

Manchester City Council

**NORTHERN QUARTER
DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

Final Report
By



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CONTENTS

1.	Executive Summary	1
2.	Introducing the Development Framework	8
3.	Vision & Objectives	9
4.	Strategic Challenges posed by the Vision	18
5.	Providing the right context for development	26
6.	Enhancing the built form	31
7.	Public Realm Priorities	33
8.	Summary of Key Actions	36

List of Figures

Figure 1: N4 character areas

Figure 2: Public realm overview

Figure 3: Potential enhancements to the built form

**Appendix – Northern Quarter Development Framework, Baseline Report
(bound separately)**

1. Executive Summary

Introducing the Northern Quarter...

- 1.1 The Northern Quarter (N4) is strategically placed between the main Manchester retail and commercial core, Piccadilly Gateway, Ancoats and Shudehill. It represents a key piece in the city centre jigsaw, an area different in character and function to any other part of the city centre and of great strategic importance to Manchester as a city of distinctive quarters.
- 1.2 In 1995, in recognition of the evolving role of the N4, Manchester City Council commissioned a *Northern Quarter Regeneration Strategy*. The Strategy set out a clear Vision for the area to build on its creative base and proximity to the main commercial core to assist its development as an attractive mixed use area.
- 1.3 The area has seen substantial investment since the production of the Regeneration Strategy. This has included significant public sector investment in environmental and building improvement schemes and urban art¹ – which all complement an increasing amount of private sector development activity in the Quarter.
- 1.4 It is fair to say, however, that the N4 has not experienced the same transformation – leisure, residential or commercial - experienced in many other parts of the city centre (Canal Street, Castlefield and now Southern Gateway). This is a strength in the sense that the individuality of the N4 remains – it is not currently a ‘corporate’ location, a place for large firms or for retail or leisure chains. It is the place for the independent sector, where residents of Manchester and visitors can buy high quality, unusual products and soak up the atmosphere of a truly ‘working quarter’. It is also a weakness in that some of the underlying concerns and problems picked out in the 1995 study have not yet been fully tackled. The environment, crime and street nuisance, unsightly gap sites and derelict buildings remain serious issues.

The N4’s current economic role...

- 1.5 There are an estimated 610 businesses in the N4 - equivalent to just under 10% of all businesses in the Central ward of Manchester. Firms in the N4 employ around 4,400 staff, with over two thirds of employment within just three dominant sectors, including:
- a major concentration of creative industries (in the region of 105 creative industry firms, employing some 700 staff). This concentration includes a broad mix of commercial creative industries (designers, architects, advertising practices, interactive computer software etc), ‘semi-commercial’ firms (artists in studio space etc) and subsidised creative enterprises (such as the Chinese Arts Centre).
 - a concentration of over 110 retail/leisure outlets in the N4 – mainly along the main shopping locations of Oldham Street, Tib Street and Church Street. Other quarters within the regional centre offer a similar volume of retail outlets, bars and restaurants – the unique factor in the N4 is the nature of

¹ Funded through European funds, the Single Regeneration Budget, English Heritage/Heritage Lottery Fund, Manchester City Council, English Partnerships and resources from the Housing Corporation.

the offer – with so many being independently owned and catering for niche markets.

- the textile and clothing sector (spanning 180 firms and employing some 1,040 staff). The vast majority of these firms are involved in wholesaling and/or retailing activities – typically procuring goods in bulk from a range of Indian subcontinent manufacturers and then selling on to specialist retail outlets across the North West region. Most are Asian owned businesses, comprising part of a wider 'cluster' of Asian owned business in the N4 – including both accountants and a number of curry cafes.

1.6 There are very few other locations elsewhere in the UK that are able to boast this concentration of *both* creative production and cultural consumption. The important interplay between the production, showcasing and consumption of cultural goods helps create the unique identity of the N4. The creative businesses in the N4 will be of growing importance in a world where employment generation is increasingly based on knowledge, innovation, new ideas and entrepreneurialism. This need for talented, imaginative individuals (with the right support infrastructure) is clearly set out in the new Manchester Knowledge Capital Prospectus – and the growth of the N4's creative community will be instrumental in taking forward the Knowledge Capital agenda.

1.7 The role and prominence of these three key sectors was identified eight years ago in the previous Regeneration Strategy – and in general the area has managed to maintain (and in some instances grow) these key elements of its business base over the latter part of the 1990s. It is clear, however, that new roles have also emerged for the N4 since the production of the previous Strategy:

- Urban Splash's Smithfield Buildings residential scheme was seen as a breakthrough scheme and attracted considerable interest when launched in 1997/98. This fuelled the residential renaissance of the N4. A significant number of residential schemes have followed the lead from Urban Splash with more in the pipeline.
- The N4 has begun to act as a successful secondary office location for a number of smaller businesses (both within and outwith the creative industries). The N4 is seen increasingly in the market place as a 'realistic alternative'.
- Large floorplate office accommodation has been provided in the N4, primarily via the CityCube development, although the tight and dense built form of the area and fragmented ownership patterns will dictate that further schemes of this size are limited to a select number of opportunities, for example the Tib Street surface car park. These schemes provide an opportunity to contribute both to an attractive public realm and enhanced levels of activity.

1.8 Most stakeholders appear comfortable with the recent influx of new commercial and residential developments described above. The consensus is to continue to enable a select number of these exciting new uses to flourish in the N4, but to retain the ethos of valuing the smaller independent traders who have historically given the N4 its unique identity.

Important challenges lie ahead...

- 1.9 The scale and nature of development activity in and around the N4 is extremely encouraging. The Development Framework will be able to work with, and harness, a high degree of private sector development interest – well in excess of that enjoyed when designing the previous regeneration strategy.
- 1.10 The role for the public sector will be to steer this development activity in a way that will maximise the benefits for the N4 itself and for Manchester more generally as a growing city of global importance. The main challenges will be:
- Maintaining the provision of affordable business space within the N4. Rising values pose a number of concerns for the sustainability of the creative industries and a range of independent retailers, which have hitherto helped to give the N4 its unique identity.
 - Removal of both real and perceived barriers to further private sector investment in the N4:
 - Overcoming the negative impact of street nuisance and crime in the N4 on the sustainability of existing business and on investor confidence more generally;
 - Addressing the problems caused by an above average level of absentee landlords and the tendency for many landowners to sit on property in the expectation that values will increase. Meantime many of these properties are falling into disrepair and blighting the appearance of the N4 (along with a number of prominent gap sites).
 - Capitalising on key entry points and new developments nearby. The amount of commercial accommodation proposed over the next 5 years from developments immediately outside the N4 is significant. The vast majority will not be in competition with the N4 offer. More, it will provide increased footfall on the periphery of the area and will act to raise the development profile of the N4 itself. The N4's proximity to key arrival points and footfall generators needs to be capitalised on more effectively.
 - Managing the forecast transition of the business base. A significant number of textile/clothing traders stated that they would either definitely or possibly move out of the N4 in the near future. Encouragingly, most of these were considering relocation to the Cheetham Hill area and are unlikely to leave the Manchester city boundary. The shift has already started but the relocation is likely to be a gradual process over the next 5 to 10 years
 - Achieving a step change in how the N4 is perceived. The ambition is for much wider national and international recognition of the distinctive qualities of the N4, and the fact that the N4 is a *key* part of the Manchester City Centre offering.
- 1.11 These challenges will only be met by effective management and co-ordination. The N4 *is* different to most other parts of the city centre and there is a strong case for continued bespoke management and co-ordination arrangements.

Our Vision...

- 1.12 The Development Framework is not proposing 'radical surgery' to the N4 in the next five years. Managed, incremental change will be the hallmark of the development framework, alongside a desire to address some of the longer standing issues affecting businesses in the N4 (particularly crime and street nuisance and some long standing gap sites/derelict buildings).
- 1.13 The Vision of this Development Framework is that by 2008 the N4 will be:
- An area which has retained and developed its own distinctive identity, by blending its current mix of occupiers with complementary new uses
 - An integral part of the conurbation core, with a vastly increased footfall through the Quarter
 - Widely recognised and promoted as a key part of the Manchester City Centre offer
- 1.14 This Vision statement should be used to shape and guide the activities of public sector agencies working on behalf of the N4 over the next 5 years.

Achieving the Vision...

Facilitating actions

- 1.15 Partners will need to ensure they provide the right context within which the further development of the N4 can take place. This will mean effective co-ordination, meaningful dialogue with key stakeholders and creative use of the planning system. The principal 'facilitating actions' identified in the Development Framework are highlighted below:
- The collaboration needed to take forward the N4 is all the more likely to occur if a dedicated resource is available to bring partners together, and harness their energy. There is a strong case for the ongoing role of the N4 co-ordinator.
 - All partners will need to place a premium on working with the N4 social agencies to ensure that any disturbances perceived to be created by (some) clients is minimised. This will require sustained efforts to ensure closer dialogue and co-operation between the individual agencies and between the agencies and Manchester City Council/GM Police. There is also a need for a stated intention from partners that no additional clustering of social agencies in the N4 will take place.
 - The role of the N4 outreach worker (acting as a liaison point between the social agencies) is beginning to reap rewards in terms of improving co-ordination. This is an important function that will need to be developed further.
 - There is a need to reinforce the relationship between the local business base and the Local Area Partnership on issues of crime and nuisance. More generally, there is a need to ensure that GM Police are more visible within the N4 and respond appropriately to issues of crime and security within the N4

business base. Local businesses are also keen to see a more effective presence from the City Centre Rangers within the N4.

- Sustained dialogue amongst traders (and between traders and public sector agencies) is imperative. Previous traders associations have been established in the N4, but have arguably lacked focus. A new traders association, with something for members 'to get their teeth into', would be a useful vehicle in taking forward the N4. Many traders have invested their futures in the area so it is important that they are engaged in any dialogue about how the area is managed and what form its ongoing regeneration might take.
- For some time, the concept of an N4 investors forum has been discussed. The idea behind such a forum would be to try and encourage principal landowners and active developers to build up a collective, shared view on the future of the N4 (based on the aspirations of this Framework document). Given the launch of this new Framework document, now would be an appropriate time to formalise the Investors Forum.
- New possible funding opportunities (through BIDS) will provide a suitable vehicle for engaging with any new traders/investors forum. A conventional BIDS Programme would harness the spirit of co-operation in the N4, but the downside is that tenants in the N4 are arguably the least able to afford any additional 'tax'. Alternative BIDS models would, however, work very well in the N4. The N4 has the potential to act as a national demonstrator for BIDS in city fringe areas. Work is already underway in taking this forward.
- From a planning perspective, specific reference should be made in any forthcoming Local Development Document to the need for affordable business space in the N4 - this may extend to the creation of a specific policy area (within the Local Development Document) for affordable business space.

Enhancing the built form

- 1.16 In spite of everything that has been achieved in the N4 in the last decade, the number of prominent gap sites and unsightly buildings still serve to give off the impression that the N4 is run down and marginal.
- 1.17 The Development Framework identifies a range of buildings/plots which detract from the attractiveness of the N4's built form. Specifically, this includes:
- Buildings that generally fail to make a positive contribution to the N4
 - Derelict/empty buildings
 - Cleared (empty) sites
- 1.18 The use of compulsory purchase (CPO) will be a key tool in tackling some of these eyesores. New CPO legislation will give planning authorities more clearly defined powers in acquiring land for the purposes of carrying out development, redevelopment or improvement. New legislation will also speed up the procedures for confirming and implementing compulsory purchase orders.
- 1.19 Previous flagship development schemes have all contributed significantly to the ongoing regeneration of the N4. The underpinning processes that have facilitated development and the quality of the end product act as useful precedents for the type of development schemes that are required in the future. On 106 High Street, for example, the success of one to one negotiation with a landowner against a

background of statutory powers (including compulsory purchase) and planning controls, was clearly illustrated. Other high quality schemes have been delivered (via a range of mechanisms) at ICIAN, Smithfield Buildings and City Cube.

- 1.20 Larger scale development opportunities include the Tib Street surface car park site and the Former Lever Street bus Station (and adjoining land). The latter offers the potential for a high quality scheme with active use at the ground floor providing good synergy with the existing City Cube scheme. These large-scale schemes provide further opportunity to improve the area's image and contribute positively to both an attractive public realm and enhanced levels of street activity.

Public realm priorities

- 1.21 It is important that the Northern Quarter retains and enhances its distinctive character – its sense of place. The Quarter is a distinctive area within the City and the treatment of the public realm should reflect this. Implementation and maintenance of the public realm will be a key issue and there is a need to balance quality, distinctive design with practical implementation and maintenance regimes.
- 1.22 Strengthening the key gateways into the N4 is a priority of the Development Framework. This will involve improving street treatments (where they have not already been done), enhancing key junctions for the benefit of pedestrians and, where appropriate, the use of features such as banners, lamp post pennants and more effective signage (in particular, adopting a less is more approach to the proliferation of single purpose signage that can clutter the street scene).
- 1.23 Some of the gateways are established entrances to the N4 which have existed for a number of years, others are new and have evolved as a result of the changing pattern of development activity around the N4. Key priorities include:
- Enhancement of the High Street and High Street/Church Street gateways (tied to any development activity on the High St triangle, the remodelling of the Arndale Centre and the creation of the Cannon Street 'wintergarden') – this is likely to be an increasingly important pedestrian thoroughfare into the N4
 - Dale Street/Ducie Street (likely to be used increasingly to link pedestrians from Piccadilly Station/Basin with the N4)
 - Access across Great Ancoats Street – the principal gateway to and from the N4 from Ancoats
 - Brewer Street and/or Hilton Street as a gateway into the area from Piccadilly Basin
 - Improvements to the Piccadilly Gardens end of Tib Street, Oldham Street, Lever Street and Newton Street.
- 1.24 The Development Framework also contains proposals for the key internal linkages within the N4. In terms of primary/secondary street treatments, the initial focus should be on Lever St and Stevenson Square (perhaps testing new traffic arrangements on a trial basis). Other priorities include the stretches of Newton Street, Dale Street and Hilton Street that have not already been improved. Further feasibility work should be undertaken on access arrangements to the rear of some buildings, possibly limiting access and more clearly identifying private areas.

Development of shared mews style surfaces providing public routes to the interior of blocks should also be investigated.

- 1.25 Traffic dominates the street environment in certain parts of the N4, especially Oldham and Hilton Streets and the Dale Street/Port Street junction (arguably one of the least pedestrian friendly parts of the N4). Significant barriers to pedestrian movement also exist, particularly along Great Ancoats Street. Where this conflict has remained unresolved it has restricted the ability to improve the street environment effectively, such as in Stevenson Square. It is hoped the current city centre transport review will open up opportunities to rationalise traffic management through and around the area.
- 1.26 Lighting is an important element of the public realm. Street, architectural, shopwindow and public art lighting in the N4, with its quality buildings, personal safety issues and evening economy, should be developed. Street lighting should be improved, to ensure it enhances pedestrian safety as well as providing appropriate lighting levels for traffic. Initial targeting should be on key routes into and through the Quarter, specifically looking at opportunities to install white (rather than sodium) street lighting.

Overview...

- 1.27 The N4 has the potential to make a significant contribution to the growing role of and status of the Manchester in the next 5 years. It will be an integral part of efforts to take forward Knowledge Capital agenda – harnessing the innovation and entrepreneurialism of the indigenous creative industries.
- 1.28 As a place the role and function of the N4 will certainly evolve. The area will capitalise on its proximity to other elements of the conurbation core – with a vastly increased footfall through the quarter bringing new business opportunities and a critical mass of individuals throughout both day and night.
- 1.29 Certain aspects should, however, remain unchanged. The Northern Quarter will retain its own distinctive identity as a location for the independent sector, where residents of Manchester and visitors can experience something different and soak up the atmosphere of a truly 'working quarter'.
- 1.30 The ambition is for much wider national and international recognition of the unique qualities of the N4. The N4 will be increasingly seen and promoted by all our partners as a fundamental part of a growing global city.

2. Introducing the Development Framework

- 2.1 A consortia led by Regeneris Consulting and comprising Drivers Jonas and Taylor Young Urban Design were appointed in summer 2002 to produce a new Development Framework document for the Northern Quarter².
- 2.2 The Development Framework is designed to update the previous Northern Quarter Regeneration Strategy produced in 1995.
- 2.3 The Steering Group for the study comprised officers from Manchester City Council, Manchester City Centre Management Company and from the Ancoats Urban Village Company.

Baseline report

- 2.4 A Stage 1 (baseline) report was completed in late 2002. The baseline report provided:
- A thorough overview of the business base within the N4 – including recent trends and possible changes in the future
 - A description of the development trends (within and outside) the N4, and the views, both current and future, of private sector developers on the N4
 - An overview of the existing physical environment of the N4 and the way in which the area interacts currently with other surrounding areas.
- 2.5 The **baseline report** is appended to this document.

Development Framework

- 2.6 This main Development Framework document builds on the analysis of the baseline report and provides an ambitious, but deliverable Vision for the N4 in coming years. A series of priority actions are also included - that will deliver sustained regeneration in the area and ensure that the N4 is increasingly linked into other major development areas within the Regional Centre.
- 2.7 The Development Framework document is structured as follows:
- Section 3- Vision & Objectives
 - Section 4 - Strategic Challenges posed by the Vision
 - Section 5 - Providing the right context
 - Section 6 - Improving the built form
 - Section 7 - Public Realm Priorities
 - Section 8 - Summary of Key Actions.

² The consortia also involved a smaller scale input from the Burns Owen Partnership (Creative Industries) and JMP (Transportation).

3. Vision & Objectives

Conclusions of the baseline report

3.1 The analysis and data contained in the baseline report led to a number of significant conclusions and observations on the Northern Quarter³:

- The Northern Quarter is distinct from the rest of the Manchester regional core – this is particularly due to the concentration of non mainstream retail and leisure outlets in the N4 and the ‘hotbed’ of cultural production and consumption. This non mainstream offer is important for any ‘global’ city.
- There are only a handful of places elsewhere in the UK that are able to boast this concentration of creative production and cultural consumption. There is interplay between these sectors that helps each grow and helps create the unique identity of the N4.
- The creative businesses in the N4 are of growing importance in a world where employment generation is increasingly based on knowledge, innovation, imagination and entrepreneurialism. The area’s cluster of knowledge based businesses will play an important role in taking forward Manchester’s Knowledge Capital initiative.
- A significant number of textile/clothing traders have stated that they would either definitely or possibly move out of the N4 in the near future. The shift has already started but the relocation is likely to be a gradual process over the next 5 to 10 years. The challenge for the N4 will be to try and retain those elements of the rag trade that have helped to give the N4 its distinct and vibrant atmosphere.
- New roles have emerged in the N4 in the last eight years. Urban Splash’s Smithfield Buildings residential scheme was seen as a ‘break-through’ scheme and attracted considerable interest when launched in 1997/98. A significant number of residential schemes have followed the lead from Urban Splash (Sorting House, Chatsworth House), with more in the pipeline.
- Housing Associations (HAs) have been active within the N4 for some years (long before the ‘residential renaissance’ outlined above). The Northern Quarter Housing Strategy, with a corresponding Steering Group, has been in place since 1993/4. Its primary aim is to deliver ‘affordable’ housing in the N4. The housing associations’ developments in the N4 have filled an important niche by providing affordable apartments which are not typically available elsewhere in the city centre.
- Many analysts believe that historically peripheral parts of the regional centre could be used to address the current undersupply of large floorplate office accommodation across the city. The N4 has already captured some of this (CityCube), and more could be imminent (Tib Street/Church Street). Further development of this kind in the N4 will, in part, be determined by the degree

³ Note : These are the main observations only. Far more detail is provided in the Appendix.

to which demand is absorbed by schemes such as 1 Piccadilly Gardens, those in Piccadilly Basin and elsewhere in the immediate area.

- The N4 already acts as a successful secondary office location for a number of (smaller) businesses. This is set to continue with the N4 being seen increasingly as a 'realistic alternative'. The ongoing release of secondary accommodation elsewhere in the city core will ensure, however, the N4 continues to face competition from other locations for this market.
- The amount of commercial accommodation proposed over the next 5 years from developments immediately outside the N4 is significant. The vast majority will not be in competition with the N4 offer. Importantly, it will create the potential of increased footfall in the periphery of the area and will act to raise the profile of the N4 itself.
- The N4 is surrounded by significant arrival points to the Regional Centre. Considering the potential of this setting the area lacks positive, welcoming entry points. The N4's proximity to key arrival points and footfall generators needs to be capitalised on.
- Crime and street nuisance (and more importantly, perceptions of crime and nuisance) have continued to be very real constraints for the development of the Northern Quarter. This is likely to continue without additional remedial action.
- There are a number of 'social agencies' in the N4, who provide support, advice and guidance to a range of marginalized and disadvantaged individuals from *across* the Manchester area. Many stakeholders see it as no coincidence that the social agencies co-exist with particularly high levels of street nuisance and anti social behaviour in the N4.

Overview from baseline report

- 3.2 Overall, the baseline report concluded that **managed incremental change** will be a feature of the Northern Quarter over the next 5 years. Most stakeholders who were consulted appear comfortable with the recent influx of new commercial and residential developments described above. The challenge will be protecting and developing the existing identity of N4 whilst controlling the quality and quantity of these new developments.
- 3.3 There is strong and growing private sector interest in the Northern Quarter. Both the scale and nature of development activity in and around the N4 is extremely encouraging. The Development Framework will be able to work with, and harness, a high degree of private sector development interest – well in excess of that enjoyed when designing the previous regeneration strategy. The baseline report concluded that the role for the public sector will be to **steer** this development activity in a way that will maximise the benefits for the N4 itself and for Manchester more generally and to secure investment in the wider public realm.

Vision and Objectives

- 3.4 Using the analysis from the Stage 1 report, the following Vision has been set to shape and guide the development of the Northern Quarter in the next 5 years:
- 3.5 By 2008 the N4 will be:
- **An area which has retained and developed its own distinctive identity, by blending its current mix of occupiers with complementary new uses**
 - **An integral part of the conurbation core, with a vastly increased footfall through the Quarter**
 - **Widely recognised and promoted as a key part of the Manchester City Centre offer.**
- 3.6 This Vision statement should be used to shape and guide the activities of public sector agencies working on behalf of the N4 in the next 5 years. The Vision statement (and *counter* Vision – see later) should also be used to send a clear message to the private sector about the preferred type and scale of development activity within the N4.

Core Objectives

- 3.7 The Vision statement will be delivered by a series of 10 core objectives. The objectives represent an *intermediate step* between the broad-brush Vision statement and the more detailed individual activities that are outlined in later sections of this report.

Working with existing strengths

O1. Retaining and developing the quality of the independent retail and cultural offer

The aspiration is to nurture high quality, but independently owned, retail and cultural attractions. The Northern Quarter has attracted a number niche independent retail outlets (Magma book store, Private Sanctuary bed shop) – the desire is for more of these. These high quality outlets would of course be located ‘cheek by jowl’ with some of the more quirky retail outlets (Afflecks Palace, second hand vinyl shops). The N4 Craft Market, with renewed direction and focus, could make a major contribution to the delivery of this objective.

O2. Nurturing a creative production base of national and international standing

A continued presence of all parts of the creative industries in the N4 is crucial. This means a mix of commercial creative industries (design, architects, advertising practices, interactive computer software etc), ‘semi-commercial’ firms (artists in studio space etc) and subsidised creative enterprises - such as the Chinese Arts Centre and Band on the Wall. The latter are an essential component of the creative mix and offer continuity/sustainability in an often volatile commercial environment. The intention is that the N4 gains growing national and international recognition for its concentration of creative industries.

Programmes to assist and nurture creative businesses and to provide affordable workspace will need to be developed if this objective is to be achieved. The Knowledge Capital initiative is probably the most appropriate means of securing such programmes.

O3. Managing transition within the fashion/textile base

There is a need to manage the changes (and challenges) that are likely to be faced by the N4 textile and fashion base in the next five years. The sector currently comprises some 180 firms, employing in excess of 1,000 staff in the N4. This will involve the successful relocation of some traders to other Manchester locations (in line with their stated intentions), and the retention of some traders in selected N4 locations.

Encouraging the new

O4. Nurture a distinctive, high quality, mixed residential market

The explosion of interest in city centre living in Manchester has created good demand for sites for residential new build/conversion across the city. The buildings in N4 are sought-after as they offer good characterful conversion opportunities. Latterly, mainstream house-builders have latched on to market sentiment within the N4 and applied further demand pressures. The aspiration is to nurture *high quality* residential schemes throughout the N4 (to the quality expressed in Smithfield Buildings, Dale Street Chambers and the Sorting House).

The role of the Northern Quarter as a continued location for both Housing Association and Council tenants must not be overlooked. The N4 benefits from a long established and stable population of council tenants. This housing stock is an important tool in maintaining a mix of affordable city centre housing opportunities, and a balanced city centre community.

Housing Associations (HAs) have been active within the N4 from some years, the most active being Riverside, Northern Counties and Tung Sing. The role of HAs in the market place has continued since 1995. This can be seen by ongoing affordable housing development at the northern end of Oldham Street and High Street. The aspiration is to see this type of development activity continue, ensuring a mixed residential offer within the N4. This mixed offer should also extend to affordable 'non-social' housing – to accommodate relatively low paid city workers who require affordable accommodation with low transport costs.

O5. Enhancing the built form

This objective will address buildings that generally fail to make a positive contribution to the N4, these may be both derelict and empty buildings and cleared (empty) sites. The threat of compulsory purchase (CPO) will be a key tool in tackling some of these eyesores.

A small number of larger scale development opportunities might also be pursued under this objective – including the Tib Street surface car park site and the Former Lever Street bus Station (and adjoining land).

Enhancing the public realm

O6. Create distinctive linkages to, from and within the N4

The N4 is surrounded by significant arrival points to the Regional Centre. Piccadilly and Victoria Stations to the east and west respectively; central multi-storey car parks; bus and Metrolink stations at Piccadilly Gardens and the proposed transport interchange at Shudehill.

Considering the potential of this setting the area lacks positive recognisable entry points. Tib Street links directly into Market Street, which possesses the greatest footfall in the Regional Centre, but the link into the Quarter is weak and unwelcoming. Signage has been poor or

non-existent, and is especially weak from Piccadilly and Market Street. The Quarter's proximity to key arrival points and footfall generators needs to be capitalised on.

More can also be done to improve *internal* linkages within the Northern Quarter – in terms of both primary/secondary street treatments and by improving pedestrian routes to the interior of blocks.

07. Creating a cleaner, safer, more secure setting

It is fair to say that crime and fear of crime have been and continue to be very real barriers to the successful regeneration of the N4.

This objective will try to ensure that the levels of crime (and perceived levels of crime) in the Northern Quarter are reduced over the next five years. The objective will demand efforts from a variety of partners and constructive dialogue with the many social agencies operating within the quarter. There is also a need to reinforce the relationship between the local business base and the Local Area Partnership on issues of crime and nuisance. Additional physical measures such as more effective street lighting and additional CCTV resources will also be required.

This is a key objective, local stakeholders have consistently reported that crime (and fear of crime) has significantly hampered investor confidence in the N4 and has constrained efforts to increase footfall through the area.

Enhancing the image, identity and management of the N4

08. Promoting the assets of the N4 more effectively, ensuring wider recognition on a local, regional and national scale.

This objective is principally concerned with raising the profile of the Northern Quarter – both as a quarter in it's own right but also as an important part of the Manchester City Centre offer. Successful delivery of this objective will require a concerted effort on additional marketing activities to raise profile (both formally and informally through various fora and networks). The ambition is for much wider national and international recognition of the distinctive qualities of the N4 and the fact that the N4 is a *key* part of the Manchester City Centre offer.

09. Ensuring effective management & co-ordination

The challenges within the N4 will only be met by effective management and co-ordination of activities. All co-ordination and management should be undertaken within the context of wider city centre management systems (via the City Centre Management Company) – reinforcing the fact that the Northern Quarter is a fundamental part of the wider city centre.

The N4 does, however, have many different characteristics to other parts of central retail core and there is a strong case for additional tailored management and co-ordination arrangements with a dedicated staff resource.

010. Providing a rich mix of events/activities in the N4

This objective will try to ensure that the N4 benefits to optimum effect from the wide variety of events and activities taking place in Manchester every year. The objective is also concerned with trying to develop, where appropriate, a rich mix of bespoke events, designed to celebrate the distinctiveness and diversity of the N4. Many creative quarters across the UK (including in the past, the N4) have arranged an annual festival, or similar event. Over the next 5 years it may be possible to (re)establish such a feature in the N4 within the wider programme of Manchester City centre events.

How will we know if we are successful?

- 3.8 It is important that a measurable and appropriate set of performance indicators are put in place to assess progress in achieving the objectives set out above. These indicators will be used *internally* to enable partners to develop and deliver the aims of the new Framework through good programmes and projects that provide value for money. The indicators can also be used *externally* by giving the Framework a voice for communicating with a variety of interest groups (particularly in the private sector) and potential public sector funding partners.

- 3.9 The indicators must be both (i) reflective of the types of activity that are being promoted through the Framework and (ii) realistically updateable. Table 3.1 overleaf provides an initial list of possible performance indicators.

Northern Quarter Development Framework – Final Report

Table 3.1 : Indicative performance indicators		
<i>Objective</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>How measured/comment</i>
<i>Working with existing strengths</i>		
Enhancing the quality of the independent retail and cultural offer	A. An increase in the number of independently owned retail outlets in the N4	A. Can measure the number of retail outlets (combination of ALCEM and D&B datasets) but difficult to show from this data source whether they are independently owned (also difficult to measure the 'quality' of the retail offer).
Nurture a creative production base of national standing	B. N4 retains its share of Manchester cultural industry employment C. N4 is more frequently cited in national press coverage of the creative industries and as one of the few genuine examples of creative quarters in the UK	B. Can be measured by combination of ALCEM and D&B datasets and Annual Employment Survey (AES). C. A difficult indicator to track. Will require some form of press tracking facility. Mersey Partnership have tracked this in the past as a performance indicator – invariably quite a costly exercise
Managing transition within the fashion/textile base	D. No net loss in the number of textile and fashion traders in the Manchester LAD area E. A 'significant' residue of textile/fashion employment remains in the N4 in 5 years time	D. Can be measured through data sources used in Stage 1 report (Annual Employment Survey). An issue with this indicator is that trends are not solely controlled by activities within the N4 E. A good indicator, need to decide what 'significant' means.
<i>Encouraging the new</i>		
Nurture a distinctive, high quality, mixed residential market	F. An increase in the overall number of residential units in the N4 G. No reduction in the share HA and LA housing in the overall N4 housing stock.	F. Current MCC Urban Capacity Study should provide a baseline measure (but difficult to measure 'distinctiveness' in a robust fashion) G. As above.
Enhancing the built form	H. Reduction in the number of vacant/unsightly buildings in the N4	H. Measured via periodic MCC surveys.
<i>Enhancing the public realm</i>		
Create distinctive linkages to/from and within the N4	I. An increase in the measured pedestrian flow in certain key N4 locations	I. A very good indicator, but one for which there is no baseline measure. Would involve extending core city centre pedestrian measurement exercise to a number of N4 locations.
Create a cleaner, safer, more secure setting	J. Reduction in the number of N4 street robberies, and commercial/residential burglaries	J. Data collected via GM Police. Will need to correspond to P1/P2/P3 beat areas.
<i>Enhancing the image, identity and management of the N4</i>		
Promoting the assets of the N4 more effectively	K. An increase in the level of positive press coverage of N4 in local/national media	K. As with indicator C, a difficult indicator to track. Will require some form of press tracking facility – invariably quite costly.
Ensuring effective management & co-ordination	No direct indicator. Tracked via other indicators highlighted above.	-
Providing a rich mix of events and activities	L. An increase in the share of city centre 'events' taking place (wholly or partially) in the N4	L. Would need to be tracked by Manchester City Centre Management Company

Character areas

- 3.10 Part of the distinctiveness of the N4 is the sheer diversity of its physical environment - with a range of building types, including: elegant terraced townhouses from the late 1700's; Victorian and Edwardian industrial buildings and warehouses, such as those along Dale Street; large scale former market and post office buildings; as well as Oldham Street's array of shops, hotels, pubs and clubs.
- 3.11 This physical diversity, combined with existing land use characteristics, suggests a number of distinct **character areas** within the N4 (see Figure 1). Some of the objectives outlined earlier will be more appropriate in certain character areas than they will in others, as follows:
- *Smithfield* – an area with an informal street layout and mix of uses. Small and large scale plots, with both historic and more recent development activity. Smithfield is likely to have continued importance in developing the N4 residential base, building on both historical (MCC Smithfield Estate) and pipeline (Ician) development activity. The area also lends itself to small scale secondary office space for certain parts of the creative industries (advertising, media etc)
 - *Thomas Street* – again, informal street layout. The area has more recently developed into a successful location for those showcasing (and selling) creative content and for some residential development. The area lends itself to taking forward the aspiration for developing the creative production base and to further develop the independent retail and cultural offer. Drawing footfall from the new Shudehill Transport Interchange will be a key objective.
 - *Oldham Street/Tib Street* – currently characterised by mixed shopping and entertainment streets. This is likely to be one of the main areas within the N4 where the aspiration to develop the quality of the independent retail and cultural offer will be centred. The Oldham Street/Tib Street area (primarily via the Tib Street car park site) is one of the few areas in the N4 where there is a possibility of securing a further large floorplate commercial development in the next 5 years.
 - *Stevenson Square* – developed around a formal grid hierarchy of main streets, side streets and 'backs'. Plots of land around the Square have been historically released on a piecemeal basis. The area around Stevenson Square has historically been a key location for the N4 rag trade. It is likely that the next 5 years will see Stevenson Square in transition, as some rag traders relocate and some consolidate their position within the N4. There is considerable scope for well managed incremental improvements to the Square to improve the sense of place and rationalise traffic movement.
 - *Port Street area* – There is an important cluster of creative industries around Dale Street, situated amongst a range of textile wholesalers. As with Stevenson Square this will be an area where changes within the textile trade will need to be actively managed. Over the next 5 years there is likely to be demand for both residential development and low cost studio space in this part of the N4.

- 3.12 These character areas are simply provided here as an indication of how different objectives may be taken forward in different parts of the N4. In due course, there may be a case (see next section on '*responding to key challenges*') to give these character areas more formal standing via emerging statutory planning documents.

What do we want to avoid in the N4 – the *counter* Vision

- 3.13 A 'counter Vision' (or statement about what precisely we want to avoid in the Northern Quarter) provides a powerful tool. The counter vision will hopefully resonate with both public and private partners alike as a clear indication of the development trends we seek to avoid.
- 3.14 Based on the analysis in the earlier Stage 1 report, it is clear that there are certain trends that all key partners wish to *avoid* in the Northern Quarter:
- Widespread, characterless residential and commercial developments.
 - Significant erosion in the net amount of affordable business space for the creative industries sector
 - An erosion in the independent ownership of many of the firms, bars, shops and restaurants in the Northern Quarter
 - The loss of architectural and heritage character of the built form
 - The loss of the spirit of co-operation, collaboration and networks that typifies the Northern Quarter currently.

4. Strategic Challenges posed by the Vision

- 4.1 Some, but not all, of the Objectives outlined in the previous section pose specific delivery challenges. These challenges will need to be addressed head on if the aspirations for the N4 are to be achieved.
- 4.2 Specifically we have identified the following key challenges:
- **Maintaining the provision of ‘affordable business space’ within the N4. The challenge is to allow a select number of exciting new uses to flourish, but not to the detriment of the existing occupiers.**
 - **Removal of both real and, importantly, perceived barriers to private sector investment in the N4**
 - **Ensuring a continued emphasis on *quality* of all development activity within the Northern Quarter (both within and outside conservation areas)**
 - **Overcoming the often negative impact of some of the N4 social agencies (and more importantly their clients) on investor confidence**

Maintaining affordable business space

- 4.3 There are a number of key development projects that are either underway or planned within the N4 that, collectively, mark a step change in the scale and nature of development activity. When coupled with the developer interest in surrounding areas (particularly the Piccadilly Gateway), the N4 is fast becoming a ‘realistic alternative’ with strong interest from a range of national developers. Property values are rising to reflect this interest.
- 4.4 The Development Framework will be able to work with, and harness, this private sector development interest. The rising values do, however, pose a number of concerns for the sustainability of the creative industries and a range of independent retailers, which have hitherto helped to give the N4 its unique identity.
- 4.5 Headline office rents in N4 (City Cube) are around £15 psf, against a headline figure within the traditional office core of around £25 psf. That said, much of N4’s office stock is of a basic quality with rents starting at around £5 psf. It is the provision of this affordable space, which has contributed significantly to the existing identity of the N4.
- 4.6 The preservation of a stock of low rental business space in the context of rising property values is a key challenge for the Development Framework. Doing so will be vital if the area’s existing cluster of creative and cultural businesses is to be retained and, indeed, strengthened and the area’s contribution to the Knowledge Capital initiative is to be maximized. It is essential that the N4 is not viewed in the market place as an area open to wholesale change and development of an inappropriate scale and type. The public sector will have to consider ways of providing affordable workspace for creative and cultural businesses should the market fail to do so.

Barriers to investment/development

4.7 The preparation of this Framework document has identified a number of barriers (some real, others perceived) that have historically hampered the development process in the N4. These include:

- *The problems caused by an above average level of 'absentee' landlords.* According to a recent audit by Manchester City Council, as many as 60 buildings in the N4 (some in prominent locations) are either lying vacant or have an absentee landlord. Anecdotally, the share of buildings that are either vacant or have absentee landlords is well in excess of that in most other parts of the conurbation core. The obvious difficulties of engaging in meaningful dialogue with absentee landlords has acted as a significant constraint on those trying to take forward regeneration in the N4.
- *The fragmented land ownership patterns in the N4.* The N4 has a particularly fragmented pattern of land ownerships, with land/building assets segmented into a relatively large number of small scale parcels. The pattern of ownership is unsurprising given the nature of the properties and is arguably not radically different from other fringe city areas. However, this fragmented ownership poses certain difficulties in taking forward development. Those who own these small holdings are often found to be either (i) waiting for someone to buy land at some future higher value (see below) or (ii) primarily interested in relatively low cost/low quality redevelopment options (there has certainly been a reluctance on the part of some, but not all, small scale landowners to put in place the added effort (e.g. good quality architect) required to take forward development in line with the stated conservation priorities for the N4)⁴.
- *The tendency for many landowners (particularly prevalent in an area such as the N4) to simply 'sit' on property until values have appreciated considerably.* This is an issue amongst both small scale and absentee landlords (and indeed more generally across the property owning community in the N4). It is certainly the case that a number of landowners are allowing their properties to sit idle (and sometimes fall into disrepair) as they await an uplift in the market. In this way inflated expectations of value, or to be more precise, future value are holding back the regeneration of the N4.
- *A perception that the Conservation Status in parts of the N4 places an added burden on landlords/developers in taking forward schemes.* The N4 has a wealth of listed buildings and two conservation areas and accordingly, development control and conservation is a key part of the development process. The Conservation Area designations in the N4 have been instrumental in attracting over £500,000 of funding from English Heritage, whilst the presence of the highest density of listed buildings in the City contributes significantly to its character. Conservation issues, however, have been cited by some as a barrier to continued economic development within the N4. Whilst this is partly a perceptual issue, it is important that all partners (public and private sector) engage in early, constructive dialogue to

⁴ The small scale ownerships/building sizes in the N4 are also, however, a great asset – it is the small (lower cost) units that have facilitated the growth of the creative industries.

ensure that Conservation Area status is seen as a positive opportunity and does not unduly hamper the development process.

Continued emphasis on quality

- 4.8 The strength of the Northern Quarter lies in its individuality, which is supported to a large degree by the urban fabric and range and quality of buildings. It is imperative that this character is maintained and enhanced through further development. This has implications for both residential and commercial development:
- **Residential.** The buildings in N4 are sought-after as they offer good characterful residential conversion opportunities (for example Smithfield Buildings, Dale Street Chambers and the Sorting House). Latterly, 'mainstream' house-builders have latched on to market sentiment within N4 and applied further demand pressures. It is a very real concern that quality (and with it the differentiating factor) may be lost. As mainstream housing developers encroach on the N4, the quality of the end product, both in terms of materials, finish and architectural merit may suffer. In the current market, there is a very real danger that wholesale residential development across N4 is the 'easy win' option for developers and landowners alike.
 - **Commercial.** The underlying concern for quality is not limited to residential property. It is equally important that the message is extended to commercial development, where developers/landowners should be fully briefed as to the need for a quality end product. A clear message is required to the market on the desired type, scale and specification of commercial development schemes. It is important that major opportunities (Tib Street car park; Ician Phase II; former Lever Street Bus Station site) all deliver high quality development schemes.

Social agencies

- 4.9 The not for profit sector accounts for 5% of all 'businesses' based in the N4. Many of these organisations are best described as 'social agencies'. It is the case that a great number of individuals suffering from drug and drink dependency or undergoing various forms of rehabilitation visit the N4 on a daily basis to make use of these services.
- 4.10 As noted earlier, many stakeholders see it as no coincidence that the social agencies co-exist with particularly high levels of street drinking, drug use and drug dealing in the N4. It is fair to say that crime and fear of crime are very real barriers to the successful regeneration of the N4.
- 4.11 The challenge for partners is to continue to work with these agencies to ensure that any disturbances created by clients is minimised. This will include efforts to ensure closer dialogue and co-operation between the individual agencies and between the agencies and Manchester City Council/GM Police.

Lessons from other creative quarters

- 4.12 The challenges that have been identified, although potentially unique in terms of their mix, are not unique in themselves. Similar issues have and are being faced by local authorities throughout the Country. Lessons can therefore be learnt from other

areas in the UK, including:

Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

Similar in nature to the Northern Quarter, this is an area of industrial heritage located close to the city centre, which has been under pressure from high value uses – in this case residential. It is different from the Northern Quarter in some key respects:

- It is not an area of such tight built form
- It has no real recognised retail function and is therefore less diverse than the Northern Quarter.
- It is not as close to the city centre as the Northern Quarter

Nevertheless, the Jewellery Quarter in Birmingham can provide some useful lessons.

Westminster City Council, London

Westminster is an authority that has long battled with the challenge of retaining the character and uses of certain parts of central London. This has been achieved through a range of planning tools including restrictive policies in their UDP.

Unlike the Northern Quarter where market opportunities, although improving, are limited. Westminster has the benefit of one of the strongest property markets in the UK. Under such conditions the use of planning policy tools to influence development and use is arguably easier and less likely to lead to blight. However, lessons can be learned from their application in this location.

Clerkenwell, London

The work of the City Fringe Partnership, which is led by the Corporation of London and funded (in part) by SRB resources is of relevance to those with an interest in the future of the N4. Focusing on a number of fringe areas around the City of London (notably Clerkenwell), the partnership has identified the rise of property prices and the impact on small businesses as one its 'key issues for the future'. The work of the Clerkenwell Green Association (a charity involved in the provision and maintenance of workshop premises for start-ups in arts, craft and design) is also of interest.

The Lessons

4.13 These examples from Britain's two largest cities demonstrate that the challenges of defining land use characteristics and of restricting the operation of market forces to control and assist in this process can be achieved by a variety of mechanisms, including:

- Effective use of land ownership
- Compulsory purchase (CPOs)
- Planning policy, including
 - Policy tools

➤ Development control tools

- Public sector funding to shape the nature of development activity

Land Ownership

4.14 Using specific land ownerships to control how property is developed within an area can take two main forms:

- *The use of Restrictive Covenants.* The use of restrictive covenants to control the future use of land is an established legal mechanism. This has been used in the Jewellery Quarter to some effect as the Council own significant areas of land which are able to 'benefit' from the restriction. However, without this land that can 'benefit' from the covenant any stipulations in a sales document are unenforceable.
- *Controlling the form of development through retained ownership of development land.* Retaining a legal interest in property is a method by which the form and future use of development can be controlled. This enables the landowner to control the form of development through a building agreement and to impose stipulations on future use. Such stipulations may relate to use but may extend to influencing rental levels (eg: a freeholder may restrict a headlessee's freedom to grant leases that are based on open market value rather than being linked to the Retail Price Index).

4.15 Successful implementation of both these tools requires at least some (and ideally significant) Local Authority land ownership in an area. Whilst opportunities for deployment of these tools in the N4 is limited (due to the limited Manchester City Council land ownerships), it is a technique that has already been used effectively in the area (where MCC have used land assets to shape the development activity on the former Smithfield market site).

CPOs

4.16 A related method of ensuring that land is developed in accordance with a public authority's *adopted* policy objectives is that of compulsory purchase.

4.17 As an authority with compulsory purchase powers, the Council (and the RDA and EP) is able, under the right circumstances, to compulsorily acquire land for a desired use. This is most likely to take the form of a 'back to back' arrangement with a developer who will underwrite the purchase price and the Council's costs in pursuing the acquisition.

4.18 CPO (or the threat of CPO) has been used in a number of the case study areas, as it has in the Northern Quarter by Manchester City Council.

4.19 Legislative changes announced in 2002 will give planning authorities greater freedom to exercise CPO powers, and it will be a valuable tool in meeting some of the key challenges within the Northern Quarter. New CPO legislation will give planning authorities more clearly defined powers in acquiring land for the purposes of carrying out development, redevelopment or improvement. New legislation will also speed up the procedures for confirming and implementing compulsory purchase orders.

Planning Policy

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

- 4.20 SPG can play a valuable role in supplementing plan policies and proposals. SPG typically expands on UDP policy and completes the policy framework for the successful operation of the development control system. It is important that supplementary planning guidance is 'anchored' in the UDP and is seen as a development of it.
- 4.21 A strength of SPG is its role as a marketing/branding tool, demonstrating a 'vision' for an area and the overriding views of partners on its future direction. This in itself will encourage investment and development along certain lines. The use of supplementary planning guidance is often considered more appropriate in areas where substantial development is proposed (such as Ancoats) and, as with other planning tools, it can only *directly* influence use where a planning application is made.
- 4.22 In the Jewellery Quarter in Birmingham, an 'Urban Framework Plan' was adopted in 1998 to guide the development of the area as Supplementary Planning Guidance. A 'Character Appraisal and Management Plan' was adopted in 2002, also as Supplementary Planning Guidance. This guidance seeks to safeguard the unique character of the Jewellery Quarter by protecting the existing historic environment (e.g. by limiting demolition and ensuring alterations do not adversely affect the character and appearance of the conservation area) and providing guidance on new design and development within the area (e.g. the publication of a design guide for new development, *permitting changes in land use where it can be shown that the new use will support and protect the traditional industries*).
- 4.23 One key shortcoming of these measures in controlling use, is that there is nothing in the planning legislation to protect premises used in the jewellery trade from conversion to another light industrial use or to offices due to them both falling within the same use class (B1).

Local Development Documents (or Frameworks)

Local Development Documents, which form part of the recently published Planning Bill, are intended to replace Local Development Plans and will act as a more locally based and tailored policy framework. In this way many consider LDDs will make the need for SPG obsolete. A Local Development Document could well be far more visual and 'masterplan led' than their Local Plan predecessors – providing the vision that detailed SPGs can successfully do at present.

Area Based Policies

- 4.24 Specific policies that seek to protect the existing character/use profile of an area along the lines adopted by Westminster within their 'Special Policy Areas' is an explicit approach. The downside of this approach is that policies inadequately drafted may be overly restrictive. This is a particular issue in fringe areas with weak or emerging property markets.

- 4.25 The City of Westminster UDP (adopted July 1997) makes special provision for uses that have traditionally characterised certain parts of the City. Policy within the Westminster UDP states that permission for developments which displace specific uses within 'Special Policy Areas' will not be granted. This is an example of specific policies within the UDP being used to safeguard the character of an area. This policy does not however protect those changes of use which do not require planning permission (i.e. those uses within the same Use Class).
- 4.26 The Plan notes that, in order to protect industrial premises, conditions will be attached to planning permissions to ensure that floorspace is retained for industrial use.

Conservation Guidance

- 4.27 Within urban areas in particular, local authorities are encouraged to prepare conservation area guides that set-out broad design principles, the background to the designation of the conservation area and notable buildings within it. These are a material consideration in any planning application and as such can help guide the form of development. A Conservation Area Character Assessment (as used in a number of the case study areas) can form a useful policy document that can reinforce planning objectives on the basis that form and use are closely linked.

Planning Agreements

- 4.28 Planning Agreements (such as Section 106 payments) can be secured from developers to contribute to works in the vicinity of or directly related to their development. These works can be related to a range of issues from public realm improvements to contributions to social facilities and as such can help subsidise uses/activities for which there would otherwise be insufficient funding (i.e. no commercial market).
- 4.29 The extent to which a local planning authority can impose S.106 obligations on a developer depends on various tests of reasonableness and the extent to which the proposed works meet objectives set-out in the adopted planning framework. More importantly, the ability to extract these payments depends on the viability of development and therefore the strength of the property market. In an environment of rising land prices such S106 payments may be easier to extract as prevailing land prices may be higher than the purchase price.
- 4.30 Section 106 agreements that require a land owner to offer space at a discounted rent for a certain number of years (such as the Westminster example) are not unusual and are merely another expression of a capital contribution.
- 4.31 In the Northern Quarter, S.106 agreements have not historically been negotiated owing to the marginal nature of much development. This position is unlikely to change substantially in the near future, although as values rise the opportunities for this type of contribution becomes more likely.
- 4.32 In the Northern Quarter, the issue is not so much one of loss of creative industry space in favour of office space, but rather the loss of these uses for higher value residential development. Section 106 Agreements have a role to play in securing a particular use within new developments in the City. A recent example in Westminster is a legal obligation to offer ground floor accommodation to a 'bespoke

tailor' at rents that reflect prevailing rents for that user.

Conditions

- 4.33 Conditions attached to a planning consent are a direct and legitimate tool to influence the form and nature of development. Conditions can relate to matters such as design, unit size and operational issues such as restrictions on operating hours/restrictions on use of closed shutters etc.
- 4.34 Once again the nature of the conditions must accord with adopted policy but they have a role in directly influencing built form and use, sometimes subtly. Once again the viability of development must be considered when considering conditions.
- 4.35 As has been outlined in the Westminster example, such planning tools can only be employed where a planning application has been made and therefore where development, or a change of use outside the existing use class is proposed. This is a substantial weakness in the potential role of planning to meet the identified objectives.

Public Sector Funding

- 4.36 Subsidy or grant from the public sector can be used to fund the value 'gap' between a use and a product which is desirable from a strategic/regeneration point of view but not commercially viable. Gap funding schemes have been used to contribute as much as one third⁵ of construction costs to achieve the viability of a construction product.
- 4.37 This form of funding can be usefully employed in areas where more valuable uses may be developed in preference to one which may be desirable, or equally where no development would occur at all without it. It is therefore a mechanism for encouraging certain forms of development but not for keeping rents affordable.
- 4.38 The N4 not a designated priority area for the current EU Objective 2 programme (for example, through an Economic Development Zone (EDZ)) and as such its ability to benefit from established ERDF funding streams is currently limited. However, opportunities for funding to promote development for occupation by creative industries may justify support from the Regional Development Agency (NWDA) under their cluster development programme.
- 4.39 In addition, the recent difficulties in utilising the government's PIP⁶ replacement programmes appear to be easing. The UK Government has secured a series of new approvals that enable regeneration bodies (Regional Development Agencies and English Partnerships) in England to spend their money in accordance with the State Aid rules (although the level of intervention is set at a maximum of 15% outside Assisted Area designations⁷).

⁵ Recent rulings from the EU on the UK gap funding regime now (typically) preclude such high levels of intervention.

⁶ Partnership Investment Programme (PIP). The European Commission banned PIP in 1999 as it infringed State Aid regulations.

⁷ The Assisted areas in England are Merseyside, Cornwall, South Yorkshire and West Wales/Valleys.

5. Providing the right context for development

5.1 Partners will need to ensure they provide the **right context** within which the further development of the N4 can take place. There are a range of implementation issues that will need to be addressed if the objectives and aspirations set out earlier in this report are to be achieved. Specifically, this will mean:

- Finding a range of solutions to tackling crime and community safety in the N4, providing a safer environment within which development activity can take place
- Addressing wider delivery issues – particularly the issue of who ‘owns’, co-ordinates and takes lead responsibility for delivering this development framework
- More effective dialogue and engagement with local traders and local land/property owners
- Using the planning system creatively.

5.2 Partners will need to retain flexibility. The issues which the N4 faces are not static and partners must be open to acting opportunistically to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. This Framework document does not purport to be a comprehensive list of all actions to be pursued in the next five years in the N4, but instead comprises the **key priorities at this moment in time**.

Tackling crime and community safety

5.3 Partners should place a premium on working with the N4 social agencies to ensure that any disturbances created by clients is minimised. This will require sustained efforts to ensure closer dialogue and co-operation between the individual agencies and between the agencies and Manchester City Council/GM Police.

5.4 The role of the N4 outreach worker (acting as a liaison point between the social agencies) is beginning to reap rewards in terms of improving co-ordination between the agencies. This is an important function that will need to be developed further.

5.5 No compelling evidence has been uncovered that the agencies need to be concentrated in any one area (aside from the fact that they were attracted to the area by cheap rents). There is arguably a need for a stated intention from partners that no additional clustering of social agencies in the N4 will take place.

5.6 There are other activities that will assist in making the N4 a more safe and secure environment:

- Bids for additional CCTV cameras
- Possibility of an additional beat officer for the Northern Quarter (at the discretion of GM Police).

5.7 There is a need to reinforce the relationship between the local business base and the Local Area Partnership on issues of crime and nuisance. More generally, there is a

need to ensure that GM Police are more visible within the N4 and respond appropriately to issues of crime and security within the N4 business base. Local businesses are also keen to see a more effective presence from the City Centre Rangers within the N4.

Providing effective co-ordination

- 5.8 It has been suggested throughout the course of this study that the Northern Quarter is sometimes seen as the 'poor relation' of the regional centre quarters. However, all partners appear to be in agreement that the Northern Quarter should continue to be viewed as an integral part of the conurbation core, and retained within the remit of the City Centre Manchester Company.
- 5.9 However, the Northern Quarter *is* different to most other parts of central retail core and there is a strong case for continued bespoke management and co-ordination arrangements (within the wider remit of City Centre Management Company). Consultees throughout this study have continually praised the role of the former N4 co-ordinator and this role is particularly important if this Development Framework is to be taken forward with the energy and momentum that it requires.
- 5.10 The Vision for the N4 is a multi faceted and challenging one. Successful implementation will require close collaboration between various parts of Manchester City Council, existing traders in the N4, potential investors and sectoral support groups (such as CIDS). Collaboration of this nature is all the more likely to happen if a dedicated resource is available to bring partners together, and harness their energy behind this agreed Vision. There is a strong case for the ongoing role of the N4 co-ordinator.

Traders association

- 5.11 The N4 allows for the meeting of like-minded people, so encouraging a range of social and economic networks. The people in the N4 are seen as having a certain quality whereby money and status are less important; allowing for a less financially 'aggressive' environment in which to work, live and visit.
- 5.12 This co-operation and collaboration could, and arguably should, be harnessed in a more formal way via a traders association. In an environment where we aspire to retaining (and managing transition) amongst some of the established sectors in the N4, sustained dialogue with traders is imperative. A particular issue will be building up more detailed contact with representatives of the textile and fashion traders.
- 5.13 Previous traders associations have been established in the N4, but they have arguably lacked focus and been dominated by select individuals. For the longer term sustainability of such a group, it will be important that traders have a clear focus and something 'to get their teeth into' to maintain interest.

Investors Forum

- 5.14 For some time, the concept of an N4 Investors Forum has been discussed. The idea behind such a forum would be to try and encourage principal landowners and active developers to build up a collective, shared view on the future of the N4 (based on the aspirations of this Framework document). A range of practical issues and considerations around the development process could also be voiced and discussed

within the forum.

- 5.15 A degree of bilateral dialogue has already taken place amongst potential investors. Given the launch of this new Framework document, now would be an appropriate time to formalise the Investors Forum.

Business Improvement Districts (BIDS)

- 5.16 New possible funding opportunities for area regeneration (through BIDS) will provide a suitable vehicle for engaging with any new traders/investors forum. A conventional BIDS Programme would harness the spirit of co-operation and sharing in the N4, but the downside is that tenants in the N4 are arguably the least able to afford any additional 'tax'. Alternative BIDS models would, however, work very well in the N4.
- 5.17 Other funding stream that may be worthy of further consideration by any traders association is the Local Tax Reinvestment Programme (LTRP). This is an idea emanating from the planning green paper and would allow local authorities to retain receipts from any increase in rateable values in targeted regeneration areas, and allow the revenues to be channelled back into the same area (funding a range of environmental works etc). It may be the case that central government will look for certain pilot areas to trial such an approach.

Events/activities

- 5.18 It is important to understand whether the N4 currently benefits to optimum effect from the wide variety of *city wide* events and activities. The consensus amongst partners is that it arguably does not.
- 5.19 There are a range of existing events programmed for Manchester City Centre that often overlook the Northern Quarter as a potential location. One example provided was the annual *In the City* music industry conference – consultees were perplexed why the event (or at least parts of the event) had yet to be spatially focussed on the N4 (the very heart of the Manchester music industry). Similar views were expressed about the location of some of the specialist markets provided in Manchester⁸.
- 5.20 The animation of streets and public spaces in the N4 (via outdoor visual arts, markets etc) will be a key ingredient in ensuring that the N4 fulfils its potential in the next 5 years. Partners should ensure, as a priority, that the N4 benefits in full from the existing (and varied) programme of city centre events and street entertainments.
- 5.21 In addition to any successes in plugging the N4 more effectively into the wider city centre events programme, there will be an ongoing requirement for a series of bespoke activities in the N4. The N4 is a unique place within the city centre and this should be celebrated.
- 5.22 The previous Northern Quarter Festival was a reasonably successful mechanism for raising the profile of the N4 within the region and of celebrating it's main facets. Many other 'creative quarters' (Temple Bar in Dublin, Merchant City in Glasgow, CIQ in Sheffield) have also experimented with festivals as a means of raising profile, some more successfully than others.

⁸ The Farmers Market is of course an exception to this trend.

- 5.23 The collective view is that there are significant benefits to be achieved from an annual N4 festival, and that these benefits can be realised at a reasonably modest cost. The Merchant City Festival in Glasgow is considered a useful example of what could be achieved in the N4 on an annual basis (see below).

Glasgow Merchant City

2002 was the first festival (Glasgow already have the established, larger west end festival) as part of a wider marketing campaign to raise profile of Merchant City. The festival was tied in with the European car free day.

Consisted of a four day event covering: Photo exhibitions, Painting exhibitions, Lantern opening procession, 4 plays, 23 musical performances (largely at different pubs/restaurants), varying band styles, Poetry reading, Craft fair, Victorian fun fair, Printmaking workshop for children, City tour, Comedy night, Farmers market, End of festival party, Ceildh

Cost: around £30,000. Funding came from: Glasgow City Council: approx £10K, THI (bid for through Glasgow City Council) £5K, Scottish Enterprise, Glasgow – £10K, First Direct Private Sector Sponsorship – £10K. There was a great deal of sponsorship in kind - e.g. pubs and clubs arranged their own acts/ some entertainment / some attractions.

- 5.24 Any new N4 festival should have a wider, more family appealing focus than the previous festival (which was largely configured for existing businesses and traders to celebrate their achievements – it had the feel of a private street party, than a fully inclusive festival). The issue of precisely who facilities and funds any new festival would also need to be addressed.

Using the planning system creatively

- 5.25 The way in which the identified challenges can be met through the use of land use planning and land ownership has to be considered carefully.
- 5.26 Planning is a potent tool but can only directly influence where planning applications are made. Also, the use of land ownership, the most direct and effective way of affecting development and use is restricted to the physical extent of ownership. In the case of the Northern Quarter public sector land ownership is limited to a few plots (although these are by chance in key locations).
- 5.27 Some of the possible options are outlined below:

- Consider specific reference in any forthcoming Local Development Document for the need for affordable business space in the N4, as set out in the Vision statement. On a related point, a specific policy area (within the Local Development Document) for affordable business space should be considered. This might be around the Thomas St area of the N4
- Utilise the limited amount of MCC land ownership to control the form of development on these sites in favour of affordable business space
- Investigate the use of Section 106 on large scale developments. Whilst difficult to apply in the market context of the N4, Section 106 Agreements may have a role to play in securing a particular use within new developments in the N4 (the recent case in Westminster of a legal obligation to offer ground

floor accommodation to a 'bespoke tailor' at rents that reflect prevailing rents for that user is a useful example)

- Consider the preparation of a Conservation Area Character Assessment. This could serve as a material consideration in any planning application and as such can help guide the form of development
- Preparation of development briefs on key non-MCC sites (such as the former Lever St Bus station site) can assist in maintaining quality thresholds on larger scale residential/commercial schemes. On these larger sites, a clear message is required to the market on the desired type, scale and specification of development.
- The use (or threat) of CPO is the principal policy tool here. New CPO legislation will give planning authorities more clearly defined powers in acquiring land, and will also speed up the procedures for confirming and implementing compulsory purchase orders.

6. Enhancing the built form

Looking back

6.1 There have been a number of examples where Manchester City Council and partners have used their land ownerships and/or planning powers to influence the form and direction of development activity in the N4. Key schemes include:

- **Ician.** Manchester City Council entered into a development agreement with Ician to bring forward the development of the former Smithfield Market site. The first phase, now complete, comprises not only standard commercial space and residential units but also space for cultural uses (Chinese Arts Centre), specialist retail, and leisure. The overall outcome will be a comprehensive and landmark large-scale development of otherwise derelict unused site/building for a range of uses.
- **106 High Street.** This scheme involved a number of buildings, one of which was listed, which had fallen into an unacceptable state of disrepair and decay. In this instance Manchester City Council worked proactively with a landowner/ developer to bring forward the development of derelict properties for mixed use. Negotiations were undertaken against the backdrop of a range of MCC statutory powers and the threat of CPO.
- **Smithfield Buildings.** One of the pioneering projects within N4, Smithfield Buildings was one of the first residential schemes in Manchester City Centre. The former Affleck & Brown Department store, which had sat under-utilised, was transformed into a vibrant mix of retail, leisure and contemporary residential apartments. The developers, Urban Splash, worked closely with Manchester City Council and English Partnerships to bridge the commercial gap. The overall outcome was the redevelopment/refurbishment of a significant building in the heart of the N4 that has acted as a trail blazing, catalytic scheme in the area.

6.2 There are lessons to be learnt from the *process* of taking forward these development schemes, in particular:

- 106 High Street – the success of one to one negotiation with landowners against a background of statutory powers including the threat of compulsory purchase and planning controls. The potential power of CPO is clearly illustrated.
- ICIAN – the negotiation of a development agreement for MCC landholdings, together with the developer bringing forward a masterplan for the development of the site.
- Smithfield Buildings – the direct use of public sector grant funding to take forward development that would not have otherwise have occurred with solely private sector resources.

6.3 These schemes have all contributed significantly to the ongoing regeneration of the N4. Both the underpinning processes that have facilitated development and the quality of the end product act as useful precedents for the type of development

schemes that are required in the future.

Looking forward - derelict buildings/gap sites/empty sites

- 6.4 The quality and attractiveness of the built form (both at eye level and above) will be a principal factor in improving the attractiveness of the N4. As noted earlier, the N4 benefits from a range of building types, including: elegant terraced townhouses from the late 1700's; Victorian and Edwardian industrial buildings and warehouses, such as those along Dale Street.
- 6.5 In spite of everything that has been achieved in the N4 in the last decade, the number of prominent **gap sites** and **unsightly buildings** still serve to give off the impression that the N4 is run down and marginal.
- 6.6 Figure 3 identifies a range of buildings/plots which detract from the attractiveness of the N4's built form. Specifically, the figure identifies the most prominent:
- Buildings that generally do not make a positive contribution to the N4
 - Derelict/empty buildings
 - Cleared (gap) sites
- 6.7 The threat of compulsory purchase (CPO) will be a key tool in tackling some of these eyesores. As noted earlier, new CPO legislation will give planning authorities more clearly defined powers in acquiring land for the purposes of carrying out improvement. The new legislation will also speed up the procedures for confirming and implementing compulsory purchase orders.
- 6.8 Larger scale development opportunities (outside the ownership of Manchester City Council) include the **Tib Street Car park** site and the **Former Lever Street Coach Station** (and adjoining land) – which offers the potential for a high quality scheme with active use of the ground floor providing good synergy with the existing City Cube scheme.

7. Public Realm Priorities

- 7.1 Implementation and maintenance of the public realm is a key issue in the N4. There is a need to balance quality, distinctive design with practical implementation and maintenance implications. Lessons have been learnt from recent schemes in the city centre, including the successful collaboration on lighting along New Cathedral Street between design consultants, MEDC and Philips.
- 7.2 Public realm works in the N4 needs to be sensitive to the issues facing the City as a whole and designs and materials being used elsewhere. However, it is important that the Northern Quarter retains and enhances its distinctive character – its **sense of place**. The Quarter is a distinctive area within the City and the treatment of the public realm should emphasise this, avoiding rolling out styles, colours and materials combinations used elsewhere in the city. Appropriate public art has a part to play in this. Lighting has a dual role, as a feature in its own right as well as addressing fear of crime issues.

Gateways

- 7.3 Strengthening the key **gateways** into the N4 is a key priority of this Development Framework. This will involve improving street treatments (where they have not already been done), enhancing key junctions for the benefit of pedestrians and, where appropriate, the use of features such as banners, lamp post pennants etc.
- 7.4 Some of the gateways are **established entrances** to the N4 which have existed for a number of years, others are new gateways which have **evolved** as a result of the changing pattern of development activity around the N4. Key priorities include:
- Enhancement of the High Street and High Street/Church Street gateways – these are likely to be increasingly important pedestrian thoroughfares
 - Dale Street/Ducie Street (likely to be used increasingly to link pedestrians from Piccadilly Station/Basin with the N4)
 - Brewer Street and/or Hilton Street as a gateway into the area from Piccadilly Basin
 - Access across Great Ancoats Street – the principal gateway to and from the N4 from Ancoats
 - Improvements to the Piccadilly Gardens end of Tib Street, Oldham Street, Lever Street and Newton Street.

Pedestrian friendly junctions

- 7.5 In certain parts of the N4, traffic dominates the street environment, and acts as a significant barrier to pedestrian movement. In certain areas there is competition for limited street space between through traffic, buses, servicing traffic, visitor traffic and pedestrians. Where this conflict remains unresolved it will restrict the ability to improve the street environment effectively.
- 7.6 It is at certain key junctions where the priority between pedestrian and traffic needs

to be addressed. Key short term priorities should be:

- Dale Street/Port Street junction. Arguably one of the least pedestrian friendly parts of the N4, and likely to become a key gateway.
- High Street/Thomas Street junction. Likely to be an increasingly important pedestrian thoroughfare, linking the Millennium Quarter/Shudehill and Arndale North with the N4.

Internal linkages (primary and secondary routes)

7.7 The Development Framework also contains proposals for the key **internal linkages** within the Northern Quarter. The phasing of any works should be influenced by the significance of the street or space in its own right; the quality of the existing treatment; and links to key projects and related investment.

7.8 In the short term (1-2 years) it is suggested that any further improvements should be made in the following areas:

- Lever Street (particularly around Stevenson Square and the linkages at either end of Lever Street into Ancoats and No 1 Piccadilly)
- Tib Street, between Church Street and Hilton Street
- Enhancement around the important High Street gateway into the N4 from the new Shudehill transport interchange (works would need to be tied to any development schemes on the High Street triangle).

1.2 Other priorities include the stretches of Newton Street, Dale Street and Hilton Street that have not already been improved.

Internal block spaces

7.9 In addition to the main primary and secondary routes through the N4, there is a need to improve the setting in the numerous linking streets and back streets that typify the Northern Quarter. Historically many of these streets in the N4 have been particularly uninviting. In the future some, but certainly not all, have the potential to provide attractive routes into the interior of blocks.

7.10 Further feasibility work should be undertaken on:

- Reconsidering *access arrangements* to the rear of some buildings, possibly limiting access and more clearly identifying private areas. This will serve to enhance the block structure of many parts of the N4, particularly around Dale Street and Newton Street.
- Developing *shared mews style surfaces* providing public routes to interior of blocks. This is primarily focused on the area between Church Street and Thomas Street around Edgehill Street and Roman Street.
- Improving *residential home zones* style/routes and spaces. Further improvements to the residential streets between Tib Street north and the

Ician scheme to create quality 'home zones' – creating shared surfaces where traffic is slowed and pedestrians have priority.

Open spaces

7.11 Open spaces have an important role to play in the N4, whether providing a setting for quality buildings, a contemplative seating area or a location for eating, drinking and shopping. As highlighted earlier, the N4 is currently poorly served by public open spaces. Priorities for addressing this situation in the short term will include:

- Stevenson Square, which is the same size as St Anne's Square, provides the opportunity to create an urban square of local and regional significance - one that sets the tone for design quality and image in the N4 more generally.
- Dale Street/Lever Street junction outside Chatsworth House.

Lighting

7.12 Lighting is an important element of the public realm. Street, architectural, shopwindow and public art lighting in the Northern Quarter, with its quality buildings, personal safety issues and evening economy, should be developed with regard to a number of key principles:

- Improve the night time appearance of streets, public spaces and key buildings
- Develop the skyline of the Northern Quarter
- Promote evening activity
- Improve safety and security – both real and perceived.
- Provide pedestrian scale lighting.

7.13 Street lighting should be improved initially targeting key routes into and through the Quarter as highlighted earlier in this report. White lighting is effective in reducing fear of crime. Lux levels should be sufficient to support any future CCTV schemes. Columns and lanterns provide the opportunity to reinforce the distinctive nature of the area and enable the hanging of promotional banners.

7.14 After hours shop window lighting combined with attractive shutters, which enable light to penetrate, assist in reducing fear of crime on the street. Lighting can also be a feature in its own right, such as the public art neon light tower on the top of Church Street car park. Further features should be focused on key sites such as Stevenson Square.

8. Summary of Key Actions

Key 'facilitating' actions

<p>The collaboration needed to take forward the N4 is all the more likely to occur if a dedicated resource is available to bring partners together, and harness their energy. There is a strong case for a N4 co-ordinator.</p>
<p>All partners will need to place a premium on working with some of the N4 social agencies to ensure that any disturbances created by clients are minimised. This will require sustained efforts to ensure closer dialogue and co-operation between the individual agencies and between the agencies and Manchester City Council/GM Police. There should also be a stated intention that no further clustering of social agencies in the N4 will take place.</p>
<p>The role of the N4 outreach worker (acting as a liaison point between the social agencies) is beginning to reap rewards in terms of improving co-ordination. This is an important function that will need to be developed further.</p>
<p>There is a need to reinforce the relationship between the local business base and the Local Area Partnership on issues of crime and nuisance. More generally, there is a need to ensure that GM Police are more visible within the N4 and respond appropriately to issues of crime and security within the N4 business base. Local businesses are also keen to see a more effective presence from the City Centre Rangers within the N4.</p>
<p>Sustained dialogue amongst traders (and between traders and public sector agencies) is imperative. Previous traders associations have been established in the N4, but have arguably lacked focus. A new traders association, with something for members 'to get their teeth into', would be a useful vehicle in taking forward the N4.</p>
<p>The concept of an N4 Investors Forum has been discussed for some time. The idea behind such a forum would be to try and encourage principal landowners and active developers to build up a collective, shared view on the future of the N4 (based on the aspirations of this Framework document). Given the launch of this new Framework document, now would be an appropriate time to formalise the Investors Forum.</p>
<p>New possible funding opportunities (such as BIDS) might provide a suitable vehicle for engaging with any new traders forum. A conventional BIDS Programme would harness the spirit of co-operation and sharing in the N4, but the downside is that tenants in the N4 are arguably the least able to afford any additional 'tax'. Alternative BIDS models may, however, work very well in the N4. The N4 has the potential to act as a national demonstrator for BIDS in city fringe areas. Work is already underway in taking this forward.</p>
<p>From a planning perspective, specific reference should be made in any forthcoming Local Development Document on the need for affordable business space in the N4 - this may extend to the creation of a specific policy area (within the Local Development Document) for affordable business space, possibly around the Thomas St area of the N4</p>
<p>Partners should ensure, as a priority, that the N4 benefits in full from the existing programme of city centre events and street entertainments. The relaunch of (a revamped) N4 festival should also be explored.</p>

Enhancing the built form

- 8.1 The Development Framework identifies a range of buildings/plots which detract from the attractiveness of the N4's built form. Specifically, this includes (see Figure 3 for full listing):
- Buildings that generally fail to make a positive contribution to the N4
 - Derelict/empty buildings
 - Cleared (empty) sites.
- 8.2 The threat of compulsory purchase (CPO) will be a key tool in tackling some of these eyesores. **New CPO legislation** will give planning authorities more clearly defined

powers in acquiring land for the purposes of carrying out redevelopment. New legislation will also speed up the procedures for confirming and implementing compulsory purchase orders.

- 8.3 Larger scale opportunity sites (outside the ownership of Manchester City Council) include the **Tib Street Car park** site and the **Former Lever Street Coach Station** (and adjoining land).

Priorities for improving the public realm

Gateways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhancement of the High Street and High Street/Church Street gateways – these are likely to be increasingly important pedestrian thoroughfares ▪ Dale Street/Ducie Street junction (likely to be used increasingly to link pedestrians from Piccadilly Station/Basin with the N4) ▪ Access across Great Ancoats Street – the principal gateway to and from the N4 from Ancoats ▪ Improvements to the Piccadilly Gardens end of Tib Street, Oldham Street, Lever Street and Newton Street ▪ Brewer Street or Hilton Street as a gateway into the area from Piccadilly Basin.
Pedestrian friendly junctions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dale Street/Port Street junction. Arguably one of the least pedestrian friendly parts of the N4, and likely to be used increasingly to link pedestrians from Piccadilly Station/Basin with the N4. ▪ High Street/Thomas Street junction. Likely to be an increasingly important pedestrian thoroughfare.
Primary street treatments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lever Street ▪ Tib Street (between Church Street and Hilton Street) ▪ Enhancement of the High Street gateway ▪ The stretches of Newton Street, Dale Street and Hilton Street that have not already been improved
Internal blocks	<p>Undertake further feasibility work on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access arrangements to the rear of some buildings, possibly limiting access and more clearly identifying private areas - will serve to enhance the block structure of many parts of the N4. ▪ Development of shared mews style surfaces providing public routes to interior of blocks - primarily in the area between Church Street and Thomas Street. ▪ Further improvements to the residential streets between Tib Street north and the Iclian scheme to create quality home zones.
Open spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stevenson Square. Provides the opportunity to create an urban square of local and regional significance. ▪ Land at junction of Dale Street and Lever Street.