

- 3,750 to 4,000 homes
- Circa 16,100 jobs\*

Principal development zones include much of the Stadium District together with the parcels in Central Wharfside.

### Phase 4: 16+ years (beyond the Plan period), 2041+

- 6,300 to 6,600 homes
- Circa 7,350 jobs\*

The principal development zones include the cluster of freight sites to the south-west of the site together with sites in the vicinity of the potential new railway station.

### Overview

The WSM demonstrates approximate development capacities of, over a period of approximately 30 years, around 15,000 homes and circa 30,000 (net 26,800) jobs\*.

\*Job numbers are estimated on the basis of potential new floorspace and do not include jobs associated with the new stadium, jobs associated with the construction period and new jobs in the wider supply chain.

DRAFT

		PHASE 1 2025 - 2030 550 - 800	PHASE 2 2031 - 2035 3,200 to 3,600	PHASE 3 2036 - 2040 3,750 to 4,000	BEYOND PLAN PERIOD 2041 + 6,300 to 6,300
WSM_INFRA_1	<b>HEAT NETWORK</b>	Energy centre will be required from the outset to capture all phases			
WSM_INFRA_2	<b>PUBLIC TRANSPORT</b>				
	Bee Network (bus) upgrades	Service, routing and capacity upgrades to be explored	New services introduced to support growing demand	New services introduced to support growing demand	
	Metrolink (tram) upgrades	Service, routing and capacity upgrades to be explored	Increase capacity on the network with more frequent and longer tram services	Increase capacity on the network with more frequent and longer tram services	
	New railway station		Investigate service enhancements to increase capacity of existing network and services	Potential new railway station / interchange west of White City Junction	
	White City remodelling		Reallocation of A5082 Wharfside Way (east) for active travel and bus priority measures		Radical remodelling of the White City junction, further improving active travel and bus priority measures
	Village Circle remodelling		Remodelling of Wharfside Way (west) and Europa Way to facilitate new stadium development	Improvements to Village Metrolink stop to deliver better connections with the new stadium	
	Mobility Hubs		Micro-mobility, cycle hire, bus interchange, car hire and decked parking provision	Micro-mobility, cycle hire, bus interchange, car hire and decked parking provision	
WSM_INFRA_3	<b>NEW BRIDGE CONNECTIONS</b>				
	Clippers Quay footbridge	New planned footbridge between Wharfside (near Metrolink stop) and Clippers Quay			
	Bridgewater Canal footbridge		New footbridge west of the existing temporary road bridge to Stadium		
	Avondale Road bridge			New bridge over railway to provide good quality active travel and local bus connections. Event-day management measures will be required	
WSM_INFRA_4	<b>PUBLIC OPEN SPACE</b>				
	Area wide public realm strategy	Incremental public realm improvements	Incremental public realm improvements	Incremental public realm improvements	Incremental public realm improvements
	Ship Canal	Reimagining Metrolink infrastructure along the Ship Canal corridor and associated improvements			
	'Central Midfield'		Phased provision of major city park at the heart of the Wharfside community	Phased provision of major city park at the heart of the Wharfside community	
	Bridgewater Canal		Public realm improvements in the vicinity of the Stadium - lighting, surfaces, cycle provision		
	Waters Meeting			New community park	New community park
WSM_INFRA_5	<b>SCHOOL PLACES</b>		Off-site education provision	2 Form Entry primary school to directly serve new residents	Off-site education provision
WSM_INFRA_6	<b>COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE</b>		Health care contributions	New health care facilities in line with population / demand increase	Health care contributions

## 4.3 INFRASTRUCTURE AND PHASING

Six broad infrastructure categories have been identified, the provision of which is considered necessary to support the levels of regeneration and growth outlined in the WSM. These categories are:

- Heat network
- Public transport
- New bridge connections
- Public open space
- School places
- Community health care

The provision of this infrastructure will be the subject of negotiation between landowners, developers, the MDC, Trafford Council, TfGM and the GMCA.

In outlining the key elements of infrastructure considered necessary to support the different phases of development, the adjacent table provides an initial basis for these negotiations.

# 5

## ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN

5.1	Introduction	102
5.2	Illustrative public realm framework	104
5.3	Placed-based guidance	124
5.4	Wharfside Waters	126
5.5	Wharfside Central	134
5.6	Stadium District	144
5.7	Wharfside South	152
5.8	Waters Meeting	160
5.9	City Threshold	168

*DRAFT*

*DRAFT*

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

### 5.1.1 Public realm and place-based guidance

Working within the parameters and guidance outlined in the Strategic Masterplan above, this section presents an Illustrative Masterplan for the whole of the Wharfside area. Whilst the guidance and the scheme featured is illustrative, it presents an interpretation of how Wharfside could look if the strategic principles and parameters outlined in the Strategic Masterplan are successfully applied and delivered.

The detailed layout, massing and appearance of buildings and spaces will be determined on a phased basis through a process of detailed design, consultation and delivery. It is anticipated that different land owners and design teams will bring their own interpretation and creativity to Trafford Wharfside as each building, block, space and street comes forwards.

Proposals for individual sites will be subject to the normal planning approvals process. It is however envisaged that detailed proposals forming the basis of planning applications (and other statutory consents) stay true to the vision and objectives as set out in this document.

This Illustrative Masterplan has two principal components:

1. **Illustrative public realm framework** An exploration of six identified public realm 'Key Moves' which expand on the proposals outlined in the Strategic Masterplan.
2. **Place-based guidance** Providing supportive reference material relevant to each identified character area across Wharfside.

Both enrich and expand on the guidance already provided in the Strategic Masterplan, bringing the opportunities to life. The intention is not to outline prescriptive and rigid requirements, but to help communicate the bold vision, ambitious objectives and high aspirations for Trafford Wharfside's long-term transformation.



Fig 24 Illustrative view of the Trafford Wharfside scheme

## 5.2 ILLUSTRATIVE PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK

### 5.2.1 Public realm vision

#### Defining Trafford Wharfside as a landscape

The landscape vision for Trafford Wharfside is to establish high quality open spaces with a strong and recognisable identity, celebrating and building upon Wharfside's distinctive assets. The qualities of the area can be translated into defining features that drive the creation of a distinctive landscape character. The objective is to deliver placemaking that builds on Trafford's raw, blue, and green identities.

#### Wharfside is Raw

Visible traces of industrial and productive heritage define the location. Its relationship with the Manchester Ship Canal, the Trafford Park, and Greater Manchester's wider infrastructure has left a legacy of rail tracks and robust materials that contribute to Wharfside's unique character.

New public realm will celebrate Wharfside's strong heritage by integrating rail tracks, dock edges, and a robust material palette. These elements will create clear wayfinding, strengthen local identity, and reinforce a sense of belonging rooted in Trafford's industrial character.

#### Wharfside is Blue

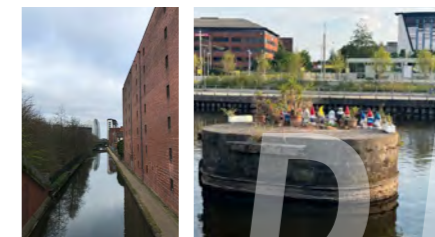
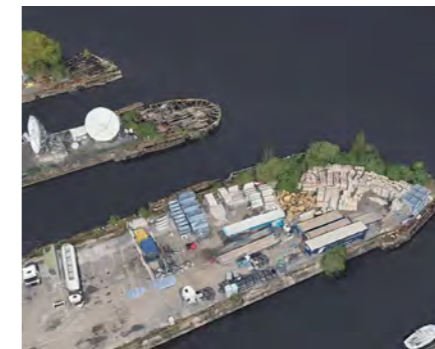
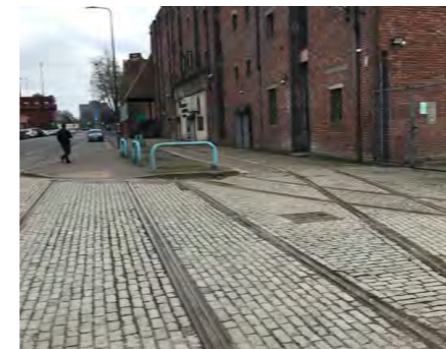
Two city-scale waterways, the Manchester Ship Canal and the Bridgewater Canal, shape Wharfside's identity. Enhancements to the dock-front public realm and the softer edges of the Bridgewater Canal will strengthen connections to water, offering residents and visitors an urban experience shaped by nature.

The Ship Canal can be enhanced by encouraging recreational uses that support active mobility and inclusive social activity. The Bridgewater Canal, with its potential as a social spine, can integrate generous green areas and contribute to the city's biodiversity networks. Together, both waterways offer linear east-west routes that weave nature, movement, and access to water.

#### Wharfside is Green

Trafford Wharfside's nature is untamed and self-grown. The vision is to maintain the sense of wilderness, drawing on the raw environment where vegetation thrives in unexpected places, while enhancing its ecological value.

While retaining the atmosphere of self-sown wilderness, green spaces should be expanded to support biodiversity, provide essential green infrastructure, and create play and leisure opportunities for both new and neighbouring communities.



DRAFT

## 5.2.2 Values

At the heart of the vision lies a commitment to using the landscape and public realm as the unifying thread, an interconnected framework that draws together the site's most valuable assets: its rich natural landscapes, the waterways that shape its character; and the enduring legacy of its industrial heritage. By allowing these elements to inform the design of the public realm, the approach ensures that growth strengthens, rather than fragments, the site's identity.



### Guide urban development through natural and ecological systems:

Reconnect with and enhance existing regional and local ecosystems.

### Position green spaces as blue-green infrastructure:

Establish a network of high-performing open spaces that serve a dual role as green infrastructure, strengthening Trafford's resilience.

### Create both homes and habitats:

Build not only for people, but also for the wildlife and ecosystems that call Wharfside home, now and in the future, ranging from micro-habitats to regional and global ecological assets.

Trafford Wharfside's green and blue spaces are well used by the public, by walkers, runners, commuters and should therefore be looked after and promoted



DRAFT

## 5.2.3 Big Moves

The following components of the Wharfside public realm strategy, presented on Fig 25, centre on capitalising on the area's existing environmental assets - its waterways, infrastructure, and industrial heritage. Strategies are put forward to help ensure these assets are harnessed to create a connected, legible, and distinctive public realm. Together, they outline a framework for enhancing accessibility, ecological value, and the overall experience of moving through and occupying the site.

- 1 'Central Midfield'** This key open space provides a clear visual link between the Stadium and the Imperial War Museum North, while also offering the opportunity to establish a green area that unites both waterways.
- 2 Ship Canal Walk** Opportunity to enhance the public realm along Trafford's Ship Canal frontage while connecting with both existing and forthcoming redevelopments in Salford.
- 3 Roads to streets** The industrial character of the area results in wide roads and large junctions. The vision transforms streets such as Trafford Wharf Road, Wharfside Way, Europa Way and the reimagining of the heavily engineered White City Circle and Village Circle junctions from car- and lorry-dominated routes into walkable, green streets.
- 4 Bridgewater Canal** A principal social spine for recreation, the Bridgewater Canal provides much needed green space and the opportunity to contribute to wider ecological objectives. It also forms an integral part of the new Stadium District and Fan Zone.
- 5 Neighbourhood spaces** Existing rail tracks on site suggest potential routes through development zones, weaving together self-grown vegetation, established ecological corridors and the site's raw industrial character. Railway Park is one of several local, yet valuable, green spaces for local communities to enjoy that connect with and incorporate existing green corridors that extend across the site and beyond its boundary.
- 6 Processional Route** A generous pedestrian axial approach towards the new stadium. Aligned directly with the stadium, this is a vibrant, active and animated space scaled generously to accommodate event-day crowds.

# DRAFT

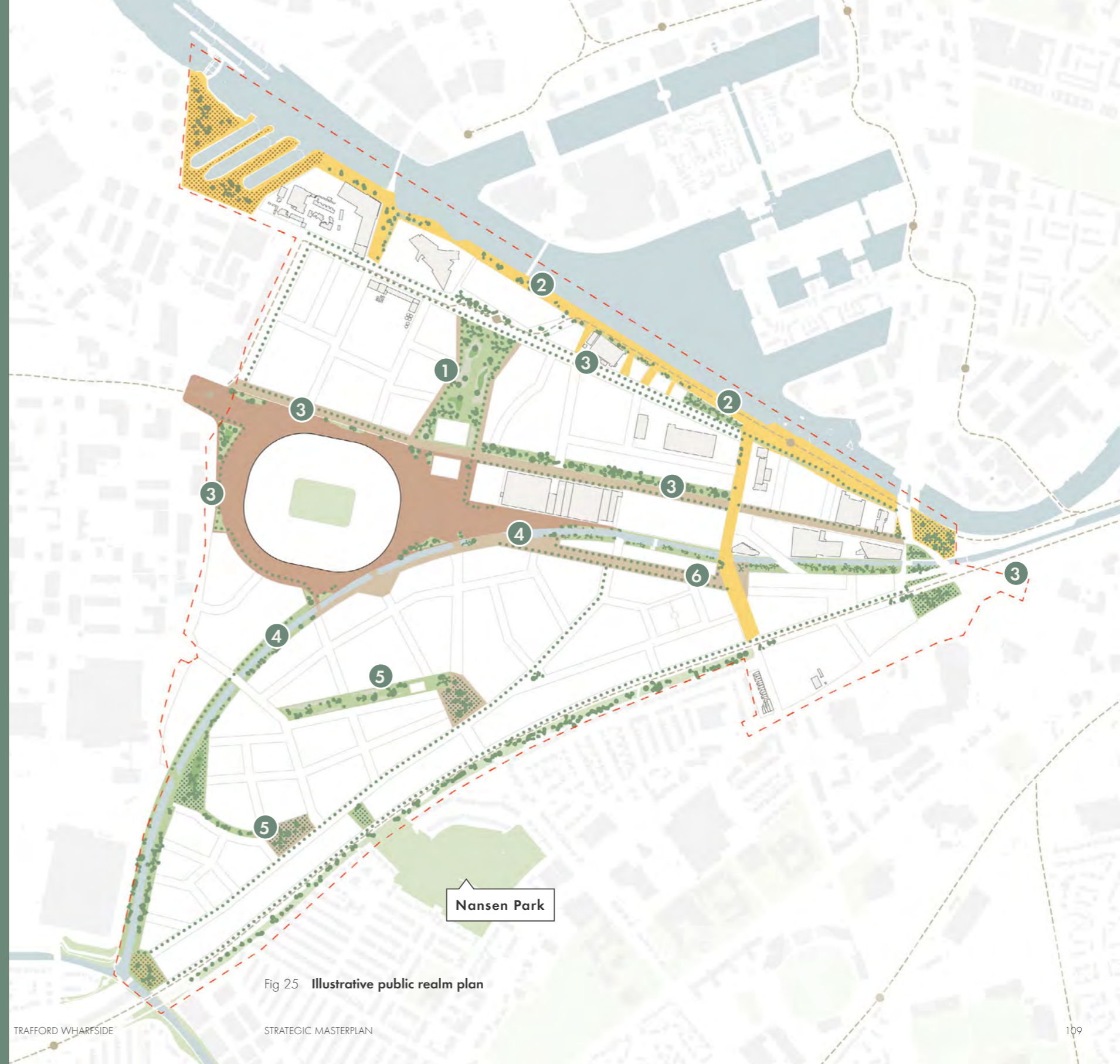


Fig 25 Illustrative public realm plan



**Bispeparken, SLA** Climate resilience meets public amenity.



**Gellerup Park, SLA** Naturalistic, meandering pathways connect pockets of activity space.



**Les Promenade de Reims, Osty et Associes** Activity pockets adjacent to central open-lawns.

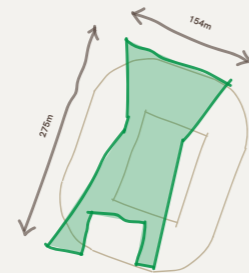


**Gellerup Park, SLA** Wilded habitat, communal playspace.

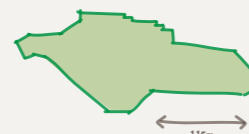
## BIG MOVE 1 'CENTRAL MIDFIELD'

A major public space connecting the Ship Canal corridor and IWMN with the new stadium and the Bridgewater Canal corridor has been a long-held aspiration and integral part of the framework for Wharfside's transformation. Parameters and guidance relating to the (i) size; (ii) location; (iii) shape; and (iv) programme of this new public open space are outlined below.

**(i) SIZE:** Open space standards are not an appropriate tool to control the size of a new city-district public park. Referencing parks proposed in major recent regeneration schemes as well as existing parks in the city is more useful however - see Fig 26. Wharfside's 'Central Midfield' will be approximately 3 Ha in size which compares well to other major new spaces coming forward across the country. This size is also favourably comparable to other public parks in the city which perform a similar role and function to that envisaged for 'Central Midfield'.



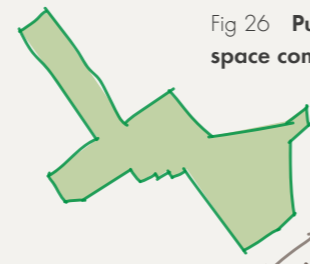
Trafford Wharfside, Manchester  
**15,000 homes : 48,000 jobs**  
circa 3 ha proposed



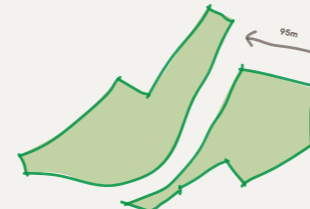
Mayfield Park, Manchester  
**1,500 homes : 10,000 jobs**  
circa 2.25 ha proposed



Ordsall Park, Manchester  
**2nd largest park in Salford**  
circa 3 ha existing



Earls Court, London  
**4,000 homes : 12,000 jobs**  
circa 3.5 ha proposed



Red Bank, Manchester  
**15,000 homes : 5,000 jobs**  
circa 2 ha proposed



St Michael's Flags & Angel Meadow Park, Manchester  
**A major public space for the city centre**  
circa 2 ha existing

Fig 26 **Public open space comparitors**

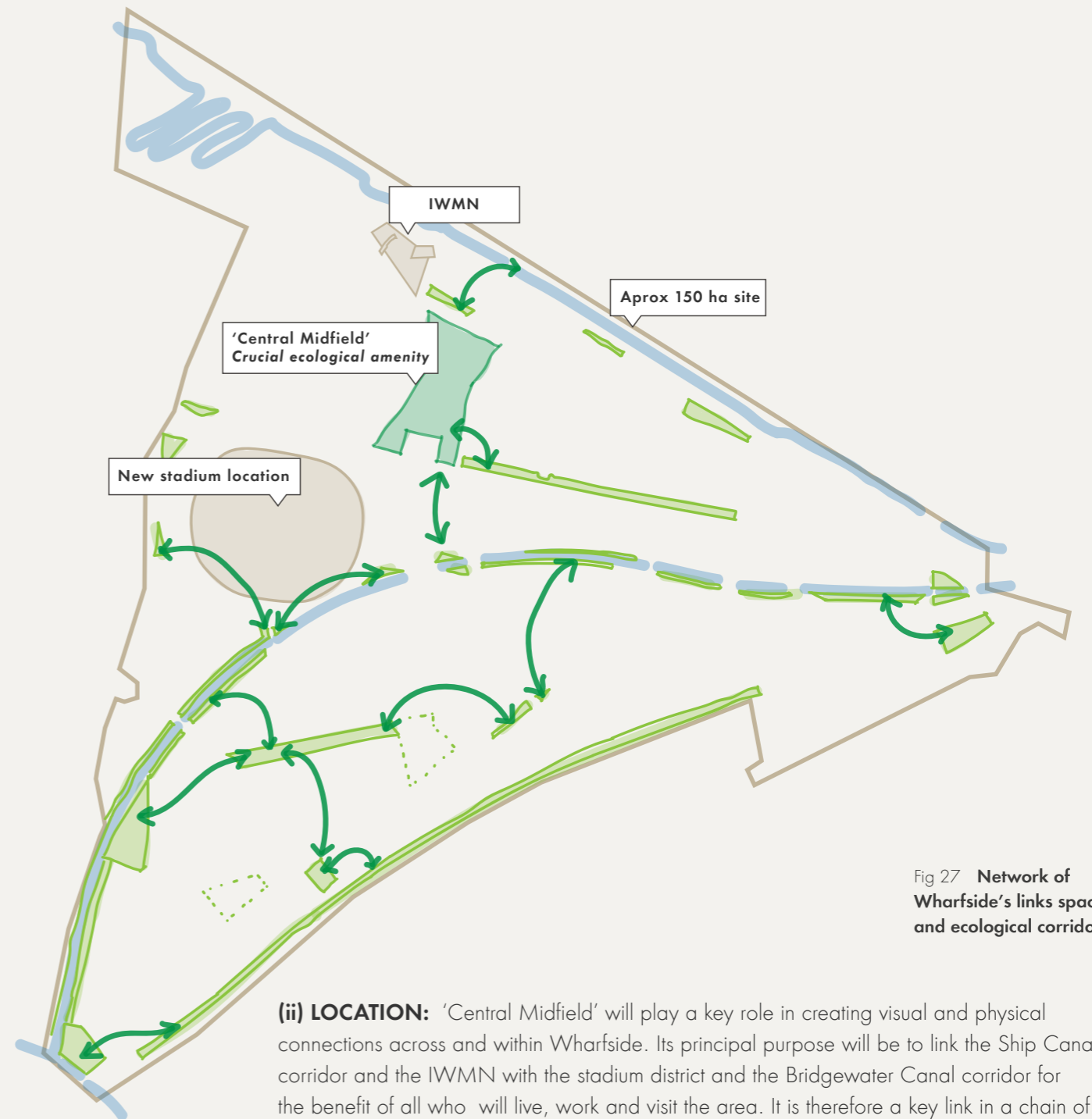


Fig 27 **Network of Wharfside's links spaces and ecological corridors**

**(ii) LOCATION:** 'Central Midfield' will play a key role in creating visual and physical connections across and within Wharfside. Its principal purpose will be to link the Ship Canal corridor and the IWMN with the stadium district and the Bridgewater Canal corridor for the benefit of all who will live, work and visit the area. It is therefore a key link in a chain of important spaces and routes. Located centrally in the Wharfside area, between the proposed stadium location and the IWMN and its adjacent Metrolink stop, it will play a central role in connecting all proposed new communities and clusters of activity as well as supporting wider journeys in all directions. The location of the park is likely to also present flexibility during the stadium construction phase during which materials and prefabricated stadium elements will need to be delivered and managed.



Fig 28 Defining 'Central Midfield's shape (clockwise from top left)  
 1 Crank towards the IWMN;  
 2 Crank towards waterfront access;  
 3 Crank towards the connection to Avondale Road; and  
 4 Crank towards the new stadium

(iii) **SHAPE:** The park should be responsive to its context. Its shape, form and function will all have a role to play in this regard. With its general location in the central-north section of Wharfside established - between Trafford Wharf Road and Wharfside Way - its proportions, access points and form respond to routes, activities, infrastructure and destinations around it, see Fig 28. Its four sides respond to context as follows:

- Northwest:** Cranks towards IWMN's public realm and footbridge beyond. It also aligns with the level pedestrian crossing at the Metrolink platform's western end.
- Northeast:** Cranks to connect directly with the eastern end of the Metrolink platform and future routes to the Ship Canal frontage.
- Southeast:** Aligns with extended routes across the Bridgewater Canal and onwards towards Gorse Hill.
- Southwest:** Cranks to connect with the stadium structure and forecourt space.

(iv) **PROGRAMME:** Whilst much more work is required to develop a brief for the park, some outline thoughts on programming for how the space might be used are set out below, Fig 29.

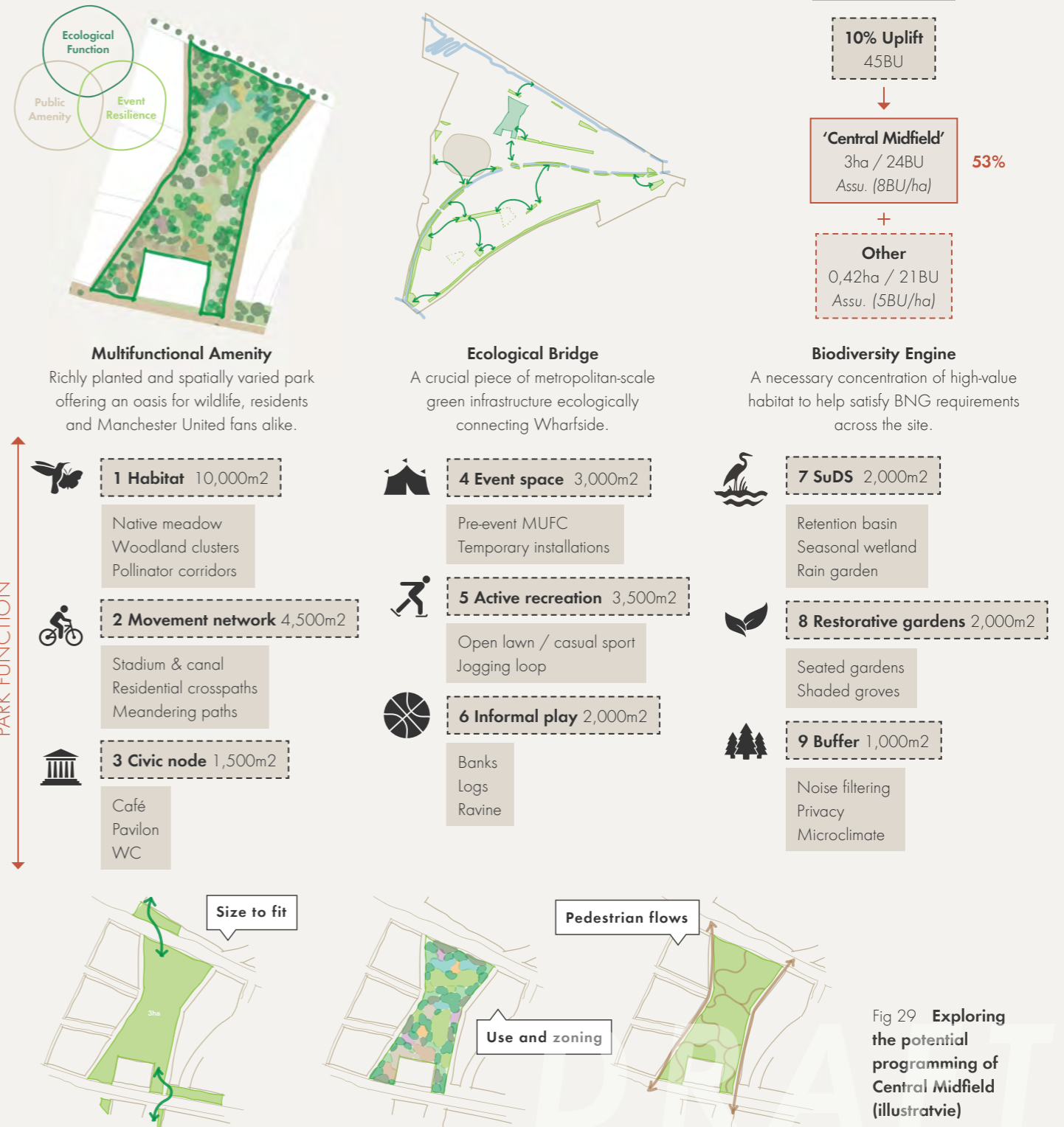
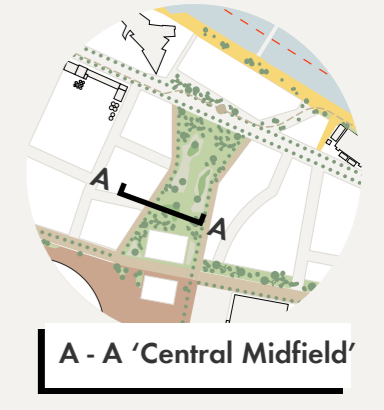
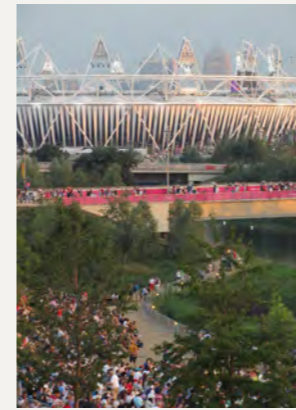


Fig 29 Exploring the potential programming of Central Midfield (illustrative)

# BIG MOVE 1 'CENTRAL MIDFIELD'

'Central Midfield' transforms a former industrial plot into a new public park at the heart of Trafford Wharfside. Its design retains traces of the industrial ground while introducing new trees, planting, and flexible spaces that bring biodiversity and activity to the district.

The illustrative section Fig 30 shows service access streets flanking sides of the park with active commercial uses taking advantage on the event-day visitor numbers. The park will be large enough to host a wide range of activities and facilities. Developing the scope and brief for the park will provide opportunities to engage local communities, including young people.



Queen Elizabeth Park and its relationship with the Olympic Stadium  
© Allies and Morrison

Park total width: 70 - 130m

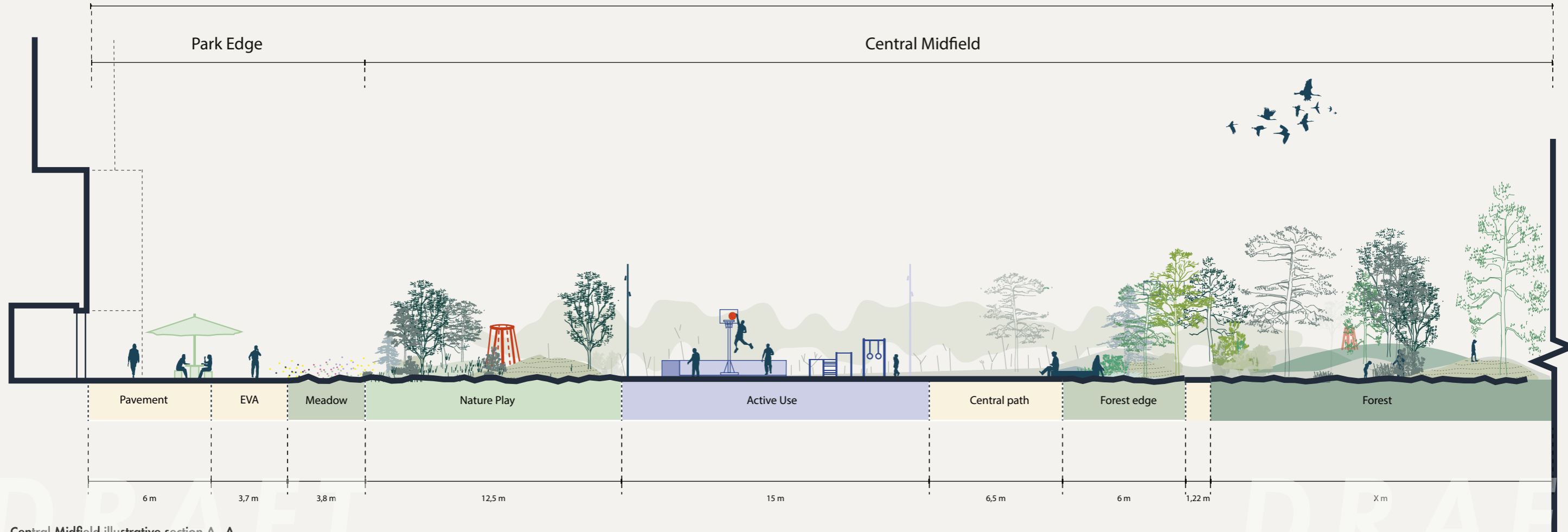


Fig 30 Central Midfield illustrative section A - A

# BIG MOVE 2 SHIP CANAL WALK

Wharfside's relationship with the Manchester Ship Canal represents a huge, untapped opportunity. Currently, the opportunities presented by a string of high-profile waterside development opportunities are undermined by the poor-quality environment of the heavily engineered nature of the Metrolink infrastructure which separates the sites from the water's edge. While the transport infrastructure must be safeguarded and effectively managed to accommodate substantial visitor flows at peak times, there is significant scope to improve the relationship between Wharfside and the Ship Canal. This is important because the new Wharfside neighbourhood will eventually be home to upwards of 30,000 new residents and many thousands of new employees. The design and management of this critical public transport infrastructure should be reviewed to enable much needed improvements in the quality of the public realm.

Narrowing of the carriageways and supporting better facilities for walking and cycling along Trafford Wharf Road will help to better connect the Ship Canal environment to Wharfside, as shown in Fig 31. Frequent, generously proportioned and good quality pedestrian and cycle crossings over the Metrolink route should be provided to help better connect the area with the Ship Canal environment. Further, opportunities to provide improved connections to the water itself should be explored given the increasingly important role of leisure uses on the Ship Canal whilst keeping the Canal open for operational shipping and navigation.

Fig 31 Trafford Wharf Road section B - B showing opportunities to narrow carriageways, turning roads into streets (see also Big Move 3 below)

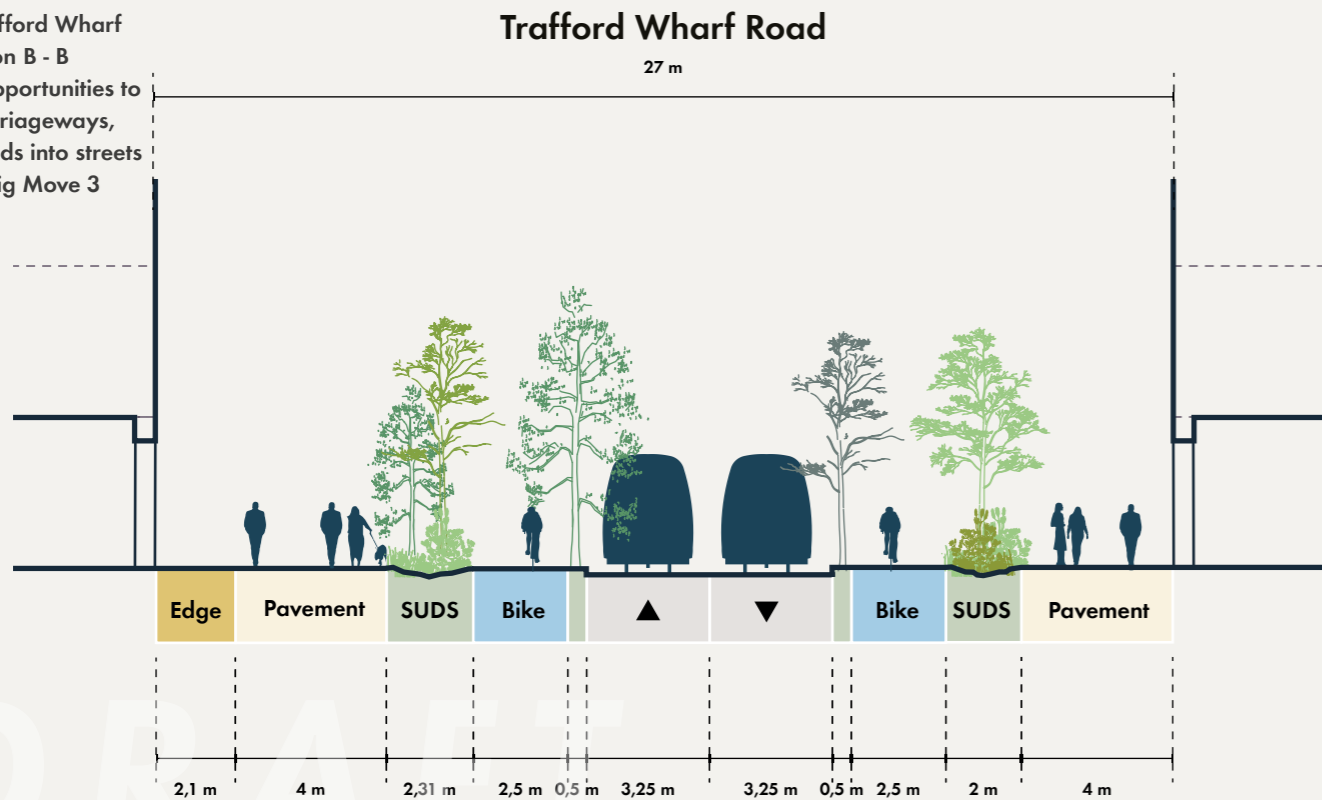


Fig 32 Existing: Wider spaces, that do include seating opportunities, do not provide any reason to stay or gather.



Fig 33 Proposal: Activate the area with diverse programming that is inclusive to all. (Reference: Ofelia Plads, Copenhagen).

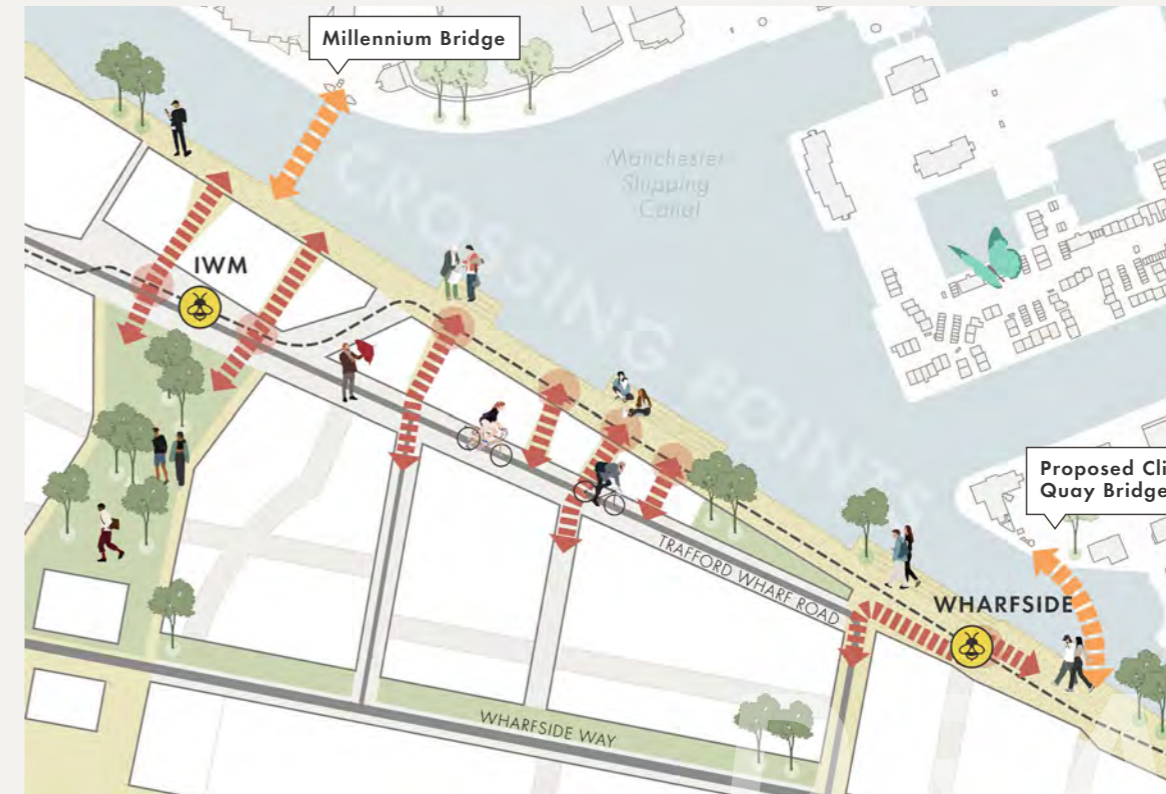
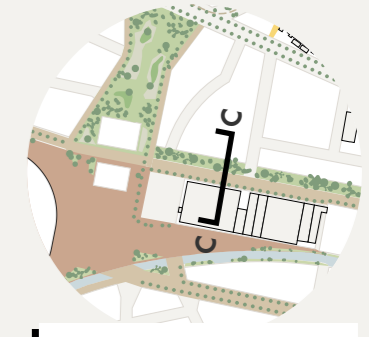


Fig 34 Plan showing more frequent pedestrian crossings over the Metrolink track between Wharfside and Imperial War Museum stops to establish better connections between the Ship Canal and Wharfside area

# BIG MOVE 3 ROADS TO STREETS

Wharfside's existing road infrastructure has been designed to support heavy industrial vehicles. Transforming these wide roads to accessible, safe and landscaped streets represents a huge opportunity. A new Wharfside Way will balance movement with landscape. The retained council-owned green space offers a foundation for more accessible, continuous public realm - linking habitats, and homes along the street. By softening its edges and introducing places to sit and gather, the street shifts from a traffic-dominated route to a greener, more civic environment.

Road narrowing along both Wharfside Way and Europa Way may be required to accommodate the stadium structure and the requisite space around it.



**C - C Wharfside Way**

Street narrowing associated with stepped access for the AO Areen, Hunts Bank near Manchester Victoria Station

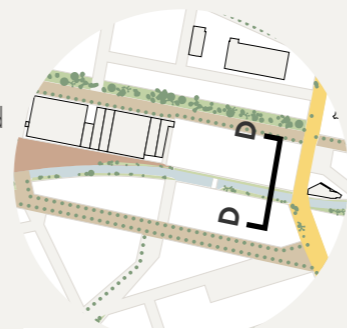


Fig 35 Wharfside Way illustrative section C - C

DRAFT

# BIG MOVE 4 BRIDGEWATER CANAL

The Bridgeway Canal corridor - an important active travel leisure route - will present a diverse and contrasting range of environments as it passes through Wharfside - from ecologically rich, quiet spaces to a Fan Zone hub for pre-match gatherings. Fig 36 and Fig 37 show how this currently unloved environment could be transformed with landscape, ecology and towpath improvements for active travel. New development along the corridor will add life and activity to this waterside environment. Opportunities to create wider basins for events and gatherings at special locations should be explored.



D - D Bridgewater Canal

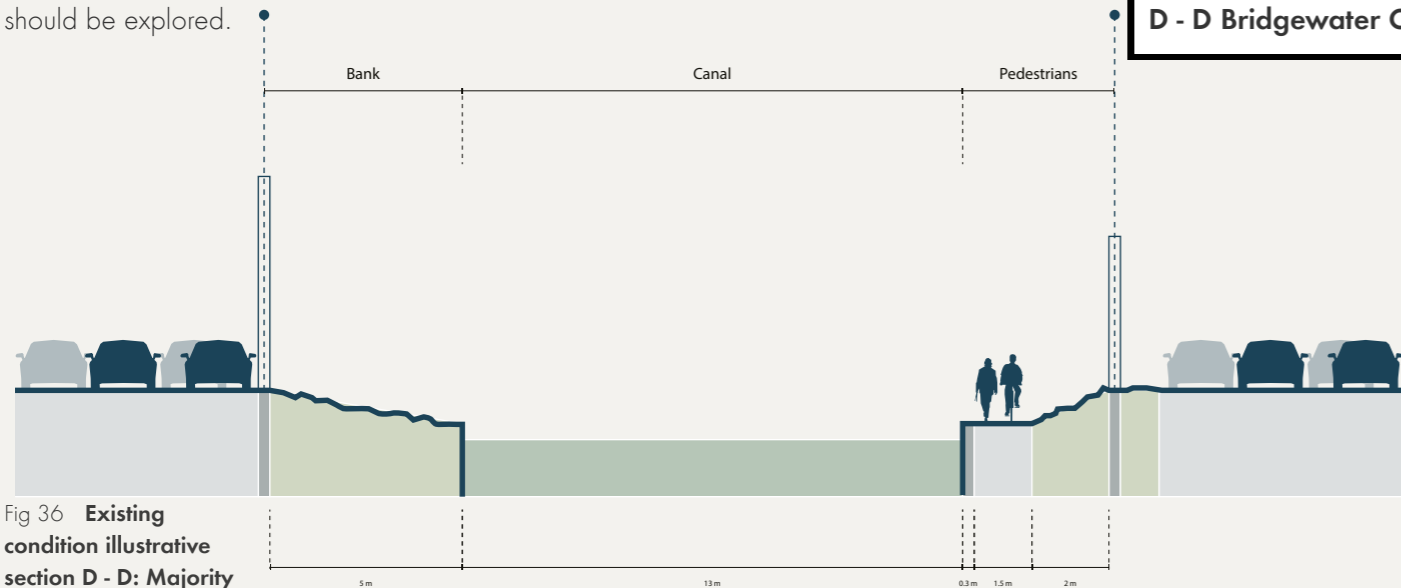


Fig 36 Existing condition illustrative section D - D: Majority of canalfront interfaces with surface parking

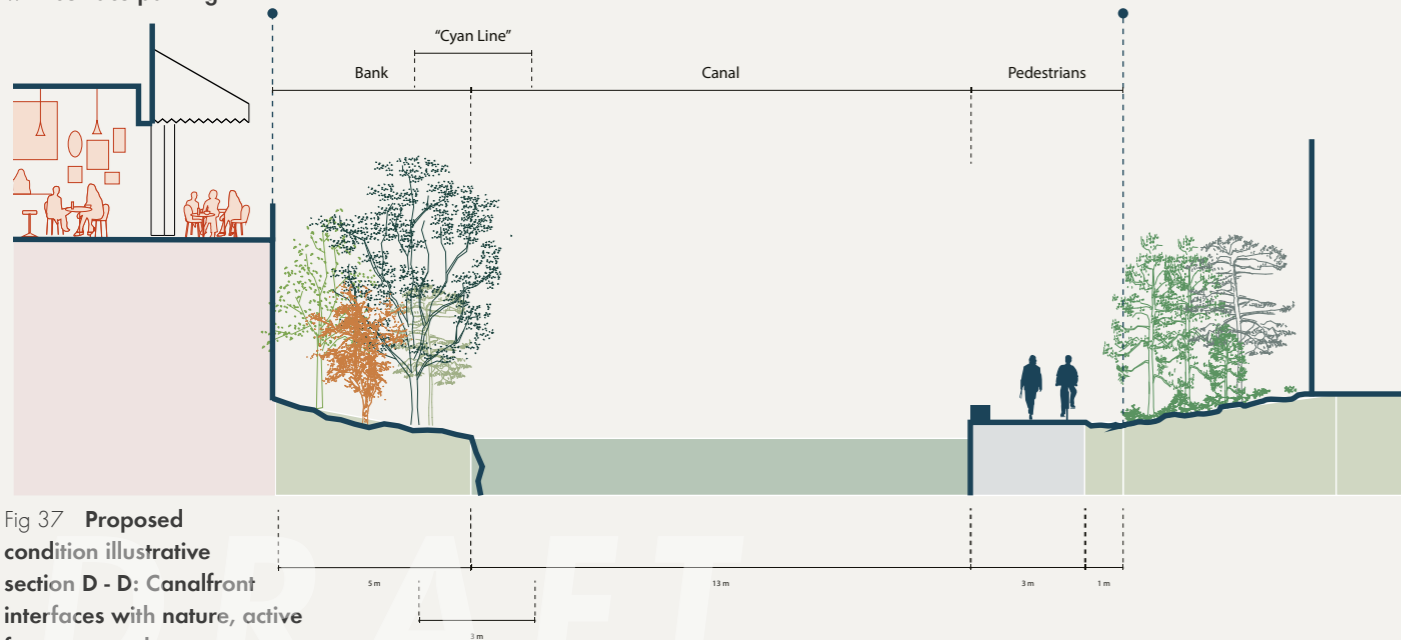


Fig 37 Proposed condition illustrative section D - D: Canalfront interfaces with nature, active frontages and more generous provision for active travel

(Below) The canalside green steps at Kings Cross in London  
© Allies and Morrison



Eden Dock © HTA - Stepped decking to encourage informal social gathering, used as a space to relax, pass time and linger

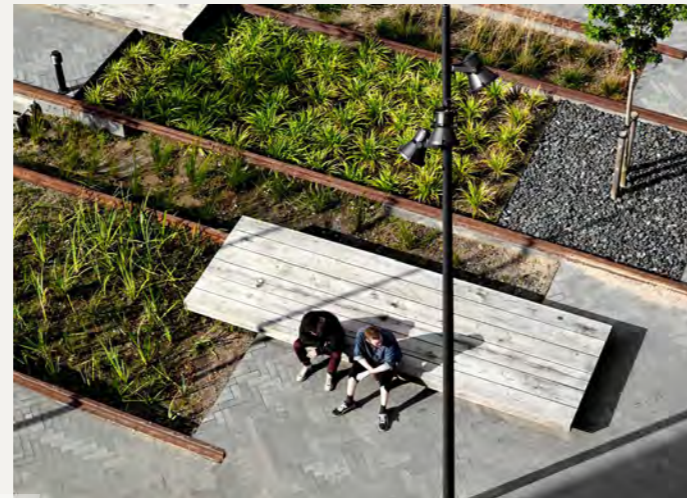


DRAFT

## BIG MOVE 5 NEIGHBOURHOOD PARK

A new neighbourhood park in the heart of Wharfside South will celebrate Wharfside's industrial heritage through landscape. The approach balances industrial heritage with contemporary use - transforming tracks into playful, social, and ecological elements. The vision celebrates Trafford Wharfside's history while supporting inclusive public life and resilient urban nature.

**Clockwise left to right:**  
**Pullman National Historical Park, Site**  
**Design Group**  
**The Highline, JCFO**  
**Nordbahnhof, Fugmann Janotta**  
**Godsbanearialet, WERK**



DRAFT

## BIG MOVE 6 PROCESSIONAL ROUTE

The Processional Route and stadium precinct will combine a processional boulevard to guide fans across the site with a framing arrival space as a collective, celebratory experience. The Processional Route is designed to flex beyond event-days, transforming into a pedestrianised public strip that supports gatherings, events, and everyday activity. In doing so, it becomes both a memorable part of the event-day experience and a civic stage for everyday year-round urban life.

**Clockwise left to right:**  
**Hyllietorg, SWECO Architects**  
**Exhibition Road, Dixon Jones**  
**Sønder Boulevard, SLA**



DRAFT

## 5.3 PLACED-BASED GUIDANCE

### 5.3.1 Character areas

As detailed in Section 3 of this report, six character areas have been identified within the WSM. Their approximate extents are illustrated in Fig 38. More detail, description, explanation and reference material for each area is outlined across the pages that follow.

- Wharfside Waters** A high-density, predominantly high-rise water-side residential neighbourhood.
- Wharfside Central** A medium- to high-density, mixed-use neighbourhood centred around a new city park.
- Stadium District** A vibrant commercial sports and leisure district, anchored by the new Manchester United stadium.
- Wharfside South** A medium- to high-density, mixed-use neighbourhood between Bridgewater Canal and the railway, connected to Gorse Hill.
- Waters Meeting** A lower-scale mixed tenure and family friendly residential neighbourhood.
- City Threshold** A high-density gateway area located at the intersection of several existing and emerging neighbourhoods.



Fig 38 Plan of the Trafford Wharfside character areas

DRAFT

DRAFT

## 5.4 WHARFSIDE WATERS

### 5.4.1 Overview

Wharfside Waters has the potential to become a distinctive and striking high-density urban waterfront environment – complementing the activities and attractions at The Quays. It will feature generous walkways, complemented by planting, seating, and places to pause. A rich mix of buildings, with shops, cafés, and amenities at ground level, will help activate and animate the waterfront.

**1 Integrating Metrolink lines** A study into the Metrolink stops in the WSM / OTR area will be carried out, to review the relationship between stops, the public realm, developments, non-event and event-days and their integration. This will include consideration of how improvements can be made to reduce the barrier-like impact of the route along Ship Canal Walk.

**2 Creating a unique waterfront hub** The waterfront environment presents a unique and as-yet untapped opportunity to create a vibrant hub of activity for commuters, visitors and those crossing the Ship Canal to access amenities in Salford. The aspiration is to transform the public realm into a welcoming waterfront that encourages seamless passage and longer stays. What is currently a hard, linear landscape confined to the water's edge will be softened through strategic planting. The potential to activate the water's edge by introducing softer eco-edges, sloped promenades, or pontoons will also be explored.

**3 Maximising views and architectural definition** Leveraging the fantastic views across the Ship Canal towards Media City and Salford, waterfront developments will be designed at a higher scale. This approach will not only maximise views but also provide a strong, defined architectural edge along the waterfront. Active frontages must be integrated into the base, especially facing the Ship Canal, to further animate the public realm along the water's edge.

**4 Enhancing connectivity** Enhanced north-south connectivity is key to the success of this neighbourhood, specifically linking Salford's with Wharfside's new activities and environments including the proposed 'Central Midfield' park. New developments must create a permeable passage between Trafford Wharf Road and Ship Canal Walk - wide routes with active ground-floors to ensure clear views and vistas through the site.

**5 Integrating cultural institutions** Established cultural institutions such as IWMN and ITV's facilities present a significant opportunity. The intention is to better integrate these buildings into the public realm, allowing these institutions to open up and connect more effectively with the waterfront environment. The opportunity to fully integrate the IWMN site with Wharfside's transformation is a particular opportunity, removing its current defensive perimeter boundary.

**6 Improving Trafford Wharf Road** WSM proposes improvements to Trafford Wharf Road by reducing the road widths. This crucial step enables benefits including: better links with Ship Canal Walk; wider pavements to accommodate increased pedestrian footfall; segregated cycle paths to encourage active travel and modal shift; and ecological and flooding benefits from greening; and, tree planting Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) at the verges.



Fig 39 Plan of the Wharfside Waters area within the illustrative masterplan



1. 2. & 3. Social spaces at Bankside  
4. Markets and restaurants at the Southbank Centre in London, south of the River Thames

© Allies and Morrison



5. Stratford Waterfront - a sequence of waterfront buildings each with their own architectural identities, on the frontage of the River Lea and in the shadow of the London Stadium

© Allies and Morrison

DRAFT

## 5.4.2 Wharfside Waters - Ground floor uses

Wharfside Waters represents a significant opportunity within Wharfside to introduce active uses and high-density homes that will contribute significantly to the area's social life.

Active uses should be prioritised on the ground and upper ground floors where they address principal routes and key public spaces such as the waterfront or new connections leading from the dock to Trafford Wharf Road. These locations naturally offer opportunities for terraces and outdoor seating with views overlooking the Ship Canal.

With established occupiers like Seven Brothers Brewing Company already in the area, it is envisaged that similar uses—including cafés, restaurants, taprooms, and bars—could be accommodated at the base of buildings. These establishments would seamlessly blend indoor and outdoor spaces, animating key areas of the public realm and firmly reinforcing Waters Meeting as a vibrant destination.

The strategy for Wharfside Waters recognises the critically important role provided by the existing Equinix Data Centre,



Fig 40 Ground Floor Uses Plan for Wharfside Waters illustrative masterplan

Fig 41 Axonometric view of Wharfside Waters area within the illustrative masterplan



1



2



3



4

- 1. Goodluck Hope, London © Allies and Morrison
- 2. Bjørvika masterplan, Oslo © SLA & Gehl Architects
- 3. Hale Wharf, London © Allies and Morrison
- 4. Lock Keepers, London © Allies and Morrison

Drawing inspiration from the rich industrial heritage of their locations, projects like Goodluck Hope, Hale Wharf, and Lock Keepers set a clear precedent for Wharfside Waters. These developments are essential in completing missing links between communities, redeveloping the voids left by past industrial activity. They effectively demonstrate how a varied housing mix can be achieved with an architecturally robust approach - one that builds character through recognisable roof-lines, directly inspired by historic wharfs and industrial centres.

The Bjørvika masterplan likewise focuses on restoring historic waterfronts by creating vibrant and engaging public spaces. It succeeds in restoring lost urban connections while simultaneously reimagining public realm around cultural institutions. Furthermore, the plan successfully integrates city nature - not only for practical benefits but also to enhance social well-being and liveability.

DRAFT

DRAFT

A series of residential towers emerge from the dock edge. While maintaining a consistent architectural language, this rich mix of building types delivers variety and visual interest. Materials and roof typologies make specific reference to Trafford Wharfside's industrial heritage. Furthermore, active frontages at the base will enliven the water's edge and activate the critical routes leading to 'Central Midfield' beyond.



Fig 42 An illustrative view over Millennium Bridge looking south towards the site and to the Imperial War Museum North on the right

## 5.5 WHARFSIDE CENTRAL

### 5.5.1 Overview

'Central Midfield' is the heart of Wharfside Central - a vibrant 'city park' activated by perimeter uses during both event and non-event days. Higher-scale, layered developments are proposed to frame the park, providing excellent views to landmarks whilst defining its edges. A genuinely mixed neighbourhood, ground floors of many buildings will offer commercial, leisure, and food and beverage opportunities, while existing businesses to the east of the area will provide a strong foundation for an emerging tech hub.

- 1 'Central Midfield'** Located and shaped to provide high-quality, direct access between the new stadium, the Millennium Bridge, the IWMN, and the Metrolink stop. This generously sized new public space, situated at the heart of the Wharfside Central neighbourhood, will offer a range of managed public facilities. It will also provide flexible spaces for relaxation and recreation and biodiversity benefits.
- 2 Park edge architecture and activation** The park edge will be framed by layered, high-scale developments. Variation in building height, form, and orientation must be included to protect local amenity, ensure good levels of daylight and sunlight and create a distinctive local townscape. Developments bordering the park should feature active frontages. Along the east and west edges, there is an opportunity for frontages to incorporate colonnaded approaches, activating the primary pedestrian routes connecting the Metrolink stop and the new stadium.
- 3 Improving Wharfside Way** The width of Wharfside Way will be reduced to a minimum, freeing up space along the edge for wider pavements, planted SuDS verges, and designated cycle paths. The stadium's immediate environment may also require carriageway narrowing along Wharfside Way and Europa Way. The northern edge's existing green buffer - with mature trees and planting - will be retained.
- 4 Commercial opportunity and diversity** Existing businesses offer a significant opportunity for the eastern end of Wharfside Central to attract similar businesses and potentially foster partnerships with educational institutions. These existing buildings could potentially be expanded or accommodate new additions, thereby adding crucial architectural interest and diversity to the neighbourhood's built environment. The Whitworth Bros. flour mill, with its long-standing relationship with the area, will also be retained.



Fig 43 Plan of the Wharfside Central area within the illustrative masterplan

### 5.5.2 Wharfside Central - Ground floor uses

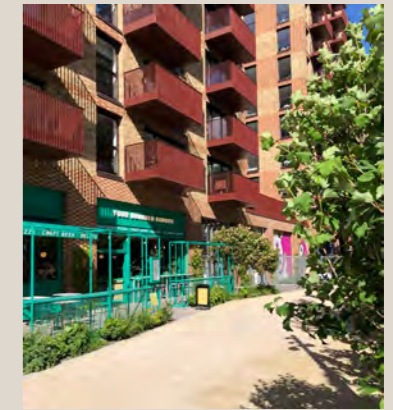
Wharfside Central, much like Wharfside Waters, will be a diverse and dynamic neighbourhood, characterised as much by its new high-density park-side apartment buildings as it is by its vibrant commercial hubs. Ground floor uses will take advantage of strong visitor footfalls between the Metrolink network and the Stadium District. In addition to food and drink uses, ground-floor activity could include leisure and community uses, alongside shops, hotels, and commercial office space. The proposed variations in building height, scale, and architectural expression along the park edge also creates opportunities to animate buildings vertically, through terraces, rooftop pavilions, and destination restaurants that capitalise on views across the park and beyond.

The eastern end of Wharfside Central allows for a more curated approach to occupiers, with tenants clustered in and around the proposed Tech Hub. These buildings could accommodate a range of flexible spaces, carefully arranged to create a vibrant ecosystem that supports local employment, encourages entrepreneurship, and promotes education. Active frontages could showcase innovation through exhibition windows or views into specialist laboratories, while community maker spaces could host events, workshops, and public engagement activities. The role played by the retention of important established businesses such as the flour mills of Whitworth Bros. Ltd. is also recognised.

New developments adjacent to the stadium will be designed to ensure the disturbance associated with event-day activities are accordingly mitigated.



Fig 44 Ground Floor Uses Plan for Wharfside Central illustrative masterplan



Photographs of Elephant and Castle in South London - a green oasis!



Looking north-west, the Imperial War Museum North (IWMN) is prominently visible from 'Central Midfield'. New developments will step back and down in scale, ensuring the museum's iconic form maintains its landmark prominence. A diverse mix of planting thrives in and around the remnants of former industry, with flexible spaces that introduce significant biodiversity and activity to the area. People are encouraged to congregate at the edges where buildings meet the ground, supported by active commercial and commercial frontages. 'Central Midfield's' varied programme of activities and facilities will attract users of all ages.

Fig 45 An illustrative view of central park looking north towards the Imperial War Museum North

DRAFT

DRAFT



**1. & 5. Keybridge House, London** © Allies and Morrison  
**2. Project Zeta, Oxford** © Allies and Morrison  
**3. Plot 14, Brent Cross Town, London** © Allies and Morrison  
**4. Unit 440, Cambridge Science Park, Cambridge** © Allies and Morrison

Keybridge House and Plot 14 at Brent Cross are strong precedents for residential-led, mixed-use developments around 'Central Midfield', showing how identity, vibrancy, and high-quality urban living can be achieved. Both schemes demonstrate the value of varied building forms that create a clear architectural character while also accommodating significant height. They balance active public edges—shops, restaurants, and residential amenities at ground level—with terraces, rooftops, and private amenity spaces above, resulting in lively, layered environments.

At the eastern end of Wharfside Central, there is potential for a tech hub to grow around existing occupiers. Zeta at Harwell Campus and Unit 440 at Cambridge Science Park offer strong precedents for research buildings that combine innovation, flexibility, and placemaking. Each establishes a sense of place while advancing sustainable design. Together, they show that highly functional research facilities can also be contextual, efficient, and identity-forming.

DRAFT

DRAFT

Arriving via Metrolink at Wharfside, looking across Sir Alex Ferguson Way, this view illustrates the potential for a new Tech Hub in Wharfside Central. Other complementary occupiers such as educational partners or businesses might also be attracted to cluster around key existing enterprises to support the establishment of an innovation district in western Manchester.

# Welcome to Wharfside



Fig 47 An illustrative view of the approach towards a new tech hub cluster

DRAFT

DRAFT

## 5.6 STADIUM DISTRICT

### 5.6.1 Overview

The new Manchester United stadium serves as the principal focal point for both this Stadium District and the Wharfside area as a whole. Sport, leisure and entertainment are key economic drivers which will generate a significant increase in visitor numbers making the Stadium District one of the city region's primary visitor destinations.

- 1 Stadium and stadium precinct** The stadium will be a landmark building of national and international significance. Views towards the stadium will need to be carefully managed and aligned with focal points around its structure. The stadium precinct will be a flexible managed space capable of hosting events and animated by uses around its edges throughout the year. Whilst the forecourt space to the east will be the stadium's principal and highest profile exterior event space, the western side of the stadium will present a new face to Trafford Park which will also need care and management in design and execution.
- 2 Routes and connections** The formal approach to the stadium is via the formal tree-lined Processional Route. Other key connections to Stadium District are via 'Central Midfield' to the north and nearby and upgraded Metrolink stops - Wharfside, Imperial War Museum, Village and Old Trafford. The Stadium location may require carriageway narrowing along Wharfside Way and Europa Way. Mobility Hubs located in close proximity to the stadium will provide essential and priority parking capacity.
- 3 Fan Zone, industrial heritage and canal activation** North of the Bridgewater Canal, there is an opportunity to retain elements of Trafford Wharfside's unique industrial heritage. This retained area has the potential to be redeveloped into a Fan Zone or similar complementary use associated with the new stadium. This location offers the best opportunity to create a seamless interface with the Bridgewater Canal, where the public realm and landscaping can be designed to step down to the water's edge, enhancing waterfront access and activity.
- 4 Mixed uses and varied heights** Alongside the concentration of sport, commercial leisure and hospitality uses, the Stadium District is suitable for commercial-led mixed-use developments. These canal-side developments would typically be mid-rise nearer the stadium to not obstruct views with taller buildings located to the east along Sir Matt Busby Way but opportunities for taller development could be explored where appropriate.



Fig 48 Plan of the Stadium District area within the illustrative masterplan

## 5.6.2 Stadium District - Ground floor uses

The Stadium District is intended to drive a strong visitor economy on both event and non-event days, with a focus on uses that complement the new stadium at lower levels, including sport, leisure, and entertainment. These uses will continue along the Processional Route. Presenting an active frontage to the canal corridor is a priority to ensure this nationally significant leisure asset and destination is appropriately addressed and set within an attractive, high quality and well used environment.

Any residential uses as part of mixed-use development will need to be carefully designed and managed to mitigate the impacts of stadium events, including noise, movement and servicing requirements.

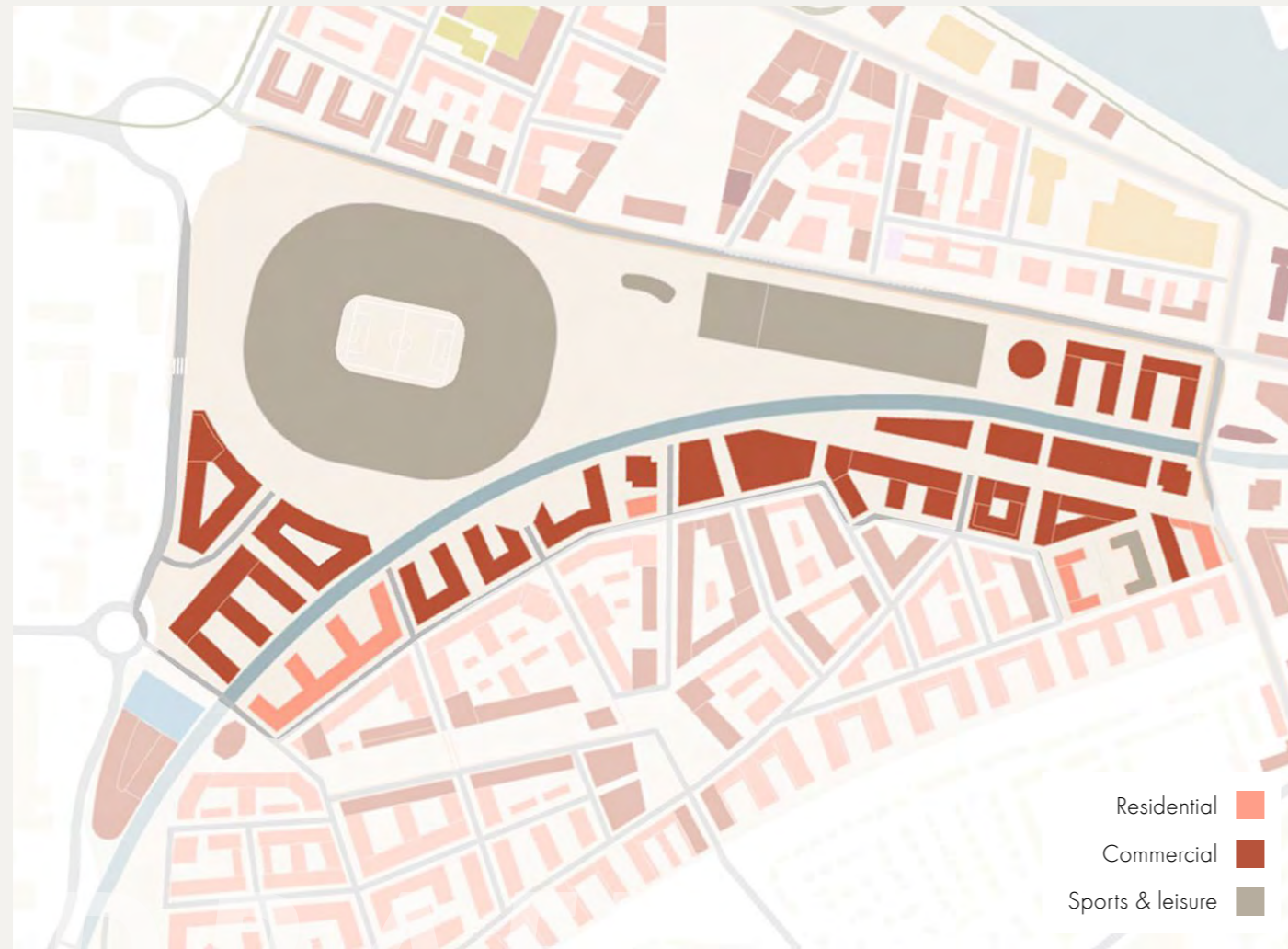


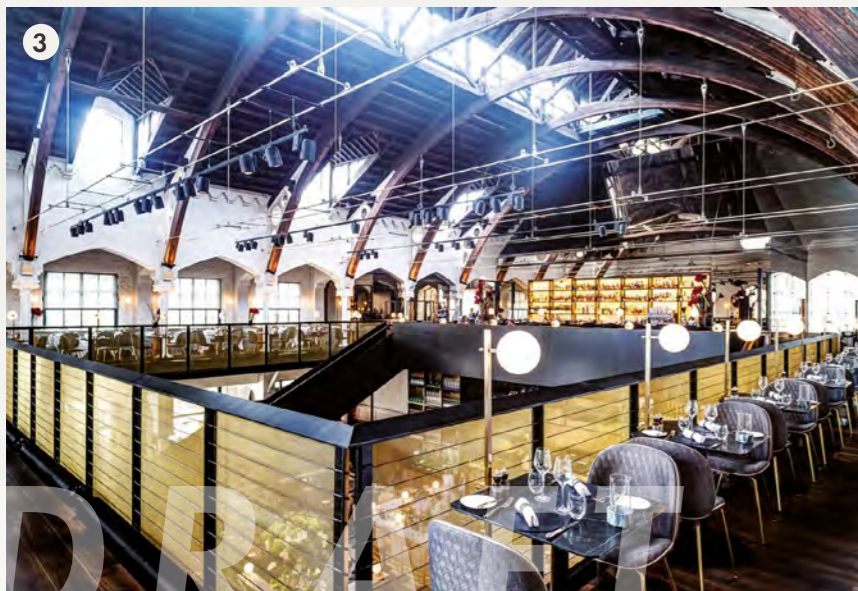
Fig 49 Ground Floor Uses Plan for Stadium District illustrative masterplan



Activity at the Olympic Park in Stratford, London - a mixture of hard and soft landscaping, blue and green infrastructure



- 1 Lewis Cubitt Sq, Kings Cross Masterplan, London © Allies and Morrison
- 2 Wembley Olympic Way, London © Dixon Jones / vPPR
- 3 German Gym, Kings Cross, London © Allies and Morrison, fit out by Conran & Partners
- 4 Dock Shed at Canada Water, London © Allies and Morrison
- 5 Canal-side Green Steps, Kings Cross Masterplan, London © Allies and Morrison



The King's Cross masterplan offers a strong precedent for the mixed-use ambition of the Stadium District. Once isolated and defined by derelict rail yards, King's Cross has been transformed through a flexible, incremental masterplan that has introduced a vibrant mix of uses. Anchor tenants such as Central Saint Martins and Google's new headquarters have reshaped the area and reconnected this former industrial quarter back into London's urban fabric.

Like WSM, the project capitalises on its heritage assets – from the restored German Gymnasium (now a landmark restaurant) to the historic Regent's Canal network – to create distinctive public spaces connected by waterways and framed by refurbished historic buildings alongside high-quality new development.

The proposed tree-lined 'Processional Route' leading to the new stadium draws inspiration from Wembley's Olympic Way. Generously scaled to accommodate tens of thousands of visitors, it is lined with active building frontages hosting sport, leisure, and entertainment uses, with commercial opportunities above.

**DRAFT**

Looking west along the canal, new residential apartments address the towpath. Their generous balconies invite residents to enjoy views of the waterway and its ecology. New bridges provide connections between Wharfside South and the Stadium District and help to navigate the level changes required.

The planned widening of the towpath and enhanced planting will significantly boost local biodiversity. This transformation will convert a currently underused part of Trafford Wharfside into a widely appreciated asset.



Fig 51 An illustrative view looking southwest along the Bridgewater Canal tow path

DRAFT

DRAFT

## 5.7 WHARFSIDE SOUTH

### 5.7.1 Overview

Wharfside South will be a varied and diverse high-quality city residential neighbourhood. Connected to Gorse Hill to the south via a new road bridge on the axis of Avondale Road, Wharfside South will have the full spectrum of housing types at a range of scales and densities. A network of new community spaces celebrate the area's sporting and industrial legacy, adding amenity and value to this sustainable new community.

- 1 Retaining and re-purposing heritage** This area presents a prime opportunity to retain and redevelop some of Trafford's historic industrial heritage. A new neighbourhood park will be a generous family friendly community space which interprets and celebrates the important former regional freight use of the site.
- 2 Connectivity and views** A new road bridge over the railway will open up Wharfside and its facilities to the adjacent Gorse Hill community. A new public space immediately north of this bridge will mark the congregation of numerous routes, with direct views to the stadium. Direct street connections provide safe and legible links to the Processional Route to the east, the canal and stadium zone to the north and Waters Meeting to the southwest. The direct route to the stadium presents the opportunity to create a new canal-side space immediately south of the structure, potentially around a new small canal basin.
- 3 Celebrating historical landscape** Remnants of former railway lines, reclaimed by nature, provide a mature landscape rich in biodiversity. This space on the western boundary of Wharfside South adjacent to Waters Meeting will form an ecological connection with Nansen Park to the south. Existing landscape features of the railway and canal corridors will be retained and improved where possible.
- 4 Celebrating community** With around 15,000 new dwellings planned for Wharfside, the Wharfside South neighbourhood is seen as the ideal location for a new primary school and other community facilities. This location is favoured as it would serve both new communities in Wharfside and existing communities of Gorse Hill equally well.



Fig 52 Plan of the Trafford Parkside area within the illustrative masterplan

DRAFT

DRAFT



(Top) Mixed housing typologies at Waterside Park, London  
 (Bottom row) Canalside living in Hale Wharf, Tottenham.  
 © Allies and Morrison



### 5.7.2 Wharfside South - Ground floor uses

Wharfside South is a predominantly residential neighbourhood with commercial and community uses clustered at key junctions and along key frontages. Commercial buildings will line the Bridgewater Canal, south of the stadium. Retail and local bars and café uses will line the edges of the new neighbourhood park.

This large city neighbourhood presents the opportunity for a rich mix of housing types and tenures, with high-density apartments, mid-rise mansion blocks and potentially some more traditional housing types.



Fig 53 Ground Floor Uses Plan for Trafford Parkside illustrative masterplan



1 Lock Keepers, London  
 2 Lock Keepers, London  
 3 Beltline Yards, Toronto  
 all © Allies and Morrison

Fig 54 Axonometric view of Wharfside South area within the illustrative masterplan



Much like the aspirations for the Wharfside South area, Lock Keepers is a residential-led mixed-use development with a canal frontage which reflects the area's robust industrial past. Uses include cross-tenure and affordable housing with creative businesses, maker spaces and traditional industry. These sit alongside the introduction of new restaurants, cafés, shops, public spaces, and open market homes. The WSM could be delivered through an industrial vernacular that celebrates the former industrial character of this part of the site.

Multipurpose maker spaces are central to the vision for the Beltline development in Toronto, another strong development precedent where the site's former industrial character has influenced the scale, form and design of new developments coming forward.

DRAFT

DRAFT

Looking west through the new neighbourhood open space in the heart of Wharfside South. This community space, flanked by new homes, community facilities and local services will be inspired by the area's proud industrial connections. There might be the opportunity to design features and elements into this new space which use and interpret the area's rail freight legacy to create a family friendly, ecologically rich contemporary yet contextual new public open space.



Fig 55 An illustrative view looking west through a new neighbourhood open space in the heart of Wharfside South

DRAFT

DRAFT

## 5.8 WATERS MEETING

### 5.8.1 Overview

In response to existing communities such as Gorse Hill to the south, and Stretford to the south-west, Waters Meeting is envisioned as a predominantly residential neighbourhood. It will comprise a mix of family-sized townhouses and low-rise apartment blocks, complemented by essential community uses and amenities such as schools, parks, green spaces and waterways.

- 1 Domestic scale developments:** Development plots will be defined by a mix of low-rise apartment blocks and rows of more traditional townhouses. This structure allows for private residential gardens and the potential inclusion of smaller mews house typologies within the inner courtyards of the plots. Complementing this, domestic-scale streets, lined with trees and incorporating shared surfaces, will create a safe and highly walkable place.
- 2 Waters Meeting bridges:** The far south-western tip of this peninsula presents a key opportunity for external connectivity. This can be achieved by upgrading and restoring existing bridge links, providing direct pedestrian access to the neighbouring community of Stretford and the Trafford Park train station. This unique spot, where the canal splits and is surrounded by greenery, is ideal for a threshold space designed for sitting and dwelling for local residents or for event-goers en route towards the Stadium.
- 3 East-west connectivity:** East-west routes link the bridges at the south-western point with the heart of the adjacent Wharfside Central area and all its community amenities. These streets are deliberately broader than the domestic-sized streets elsewhere in the area, featuring wider pavements to ensure the unhindered flow and movement of people traveling to and from the Stadium and Trafford Park Station. The opportunity for active ground-floor uses along this route - including essential services such as pharmacies, post offices, and local supermarkets - will help establish a fully functioning community.
- 4 Green links:** Like elsewhere in the masterplan, existing green spines located in and around abandoned railway lines offer the opportunity to create unique landscape environments. Crucially, these areas will also provide vital habitat and biodiversity links across the entire masterplan. In conjunction with these corridors, more open pocket parks should be included, allowing local residents flexible space for recreation, such as playing a game of football, or simply somewhere to relax.



## 5.8.2 Waters Meeting - Ground floor uses

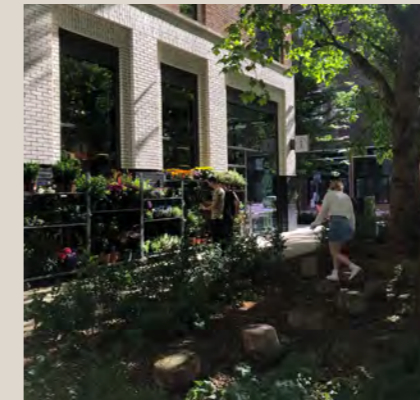
As a predominantly residential neighbourhood, ground floor uses at Waters Meeting are expected to be more limited in their mix, with a primary focus on amenities that support the day-to-day needs of future residents. These may include local convenience retail, such as a post office, hairdresser, and small shops, alongside well-being, healthcare, education, and community facilities. Providing these uses within walking distance can help reduce the need for unnecessary travel, supporting enhanced sustainability and liveability.

On event days at the new stadium, increased pedestrian footfall is anticipated to pass through parts of the area. Key streets that provide direct routes to the stadium therefore present opportunities for more animated ground floor uses that contribute to the area's social life, such as cafés, bars, and small-scale retail.



- Residential ■
- Commercial ■
- Education ■

Fig 57 Ground Floor Uses Plan for Waters Meeting illustrative masterplan



(Below and right) Photographs of some green streets and spaces in Elephant and Castle, (Far right) ground floor uses in Sloane Square, homes off Nunhead Green and The Cut in Waterloo.



DRAFT

DRAFT



1 Ironworks, Mill Road, Cambridge  
 2 Adamstown, Dublin  
 3 West Hendon, London  
 4 Trumpington Meadows, Cambridge  
 all © Allies and Morrison

The aspiration for Waters Meeting is to transform a currently underutilised site into a connected, liveable neighbourhood. Despite their differing scales and contexts, the precedent projects share a strong emphasis on delivering a diverse range of homes, promoting walkability, and creating high-quality public spaces for the community.

Ironworks, Mill Road, located alongside the railway in Cambridge, provides a rich mix of homes and community uses. A range of building typologies – including townhouses, mews houses, apartments, and a community centre – is set within a network of green open spaces that encourage social interaction and wellbeing.

West Hendon, while significantly larger in scale than Waters Meeting, similarly focuses on reconnecting a previously isolated site through new streets, public parks, and community facilities, alongside opportunities for small cafés and shops that activate the public realm and support daily life.

At a more domestic scale, the Trumpington Meadows development demonstrates how careful control of density, street hierarchy, and building form can create a highly walkable and legible neighbourhood. Subtly distinct character areas are delivered through a restrained palette of local materials that responds sensitively to the local vernacular.

DRAFT

DRAFT

Even on a rainy evening, the scale and domestic nature of the new streets in Waters Meeting feel welcoming and homely. This illustrative view of a typical street highlights the planned mix in housing typologies: a row of more traditional, yet contemporary, townhouses leading to slightly larger apartment blocks that form the anchor at the end of the plot.



Fig 59 An illustrative view of a typical domestic residential street in Waters Meeting on a rainy evening

DRAFT

DRAFT

## 5.9 CITY THRESHOLD

### 5.9.1 Overview

Opportunity for large landmark towers mark this gateway point for visitors approaching Trafford Wharfside Masterplan from the city centre, with robust medium-to-high scale developments fronting onto Chester Road. De-engineering the White City roundabout, coupled with improving permeability into this area of the site, and the introduction of a possible new railway station, offers this site the potential to become a truly transformative arrival point accessible by all modes of transport.

**1 New Station Plaza and connectivity** With the potential new train station located at the heart of this area, there is a significant opportunity to provide a new threshold plaza. This plaza will feature wide connecting routes leading westwards toward the Stadium District and linking directly with the main Processional Route. Similarly, to the south of the railway lines, safe and direct routes must be established through the emerging residential development, connecting onward to the new Civic Quarter south of Chester Road. De-engineering the White City roundabout at the far eastern point will create humanised connections with opportunities for a rich mix of planting, over the once hostile road junction, leading directly toward the Bridgewater Canal, Pomona Island, and ultimately the city centre.

**2 An architectural gateway** This gateway site provides the opportunity for a cluster of landmark towers. Whilst care will be needed to take account of the setting of heritage assets including the Victoria Warehouse, this height will allow residents to capitalise on panoramic views across this emerging new city district to the west, as well as views toward Salford and the city centre to the east.

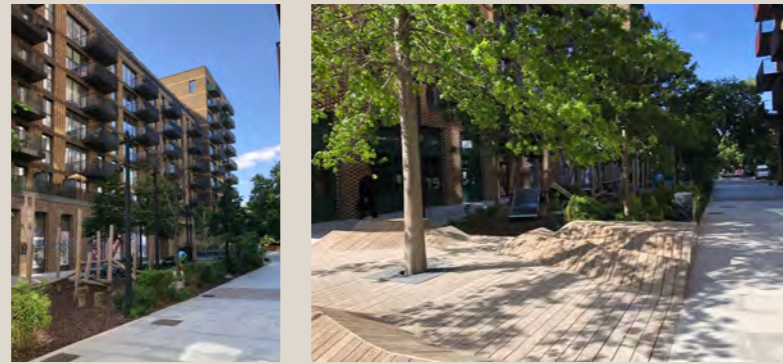
Surrounding these towers, lower developments will feature a mixed-use distribution, ranging from residential apartment blocks to commercial uses that benefit from their proximity to the potential new railway station. South of the railway line, robust residential apartment blocks will front Chester Road, with the opportunity for incorporating several storeys of other active uses at the base of the buildings.

**3 Mobility Hubs and accessibility** Mobility Hubs are strategically located along Chester Road and Victoria Place. This positioning provides people with the opportunity to access the site by car or public transport, while simultaneously discouraging vehicular traffic from driving toward the Stadium or other attractions further within the Wharfside area.

**4 Northern canal edge** North of the Bridgewater Canal, established Cultural and Entertainment venues, such as the Victoria Warehouse, are located within a series of rich industrial heritage buildings. Existing and emerging residential uses will begin to front directly onto the Ship Canal in this area.



Fig 60 Plan of the City Threshold area within the illustrative masterplan



(top) Landscaping on a pedestrian street in Elephant and Castle, (middle) ground floor uses at Bankside in London and (bottom) small workshop units and shops in Elephant and Castle.

### 5.9.2 City Threshold - Ground floor uses

The City Threshold functions as a transitional space characterised by the ebb and flow of people moving between the potential new train station and Metrolink stop, neighbouring areas, and key destinations such as the new stadium and Victoria Warehouse. In response to this high level of movement, and alongside the mix of commercial and residential uses proposed, ground floor activity is expected to focus on uses that contribute to the social life of the area, including cafés, bars, and restaurants. These uses are anticipated to cluster around key public spaces and primary routes, taking advantage of good levels of sunlight and creating attractive places to dwell, gather, and spill out into the public realm.

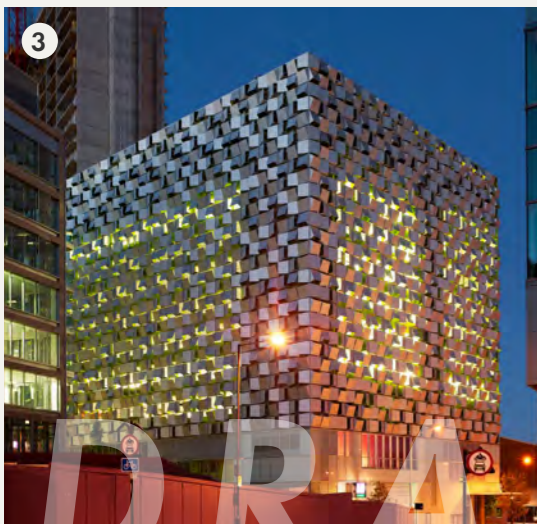


- Residential ■
- Commercial ■
- Hotel and hospitality ■
- Cultural and community ■
- Mobility hub ■

Fig 61 Ground Floor Uses Plan for City Threshold illustrative masterplan



1 Pancras Square, Kings Cross Masterplan, London  
 2 Two Fifty One, London  
 3 Charles Street Car Park, Sheffield  
 4 Bloom, Nine Elms, London  
 all © Allies and Morrison



The mix of building typologies proposed within the City Threshold area draws on a range of clear precedents. Tall landmark buildings, such as Two Fifty One at Elephant & Castle, are proposed to be strategically located at the eastern gateway to the site. Its sculptural crown and articulated façade create a changing presence across long views, while at street level the building adopts a more intimate scale, supported by the introduction of new green space.

Buildings along Chester Road are required to be robust in character, with active ground-floor uses forming a buffer for residents from the surrounding environment. The Bloom buildings in Vauxhall provide a strong precedent, combining active frontages with generous resident amenities, including sheltered courtyards and quieter external spaces set back from the street.

The Charles Street Car Park, part of Sheffield's Heart of the City regeneration, demonstrates how utilitarian buildings such as car parks or mobility hubs can still be architecturally expressive. Its folded anodised aluminium façade creates shifting light and shadow, aligning with the ambitions of a transformative masterplan such as Trafford Wharfside.

Public spaces in and around the potential new train station must provide clear routes and strong visual connections towards the Stadium District. Pancras Square at King's Cross, London, offers a relevant precedent, where a diverse mix of building uses defines strong edges, and generous intervening space allows people to move freely towards destinations in the distance.



Improved crossings over Chester Road provides a radically improved connection with the new Civic Quarter. A residential tower with two storeys of active frontages, housing cafés, shops and restaurants, welcomes pedestrians towards the site, with a generously proportioned street leading pedestrian towards the potential new train station beyond. To the right, the White City Roundabout has been transformed to help give significantly greater priority to pedestrian, cycle and bus movements.

Fig 63 An illustrative view of a crossing over Chester Road, towards the potential new train station plaza

DRAFT

DRAFT

## Allies and Morrison

Studio 4, Makers Quarter KAMPUS

42 Aytoun Street

Manchester M1 3GL

+44 20 7921 0100

[alliesandmorrison.com](http://alliesandmorrison.com)

[studio@alliesandmorrison.com](mailto:studio@alliesandmorrison.com)

telephone

web

email

**DRAFT**

**DRAFT**



# APPENDIX

## WHARFSIDE IN CONTEXT

A1	Planning policy context	180
A2	History and heritage	184
A3	Public realm context	188
A4	Socio-economic context	190
A5	Property market analysis	192
A6	Development context	196
A7	Activities and land use	198
A8	Existing Movement Context	200
A9	WSM and Streets for All	206
A10	Strategic vehicular access	208
A11	Infrastructure	214

**DRAFT**

# A1 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

## A1.1 Introduction

The Wharfside Masterplan area operates within a complex but supportive planning policy framework comprising multiple strategic and local planning documents that collectively promote growth and regeneration. The strategic foundation is provided by Places for Everyone, the long-term spatial plan for nine Greater Manchester districts adopted in 2024, which guides development across the region until 2039. Within this framework, the masterplan area benefits from dual strategic designations that reinforce its development potential and regional significance.

## A1.2 Places for Everyone Strategic Context

Under Places for Everyone, the WSM area falls within the Core Growth Area (JP-Strat1), a designation that actively supports major employment growth across a corridor encompassing Manchester City Centre, the Quays, Trafford Park and Port Salford. This strategic recognition positions the area as fundamental to Greater Manchester's economic growth strategy. Additionally, the land facing the Manchester Ship Canal forms part of The Quays area designation (JP-Strat3), which specifically supports significant expansion of business, housing, leisure and tourism functions, providing clear policy support for mixed-use development approaches.

## A1.3 Local Planning Policy Framework

At the local level, Trafford's planning framework currently comprises the Core Strategy (adopted 2012) and saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan (adopted 2006). The masterplan area is subject to several key policy designations that shape development potential. Core Strategy Policy Strategic Location 2 - Trafford Wharfside

covers the northern portion of the masterplan area and actively promotes development to create "a major mixed-use area of regional and international significance," with explicit focus on economic, leisure and residential development opportunities.

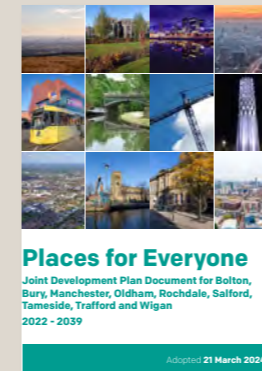
## A1.4 Emerging Policy Context and Future Framework

Trafford Council is currently undertaking a comprehensive Local Plan review that will fundamentally reshape the policy landscape for the area.

The new Trafford Local Plan, targeting adoption in 2027/2028, will replace the existing Core Strategy and UDP, creating a unified policy framework alongside Places for Everyone through to 2042. Significantly, the Council proposes to designate Trafford Wharfside as a regeneration area within the new Local Plan, suggesting a more flexible and growth-oriented policy approach.

To date, Trafford Council has carried out two consultations under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations. The Council consulted on the Draft Trafford Local Plan: Policies between April and June 2025 and the Trafford Local Plan: Site Allocations and Designations between 22 September and 3 November 2025.

The plan preparation timeline includes Regulation 19 consultation in August/September 2026 and planned submission in December 2026. This policy evolution presents opportunities to address current restrictive designations and align local policy more closely with the area's strategic growth potential, particularly given the proximity to the Civic Quarter Area Action Plan (adopted



### Places for Everyone

Places for Everyone is the strategic long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester districts (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth. Adopted in 2024 the plan sets out how the nine boroughs should develop up until 2039.



### Trafford Unitary Development Plan

The Revised Trafford UDP was adopted in June 2006. Most of the UDP policies are no longer operational as they have been superseded by the Core Strategy and the Joint Waste and Minerals Plans.

The saved policies of the UDP remain part of the Local Plan for Trafford.



### Trafford Local Plan: Core Strategy

The Core Strategy was adopted in 2012 and sets out the Council's spatial policy framework for delivering the development and change needed to realise the Council's vision for the Borough up to 2026. It includes policies relating to economic, social and environmental issues and how these will shape the future of Trafford.



### Civic Quarter Area Action Plan

The CQAAP was adopted in 2023 and is a development plan document for the Civic Quarter, a 55 Ha regeneration zone located south east of the Wharfside Masterplan Area.

The CQAAP provides a statutory policy framework in order that this transformational change is delivered appropriately and managed effectively.



### Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Guidance (SPGs)

SPDs and SPGs provide additional information to assist with the interpretation and the implementation of policies contained within the adopted Development Plan. Relevant SPDs include:

- SPD 1 Planning Obligations
- SPD 3 Parking Standards
- SPD 5 Conservation Areas
- SPD 7 Trafford Design Code

DRAFT

Fig 64 Relevant planning documents and information

2023) which provides a statutory framework for delivering 4,000+ homes across 55 Ha immediately southeast of the Wharfside area.

This Masterplan for the Wharfside area will inform and support the development of the Regulation 19 Draft Local Plan, which will contain a detailed policy to guide new development across the masterplan area.

### A1.5 Places for Everyone

Places for Everyone is the strategic long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester districts (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth.

Adopted in 2024 the plan sets out how the nine boroughs should develop up until 2039.

### A1.6 Trafford Local Plan: Core Strategy

The Core Strategy was adopted in 2012 and sets out the Council's spatial policy framework for delivering the development and change needed to realise the Council's vision for the Borough up to 2026. It includes policies relating to economic, social and environmental issues and how these will shape the future of Trafford.

### A1.7 Trafford Unitary Development Plan

The Revised Trafford UDP was adopted in June 2006. Most of the UDP policies are no longer operational as they have been superseded by the Core Strategy and the Joint Waste and Minerals Plans.

The saved policies of the UDP remain part of the Local Plan for Trafford.

### A1.8 Civic Quarter Area Action Plan

The CQAAP was adopted in 2023 and is a development plan document for the Civic Quarter, a 55 Ha regeneration zone located south east of the Wharfside Masterplan Area.

The CQAAP provides a statutory policy framework in order that this transformational change is delivered appropriately and managed effectively.

### A1.9 Supplementary Planning Documents & Guidance

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Guidance (SPGs) provide additional information to assist with the interpretation and the implementation of policies contained within the adopted Development Plan.

Relevant SPDs include:

- SPD 1 Planning Obligations
- SPD 3 Parking Standards
- SPD 5 Conservation Areas
- SPD 7 Trafford Design Code

### A1.10 Design Code

The Design Code is an adopted SPD which is intended to help developers when formulating proposals and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. As such, all applicants are expected to demonstrate how their design approach has been influenced by the surrounding context and complies with the Design Code.

The SPD sets out the design intentions for new development in the Borough and provides parameters to aid an understanding of the level of design quality required for schemes in Trafford. The Trafford Design Code is applicable to the delivery of both new residential and non-residential development. Through a landscape and place-led approach it helps shape the kind of places where people want to live, work and spend quality time by delivering more accessible, sustainable, well-designed development.

The SPD divides the Borough into a series of Places, which are localities within the Borough which are recognisable

as being of a different character as defined by their architecture, history, character, landscape or land uses. These Places and their descriptions help guide applicants when thinking about the context of their proposals.

The SPD is then broken down into a series of Design Codes, which fall into two broad categories, area codes and development codes.

The area codes are set out within the New Places chapter and relate to the allocated regeneration areas in the local plan. The majority of the Wharfside area is identified as a new High Density, High Rise area. However, this boundary relates to the previous Wharfside masterplan area and as such, the rail freight logistics area lies within the Trafford Park area, which is focused upon commercial and industrial development. This Masterplan amends this identification and going forward, the entirety of the Wharfside Masterplan area should be assessed as a new High Density, High Rise area.

The purpose of the New Places area code is to set out a simple, layered approach which promotes high-quality masterplanning to deliver a successful holistic outcome. The code states that height and density parameters in New Places will be set through development plan policies and masterplanning. Accordingly, the appropriate height and density parameters within the Wharfside area is set out in this Masterplan and will be reinforced in Local Plan policy.

The New Places chapter sets out a series of codes to guide new development, each of which are considered within this masterplan:

- **Context and Identity** All development in New Places must have a positive and coherent identity.
- **Landscape led strategy** Develop a network of public spaces with key corridors and routes defined through the design of the landscape.
- **Green corridors** Protect existing green spaces and take opportunities to create new green corridors through the masterplan area.

- **Connections to the wider area** Create a network of streets and connections which promote active travel.
- **Layout and identity** Consider how new development will contribute to the identity of the masterplan area
- **Defining spaces with built form** Using new buildings and active frontages to define spaces within the area.
- **Creating a skyline** Siting tall buildings to create a coherent skyline.
- **Views, vistas and landmarks** Protect existing key views and take opportunities to create new views into and within the area.
- **Mix of uses** Providing a mix of uses to create a well-designed place for the whole community.

The Design Code provides further detailed guidance on the approach to various development types, such as houses, apartments, tall buildings and commercial buildings. These codes provides guidance on issues specific to the development type, which much be considered alongside the core, cross-development themes such as landscape and nature, streets and public realm and innovation.

This masterplan has been prepared with the Design Code SPD in mind to provide further, detailed guidance in relation to new development within the Masterplan area. Where there is any conflict in the guidance between the two documents, this Masterplan should take precedence.

## A2 HISTORY AND HERITAGE

### A2.1 Trafford Park

Trafford Park was traditionally a rural estate. The manor of Trafford was held by the de Trafford Family and their principal seat was Trafford Hall, a grand country house located within the park land. Trafford Park was a large, picturesque private park, a stark contrast to the rapidly industrialising city of Manchester. The estate remained with the de Trafford family until the end of the 19th century, when opportunities for industrial development led to its sale.

#### Industrial origins and transformation

Trafford Wharfside's development has been fundamentally shaped by its industrial heritage, beginning with the transformative completion of the Manchester Ship Canal in 1894, which converted Manchester into Britain's third busiest port despite being 35 miles inland. This engineering achievement revolutionised the region's industrial capabilities and established Wharfside as a vital manufacturing and trade hub.

The early 1900s saw Wharfside flourish with warehouses, wharves, and industrial infrastructure dominating the landscape. The expansion of Trafford Park in the 1920s-30s, the world's first planned industrial estate, further cemented the area's economic significance. Companies like Westinghouse Electric and Ford Motor Company established major factories, drawing thousands of workers. The park became a critical component of Britain's war effort, producing munitions, aircraft engines, and military vehicles.

During this period, the area cemented its global recognition through sport: Old Trafford Cricket Ground and Old Trafford Football Stadium became world-famous landmarks, further elevating the name of "Trafford."

#### Economic decline and urban transition

The post-war period brought significant challenges as de-industrialization accelerated in the 1950s-60s. The completion of the M62 Motorway in 1962 shifted transport dynamics away from canals and railways, changing the area's urban form and economic purpose. Industrial decline led to the closure of the Manchester Docks in 1981, ending the era of maritime trade and leaving significant vacant industrial land and a fragmented urban fabric.

In the 1980s, the Trafford Park Development Corporation was established to revitalize the area, successfully attracting new businesses and turning it into a major centre for distribution, commerce, and media. The area was also involved in the Enterprise Zone experiment, a policy initiative introduced by the Conservative government under Margaret Thatcher in the UK, starting in 1981. The regeneration policy was designed to combat urban decay and high unemployment by relaxing government regulations and taxes to stimulate private sector investment and job creation. Other factors which played a role in the regeneration of the area included the Trafford Park Investment Strategy, the development of the Ecology Park, local railway upgrades and the creation of the Trafford Park urban development corporation.

The development of Media City also played a key role in driving investment, jobs and regeneration in the area. The project anchored vast amounts of surrounding commercial and residential development, transforming Salford Quays and Trafford Wharfside. Destinations such as The Lowry and the Imperial War Museum North were key cultural place-makers in the regeneration of the Wharfside area, further encouraging visitors through destination tourism.



An image of the Manchester Ship Canal in the 1930s. Trafford Road Bridge sits in the foreground.

# DRAFT

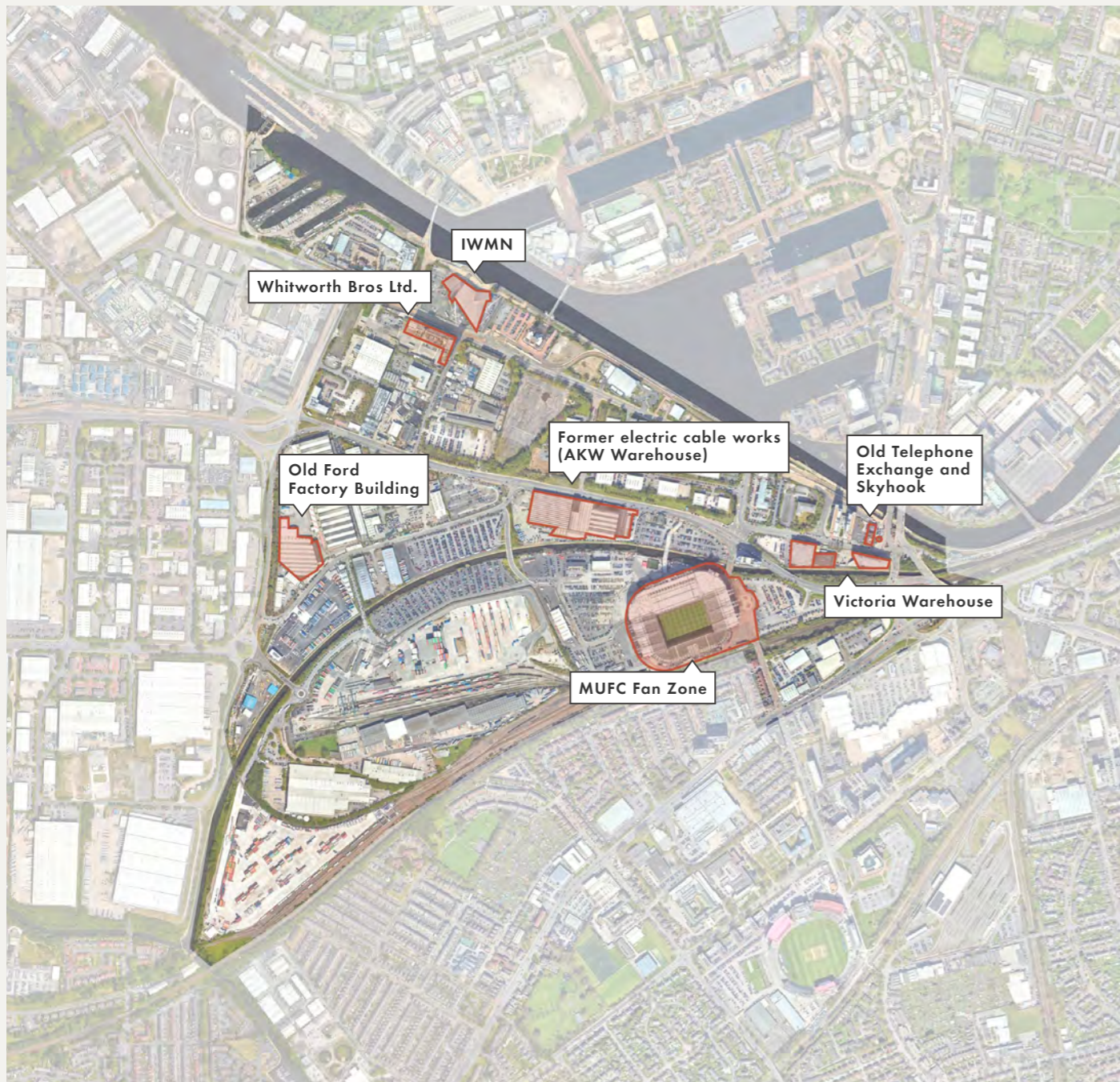


Fig 65 Existing commercial and cultural assets

## A2.2 Site heritage assets

Trafford Wharfside is rooted in a deep and significant industrial legacy. Key surviving buildings such as Victoria Warehouse and the former Telephone Exchange anchor what could be described as a 'Heritage Quarter' at the eastern end of the site. These substantial warehouse buildings date from the early- to mid-20th century and represent a rare and well-preserved example of canal-side industrial architecture in the region. Towards the west of the site, fronting Europa Way, a remnant of the former Ford factory remains. While the building has been over-clad, its original pitched roof profiles are still legible, providing a physical reminder of Trafford Wharfside's association with large-scale vehicle manufacturing and assembly.

Collectively, these heritage assets are characterised by robust red-brick façades, long-span steel or concrete frames. The historic industrial character is further reinforced by surviving remnants of railway infrastructure, with sections of former track still embedded within the grounds around these buildings, offering a tangible reminder of the close relationship between rail, canal and industry that once and currently defines the area.



(left) The Victoria Warehouse seen from the air. (below) The last remaining part of the former Ford factory. (bottom) Victoria Warehouse seen from the Bridgewater Canal



DRAFT

DRAFT

# A3 PUBLIC REALM CONTEXT

## A3.1 Overall approach

The placemaking strategy for Trafford Wharfside is based on an analysis of and appreciation for the area's built character and the positive and potential qualities of the existing public realm. This is comprised of two major waterways, significant industrial heritage and largely overlooked nature and natural assets.

**Existing blue infrastructure** The site extends for approximately one mile of uninterrupted access to the water of the Manchester Ship Canal - an enormous opportunity for value-capture and liveable public realm. The more intimate and neglected (and therefore ecologically rich) waterside environment along the Bridgewater Canal arcs right through the centre of the site - a green corridor currently favoured by cyclists with enormous ecological, recreational and value capture potential.

**Existing green** Characterised by a "bracken" aesthetic, existing natural habitats have adapted to survive and thrive in unlikely industrial conditions.

**Industrial heritage** Artefacts of Trafford Wharfside's past can be found throughout the area. The preservation, enhancement and positive interpretation of this heritage character in Wharfside's public realm has a potentially enormous positive contribution to make to the area's quality of place.



### Manchester's industrial waterways

Manchester's industrial arteries link with a broader canal system servicing the wider north-west region. Whereas the dimensions of Bridgewater Canal are standard for canal boats, the Ship Canal is broader and deeper - allowing Manchester to operate as a port city, despite its distance from the sea.

Unusually, the otherwise land-locked city is criss-crossed by waterways - from man-made docks and canals to natural rivers. Trafford Wharfside, and Salford Docks in particular, defines a "unique blue" gateway to the city.

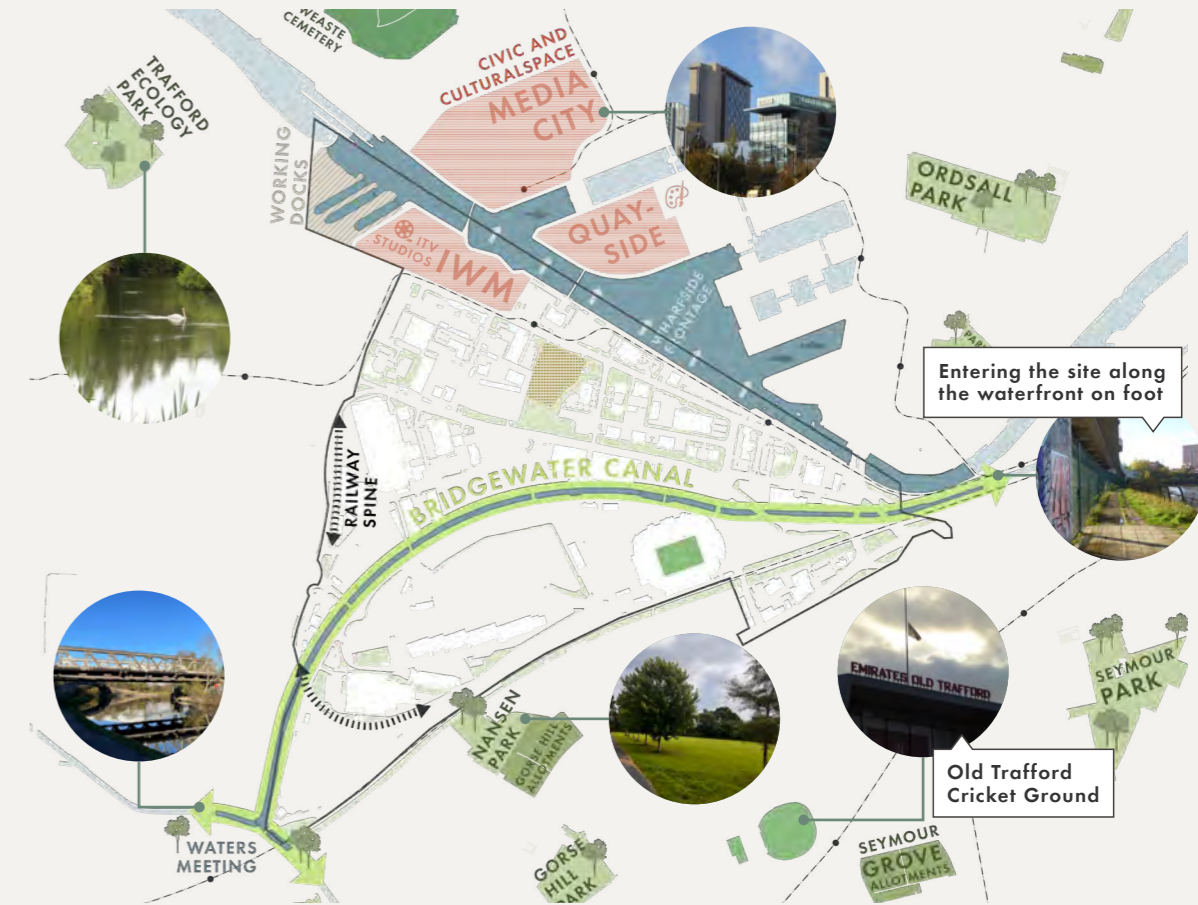


A visit from the submarines to Trafford Wharf in the 1960s

The construction of the Manchester Shipping Canal in the 1890s and (below) the opening of the canal in the 1890s



Fig 66 An opportunity for the railway lines



The public realm is shaped by a series of barriers, infrastructure constraints, and industrial conditions that limit movement, accessibility, and the overall quality of place. Understanding these spatial challenges is essential to informing a strategic approach to future public realm improvements. The following issues outline the constraints currently defining the area.

**Ship Canal walled condition** The level change between the Metrolink line and the waterfront is reinforced by a retaining wall, creating a narrow promenade, restricting public access.

**Metrolink alignment** The existing Metrolink route severs the waterfront, limiting opportunities for generous public spaces along a significant stretch of the Ship Canal.

**Street narrowing** The industrial character of the area results in wide roads, large junctions and bridges. Subject to maintaining underground services, transforming streets from car-dominated routes into walkable, green streets is a key challenge but also an important opportunity.

**Connectivity across Bridgewater Canal** Widening of tow paths and provision of additional crossings over the canal will be essential to improve safety and accessibility.

**Railway boundary** The railway provides an ecological corridor but also creates a barrier, challenging the integration of new development with existing neighbourhoods.

## A4 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

### A4.1 Greater Manchester: A diverse economic powerhouse

Greater Manchester stands as one of the UK's most significant economic regions, anchored by diverse industrial strengths and emerging innovation sectors. The city region hosts Europe's largest industrial park at Trafford Park, accommodating over 1,330 businesses and 35,000+ employees, while maintaining the largest technology cluster outside London.

The region's £5 billion digital ecosystem comprises more than 10,000 digital and technology businesses, from innovative start-ups to global brands. This innovation economy operates alongside established manufacturing, creative industries, and professional services, creating a resilient diversified economic base enhanced by world-class institutions including the University of Manchester and cultural assets like Manchester United.

### A4.2 Trafford Borough: Economic excellence and growth

Trafford contributes significantly to Greater Manchester's success, with the second highest GVA in Greater Manchester, demonstrating exceptional productivity and economic density [source: ONS].

The borough hosts a mature business ecosystem of 11,485 enterprises, with higher concentrations of larger businesses than national averages. Trafford supports 65 large businesses (250+ employees), 260 medium-sized businesses (50-249 employees) at 2.3% versus England's 1.7%, creating opportunities for both anchor tenants and SME cluster development [source: Inter Departmental Business Register (ONS) 2025].

Employment performance demonstrates exceptional strength with 79.4% of working-age residents employed, significantly exceeding the North West average of 74%, supported by exceptionally low unemployment rate at 4%. Trafford's job density of 1.19 jobs per working-age resident ranks highest among metropolitan districts, with 177,000 total jobs serving a working-age population of 148,280 [source: ONS / Nomis 2024, 2025].

### A4.3 Demographics and skills profile

Trafford borough accommodates approximately 241,025 residents. Population projections indicate 6.25% growth to 256,094 by 2039, with particular increases in the 35-44 age cohort (14.9% of population) and significant projected growth in households aged 45-54 and 64+.

The borough's workforce demonstrates exceptional qualification levels, with 62% of the working-age population holding degree-level or higher qualifications, substantially above England's 48.6% average. Circa 76.4% possess at least A-level equivalent qualifications, with only 4% having no formal qualifications, indicating a highly skilled labour pool ready to support knowledge-intensive industries [source: ONS Annual Population Survey 2025].

### A4.4 Trafford Wharfside: Local context and opportunity

Trafford Wharfside currently encompasses diverse uses across its 150 hectare footprint, predominantly accommodating industrial operations alongside extensive surface car parking associated with Old Trafford Stadium. The area benefits from established cultural assets including the Imperial War Museum North and Victoria Warehouse, while residential development remains minimal, presenting significant opportunity for comprehensive mixed-use community creation.

The southern portion is anchored by Manchester United's global presence, which attracts over 2.3 million visitors annually generating £358 million in visitor spending across Greater Manchester. The proposed new stadium would add 1.76 million additional annual visitors, with over 710,000 being high-spending international tourists, creating powerful economic momentum and synergies for mixed-use development [source: Oxford Economics 2024].

Given the scale and nature of the transformational change being proposed, a careful balance will need to be struck between the need to maintain a strong and successful industrial base and growth and investment in new uses and activities. In this new context, the threshold role played by Europa Way and First Avenue become only more important to ensure the continued and ongoing success of Trafford Park as one of the country's premier industrial locations.

### A4.5 Proposition

As a designated growth location within the Western Gateway MDZ, Trafford Wharfside is uniquely positioned to capitalise on Greater Manchester's diverse economic strengths while leveraging local assets including global sporting heritage, waterfront location, and proximity to established innovation clusters. The combination of limited current residential provision and strong economic fundamentals including a highly skilled workforce creates opportunities for comprehensive mixed-use development that can attract international investment while supporting inclusive growth for local communities.

The area's evolution from industrial heritage toward digital, creative, and technology sectors aligns with Trafford's broader economic transformation, positioning Wharfside as a key driver of the borough's future growth.

# A5 PROPERTY MARKET ANALYSIS

## A5.1 Residential market

The Trafford Council area has a current population of approximately 241,025 residents (ONS estimate, 2024), projected to grow by 6.25% to 256,094 by 2039 with a significant increase in the number of households aged 45-54 and 64+.

There are 96,194 dwellings within Trafford local authority area, with an average household size of 2.4 people. 20.2% of properties are flats, with houses making up 79.8% of housing stock. 69.7% of households own their own homes while 15.3% live in privately rented accommodation.

Trafford commands premium rental values across Greater Manchester and the North West region, with notable sub-market variations that position Old Trafford as an accessible entry point compared to higher value areas in the borough (such as Altrincham or Sale).

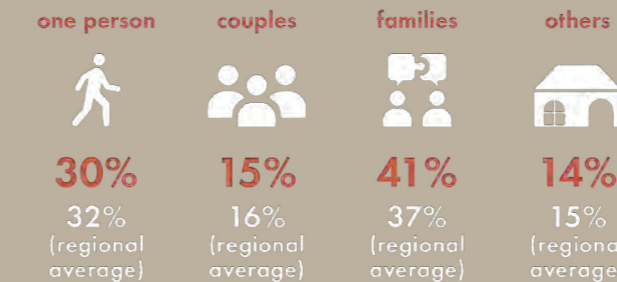
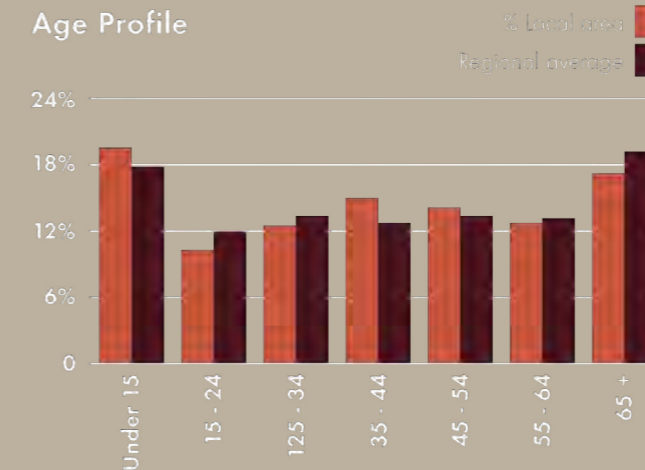
The majority of recent residential development in the Old Trafford area comprises apartments and office-to-residential conversions appealing predominantly to working professionals seeking modern living with excellent transport links.

In the last five years there have been 3,792 new homes built across Trafford, an average of 758 per year. There is significant development momentum within proximity in neighbouring areas including the Civic Quarter, Salford Quays and Trafford Bar progressing through various delivery stages from pre-planning to active construction. Within Trafford Wharfside itself, residential remains minimal, with one existing residential building (382 BTR units and 412 student beds) with planning approval secured.

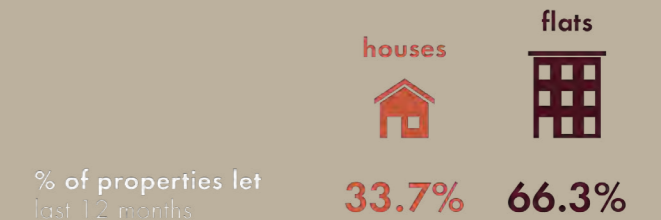
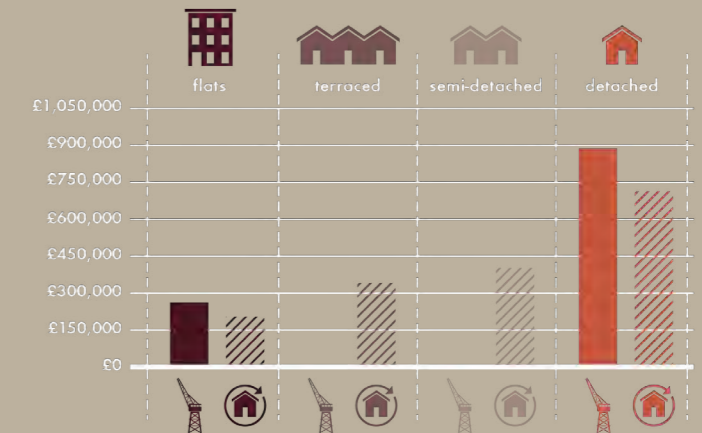
## A5.2 Residential Proposition

- Capitalise on Scale and Development Capacity** Trafford Wharfside's 150 Ha development zone presents unprecedented residential delivery opportunities, with minimal existing provision creating capacity for thousands of new homes across multiple tenure types, capitalising on proximity to major employment areas and enhanced transport infrastructure.
- Diversify Housing Portfolio** The framework should deliver a comprehensive mix of dwelling types, sizes, and tenure options to accord with the emerging Trafford Local Plan requirements and Trafford Design Code to meet Trafford's identified local housing needs.
- Leverage Strategic Location Assets** Capitalise on the area's unique positioning adjacent to a major stadium while maximising connectivity to Manchester City Centre and MediaCity to attract diverse residential demographics and create a distinctive living proposition.
- Balance Stadium and Residential Integration** Carefully plan the integration of a major new stadium and event venue within a vibrant residential community, addressing event day impacts, and infrastructure capacity while leveraging the economic and cultural benefits.
- Navigate Mixed-Use Environment** Address the challenges of embedding residential communities within a predominantly industrial setting through innovative planning that creates appropriate buffers, environmental mitigation, and mixed-use areas that celebrate the area's industrial heritage.

Fig 67 Source: Dataloft by PriceHubble, Land Registry



## Average prices by property in the last 12 months



DRAFT

### A5.3 Commercial property market analysis

Trafford Wharfside's commercial landscape is characterised by a diverse industrial ecosystem spanning 62 Ha (circa 42% of the area's total 150 Ha), hosting a sophisticated mix of knowledge-intensive businesses that demonstrate the area's evolution beyond traditional manufacturing. The current employment base reveals emerging innovation clusters, including advanced technology and R&D operations exemplified by Kratos Analytics, creative and media businesses anchored by ITV Granada Studios and food innovation enterprises such as traditional manufacturing at Whitworth Bros Flour Mill. This industrial foundation coexists with data centre operations and various supply chain services, creating a natural foundation for higher-value economic activities.

The area's office provision remains limited within the red line boundary, comprising primarily Warren Bruce Court's managed workspace offering flexible accommodation and Quay West which is earmarked for residential redevelopment. The broader Old Trafford office market concentrates along Chester Road and Talbot Road arterials, reflecting the area's traditional role as a transit corridor rather than a destination district. This limited provision should be viewed as opportunity rather than constraint, allowing for purposeful commercial development that serves specific innovation-focused occupiers.

The surrounding commercial context positions Trafford Wharfside within an exceptionally strong economic ecosystem. The area sits adjacent to Europe's largest industrial park at Trafford Park, accommodating over 1,330 businesses and 35,000+ employees, while benefiting from proximity to MediaCity's £5 billion digital ecosystem and

direct access to Manchester city centre's commercial core. Regional office market dynamics reveal a "flight to quality" trend.

The area's designation as a Core Growth Area under the Places for Everyone strategic plan through 2039, combined with its inclusion in the Western Gateway Growth Location targeting £1 billion annual investment, demonstrates the strategic importance of this location within Greater Manchester's broader economic objectives.

Trafford borough supports a mature business ecosystem of 11,355 enterprises, with a higher concentration of medium and large businesses (2.1%) compared to England's average of 1.6%, creating opportunities for both anchor tenants and SME cluster development.

Employment performance demonstrates exceptional strength with 75.0% of working-age residents employed. Trafford's workforce demonstrates a high qualification levels, with 54.9% holding degree-level or higher qualifications compared to England's 43.2% average, while 69% possess at least A-level equivalent qualifications.

This highly skilled labour pool is supported by purpose-built educational infrastructure including UA92's industry-embedded education model, which produces graduates specifically aligned with digital, media, business, and sports sectors while maintaining explicit focus on social mobility, alongside the University of Salford's MediaCity campus and Trafford College's vocational expertise.

### A5.4 Commercial proposition

Reflecting on the commercial and property context within which the WSM has been prepared, there are a number of key commercial propositions which help to inform target opportunities for investment, as follows:

#### 1. Leverage innovation ecosystem foundations:

Build upon existing tech/data infrastructure (Kratos Analytics, data centres) and creative/media presence (ITV Granada Studios) to create a globally recognised innovation district specialising in sports technology, digital innovation, and creative industries that capitalise on Manchester United's international profile and proximity to MediaCity's £5 billion digital ecosystem.

#### 2. Transform industrial heritage into high-value sectors:

Transition from traditional manufacturing toward innovation-driven production focused on advanced manufacturing, sustainable processes, and technology-enabled methods, while preserving and celebrating the area's industrial DNA as authentic place-making assets that differentiate from generic business environments.

**3. Develop flexible innovation infrastructure:** Create spaces that serve the specific needs of businesses seeking collaborative, high-specification workspace aligned with the demonstrated "flight to quality" market trend.

#### 4. Capitalise on strategic connectivity hub:

Position Trafford Wharfside as a gateway between Manchester's key economic nodes—MediaCity's creative clusters, Trafford Park's industrial expertise, and Manchester city centre's commercial core—while leveraging Manchester Airport's global destinations to attract international businesses and export-oriented companies.

#### 5. Integrate educational talent pipeline:

Greater Manchester provides access to a deep and diverse talent pool, including over 120,000 university students across The University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University, and the University of Salford, with 49% of UoM graduates remaining in the North West. Within Trafford, leverage UA92's industry-embedded education model, University of Salford's MediaCity campus, and Trafford College's vocational expertise to create seamless pathways between education and employment, supporting both established businesses and emerging sectors within a cohesive innovation community.

A6.1 Development context

The wider area surrounding the Trafford Wharfside is experiencing development momentum, with a substantial pipeline of residential projects set to fundamentally transform the local landscape. This growth is supported by strategic investment initiatives including the Greater Manchester Good Growth Fund, a significant regional investment programme launched to drive localised regeneration, generate tens of thousands of jobs, and build new affordable homes. Backed by government, the National Wealth Fund, and the Greater Manchester Pension Fund, it aims to ensure economic success benefits all 10 boroughs. Major schemes include the expansive 55 Ha Civic Quarter development accommodating over 4,000 new homes with Lumina Village currently under construction, as seen in Fig 68.

The GMP site contributes a further 750+ homes with 25% affordable housing provision, and MediaCity Phase 2 represents a significant expansion, doubling its current footprint with over 1,400 additional homes planned.

Further amplifying this growth trajectory, Pomona Island presents potential for up to 2,600 homes, while Cotton Quays holds consent for 1,500 apartments with scope for even denser development. This collective pipeline of approximately 10,000+ new residential units within the immediate vicinity will in time if all built out establish the area as a major residential hub and substantial population growth that will drive sustained demand for commercial, retail, and community services

**Current residential context**

Wharfside currently lacks a substantial residential

community, although recent developments are establishing residential presence. Cole Waterhouse completed No.1 Old Trafford in 2021, which has begun to grow the living offer. Cole Waterhouse is now bringing forward the adjacent Trafford Wharf development in partnership with Heim Global Investor, delivering 382 BTR plus 412 PBSA beds with £26 million secured from the Greater Manchester Good Growth Fund.

The area is surrounded by established residential neighbourhoods, with traditional red-brick terraced streets to the south between the A56 and railway line, and diverse housing types in Salford Quays to the north.

A6.2 Cultural landscape and assets

Wharfside and The Quays house numerous cultural landmarks that draw visitors, including: Manchester United's Old Trafford Stadium, Old Trafford Cricket Ground, The Lowry, Imperial War Museum North, Victoria Warehouse and the Coronation Street Experience at the ITV Studios.

However, these visitor experiences remain disjointed with poor connectivity between destinations. While Old Trafford Stadium stands as the most iconic structure, drawing tens of thousands on match days and serving as a global symbol of Manchester's sporting heritage, the grandeur of the stadium is not matched by the urban realm around it.

Today, Wharfside remains defined by its industrial past with distinctive characteristics:

- Large, expansive linear features including wide roads, large junctions, bridges, and canals.
- Network of waterways (Bridgewater Canal and Manchester Ship Canal) that have transitioned from



industrial use to leisure routes.

- Car-oriented infrastructure including Wharfside Way and Trafford Wharf Road that prioritise vehicular movement and create barriers to pedestrian movement. Railway infrastructure creating significant north-south

barriers.

- Fragmented urban form, surface car parking and large secured plots limiting movement between destinations.

## A7 ACTIVITIES AND LAND USE

### A7.1 Existing economic assets

Whilst the WSM vision is a radical one, there are some existing important uses – venues, businesses, recent developments – which will continue to have a key role in the long-term transformation of Trafford Wharfside. Existing and retained buildings are seen in Fig 69.

Imperial War Museum North, ITV Studios and its Coronation Street Experience and the O2 Victoria Warehouse are all nationally important sporting or cultural venues which will remain key assets for Wharfside during the regeneration process. Whilst dominated by surface car parks and relatively low intensity employment uses, Trafford Wharfside also already benefits from an economically diverse range of businesses. Many are now long established, successful and should be considered economic assets. Like the major cultural venues in the area, some of these enterprises may also have an important ongoing role during the transformation process.

A review of some of Trafford Wharfside’s existing key cultural and economic assets can be outlined as follows:

#### Venues and attractions:

- **IWM North:** The award-winning Daniel Libeskind designed museum which first opened in 2002. It was the first branch of the Imperial War Museums outside the south-east of England and was central to the regeneration of the The Quays area. The museum has aspirations to build on and improve its current visitor numbers of around 250,000 per year through a programme of investment in both the museum programme and its estate.
- **ITV Studios and the Coronation Street Experience:** Seen as part of the MediaCity location, filming on the new Trafford Coronation Street started

in 2014 with public tours commencing in 2018. Coronation Street Experience is now a popular visitor attraction allowing fans to tour the working exterior set of the iconic ITV soap opera. Filming operations on the site will be sensitive to noise pollution and changes to the local skyline.

- **O2 Victoria Warehouse:** Opening in 2012 as a venue following extensive renovations the facility was re-branded as the O2 Victoria Warehouse in 2018 with a capacity of 3,500 for live music events in the main auditorium. Investment in the building has seen its transformation from a once derelict warehouses into a modern, versatile venue which retains its industrial – exposed brickwork and cast-iron columns – heritage.

#### Businesses and industries:

There are many businesses located across the Wharfside site. Given the scale of the transformation envisaged, the regeneration of the Wharfside area will require many businesses to relocate. The adjacent Trafford Park industrial estate is constantly evolving with exceptionally good transport connections. The WSM has been informed by engagement with key local businesses. Some of these businesses support jobs and activities which contribute positively to the short and/or longer-term vision for the Wharfside area.

- **Whitworth Bros.:** The Whitworth Bros. Flour mill has been associated with flour milling for well over a century with the original Rank Hovis Mill dating from 1907. Rebuilt following the Manchester Blitz, Whitworth Bros. acquired the operational mill from Ranks Hovis in 2018, continuing the site’s long legacy of industrial-scale flour production. Whitworth Bros.



Fig 69 Retained existing buildings

#### Key

- Commercial
- Cultural and entertainment
- Tech and research
- Infrastructure
- Residential
- Existing buildings potentially not retained

have investment plans for their Trafford plant which plays a strategic role in their national operation.

- **Equinix Data Centre:** The Equinix data centre in Trafford plays a vital role as the primary digital and network hubs for Greater Manchester and the North of England. The centre underpins the region’s digital economy, central to connecting businesses, major cloud providers, and network operators. The facility generates significant amounts of waste heat which is currently an untapped resource.
- **Kratos Analytical Ltd:** A high-tech advanced and precision manufacturer and research laboratory, Kratos are a major employer in Trafford. They support highly skilled and well-paid jobs, supporting an extensive supply chain.
- **Seven Bro7hers:** Founded in 2014, this Salford-based local craft beer brewing business is rapidly growing. The brewery established a presence in Trafford with a distribution centre and a popular pop-up match-day bar on a prominent site adjacent to the Manchester Ship Canal frontage and adjacent to a Metrolink pedestrian crossing. The business plans to expand its Trafford operations in the short term and these plans align well with WSM’s vision to create a network of visitor attractions which support major cultural and sporting institutions.

- **Maritime Transport:** A statutorily protected freight facility in the south-western corner of the site. Whilst relocation of the stadium depends on relocation of much of the freight-related operations west of the stadium, the Maritime site will likely only come forward in the very late stages of regeneration.

#### Residentially led developments:

- **No 1 Old Trafford:** A prominent, high-specification residential development developed by Cole Waterhouse completed in May 2021. Two connected blocks of 15 and 18 storeys, connected by a landscaped podium garden providing a total of 354 apartments. This development was the first residential-led within the core Trafford Wharfside site.
- **Former Hilti site:** Planning permission has been secured by Cole Waterhouse for redevelopment of the former Hilti headquarters site. Benefitting from Good Growth funding, the development comprises 438 build-to-rent flats, 419 student rooms, and a higher education facility with public realm improvements.
- **Sir Matt Busby Way:** A terrace of existing houses on the axis between Old Trafford Cricket Stadium and the existing football stadium.

These existing venues, facilities and developments will all likely play an important ongoing role in Trafford Wharfside’s regeneration.

## A8 EXISTING MOVEMENT CONTEXT

The movement and connectivity of the Trafford Wharfside area is shaped by a complex interplay of waterways, major roads, and public transport infrastructure, creating both opportunities and challenges for active and sustainable transport. While the site benefits from strategic links to Manchester, Salford, and Trafford, physical barriers such as canals, rail lines, and a highly trafficked road network limit permeability for walking and cycling. The area is currently well served by public transport, although connectivity to and capacity of these networks could be enhanced to better serve the site as it evolves. This section explores the existing conditions, identifies severance issues, and highlights the potential for improved connections through planned interventions. Fig 70 highlights the existing walking and cycling routes.

### A8.1 Walking and site access

The current industrial nature of much of the masterplan area creates an unattractive walking environment, with wide carriageways accommodating high traffic volumes, including significant HGV movements. Large private plots of land further reduce the permeability and legibility of the area for people on foot.

The Manchester Ship Canal presents a degree of severance to the north; however, this is largely overcome through frequent bridge crossings providing connections between the site and MediaCity / The Quays. The proposed Clippers Quay footbridge will further enhance connectivity across the Ship Canal.

The Bridgewater Canal spans across the masterplan area in a curved east-west alignment. This is currently used as an active travel corridor, although limited access points, limited natural surveillance and a narrow tow-path are significant constraints to its usability and attractiveness as a walking and cycling route, particularly at night.

White City Circle to the east of the masterplan area is a convergence of several A-roads, resulting in a large-scale

junction with high traffic volumes. Traversing the junction on foot requires use of several signalised crossing points, with long crossing distances and multiple stages. The junction therefore creates significant severance between the site and Manchester city centre to the east.

Access to south of site is limited due to the presence of the rail line. Bridges are located at Sir Matt Busby Way and Railway Road (open match days only), both in the proximity of the existing stadium at the eastern end of the site.

Europa Way to the west of the site is a wide boulevard with two vehicle lanes in each direction and a central reservation, which limits crossing opportunities. Village Circle, at the north end of Europa Way, is a large signalised roundabout. The roundabout accommodates Metrolink movement, as well as multiple traffic movements, resulting in a large complex junction and subsequent severance for people walking, wheeling and cycling.

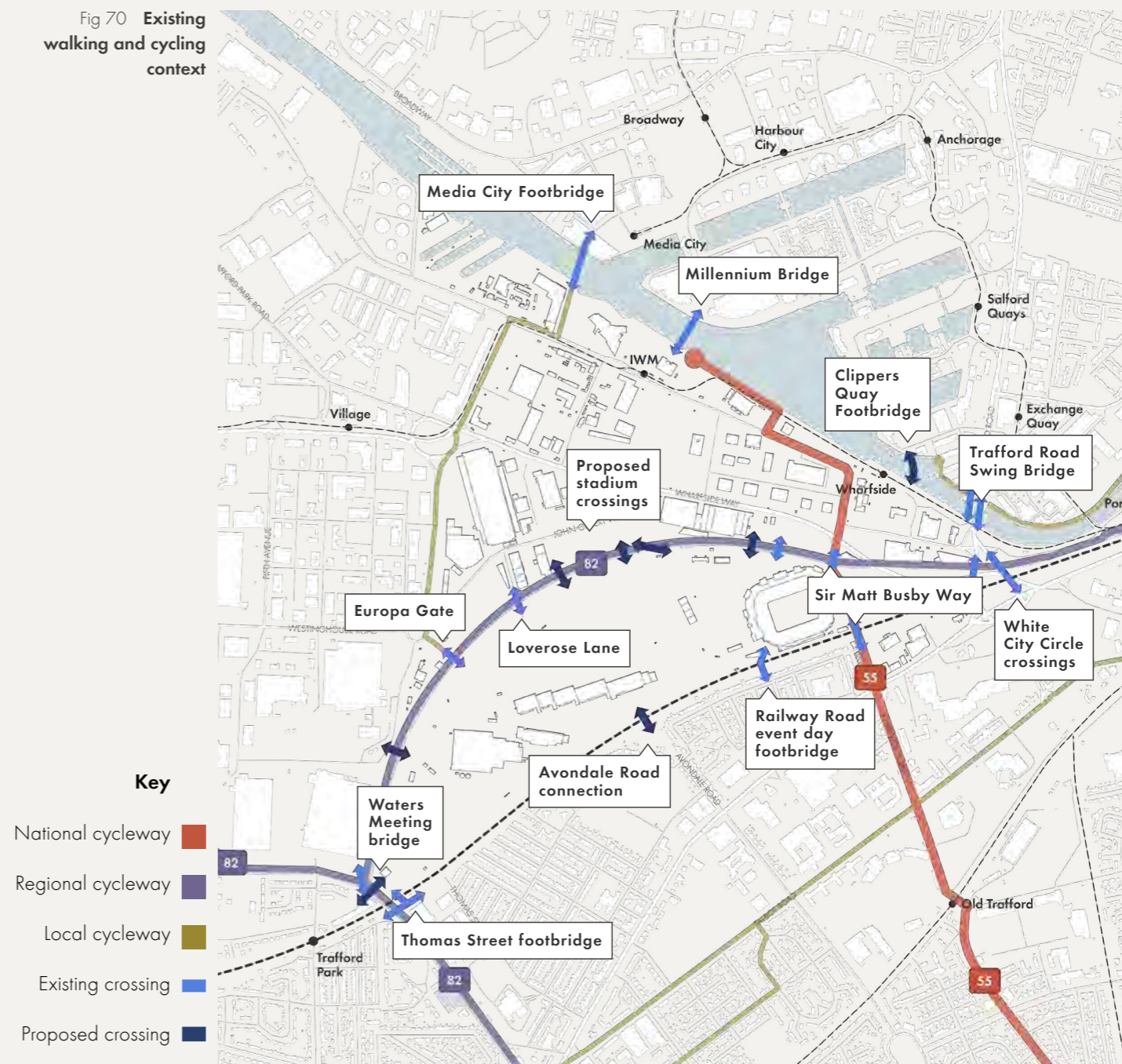
There is an existing bridge link across the Bridgewater Canal and the Waters Meeting Canal junction in the southwest corner of the site. This route is part of the disused rail line that connects into Trafford Park. A further footbridge is located just to the south of the rail line, connecting from Thomas Street to the east of the canal to Station Road to the west of the canal.

Improvements to accessible walking and wheeling routes across the Wharfside area have the potential to make a significant future contribution to the city-wide [CyanLines](#) initiative.

### A8.2 Cycling

The cycle network within the Wharfside area is well connected to routes to Trafford, Salford, and Manchester. Existing cycle infrastructure is in place on Trafford Wharf Road, Wharfside Way and Victoria Place, including on- and off-street lanes and bus stop bypasses, providing mixed quality east-west routes through the masterplan area. Shared footway-cycleways are also in place on Europa Way. The cycle network provides access to the Metrolink stops within the WSM area.

Fig 70 Existing walking and cycling context



Images of existing walking and cycling provision across the site



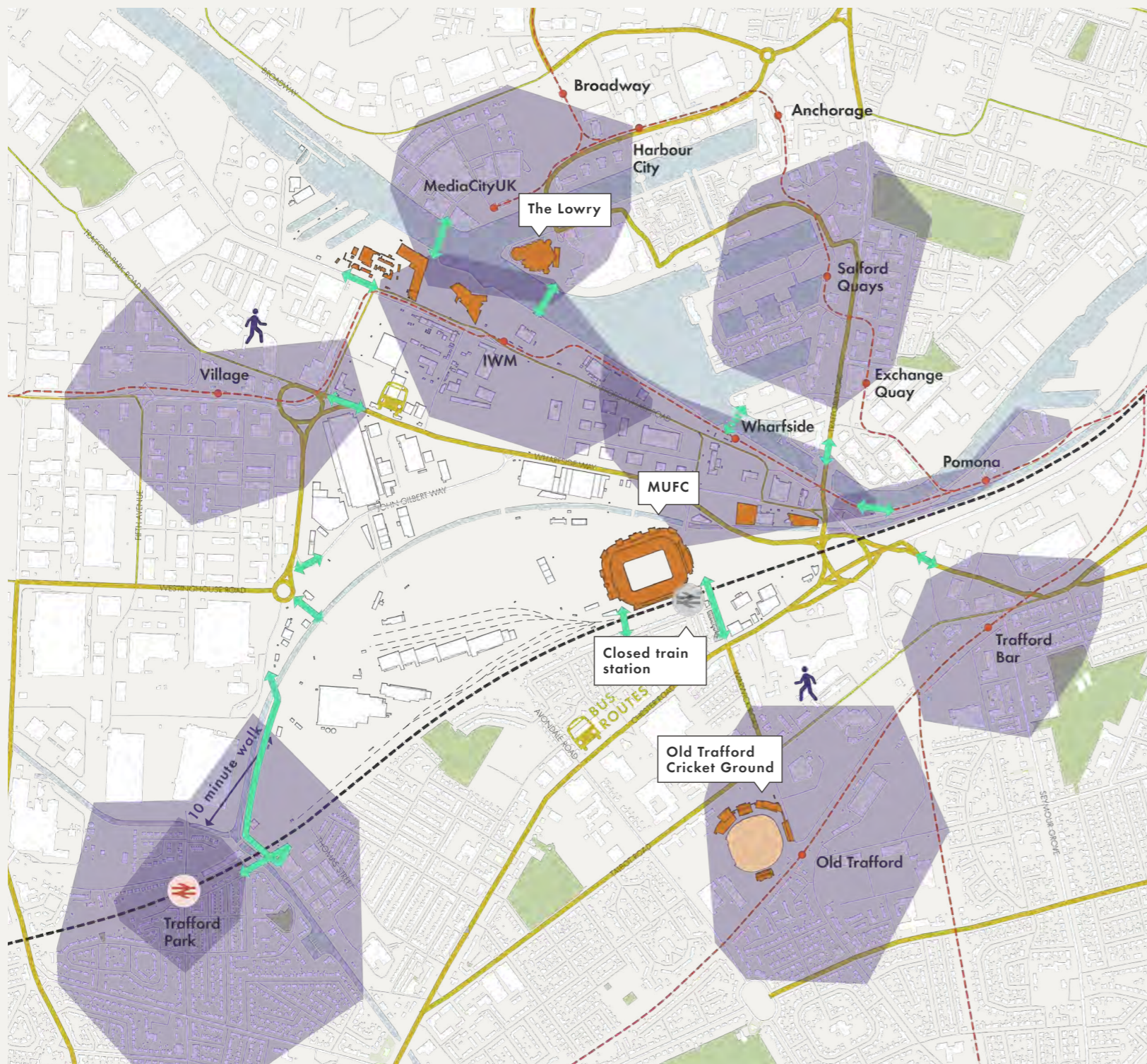


Fig 71 Existing movement context

The Bee Network is a blueprint of Greater Manchester's plan to build a world-class walking, wheeling, and cycling network. These plans identify Wharfside Way as a Busy Beeway, planned to be a fully protected space for people travelling on bikes and on foot, separated from traffic. Europa Way, Trafford Wharfside, Sir Matt Busby Way, the Ship Canal waterfront, and Bridgewater Canal tow-path are identified as Beeways. These are routes on quieter streets that will be created using signage and small changes to road and footway layouts to prioritise active travel.

The Bridgewater Canal is an existing cycle route, although constrained in places due to the width of the tow-path and this being a shared use path with pedestrians. Some of the access points to the canal are stepped, therefore restricting opportunities for access by cycle.

### A8.3 Metrolink

The Metrolink Trafford Park Line runs through the northern edge of the Wharfside area. Wharfside Metrolink stop is in the northeast of the area, and the Imperial War Museum stop is to the north-west, near the pedestrian bridge link to The Lowry. The Wharfside stop is currently heavily used on events day and has permanent queueing infrastructure to support crowd control during busy periods.

Beyond the Wharfside area to the west is the Village Metrolink stop and to the north is the MediaCity Metrolink stop which is on the MediaCity and Eccles lines and accessible via the MediaCity footbridge. Beyond the WSM area to the east, also on the MediaCity and Eccles lines, is the Exchange Quay Metrolink stop. This is not currently easily accessible on foot but will be well connected to the site following construction of the proposed Clippers Quay footbridge. Trafford Bar and Old Trafford stops are currently the main stops on match days and also walkable from the east and south respectively.

### A8.4 Rail

The Liverpool-Manchester via Warrington rail line runs along the southern edge of the site. The line is also well used for freight operations, including by current occupants of sites within the masterplan area adjoining the rail line.

Trafford Park rail station is located just beyond the southwest corner of the site. This is a small station with hourly passenger services between Manchester and Liverpool. The station is poorly connected to the site on foot due to severance from the Bridgewater Canal and rail line. The adjacent plan shows that only a small section of the site is within a 10-minute walking distance of Trafford Park station. Originally only used on match days, a railway station integrated into the South (Sir Bobby Charlton) Stand has been disused since 2018 on safety grounds.

### A8.5 Bus

Much of the Wharfside area is within a 5-minute walk of a bus stop. However, given expansive freight uses there is currently poor provision in terms of bus stops and routes in the southwest wedge of the site. A lack of connections across the rail line limits access from the site to bus services on the A56 Chester Road and Talbot Road to the south. Improve bus priority measures, potentially including re-routing of existing bus routes, provision of new bus routes, increased service frequencies on key routes, and new connections across the rail line to the south, should be explored to enhance connectivity.

## A8.6 White City Circle

White City Circle is a convergence of several A-roads, resulting in a large-scale junction with high traffic volumes. It is a confluence for key routes for all modes including walking, cycling, rail, Metrolink, bus, traffic and canals. The junction accommodates strategic traffic routes, with few options for diversion, and is a key route for travel to the existing stadium. As the Trafford Wharfside masterplan comes forward, additional movements will be generated from the masterplan area as well as new development in Manchester and Salford.

There are two existing bridges connecting White City Circle to Trafford Road in Salford. Both of these bridges are currently used for general traffic, totalling 7 traffic lanes with minimal provision for walking and no cycling infrastructure. Reallocation of space for different users across the two bridges should be explored.

Traversing the junction on foot requires use of several signalised crossing points, with long crossing distances and multiple stages. The junction also presents a significant constraint to cyclists, with a lack of cycle infrastructure making it an unattractive and unsafe route for most people cycling. White City Circle therefore creates significant severance between the site and Manchester city centre to the east.

An aerial of the White City roundabout today from Google Earth.



A view of Trafford Wharfside in the 1930s. The area is notably denser and the roads follow a straighter less organic route.



Trafford Wharfside in 1934. The Trafford Road Bridge can be seen in the foreground crossing over to the site. The Trafford Road here runs across the railway line and joins directly onto Talbot Road. Wharfside Way has not yet been built.



Looking east towards the White City roundabout and Manchester City Centre.

DRAFT

DRAFT

## A9.1 Streets for all

Applying Greater Manchester's Streets for All, a street hierarchy has been developed for the masterplan to outline design principles and the movement and place functions of streets within the site. Descriptions of the street typologies in the context of the Wharfedale masterplan are set out below:

### Strategic Roads

Strategic Roads carry higher volumes of motor traffic. Adverse impacts on other modes and local communities should be minimised by accommodating sustainable modes (e.g. segregated cycle infrastructure and bus priority measures). Regular crossing opportunities should be in place, as well as safe, easy crossings at junctions to reduce severance.

### Connector Streets

Connector Streets join up neighbourhoods and local centres. They form the backbone of the bus network and may offer the most direct routes for walking, wheeling and cycling. As with Strategic Roads, these roads should be designed to make them attractive and safe for active modes.

### High Streets

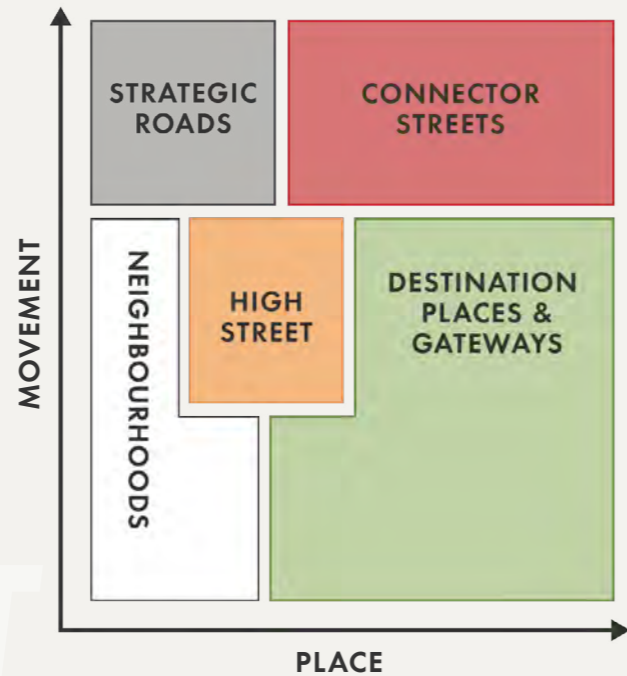
High Streets are at the heart of our communities and are important places for shopping, leisure and work. Located in neighbourhood centres and active public areas, these should be easily accessible by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport, and be designed to encourage people to dwell. Vehicle access for deliveries, servicing and essential car users should be facilitated.

## Neighbourhoods

Neighbourhood streets provide access to homes and local amenities. Walking and cycling should be prioritised in these spaces, with measures for traffic reduction and calming. Vehicle access for deliveries, servicing and residents should be accommodated.

### Destination Places and Gateways

Destination Places and Gateways are locations where people gather and/or pass through and should have a sense of identity and character. Within the masterplan area, the functions and busyness of these spaces may vary between event and non-event days, and the design of these spaces may therefore need to be flexible and adaptable.



- Key**
- ▬▬▬ Strategic Roads
  - Connector Streets
  - Destination Places and Gateways
  - Destination Connectors
  - Neighbourhoods
  - ⊕ Train station
  - ⊕ Metrolink stop

Fig 72 The Greater Manchester Street Types from the Greater Manchester's Streets for All Design Guide Source: GM Streets for All Design Guide (Figure 2.3)



Fig 73 Street Hierarchy - Event day

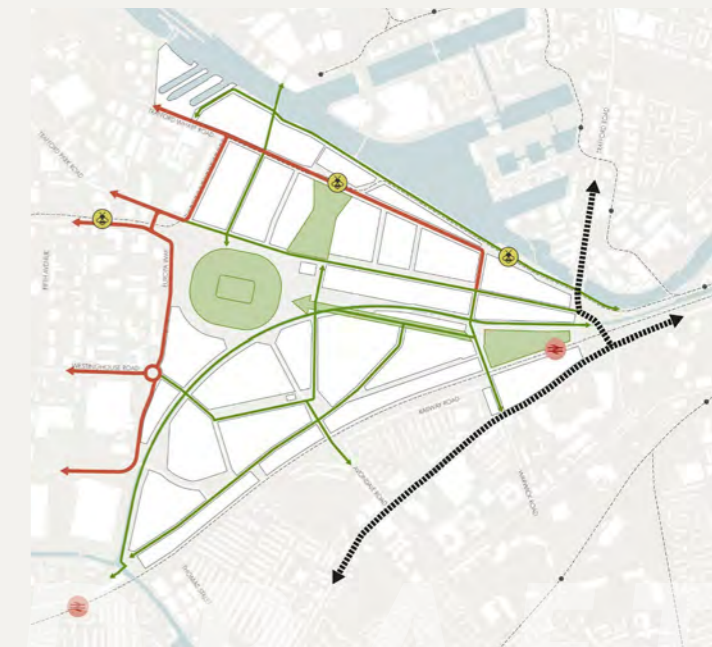


Fig 74 Street Hierarchy - Non event day

# A10 STRATEGIC VEHICULAR ACCESS

## A10.1 Access for industrial traffic

The industrial nature of Trafford Park results in high volumes of traffic movements, including a high proportion of HGVs, on the local highway network. Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts on key roads within and surrounding the Wharfside area are shown in Fig 75.

These counts suggest that vehicles travelling to/from Trafford Park largely travel via the M60, via Junction 9 and Junction 10, and via Centenary Way to the north. The counts also show around 13,500 daily vehicles travelling east-west via Wharfside Way. If the current highway network serving the area is retained going forward, along with increased traffic associated with future development, Wharfside Way will continue to cause severance through the centre of the Wharfside area as a vehicle dominated route. There is therefore a need to downgrade and rebalance the use of Wharfside Way to unlock more space for people walking, wheeling and cycling, and to enable reliable operation of buses.

To facilitate this, strategic access to Trafford Park, particularly for HGVs, should be further encouraged via the M60 Junctions 9 and 10 to the southwest and via Centenary Way to the north. As noted above, these routes are currently well used for access to Trafford Park and are appropriate for the types of vehicles associated with an industrial area. This approach therefore builds on existing movement patterns.

Access from White City Circle should be discouraged, as this is an already constrained junction that causes significant severance. Roads within the masterplan area should be used for access only and not to accommodate through vehicle movements. This will unlock opportunities to

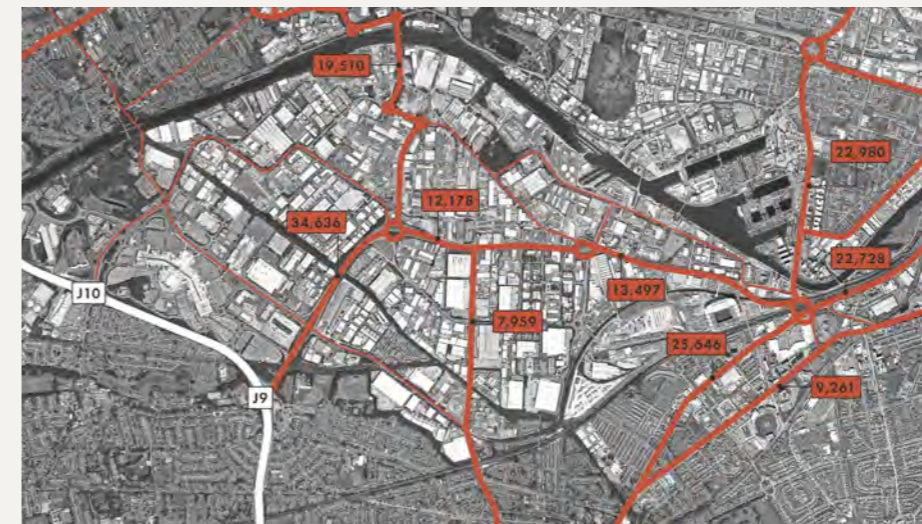
reallocate space and change the character of Wharfside Way and all streets within the Wharfside area, as well as reimagine White City Circle to better serve all modes. A high-level view of this strategy is shown in Fig 76.

Similarly, Europa Way and Village Circle create severance on the western boundary of the site. By rationalising these spaces to prioritise public transport and active modes, essential vehicle access can be retained whilst creating a safer and more attractive environment for local residents and visitors to the stadium.

On event days, there will be a need to manage and limit general traffic movements through the area. This would likely comprise of the closure of Europa Way and Wharfside Way with only essential local access permitted - see Fig 77.

Key opportunities for measures on the strategic road network include:

- Review of traffic management measures at the White City Circle junction and Junctions 7, 8, 9 and 10 of the M60 regarding the directional signage of industrial traffic towards Trafford Park and the OTR area.
- Prioritisation for the use of M60 Junction 9 for all industrial traffic within the Old Trafford Regeneration Area and wider Trafford Park estate.
- Review of directional signage within Trafford Park to prioritise all heavy goods movements via M60 and introduce directional signage for stadium related trips to park & ride / mobility hub locations.
- Traffic management measures at threshold locations between Trafford Park and Trafford Wharfside to discourage and limit heavy and volume traffic movements.



(Top to bottom)  
 Fig 75 2024 DfT traffic counts (roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/count-points)  
 Fig 76 Future vehicle access strategy (illustrative)  
 Fig 77 Event day vehicular access strategy (illustrative)

## A10.2 Wharfside Way

Wharfside Way is a wide, traffic-focused east-west route running through the masterplan area. Its rebalancing is key to unlocking additional development land, supporting the prioritisation of active travel and public transport, and facilitating a broader transformation in the character and function of the road network within the masterplan. The rebalancing of Wharfside Way also presents an opportunity to redefine two of its key junctions, White City Circle and Village Circle; creating enhanced gateways at the eastern and western entrances to the masterplan area.

## A10.3 White City Circle

White City Circle is a confluence for key routes for all modes including walking, cycling, rail, tram, bus, traffic and canals. The junction accommodates strategic traffic routes, with few options for diversion, and is a key route for travel to the existing stadium. As the Trafford Wharfside masterplan comes forward, additional movements will be generated from the masterplan area as well as new development in Manchester and Salford.

Existing vehicle movements are shown in Fig 78. This demonstrates the scale of the junction and the number of vehicle movements, including buses, to be overcome for people walking, wheeling and cycling between Trafford Wharfside, Salford and Manchester city centre.

## A10.4 Long-term: Removal of Wharfside Way

A unique opportunity is emerging for radical and transformational change to the White City Circle and its environs in the longer term. A number of factors come together in support of more radical longer-term transformation, as follows:

- The new Manchester United stadium and ambitions for dramatic modal shift in visitor trips to more sustainable travel patterns
- The potential for a new railway station adjacent to the White City Junction
- The planned public realm framework as outlined in the Civic Quarter AAP
- The need to create a new city-facing 'address' for Trafford Wharfside's wider regeneration

The Civic Quarter is located immediately to the south of the White City Circle. This Area Action Plan proposes a major public realm axis across the dualled A56 Chester Road with the location of this connection determined by the location of the listed entrance portal and lodges to the former White City Greyhound Track which once stood where the White City Retail Park is located.

The principal move would be the removal of the existing eastern connection between Wharfside Way (A5081) and the White City Circle. This length of highway peels away from the original alignment of Wharfside Way and sweeps south, passing over the Bridgeway Canal before joining the junction. The idea would therefore hinge on reconnecting Wharfside Way with Victoria Place. The junction between Wharfside Way and Sir Matt Busby Way would require major remodelling. Given the proposed relocation of the stadium, junction remodelling provides a valuable opportunity for the reallocation of road space to support safer pedestrian movements through this junction.

An illustrative concept for how this remodelling could work is shown in Fig 79.

### Key

- General traffic
- Active travel
- Potential bus priority route



Fig 78 White City Circle - Current vehicle movements

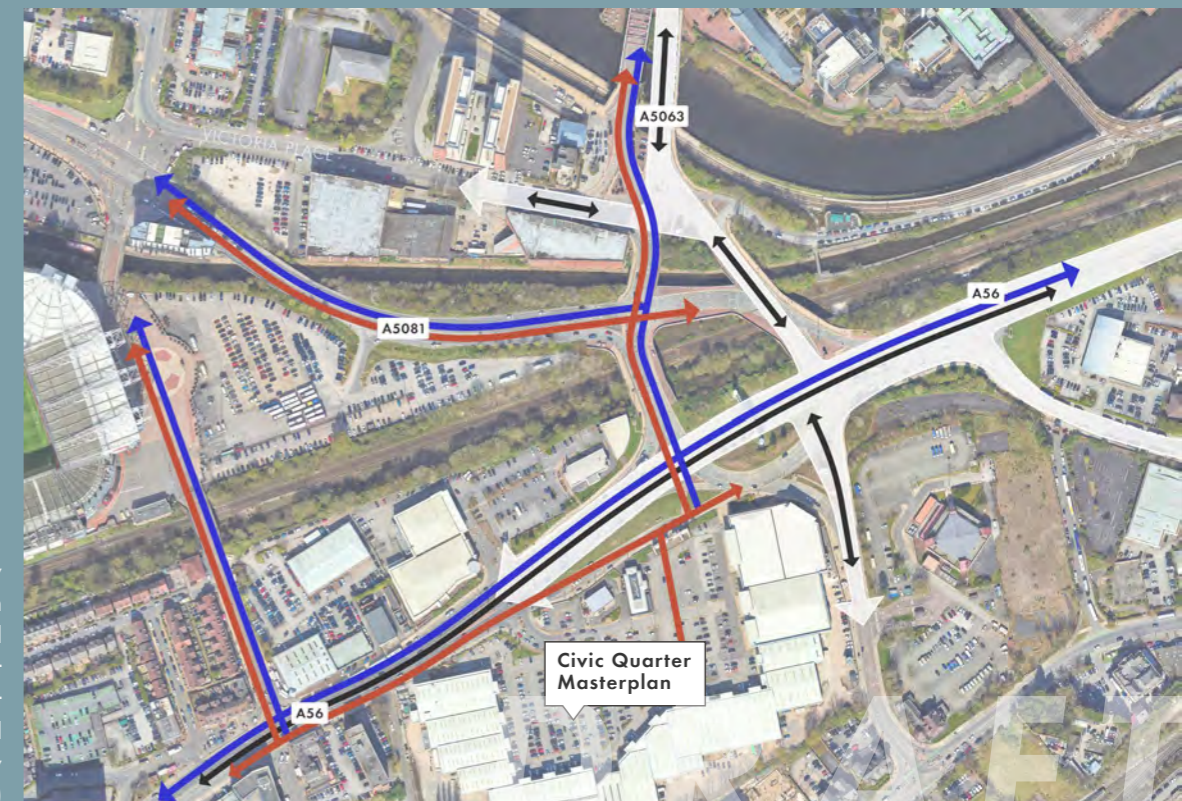


Fig 79 White City Circle: Long-term vision - potential traffic management arrangement showing bus and active travel priority (illustrative)

DRAFT

DRAFT



Fig 80 Village Circle existing condition



Fig 81 Village Circle assessment - proposed condition (illustrative)

- Key**
- General traffic
  - ▨ Metro link
  - ⊗ Village Metrolink stop

### A10.5 Reimagining Village Circle

Village Circle is a large-scale roundabout with high traffic volumes, made more complex by the through movement of Metrolink services. At present, the junction accommodates vehicle movement between the masterplan area and Trafford Park, particularly for industrial vehicles.

Traversing the junction on foot requires use of multi-stage signalised crossings, with long crossing distances. Some segregated cycle infrastructure is in place, however this is not consistently applied across the junction and its approaches.

The Village Metrolink stop is located to the west of the junction, resulting in severance between the Metrolink stop and the masterplan area to the east.

Existing vehicle movements are shown in Fig 80, which demonstrates the complexity and scale of the junction.

A transformational change to the scale and function of Village Circle would unlock significant opportunities for Trafford Wharfedale. Wharfedale Way is a wide, heavily trafficked route penetrating centrally into the eastern edge of Trafford Wharfedale. Similarly, Europa Way is a wide boulevard with two lanes of traffic in each direction that directly borders the western edge of the masterplan area.

Rebalancing these routes would support a general reduction in vehicle movements through the area, unlock additional land for development, and prioritise active modes and access to public transport.

As shown in Fig 81, the vision for Village Circle comprises:

- Removal of through roundabout to simplify vehicle movements and reduce scale of junction
- Reallocation of road space on Europa Way and Trafford Wharfedale to unlock land and provide enhanced active travel and public transport links.
- Narrowing of main carriageways and reduced number of lanes.

- Reduced radii at junction approaches.
- Simplified walking / cycling routes, with fewer crossing points and reduced crossing distances.

Given the proximity of the Village Metrolink stop to the new stadium, it is anticipated that the stop would need to be closed on event days for safety and crowd management purposes. Adjacent stops, such as Imperial War Museum, are within a short walking distance of the stadium for use on event days.

### A10.6 Wharfedale Way, Europa Way and Trafford Wharf Road

The relocation of the stadium to a location with direct frontage on Wharfedale Way, Europa Way and Trafford Wharf Road will require potentially significant interventions to these two primary roads.

Much detailed work remains to be done and will come forward as stadium design proposals emerge, but it is likely that specific traffic management measures will be required along these roads which might include carriageway narrowing and temporary closures in some locations. Particular consideration for event-day pedestrian egress will be required and any potential conflicts that might arise.

**DRAFT**

## A11.1 Context

Heat networks are being promoted in the UK as a key route to decarbonise heating, particularly in dense urban areas where shared infrastructure can be most efficient. National policy anticipates that heat networks could supply up to 20% of the UK's total heat demand, making them an important component of the transition away from individual fossil fuel systems.

Trafford Wharfside falls within a 'Heat Network Zone', identified through the national heat network zoning programme led by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) in partnership with the GMCA. Heat network zoning defines areas where heat networks are expected to provide the lowest-cost solution for decarbonising heat. The zoning for heat networks will be going through legislation this year and will require development within these zones to connect to an existing or planned network, or to implement a network solution itself.

This expectation is reinforced through Greater Manchester's adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, which states that major developments are expected to connect to an existing or planned heat network where feasible, or to install a site-wide or communal heat network solution, unless it can be demonstrated that an alternative approach would deliver greater carbon reductions or that connection is not practicable or viable.

Trafford Council has undertaken a review of heat demand across the proposed development, potential low-carbon heat sources, and the different heat network strategies that could be implemented.

The design of the heat network for the site will ultimately fall to a District Heat Network (DHN) developer, one that will be procured by the Council. This developer will need to provide a zone delivery plan, which will enable the Council to formally zone the site.

## A11.2 Utilities infrastructure overview

Existing utilities within the Wharfside area comprise high-voltage electrical cables, combined and surface water sewers, telecommunication routes, and water infrastructure serving historic industrial and stadium uses. These assets are expected to require rationalisation and potential reinforcement to accommodate the full build-out of the masterplan.

Discussions will be required with the statutory undertakers, including Electricity North West (ENWL), United Utilities, and telecommunication providers to confirm existing network capacities, available connection points, and any off-site reinforcement requirements.

Subject to the outcomes of these consultations, there may be potential to appoint an Independent Distribution Network Operator (IDNO) to design, adopt, and operate new electrical infrastructure for the development. This option would be explored in collaboration with ENWL to ensure consistency with their network strategy and technical standards.

Coordination between the electrical, district heating, and digital infrastructure networks will be essential to minimise spatial conflict, future-proof utility corridors, and enable efficient servicing of phased plots across the site.



Fig 82 Utilities plan

### A11.3 Heat sources

It is most likely that the heat for a network would come from a range of heat sources, including air source, water source (canal), ground source (with boreholes), data centre waste heat recovery, and sewer heat recovery, see Fig 83. The options being explored focus on heat sources that are compliant with net zero and are aligned with recommendations from the latest Committee on Climate Change (CCC) report to move away from fossil fuels and CHP.

A high-level appraisal of these options is provided. Other potential heat sources include deep geothermal, solar thermal and energy from waste, or more traditional, fossil fuel technologies such as gas boilers and combined heat power (CHP).

Heat source	Key requirements / Land take	Reliance or consents	Performance & reliability	Commentary
Air source	Large energy centre (~3,000 m <sup>2</sup> ) with external heat pump arrays.	None	Lower efficiency in colder weather; noise mitigation required.	Technically simple but less efficient; suitable only as supplementary capacity.
Water source (canal)	Energy centre (~2,000 m <sup>2</sup> ) located near the canal.	Requires interface with Peel Holdings and abstraction/discharge consent.	Stable source temperature under good flow conditions; performance can fall during cold, stagnant periods or icing.	Proven technology but less reliable where canal flow is limited; requires additional recirculation or thermal balancing to maintain efficiency.
Sewer heat recovery	Energy centre (~2,000 m <sup>2</sup> ) near combined sewer with sufficient flow.	Requires agreements with United Utilities and the Environment Agency.	Reliable where flow volumes are high; locally unproven.	Potential medium-term option, contingent on flow and partnership feasibility.
Data centre waste heat	Shared facility: Energy Centre (~2,000 m <sup>2</sup> ) + Data Centre (~1,000 m <sup>2</sup> ).	Coordination with Data Centre delivery.	Continuous, controllable heat source; high resilience.	Strongest alignment with masterplan; stable operation and high overall efficiency – preferred heat source.
Closed Loop Ground Source (Boreholes)	3000-4000 underground boreholes. No land taken.	Required agreements with the Environment Agency and detailed coordination with the foundation and civil design.	Stable source temperature and fully resilient.	Stable operation and high overall efficiency. A preferred heat source, but potentially more expensive.

### A11.4 Network options

There are a range of options for new heat networks across the site, each with different potential energy centre and piping sizes. There will be advantages and disadvantages for each which will need further consideration and assessment.

Options range from a single site-wide high-temperature heat network served by a single energy centre to multiple smaller low-temperature heat networks served by passive heat sources.

A summary of these options, and the size of associated energy centres, is outlined in Fig 84. Note that in the case of multiple smaller networks, interconnectors can still be introduced to enable heating sharing.

Fig 83 Summary of heat source feasibility findings

\* Assumption if this is the sole heat source serving a single site-wide network

### A11.5 Network phasing and DHN ready design

The phasing of the network(s) will need to be aligned with the overall development programme to enable early connection of Phase 1 plots, with subsequent extensions supporting future phases. As noted, this will need to be fully coordinated with the DHN developer.

If the infrastructure is delayed, early-phase buildings will be designed to be DHN-ready, ensuring seamless future integration. This includes:

- Space allocation for heat interface units (HIUs) or building/apartment-level heat pumps.
- Riser and plantroom allowances.
- External pipework connections capped at plot boundaries for future tie-ins.

Option	Operation	Energy Centre Size	Relative Scale Icons
Single site-wide network with a single energy centre	These could either be: <b>4th generation networks</b> , operating at 60-80°C. These networks provide heating only and require heat interface units (HIU) at the building or unit level to draw heat.	2,000 - 3,000 m <sup>2</sup>	
Multiple smaller networks with separate energy centres	or <b>5th generation networks with active heat sources</b> , operating at 20-30°C. These networks provide heating and cooling and require individual heat pumps at the building/apartment level to upgrade heat for heating or reject heat for cooling.	Approximately prorated relative to a single energy centre. X. E.g. 4 smaller energy centres (potentially to align with planning consent phases) would be ~750m <sup>2</sup> each.	
Multiple smaller networks with separate energy centres and local supplementary heat		Reduced energy centre sizes with local supplementary heat (e.g. rooftop heat pumps)	+ x No. plots
Multiple smaller networks using passive heat sources	5th generation networks with passive heat sources operating at 10°. These networks provide heating and cooling and require individual heat pumps at the building/apartment level to upgrade heat for heating or reject heat for cooling.	3,000-4,000 boreholes across the site, drilled and serving plots as they are developed. The number of boreholes can be reduced if used in conjunction with solar thermal or waste heat rejection (see section on thermal storage).	 Underground boreholes

Fig 84 Summary of heat network options

### A11.6 Next steps

- Engagement with procured DHN developer to coordinate the definition of shared utility corridors and confirm DHN pipe routes relative to other infrastructure
- Engagement with ENWL, United Utilities, and other statutory undertakers to confirm available capacity and connection strategy.
- Liaise with sewer and data centre operators to confirm heat-recovery potential and phasing alignment.
- Engagement with Trafford Council, GMCA, and utility stakeholders will continue to ensure the DHN supports regional net-zero objectives and aligns with emerging Greater Manchester Energy Master planning initiatives.



DRAFT

TRAFFORD WHARFSIDE



Clockwise from left: Beauty in infrastructure. A multi storey car park in the Olympic Park, a new bridge link Olympic Park and a bridge link connecting the park to Hackney Wick Olympic Park.  
© Allies and Morrison

DRAFT

STRATEGIC MASTERPLAN

## Allies and Morrison

Studio 4, Makers Quarter KAMPUS  
42 Aytoun Street  
Manchester M1 3GL

telephone +44 20 7921 0100  
web [alliesandmorrison.com](http://alliesandmorrison.com)  
email [studio@alliesandmorrison.com](mailto:studio@alliesandmorrison.com)

DRAFT