

Rochdale Station Square

Statement of Community Involvement

ON BEHALF OF ROCHDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

December 2022

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Appendices

Appendix 1: List of Survey Questions

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement ('SCI') has been prepared by Nexus Planning on behalf of Rochdale Borough Council ('the applicant') to support the submission of an application at Rochdale Station Square for:
- 'Public realm works including: new public square; relocation of taxi rank and car parking spaces; and associated works.'**
- 1.2 The proposed scheme presents a major regeneration opportunity for the area, comprising an improved public realm that will provide a new entrance to Rochdale. The public realm, located to the north of the railway station, will provide a civic space for local communities. The investment in this area will act as a catalyst for further investment into Rochdale, and support wider regeneration initiatives in the town and the Borough.
- 1.3 Further detail of the application proposals is provided in the submitted Planning Statement, and the Design and Access Statement. This SCI should be read alongside the full suite of application documents.
- 1.4 The application have evolved following extensive pre-application engagement and discussions which can be summarised as follows:
- On-going discussions with planning officers at Rochdale Borough Council and key stakeholders, including Transport for Greater Manchester ('TfGM'), Historic England and the highway authority; and
 - Public consultation with local residents and businesses containing information about the proposals, including an online survey and dedicated page on the Council's 'Citizen Space' consultation hub, and drop-in public exhibition events.
- 1.5 The purpose of this report is to record the findings of our consultation, and to set out how comments have been accounted for in the final proposals.

Report Structure

- 1.6 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:
- Section 2 provides the planning policy context;
 - Section 3 outlines the approach and methodology of the consultation programme;
 - Section 4 sets out the pre-application discussions with the local planning authority and statutory planning consultees;
 - Section 5 explains the consultation with local residents and the wider community;
 - Section 6 summarises the outcomes of the community engagement.

2. Planning Policy Basis

- 2.1 This section of the SCI sets out the planning policy basis for public consultation, including local and national guidance and requirements.
- 2.2 Whilst pre-application consultation on an application of this nature is not a statutory requirement, it is recognised that it is beneficial in this instance to engage with local communities in order to deliver an appropriate public realm scheme. Pre-application engagement is also encouraged by the below policy framework.

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

- 2.3 Chapter 4 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the NPPF') covers pre-application consultation, and identifies that early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties.
- 2.4 Paragraph 40 of the NPPF identifies the key role local planning authorities ('LPAs') can play in encouraging applicants to take advantage of the pre-application stage. Although an LPA cannot require a developer engage with them before submitting a planning application, LPAs are encouraged to recommend the take-up of any pre-application services they offer. Where beneficial, LPAs should encourage applicants to engage with the local community, and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.
- 2.5 Paragraph 41 of the NPPF makes clear that early engagement (with all stakeholders, including statutory consultees) can assist LPAs in issuing timely decisions, helping to ensure that applicants do not experience unnecessary delays and costs.

National Planning Practice Guidance (2014)

- 2.6 National Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG') recommends pre-application engagement as a means of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system, and to improve the quality of planning applications and their likelihood of success.
- 2.7 The PPG also states that the level of engagement should be proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposed development.

Rochdale Statement of Community Involvement (August 2021)

- 2.8 Rochdale Borough Council's approach to community involvement is set out in this document. The Council encourages applicants to contact them for discussions prior to submitting the application.
- 2.9 For significant development proposals, the Council has adopted guidance to encourage applicants/developers to consult with the local community prior to submitting their application.
- 2.10 The following methods are likely to be suitable and could be used if considered to be appropriate:
- circulating a letter or statement to local residents and businesses explaining the proposals;
 - arranging an exhibition or presentation;
 - engagement online using social media or dedicated consultation websites; and
 - arranging a press release in local media.

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- 2.11 Applicants contemplating the submission of a major application should contact the LPA at pre-application stage to discuss and agree a consultation procedure. The agreed procedure will include arrangements for reporting the information obtained from the consultation exercise and production of a document that explains how that exercise has influenced the detail of the application.
- 2.12 Applicants are also encouraged to engage in pre-application discussions with the LPA. The discussions should seek to identify key issues and planning policies that the developer should take into account, and identify likely problems at an early stage and to allow the developer to address them via amendments to a scheme prior to submitting a planning application. This process will also enable the identification of any required community consultation and any supporting reports that may be required to support an application. The scope of pre-application engagement will vary according to the nature of the application.
- 2.13 Engagement with other bodies such as the Environment Agency, TfGM and the highway authority may also be recommended, and applicants should undertake investigations to confirm the presence of services such as gas, electricity, water, sewers, and telephone and cable lines.

3. Pre-Application Engagement with Statutory Consultees

- 3.1 In accordance with the Rochdale Statement of Community Involvement and paragraphs 40 and 41 of the NPPF, pre-application engagement with the LPA and key statutory and non-statutory consultees has been undertaken. This engagement has sought to identify and address issues in respect of the scheme design prior to the submission of a planning application in order to provide a better outcome for stakeholders. This engagement has also confirmed the documents required to support the planning application.
- 3.2 The scope of the engagement was informed through discussions with Officers at Rochdale Borough Council, and a list of key statutory and non-statutory consultees was established.

Engagement with Council and Stakeholders

- 3.3 Discussions regarding the proposals at Rochdale Station Square, including the emerging planning application, have taken place between the project team and key stakeholders, including Council Officers, over recent months. A number of meetings were held with key stakeholders, including:

- a. Council Officers – A meeting was held with Ryan Grant, Principal Planning Officer at Rochdale Borough Council on 14 July 2022. This meeting discussed the emerging proposals at Rochdale Station Square, with a particular focus on matters of design, highways impacts and heritage, and to scope the planning application submission requirements.

Regular meetings have been held with Rochdale's Senior Highways Officer (Strategy) and they have also been a standing attendee at the design workshops throughout the development of the masterplan and Rochdale Station Square. In an email dated 6 September 2022 it was confirmed that the application for Rochdale Station Square should be supported by a Transport Statement.

- b. Transport for Greater Manchester – TfGM have been engaged in the development of the masterplan and subsequent workshops with the Rochdale Station Square design team. Representatives from a wide range of departments have been engaged from late 2019 through to the submission of this application. In preparing the application submission, meetings have been held with representatives from transport strategy, the rapid transit development team, traffic management – buses, and rail. The most recent meeting (7 October 2022) also included a representative from Diamond Buses in relation to the implications of the scheme on their 471 service.
- c. Taxi Group – A meeting with the Council's licensing officers and representatives of the Licensed Taxi Trade Association for Rochdale took place on 18 July 2022. The principles of the scheme as presented were welcomed by the representatives.
- d. Rail Industry – Representatives from Network Rail (station operator), Northern Rail (train operator) and TfGM, have taken place both in the series of design workshops from the masterplan through to the submission. There have been monthly meetings of the Stations Alliance group where the project has been discussed alongside wider ambitions for the Rochdale station area.
- e. Nye Bevan Health Centre – met with key stakeholders from the NHS and Nye Bevan House on 13 July 2022. Conversations touched on the request for steps for those accessing a physio appointment, and providing outdoor café seating. The discussions also touched on the importance of ensuring the road layout provides sufficient access for the movement of the mobile scanner into and out of the car park of Nye Bevan House.

- f. Heritage – meeting held with Historic England, Invest in Rochdale, Rochdale Development Agency and the LPA on 19 July 2022. Discussions touched on landscaping, ensuring the layout reflected pedestrian desire lines, the potential location of bollards or other obstructing features to ensure pedestrian safety, tree planting, public art and whether the proposed parking arrangements could impact future development in the area. The discussions also noted the potential for the materials finish of the square to be pulled into the surrounding streets.

Summary of Feedback

- 3.4 In an email dated 5 August 2022, Ryan Grant identified the validation requirements for the application to be as follows:

- Planning Statement;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Statement of Community Involvement;
- Full package of planning drawings including site location plan, existing and proposed site plan, sections, and so on;
- Landscape plans, planting schedule, street furniture details, and so on;
- Ecological Report;
- Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment;
- Crime Impact Statement;
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy; and
- Heritage Statement.

- 3.5 Comments were received on the proposed design of Station Square from Michael Atkinson-Smith, Senior Project Officer at Rochdale Development Agency via email on 1 August 2022. These comments relate to the following matters:

- Clarification in respect of the number of pedestrian crossings;
- The planting areas around the tram line boundaries should be raised to avoid unwanted pedestrian use;
- Clarification as to whether SuDS features can be used adjacent to the tram line;
- Consider using the Metrolink substation building close to St John the Baptist Church as some form of historical interpretation board;
- Reduce tree planting outside Nye Bevan House which could obscure the building;
- The landscape design in the north-western corner of the square should be reconsidered;
- Consider adding bollards or similar features throughout the square in the interest of pedestrian safety;
- Cycle parking should be provided throughout the square in convenient and overlooked places, including at the station;
- Public art installation supported, this could be provided in the form of a plinth with a revolving programme of sculptures;
- Reconsider parking arrangements and provide hard landscaping, such as seating, to break it up; and
- The materials proposed in the square could be pulled into the surrounding streets to make the street look more cohesive.

- 3.6 Comments were received from Catherine Fenghour, Conservation Officer at Rochdale Borough Council, on 29 July 2022. These comments relate to the following matters:

- Non-designated heritage assets should be considered;

- Improvements could be made to the buildings on Maclure Road and Station Road as some of the buildings are of good architectural quality;
- More of a connection between the Fire Station and the church would be welcomed, due to their shared history and landmark status;
- More details of proposed paving and soft landscaping should be considered; and
- Areas of soft landscaping/paving along western boundary of tramline should be reconsidered. May be preferable to provide continuous soft landscaped strip.

Response

3.7 The planning application submission responds to the outcome of the above consultations in the following ways.

- The planning application is accompanied by all of the documents requested by the LPA in their consultation response. This submission documents provide the additional detail requested by key consultees, including information in respect of landscaping and the consideration of heritage assets;
- Where appropriate and possible, the application proposals have been revised to respond to comments. In some instances, due to operational requirements or the presence of utilities infrastructure, it has not proven possible to revise the scheme to reflect comments made raised; and,
- Additional clarification has been provided as appropriate in response to requests from consultees for further information or greater detail.

4. Pre-Application Engagement with Residents

Public Consultation

- 4.1 The proposed plans were presented online via a dedicated 'Citizen Space' page on the Council's website¹. The page provided an online survey seeking to elicit feedback from the local community – both residents and businesses – and other stakeholders. Contact information was provided to enable respondents to direct any questions at that stage to members of the team.
- 4.2 In-person consultation events were held on Thursday 28 July 2022 and Tuesday 2 August 2022. These all-day events were held between 10am and 5pm at the Fireground (the Fire Service Museum) on Maclure Road, which is situated directly adjacent to the Rochdale Station Square site.
- 4.3 Following this event, the online consultation opened on 28 July 2022 and closed on 11 August 2022. Overall, there were 94 individual responses to the consultation. The list of questions posed are provided at Appendix 1 of this report.
- 4.4 The multi-platform consultation methodology supports an inclusive public consultation exercise, and has provided the opportunity for a range of interested parties to appraise and respond to the detail of the presented scheme. The methodology also allowed for direct engagement with residents and stakeholders, and allowed them to share and distribute content and responses among themselves in order to raise local awareness in relation to the proposals and the objectives of the proposed scheme. .

Findings

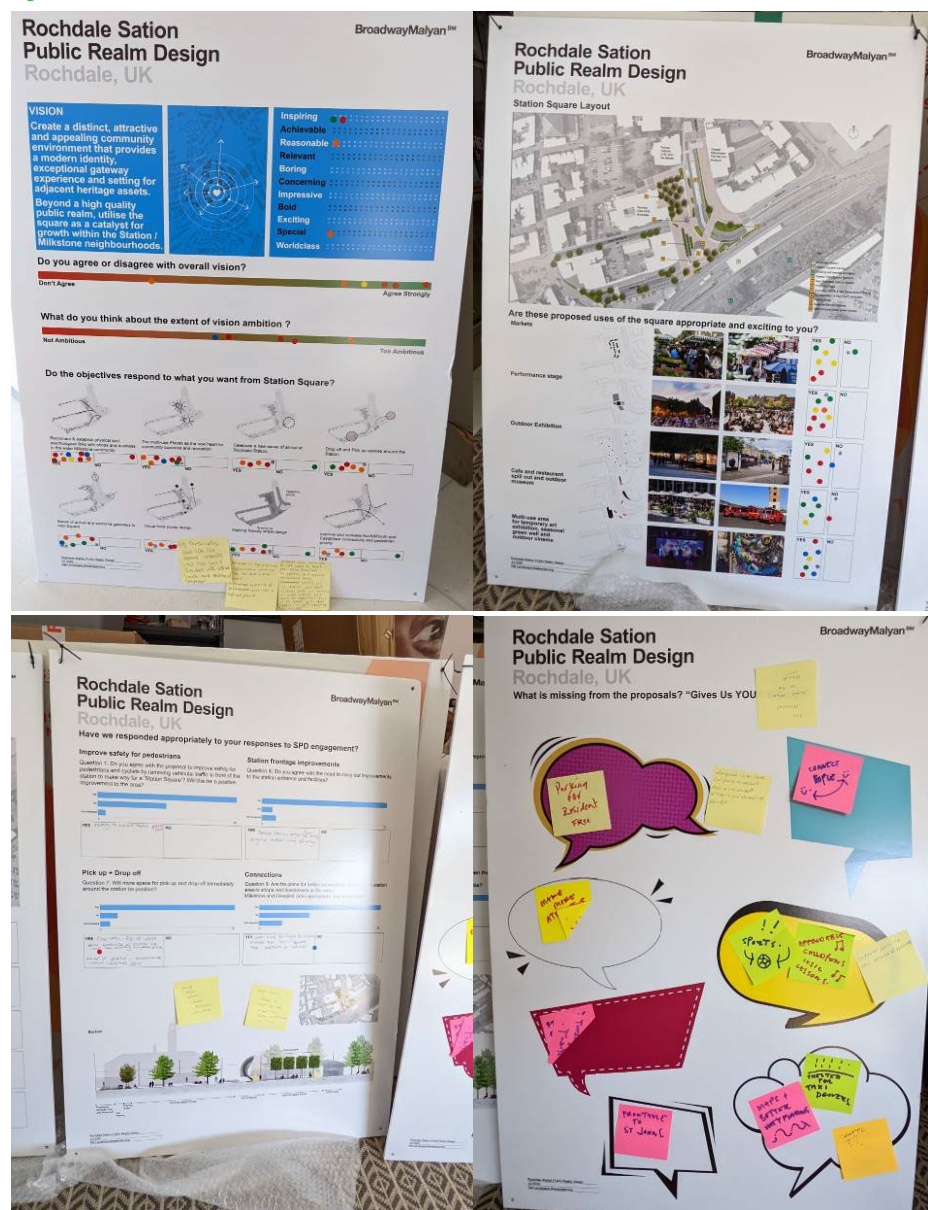
Consultation Event

- 4.5 As set out at Paragraph 4.2 above, two dedicated in-person exhibition and consultation sessions were held in July and August 2022. These sessions corresponded with the online consultation event, and were held adjacent to the Rochdale Station Square site.
- 4.6 Figure 4.1 below sets out some of the consultation material that was displayed at the exhibition event.
- 4.7 On the whole, feedback from the in-person consultation event was generally positive and respondents' were supportive of what the project is trying to achieve. The majority of respondents agreed with the vision and thought that the extent of vision ambition was just right to more ambitious.
- 4.8 There was broad support for the objectives, with a limited number of negative responses being received in relation to:
- the perceived 'sense of arrival' when alighting at the station;
 - whether the street design is sufficiently pedestrian-friendly;
 - the physical and psychological links to shops and businesses in the wider Milkstone community; and
 - improvements in respect of north to south and east to west pedestrian connectivity.
- 4.9 The proposed uses in the square were also largely supported. Respondents were almost unanimously in favour of hosting markets and using the square as a multi-use area to accommodate temporary art exhibitions, seasonal

¹ <https://consultations.rochdale.gov.uk/research/rochdale-station-square/>

greenery, and as an outdoor cinema. Only a single negative response was received in respect of the outlines proposed uses, relating to whether the square represents an appropriate location for a market. A total of two responses which failed to answer either 'yes' or 'no' were also received in respect of the proposed use of the square as an outdoor exhibition space and for café and restaurant 'spill out' space with an outdoor museum.

Figure 4.1: Consultation Boards



4.10 In terms of detail that residents considered to be missing from the proposals, the following needs were identified by residents:

- improved parking, including the potential for free residents parking, and electric vehicle charging points;
- a greater number of benches;
- improvements to the frontage facing St John's Church;
- improved wayfinding throughout the site; and,
- a shelter for taxi drivers.

Online Survey

- 4.11 The responses to the online survey were more mixed, but on the whole, still generally positive.
- 4.12 Question 1 asked respondents whether sufficient consideration had been applied to pedestrian facilities; better connectivity (between the station area to shops and businesses in the wider area); station frontage improvements; and, pick up and drop off. In total, 67% of respondents said that sufficient consideration had been applied to pedestrian facilities; and 62% said the same in respect of station frontage improvements. However, 38% of respondents agreed that the project team had given sufficient consideration to better connectivity (as opposed to 45% who suggested that further consideration could be given to this matter), and 33% of respondents considered that sufficient consideration has been demonstrated in respect of pick up and drop off facilities (45% of respondents indicated that further consideration could be given to this issue). It should be noted that a reasonable proportion of respondents indicated that they didn't know whether the proposals appropriately addressed these issues.
- 4.13 Question 2 asked respondents to provide some key words to describe the proposed vision for Rochdale Station Square. Although a number of responses supported the vision, and supported the idea of realising change in the Square, there some concerns were also expressed with the vision. These included the suggestion that the vision was considered to be boring, and some respondents raised technical concerns relating to highway design and a perceived potential for criminality.
- 4.14 With respect of the open ended Question 3, 'What are your views on the overall vision?', typical comments in favour of proposals were as follows:
- *'More pedestrian friendly space is needed with convenient drop-off and pick-up points for vehicles';*
 - *'The area is in need of redevelopment and modernising';*
 - *'The proposals will attract people to the Fire Museum and St John's Church';*
 - *'The proposals will improve the area and entrance to Rochdale town centre'.*
- 4.15 Less favourable comments in respect of the same question included:
- *'More work needs to be done around Drake Street';*
 - *'The drop off area needs to be accessible for people with mobility issues and the exclusion of buses and taxis will make access for less mobile people and those without a car worse';*
 - *'Anti-social behaviour needs tackling';*
 - *'The proposals should include the opening up of the canal basin near Drake Street';*
 - *'There is too much traffic and congestion and the proposals will worsen congestion on Drake Street and other surrounding roads';*
 - *'The tram lines and stop should be greened';*
 - *'More heritage design needed';*
 - *'The proposal does not consider the impact on existing business and residents in the area';*
 - *'Road closures will reduce overlooking at night and make the square less safe'; and*
 - *'The vision lacks creativity and is too simplistic'.*
- 4.16 Question 4 asked respondents to provide their view about the extent of the vision ambition for Rochdale Station Square, and asked them whether the vision was 'too ambitious', 'about right' or 'not ambitious'. In total, 46% of respondents either thought the vision was 'about right', or somewhere between being too ambitious and not ambitious. A total of 16% of respondents felt the vision was 'too ambitious', and 35% thought that it was 'not ambitious'.

4.17 Question 5 asked respondents whether scheme objectives were consistent with their expectations for a redeveloped Rochdale Station Square. A total of 10 criteria were identified for respondents to consider. These are summarised below, listed in descending order from those which secure the highest rate of approval:

- 60% - Walking friendly street design;
- 53% - Sense of arrival and welcome gateways to new Square;
- 52% - Improve and increase north to south and east to west connectivity and pedestrian priority;
- 51% - Involving public space and squares with formal and informal nature;
- 50% - Visual focal points design;
- 50% - Celebrate and new sense of arrival on Rochdale Station;
- 46% - Drop off and pick-up spaces around the Station;
- 41% - Features inform movement and define spaces;
- 38% - Reconnect establish a physical and psychological link with shops and business in the wider Milkstone community; and,
- 36% - The multi-use square as the new heart for the community business and recreation.

4.18 Question 6 asked whether the proposed uses of the square were appropriate and exciting. Land use options provided in the survey referred to markets; a performance stage; outdoor exhibitions; café and restaurant spill out and outdoor museum; multi-use area for temporary art exhibition; and, public art mural with green wall and outdoor cinema. Of these proposed uses, a café and restaurant spill out was the most popular (with 64% of respondents expressing support), followed by a multi-use area for temporary art exhibitions and outdoor exhibitions (with 50% and 49% support respectively). Lower levels of support were expressed for markets (40%) and use of the square as a performance stage (33%).

4.19 Question 7 asked respondents what their 'big idea' was for Station Square. The main themes arising from this relate to: allowing existing and new businesses to flourish: keeping the square well maintained; providing an attractive and exciting design; creating a pleasant pedestrian environment; and, creating a good impression on arrival to the town. Other aspirations include:

- *'A central point where residents and visitors can spill out from shops and apartments nearby';*
- *'A multi-cultural, urban sense of place';*
- *'Be careful how much space you take don't forget there is a health centre there & people need easy access to it. Especially disabled people who more than likely need medical attention more often';*
- *'Don't over-complicate it! Just make it pleasant and pedestrian-friendly. People will use it mainly as a place to move through easily to their ongoing destination, not just stop there - unless their train is delayed, of course!!';*
- *'Key to this area is public transport and health care. That means private vehicles and taxis dropping off and picking up. I'd have vehicle accessible drop offs right outside Nye Bevan's main entrance and directly between railway station's main entrance and ramp to tram platform. In other words keep current locations but improve them';*
- *'The overall design is good but should still allow access to buses at the front of the station and not at the rear. It certainly gives a better impression to people coming into Rochdale'; and*
- *'To make it a community area for everyone'.*

4.20 Finally, Question 8 asked respondents about whether they had anything further that they wanted to raise as part of this consultation. Comments mostly related to matters raised elsewhere in the consultation process, and included references to supporting the proposals. Other respondents expressed concerns in respect of changes to the highways network and how these may impact the operation of businesses and picking up passengers from the Station, and the need to ensure the views and inputs from local residents are considered as part of the process.

4.21 Example responses include:

- *'Any improvement is an improvement. Taking the road away and creating a pedestrian square is a good idea as long as it's kept clean and safe. It can soon be a bad area if it's not maintained and policed';*
- *'Make this a project worthy of a design award';*
- *'Please make sure local people's views are taken on board'; and*
- *'There should be nice buildings nearby to create an attractive atmosphere. More buildings for commercial use to create more jobs. There needs to be support for existing businesses nearby and create opportunities for new businesses too. The development should be focused around conservation, which would make it more attractive. At the moment the plans are not ambitious enough'.*

Response

- 4.22 As set out above, the consultation process included a multi-platform approach, drawing on both in-person consultation events and online consultation via a dedicated 'Citizen Space' page on the Council's website. Such a multi-platform approach ensures that the public consultation process was inclusive, and provided the public an opportunity to appraise and respond to the detail of what was presented.
- 4.23 However, on review of the feedback and results of both consultation approaches, it is apparent that the two modes of consultation have provided somewhat different responses.
- 4.24 The results of the in-person public consultation highlight a largely positive response, which is generally supportive of the project objectives. The majority of respondents agreed with the identified vision and generally thought that it was suitably ambitious. Furthermore, broad support was also noted for the objectives, with few negative responses being raised.
- 4.25 More measured support was recorded through the online consultation process, which generally identified positive feedback but also identified areas for refinement and further consideration prior to the submission of an application.
- 4.26 The slightly different outcomes of the two consultation approaches is considered to reflect that, in the online consultation, where respondents were not presented in person with the proposals the intent and aims of the scheme were not fully understood. This contrasts with the in-person, face to face consultation whereby residents were able to ask questions of the project team in order to have their questions answered. The feedback from the in-person consultation is considered to be reflective of residents having had a chance to discuss the proposals prior to answering the questionnaire.
- 4.27 Taken together, the combined approaches generally demonstrate broad support for the renewal of Rochdale Station Square. However, they also highlight that members of the community are keen to understand the practical implications of the proposals, in terms of design, impacts to pedestrian and vehicle movements, and the potential for an increase in opportunities for criminality.

5. Summary and Responses

- 5.1 All comments received have been reviewed and reflected upon as the application scheme has been finalised.
- 5.2 As set out at Section 4, the feedback and results received through both consultation approaches demonstrates a somewhat different outcome, with a largely positive response being received through the in-person public consultation, and a more measured level of support recorded through the online consultation process. Taken as a whole, the generally positive feedback received through the consultation process is welcomed, and areas for refinement have been reviewed and (as appropriate) addressed.
- 5.3 However, as noted at Paragraph 4.26 above it is noted that
- 5.4 The slightly different outcomes of the two consultation approaches is considered to reflect that, in the online consultation, where respondents were not presented in person with the proposals the intent and aims of the scheme were not fully understood. This contrasts with the in-person, face to face consultation whereby residents were able to ask questions of the project team in order to have their questions answered. The feedback from the in-person consultation is considered to be reflective of residents having had a chance to discuss the proposals prior to answering the questionnaire.
- 5.5
- 5.6 Accordingly, it is noted that a number of responses raised highlighted matters which require consideration as part of the planning application. These are highlighted below, along with the response from the project team to each matter raised.

Impacts to Highways and Pedestrian Movements

- 5.7 In respect of pedestrian movements, the proposed design has been developed in order to encourage and promote clear routes through the Square. Proposed street furniture is aligned to as to provide clear pedestrian routes throughout the Square; this includes the facilitation of straightforward east to west movements where possible, recognising the presence of some existing constraints, most notably the Metrolink line.
- 5.8 From a design perspective, the proposals have sought to promote the prioritisation of pedestrians. This has been achieved through reducing conflict points between pedestrians and private vehicles, and use of a pedestrian-friendly material specification, which includes softer paving options and avoid tarmac. Physiological traffic calming techniques have been employed, such as narrowing carriageways, widening footways, removal of highway barriers, low kerbs, and using materials to promote pedestrian priority.
- 5.9 Turning to vehicular movements, due consideration has been given to the need to provide and ensure vehicular access for servicing, and to allow access for residents and those using Nye Bevan House. All public highways across the site have been subject to vehicular tracking and engineering, which is set out elsewhere in this planning application submission.
- 5.10 Key stakeholder groups have been engaged with, including representatives of local taxi operators, and the proposals have been reviewed to account for their requirements and feedback. TfGM have also been engaged with in respect of vehicular and bicycle movements, pedestrian accessibility, and in respect of buses, taxis and trams. This engagement with TfGM is ongoing and will continue through to determination of the planning application.

Potential for Criminality

- 5.11 The forthcoming planning application will be supported by a Crime Impact Statement which assess the proposed development for any negative impacts that may increase the potential for criminality and instances of crime. A Crime Impact Statement is also a validation requirement for Rochdale Borough Council.
- 5.12 The proposals have been designed so as to provide clear views throughout the Square. The proposed spatial arrangement includes clear stem trees, which facilitate and support the wider aspiration to provide clear lines of site throughout the square. The square has been designed to ensure that there are no areas for lurking or anti-social behaviour, and the early lighting strategy that has been developed will ensure that the public realm is safe and inclusive, especially in the evening.
- 5.13 It is also important to note that this scheme represents an early phase project in the redevelopment of the wider area, which will include new developments with active frontages to the square. These uses are anticipated to encourage passive surveillance throughout the day, and in so further reduce any potential for criminality.

Impacts upon Local Business and Nye Bevan House

- 5.14 The project team have met with representatives from Nye Bevan House in the development of these proposals. These discussions addressed operator requirements from an access perspective, and the need to ensure that the annual HGV movement associated with a key piece of medical equipment is maintained. Highways tracking has been carried out, and has confirmed that these movements are accommodated within the highway design. Furthermore, parking facilities for Nye Bevan House will be maintained, as will the current access arrangements. It is not proposed that these arrangements will change at all. Furthermore, the current pick-up and drop-off arrangements in respect of the chemist within Nye Bevan House have also been accommodated within the proposed design.
- 5.15 In respect of vehicular parking, there will be a net increase in formal parking spaces through the delivery of the proposals.
- 5.16 Finally, access and servicing arrangements for local business have again been tracked and considered in the development of the scheme. All local business will enjoy the same level of access as they currently do. Whilst it is acknowledged that some routes will change or be adapted, this is only to allow pedestrian movements to be prioritised, which is an underlying objective of the scheme. The limited re-routing of vehicular traffic will also reduce conflict points in the square.

The potential inclusion of areas beyond Rochdale Station Square, including opening-up the Canal Basin

- 5.17 In September 2021, the Council adopted a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the Rochdale Station Area. This SPD covers the area between Drake Street in the north to Queensway in the south, and includes the Station Square. The SPD contains a broader range of proposals for interventions in this wider area, however the project at Rochdale Station Square is a particular project within this wider masterplan.
- 5.18 The proposal at Rochdale Station Square solely relates to the area in front of the train station, and both the existing Canal and the old alignment of the infilled Canal are located approximately 100 metres away from the site. The nature of the funding being sought by the Council to deliver this project places a constraint upon the extent of the project area and the planning application site, and therefore it has not been possible at this stage to include the Canal within the proposals, which focus solely on the Rochdale Station Square area.

- 5.19 The application site is sufficiently extensive to deliver a transformative project which will significantly improve visitors' perceptions on visiting Rochdale and provide an improved public realm to act as the catalyst for further investment in the area.

Appendix 1: List of Survey Questions

1. We have undertaken previous consultation (during the draft SPD) when a number of key areas to enhance the Station Square were identified. In the attached plans, do you think we have provided sufficient consideration in the following areas?
 - a. Pedestrian facilities;
 - b. Better connectivity (between the station area to shops and businesses in the wider area);
 - c. Station frontage improvements; and
 - d. Pick up and drop off.
2. Provide some key words to describe the Rochdale Station Square vision.
3. What are your views on the overall vision?
4. What do you think about the extent of vision ambition for Rochdale Station Square?
5. Do the objectives respond to what you want from Rochdale Station Square?
 - a. Reconnect establish a physical and psychological link with shops and business in the wider Milkstone community;
 - b. The multi-use Squares as the new heart for the community business and recreation;
 - c. Sense of arrival and welcome gateways to new Square;
 - d. Visual focal points design;
 - e. Celebrate and new sense of arrival on Rochdale Station;
 - f. Drop off and Pick up spaces around the Station;
 - g. Features inform movement and define spaces;
 - h. Walking friendly street design;
 - i. Connectivity and pedestrian priority;
 - j. Scale and improve GI and sustainability.
6. Are the proposed uses of the square appropriate and exciting to you?
 - a. Markets;
 - b. Performance stage;
 - c. Outdoor Exhibitions;
 - d. Cafe and restaurant spill out and outdoor museum;
 - e. Multi-use area for temporary art exhibition; and
 - f. Public art mural, green wall and outdoor cinema.
7. What is your big idea for Rochdale Station Square?
8. Is there anything else you want to say?



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