

Manchester City Council Report for Resolution

Report to: Executive - 26 July 2017

Subject: Chorlton – New Residential Growth Opportunities

Report of: Strategic Director, Development

Summary

This report sets out three potential opportunities to promote new residential growth within the Chorlton area which will offer the city benefit from a range of affordable, mid-range and executive priced homes if these proposals are supported. Two of the three opportunities – the redevelopment of Chorlton Cross Shopping Centre and the development on Ryebank Road - will be consulted upon over the next number of months in order to gauge the views of residents and other key stakeholders.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- 1) Note the processes associated with the disposal of Chorlton Leisure Centre and that a verbal update will be given at the meeting on the outcomes of the process associated with the disposal of this Asset of Community Value;
 - 2) Delegate the authorisation to dispose of the former Chorlton Leisure Centre site at Market Value to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Deputy Leader (Housing & Regeneration) and Executive Member for Finance and Human Resources;
 - 3) Instruct the City Solicitor to complete the required legal documentation associated with the disposal of Chorlton Leisure Centre;
 - 4) Endorse the draft Chorlton Cross Development Framework as appended to this report in Annex 1 so that it can be used as a basis for further consultation with local stakeholders and landowners; and
 - 5) Endorse the draft Ryebank Road Development Framework as appended to this report in Annex 2 so that it can be used as a basis for further consultation with local stakeholders and landowners.
-

Wards Affected:

Chorlton

Community Strategy Spine	Summary of the contribution to the strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The proposals offer the potential to promote mixed use developments that broaden and deepen the retail offering in Chorlton thereby strengthening the neighbourhood offer, contributing to the creation of jobs within the area and also providing a range of new residential accommodation for the growing population of the city.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Chorlton will help meet the demand for housing from workers who wish to live within the heart of the conurbation.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The proposals offer the potential to help deliver the Manchester Residential Growth Strategy and meet the growing demand for new homes in the City. The proposals will involve the creation of high quality amenity space that will be accessible to the local community.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The proposals will support the delivery of new residential developments using state of the art technologies to reduce the carbon footprint and create neighbourhoods with a range of amenities to support its residents.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The proposals for new development in Chorlton are all accessible to a range of public transport routes.

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

None

Financial Consequences – Capital

There are no immediate capital consequences arising as a result of these proposals.

Contact Officers:

Name: Joanne Roney OBE
 Position: Chief Executive, Manchester City Council
 Telephone: 0161 234 3006
 E-mail: j.roney@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Eddie Smith
Position: Strategic Director, Strategic Development
Telephone: 0161 234 3030
E-mail: e.smith@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Liz Treacy
Position: City Solicitor
Telephone: 0161 234 3087
E-mail: l.treacy@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Julie Roscoe
Position: Head of Planning & Building Control
Telephone: 0161 234 4552
E-mail: j.roscoe@manchester.gov.uk

Background documents (available for public inspection):

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

- Chorlton District Centre – Action Plan 2010 to 2020, Executive, 28th July, 2010
- Proposed Hough End and Levenshulme Leisure Facilities Update, Executive, 20th November 2013
- A Stimulus for Residential Growth, Executive, 24 June 2014
- Manchester Residential Growth Strategy and Action Plan 2016/17, Executive, 2nd March 2016
- Housing Affordability, Executive, 14th December 2016
- Interim output from the District Centres Subgroup, Economy Scrutiny - District Centres Subgroup, 23rd February 2017
- Delivering Residential Growth: Update and Action Plan 2017 - 2022, Executive, 28th June, 2017
- The Manchester Metropolitan University Estate Strategy 2017 – 2027, Executive, 28th June, 2017

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out three potential opportunities to promote new residential growth within the Chorlton area which will offer the city to benefit from a range of affordable, mid-range and executive priced homes if these proposals are supported. Two of the three opportunities – the redevelopment of Chorlton Cross Shopping Centre and the development on Ryebank Road - will be consulted upon over the next number of months in order to gauge the views of residents and other key stakeholders.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In March 2016 the Executive endorsed the Manchester Residential Growth Strategy which set a minimum target of 25,000 new homes to be delivered within the city by 2025. The Residential Growth Strategy proposes a set of priorities to support the city's sustained economic growth and to ensure that there are affordably priced houses and apartments for sale and rent, which meet the needs of economically active households who want to live in the city. The Strategy comprises 6 key objectives:

- Increase house building on existing and new sites;
- Improve the quality and sustainability of the city's housing;
- Increase opportunities for home-ownership;
- Expand the family housing offer;
- Professionalise the private rented sector across the city; and
- Provide appropriate housing options for retirement living.

- 2.2 In December 2016, the Executive also approved a new Housing Affordability Policy Framework for Manchester. The Framework sets out an aim to increase the proportion of homes affordable to Manchester residents to between 1,000 and 2,000 new homes each year. Decent and secure housing that meets the needs of Manchester residents with below average household incomes were defined as 'affordable'. The Residential Growth Strategy will be delivered in accordance with this Framework.

- 2.3 With regard to Chorlton the Executive approved a District Centre Action Plan in 2010 that set out a very clear vision for the District Centre. This was that:

“Chorlton will continue to be a successful neighbourhood that is accessible to all and well connected. It will provide an attractive and vibrant district centre with a full range of quality shops and community facilities. A redeveloped core will provide the catalyst for further investment, providing a new destination where people can meet and shop, encouraging visitors to spend more time in the district centre. The distinctive independent retail sector will continue to differentiate Chorlton from other centres in Manchester.”

- 2.4 The Chorlton District Centre Action Plan also established a set of key principles that formed the bedrock of the Action Plan. These included:

- Providing a high-quality further range of convenience offers to improve the retail core;
- Improving and developing the comparison non-food retail offer;
- Supporting and further developing the mix of independent traders and seeking to encourage more high-quality operators;
- Improving public services and public service provision;
- Maximising the benefits of the economic ‘accelerator’: Metrolink;
- Upgrading and improving the age-friendliness of the public realm, and increasing the amount of time visitors spend in the centre;
- Improving accessibility, connectivity, green infrastructure, public transport and parking;
- Protecting existing employers and encouraging the space for small to medium enterprise businesses where appropriate;
- Promoting a sustainable place, taking on the principles of the Manchester Climate Change Call to Action; and
- Ensuring strong leadership, management and governance through partnership working.

2.5 Finally, the nature of how “high streets” in the UK are changing as a result of number of differing drivers such as new patterns of retailing, new demands for food service offerings and a demand for new residential development has led the City Council’s Economy Scrutiny Committee to establish a District Centre Sub Group to examine the role and function of our district centres in the city with a view to making a series of recommendations to improve them. The interim report published in February this year made a number of observations including:

- There has been a significant shift in the ways that many District Centres operate over recent years attributable to wider economic trends, such as the general reduction in high street retail as retail has moved online; shifting demography through inward migration of particular groups; the growth of a night-time economy and other factors.
- The Council’s aims for District centres, as local centres, need to be more clearly defined as places where there is public space where people can meet and spend time together, and where people can meet a reasonable part of their basic day to day needs. District Centres also require transport and digital interconnectivity. Viable retail activity is therefore a really important element of this mix, and will only flourish where there is sufficient population density to bring enough footfall to make retail viable businesses.
- The city’s population has grown rapidly over the last decade and is projected to continue to grow and homes are being built to meet the housing needs of this growing population, with the sites for these primarily in the North and the East of the city.

2.6 It is against this background that the proposals for new residential growth in Chorlton have been considered.

3.0 Chorlton – New Residential Growth Opportunities

- 3.1 There are three potential opportunities to create new homes within the Chorlton area. These are: Chorlton Leisure Centre; Chorlton Cross Shopping Centre and Ryebank Road. Each of these assets are owned respectively by the City Council, the Greater Manchester Pension Fund via the Greater Manchester Property Venture Fund (GMPVF) and Manchester Metropolitan University. Discussions with the latter two parties in recent months has indicated a willingness to promote new development on the assets they hold within Chorlton. Subsequent sections of this report set out the current background and proposals for each of the three opportunities.

4.0 Chorlton Leisure Centre

- 4.1 In November 2013, the Executive approved proposals to build a facility on Hough End Playing Fields, fronting Princess Parkway allowed the closure of the Chorlton and Withington buildings which were concluded to be life expired and uneconomic following a full review of the ongoing operational costs and future investment required through the Asset Management Programme. Following the completion of the Hough End Leisure Centre, Chorlton Leisure Centre was closed in June 2015. The site is currently vacant.

Asset of Community Value

- 4.2 In March 2015, the Council received a nomination for the Chorlton Leisure Centre building to be listed as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) under the Localism Act 2011 and The Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012. Under the legislation, the Local Authority is required to review any nomination for land or property within its boundary and make an independent decision based upon specific criterion. Following a review of the nomination by the panel of officers, the building was listed as an ACV in May 2015.
- 4.3 Through this legislation, a land owner is required to inform the Local Authority of its intention to dispose of the site. In June 2017, the Council as landowner, formally notified the City Solicitor of its intention to dispose of the site in accordance with this legislation. The Council is required to advertise the intention of the landowner locally, as well as informing the Community Interest Group who made the original nomination.
- 4.4 From the date of the confirmation by the landowner Community Interest Groups have six weeks to formally notify the Council of their interest in submitting a bid for the site. The six week period runs out on the 25th July 2017. Should interest be registered during this period, offers may be made for the acquisition of the site from the landowner for a period up to six months from the initial date that the City Solicitor was informed of the intention to dispose. The landowner, has the final decision as to whether it accepts any offers made, with no right of appeal from a bidder. A verbal update will be

given at the Executive on the outcomes of the processes that conclude on the 25th July.

- 4.5 In respect of Chorlton Leisure Centre, the Council would expect to obtain market value for any disposal. If a Community Interest Group does not register interest within the six week period, the Council may dispose of the site in accordance with its usual powers. Following interest from a Community Interest Group, if no follow up offers are made in the ensuing period or any offer does not meet the Council's criteria in terms of regeneration benefits, including residential growth and specifically homes that meet the new affordability policy, or market value, the Council may dispose of the site in accordance with its usual powers.

Planning Policy Context

- 4.6 In order to support the ongoing regeneration initiatives of Chorlton District Centre, the Council would expect any disposal to meet the guidance as set out in the relevant Planning Policy documents. In respect of supporting residential growth the site could host circa 40 new homes.

5.0 Chorlton Cross Shopping Centre

- 5.1 The Chorlton Cross Shopping Centre lies at the heart of Chorlton District Centre and it is owned by the Greater Manchester Pension Fund via the Greater Manchester Property Venture Fund (GMPVF). Over the last 12 months the City Council has been in discussions with the Fund to discuss with them their ambitions to bring forward a comprehensive redevelopment of the site to include new retail provision, new residential development and new car parking facilities.
- 5.2 The GMPVF have been encouraged to prepare a draft Development Framework for this site in order to then subject their proposals to a period of public consultation. The draft Chorlton Cross Development Framework (attached at Annex 1 of this report) has been prepared by 5 Plus Architects and GVA on behalf of GMPVF. Drawing on retail, leisure and residential market demand evidence, the Framework includes details of the mix of uses, scale, massing and densities of development sought through redevelopment. In relation to residential development the draft Framework, amongst other things, proposes circa 190 new homes on the site.
- 5.3 The draft Chorlton Cross Development Framework design principles and illustrative masterplan options provide guidance and a clear demonstration of how new development can be managed to realise the site's opportunities in a manner that maximises the development's contribution to Manchester's strategic objectives. In summary the key principles include:
- Enhancing the District Centre retail core. Repairing the lack of retail activation to the eastern boundary of the site that fronts Manchester Road. The current development turns its back to the street and breaks the ground floor retail activation that exists along Manchester Road and

around the Four Banks. Any new development coming forwards should seek to maximise the positive ground floor activation to this retail street through the provision of new retail opportunities and front doors to apartments above.

- Repairing the residential grain. Restoring and completing the residential grain to the west of the site through the provision of new appropriately scaled town houses. Creating a back to back private garden configuration whilst establishing a new town house frontage and pedestrian friendly street extending through the core of the site. Through the creation of contextually scaled and proportioned streets a sense of place is established.
- A permeable development promoting strong north south pedestrian connections through the site and with adjoining areas by repairing the existing urban grain. Re-purposing an existing vehicular north-south route through the site and existing car park with a new positive pedestrian friendly street activated by town houses and human scale activation at ground. The existing vehicular access through the site should be limited to access from a single direction only to prevent 'rat running' and promote a pedestrian friendly residential street. Car parking should be minimised to the street with new shared residential and retail parking located within a covered 2 storey podium skinned with retail, apartment and town house activation. Positive ground floor activation, removal of the car from the street and place-making is maximised to enhance the delivery of a high quality residential led mixed use development.
- The development should be focused on delivering new resident amenities offering a mix of well managed and maintained landscaped areas. The second floor resident's podium deck provides the opportunity to create a distinctive and appealing development that affords a sheltered and southerly aspect.
- In response to orientation and existing built context, the scale and massing of blocks should be modulated and offset to promote daylight penetration into the public realm and roof top amenity areas whilst responding appropriately to the scale and built rhythm of Manchester Road. This should create a sense of enclosure and successful, human scale relationship to the site's open spaces.
- The site is uniquely positioned at the core of the Chorlton District Centre. There is an opportunity to use scale to define the site as a Gateway to the retail core. Graeme House, the existing 8 storey office is unique to the scale of the surrounding context and establishes a maximum height parameter for any new development. Any new tall development should be appropriately located in response to orientation and context and be modulated to optimise daylight penetration and visual connections.

- Given the site's unique position at the heart of the retail core, the Framework presents an opportunity to provide new and improved car parking that will support both the new residential and retail demand on the site whilst also making provision for the wider retail core. The provision of new car parking on this site will assist in the promotion and further regeneration the retail core. This will also assist in addressing the loss of existing surface car parking directly from the site.
- 5.4 It is intended that this Development Framework, once approved, will guide and form the basis of assessment for future planning applications at the site. Design and Access Statements and masterplans submitted in support of future redevelopment proposals at Chorlton Cross Shopping Centre must clearly detail how the proposed development reflects the land uses, densities and design and layout principles laid out in the final approved Development Framework.
- 5.5 The Executive will be asked to endorse the draft Chorlton Cross Development Framework (as appended to the report in Annex 1) for a period of consultation with residents and other stakeholders and to note that a final version of this Framework will be submitted to a future meeting of the Executive following that consultation.
- 6.0 Ryebank Road**
- 6.1 The June 2017 meeting of the Executive were informed of Manchester Metropolitan University's (MMU's) new ten year Estate Strategy. This Strategy re-affirmed the University's commitment to the city and the wider city region to deliver excellence in education and it set out the intention to invest significantly in new buildings and estate over the next ten years. Arising from this Strategy the University will dispose of a number of existing property assets in order to help underpin the investment needed to deliver this ten year Estate Strategy.
- 6.2 The MMU's successful disposal of its Didsbury, Hollings, Aytoun, and Elizabeth Gaskell campuses helped facilitate the creation of the previous phase of growth and consolidation of the University into the city. As the University embarks upon its next phase of growth the Ryebank Road site provides a further unique opportunity to make a significant contribution to the long term economic growth of the city of Manchester, particularly the City Council's residential growth and place making ambitions. As with the strategy to dispose of the Didsbury, Hollings, Aytoun, and Elizabeth Gaskell campuses the aim is to ensure that this surplus asset supports investment in the University's future growth whilst at the same time helping to support in delivering Manchester's wider economic growth ambitions, and ensuring that there is a lasting legacy to the local community in terms of beneficial use.
- 6.3 In this respect, the Ryebank Road asset has the opportunity to meet the City's need for high quality executive homes, whilst simultaneously investing in its immediate parkland context. The overall benefit will be to create the ability of the University and City Council to reinvest the value created from this strategic

disposal to deliver new and improved education, community, sporting and recreational facilities.

- 6.4 As with the Didsbury Campus site the Manchester Metropolitan University have been encouraged to prepare a draft Development Framework for this site in order to then subject the proposals to a period of public consultation. The draft Ryebank Road Development Framework (attached at Annex 2 of this report) has been prepared by 5 Plus Architects and Cushman Wakefield on behalf of MMU.
- 6.5 The Ryebank Road site has been vacant for a number of years being surplus to MMU's requirements. As a result, this privately owned site has become an under-utilised area of predominantly unmanaged grassland with restricted accessibility. It has effectively become a barrier between the existing surrounding residential communities and the recreational amenities of Longford Park.
- 6.6 In preparing the draft Ryebank Road Development Framework it has been recognised the potential for the site to be positively transformed, particularly if the existing environmental and landscape assets that it possesses can be used as the basis upon which a framework for regeneration can be produced. For example, the groups of mature trees along its Western boundary have an unmanaged understory which at present creates an almost impenetrable barrier of vegetation between the site and the park. Similar characteristics are found along the boundary with St John's Primary School. With careful management these groups of trees can become a distinctive component of any framework for regeneration, providing a reference point for the character of any future proposals. The same can be said for the native hedgerows located along the southern boundary of the site, and the historic Nico Ditch that runs East to West across the site which, at the present time is difficult to pick out as a landscape feature due to the sites unmanaged state, but represent assets that will add strong character to proposals on the site.
- 6.7 Through a careful analysis of the site characteristics, its technical constraints, and undoubted opportunities, a framework for its regeneration has evolved that responds directly to the City Council's aspiration to deliver its residential growth and place making ambitions. This will further enhance the City Council's aspiration to neighbourhoods that are great places to live and that provide a high quality of life that benefit the people who already live here as well as attracting greater numbers of talented people to be part of the city's future and in turn attract more investment and jobs.
- 6.8 On this basis the framework places the sites environmental and landscape assets at its core as this will provide the character and quality that is expected from any new investment into Manchester and the Chorlton neighbourhood. In summary, the framework proposes:
- The re-use of the existing access off Longford Road as the main vehicular entrance to the site;

- Ryebank Road to the North is proposed as a pedestrian and cycle access point. This will create a fully accessible residential extension that is both linked with its surroundings and additionally offers increased permeability through the new development;
- Suburban housing is suggested as being most appropriate with a range of unit sizes which are envisaged to consist of detached and semi-detached units, each with sizeable gardens and in curtilage car parking;
- An appropriate density that respects and responds to the physical, social and economic context of the site and wider Chorlton area - the Framework suggests circa 70 homes across the site; and
- The development should create an external environment that embraces the neighbouring Longford Park, softens the current vegetated barrier between the site and the Park and opens up views to the Park from the site. The proposals seek to protect and enhance, create a parkland setting for the new homes, protect mature tree planting and introduce a new layer of vegetation to enhance the existing.

6.9 The draft framework proposes a high quality, low density development in keeping with its surrounding context whilst supporting a new, residential product that will enhance the existing residential offer to Chorlton and the wider South Manchester market.

6.10 As with the draft Chorlton Cross Development Framework it is intended that the Ryebank Road Development Framework, once approved, will guide and form the basis of assessment for future planning applications for the site. Design and Access Statements and masterplans submitted in support of future redevelopment proposals for Ryebank Road must clearly detail how the proposed development reflects the land uses, densities and design and layout principles laid out in the final approved Development Framework.

6.11 The Executive will be asked to endorse the draft Ryebank Road Development Framework (as appended to the report in Annex 2) for a period of consultation with residents and other stakeholders and to note that a final version of this Framework will be submitted to a future meeting of the Executive following that consultation.

7.0 Concluding Remarks

7.1 Chorlton continues to be one of the city's most popular neighbourhoods with very few opportunities to secure significant new investment into it. The proposals to bring forward new residential development on the sites of Chorlton Leisure Centre, the Chorlton Cross Shopping Centre and on Manchester Metropolitan University's Ryebank Road sites have the potential to broaden and deepen the housing offer in Chorlton with significant opportunities to develop affordable, mid-market and executive type homes for families, couples and single people.

- 7.2 In Chorlton District Centre both the Shopping Centre and the Leisure Centre sites, in addition to providing new homes, have also the potential to also broaden and deepen the provision of new retail and other private sector led services in the area, thus helping to realise the long held ambitions for the District Centre.
- 7.3 Finally, in respect of the Ryebank Road site the draft proposals propose a high quality, low density residential development which must be aligned with the opportunity to enhance the tree coverage and provide an area of managed public open space that would enhance and maintain the links to Longford Park. As part of any emerging proposals, it will be necessary to assess biological and ecological features and ensure these, where appropriate, play an intrinsic part of the site's development, together with the careful consideration of how the provision of open space is managed and provides the qualitative improvements required.
- 7.4 Detailed recommendations appear at the front of this Report.

8.0 Contributing to the Manchester Strategy Outcomes

(a) A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities

- 8.1 The proposals offer the potential to promote mixed use developments that broaden and deepen the retail offering in Chorlton thereby strengthening the neighbourhood offer, contributing to the creation of jobs within the area and also providing a range of new residential accommodation for the growing population of the city.

(b) A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success

- 8.2 Chorlton will help meet the demand for housing from workers who wish to live within the heart of the conurbation.

(c) A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities

- 8.3 The proposals offer the potential to help deliver the Manchester Residential Growth prospectus and meet the growing demand for new homes in the City. The proposals will involve the creation of high quality amenity space that will be accessible to the local community.

(d) A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work

- 8.4 The proposals will support the delivery of new residential developments using state of the art technologies to reduce the carbon footprint and create neighbourhoods with a range of amenities to support its residents.

(e) A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth

- 8.5 The proposals for new development in Chorlton are all accessible to a range of public transport routes.

9.0 Key Polices and Considerations

(a) Equal Opportunities

- 9.1 An outcome will be to capture local employment opportunities and ensure that local residents have the opportunity to compete for such job opportunities.

(b) Risk Management

- 9.2 Not Applicable

(c) Legal Considerations

- 9.3 To be added