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**Manchester City Council  
Report for Resolution**

**Report to:** Executive - 14 December 2016

**Subject:** Draft Manchester Residential Quality Guidance

**Report of:** Strategic Director – Development and the Deputy Chief  
Executive (Growth and Neighbourhoods)

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### **Summary**

This report sets out guidance for design quality standards for residential development in the city which are set out within the “Manchester Residential Quality Guidance” document. Following a period of consultation this report seeks final approval from the Executive for the “Manchester Residential Quality Guidance” document to be adopted as a material consideration in the Council’s decision making as a Local Planning Authority.

The “Manchester Residential Quality Guidance” document seeks to underpin and contribute to the Our Manchester ambitions for the city of being: a beacon for sustainable design; building well-designed, energy-efficient, sustainable and affordable homes to rent and buy; encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport; recycling more of our waste; and improving the quality of parks, green spaces, rivers and canals, and incorporate more into new developments where appropriate. All of these ambitions for the city help to create sustainable and popular neighbourhoods where people want to live and, at the same time, to contribute to raising the quality of life in the city. The final version of the “Manchester Residential Quality Guidance” document seeks to provide clear direction to all those involved in the development of, the construction of and the management of new homes in the city.

### **Recommendations**

The Executive is recommended to:

1. Acknowledge the work of the Residential Design Guide Sounding Board in overseeing the development of the “Manchester Residential Quality Guidance” document;
2. Approve the “Manchester Residential Quality Guidance” document as a material consideration in the Council’s decision making as a Local Planning Authority; and
3. Approve that the guidance contained within the “Manchester Residential Quality Guidance” document should be reflected in the development of a new Development Plan for Manchester, on which work will commence within the next 12 months.

**Wards Affected:** All

<b>Manchester Strategy Outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of the contribution to the strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Manchester is the fastest growing city in the UK, - the 2011 Census established the City's population as 503,000, a 19% increase from 2001, with the city centre increasing its population from a few thousand in the late 1990s to circa 24,000 by 2011. Providing the right quality and diversity of new residential accommodation for its increasing population will be critical to maintaining this continued growth and success.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	There is a relationship between quality housing provision and better employment and education outcomes. Adopting design quality principles can contribute to improving these outcomes.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The Manchester Residential Quality Guidance seeks to promote new housing which, amongst other things, is fit for purpose in the long term and can accommodate the needs of residents throughout their lives. The Guidance also seeks improve the lives of people in the city by providing opportunities to bring people together.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The Manchester Residential Quality Guidance seeks to promote development that will be designed with full regard to the principles of sustainability, including accessibility for all, energy efficiency and the contribution that the public realm can make to the 'greening' of the City.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The Manchester Residential Quality Guidance seeks to promote the development of neighbourhoods that make it easy for people to get around by means other than the car.

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

**Financial Consequences – Revenue & Capital**

None

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

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

- Improving the Standards of Residential Development in the City, Executive, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015
- Manchester Strategy 2016 – 2025, Executive, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2016
- The Manchester Residential Growth Strategy and 2016/17 Action Plan, Executive, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2016
- Draft Manchester Residential Quality Guidance, Executive, 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2016

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 In March 2015 the Executive adopted, on an interim basis, the London Housing Design Guide Space standards as a basis for assessing new residential developments pending the preparation of specific guidance for Manchester. The Executive requested that a further report be brought back to the Executive in due course setting out key principles for design quality standards for residential development in the city.
- 1.2 At the Executive's meeting in June 2016 a draft "Manchester Residential Quality Guidance" was endorsed for a period of consultation. This report sets out the outcomes of that consultation and brings forward final proposals for design quality standards for residential development in the city and seeks approval from the Executive to adopt the Manchester Residential Quality Guidance as a material consideration in the Council's decision making as a Local Planning Authority.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The "Our Manchester" Strategy sets out a very clear vision for the city and an approach to deliver that vision. In essence for our city to be economically successful going forwards it must be able to attract to people and businesses alike to live and to be based within Manchester. Progress towards a low / zero carbon future will drive prosperity, an international profile and an improved quality of life. As such a series of high levels aims are embedded within the "Our Manchester" strategy that seek to chart a course to deliver the vision, a number of which point to the need for the city to bring forward actions to embed good design to secure a wide range of outcomes associated with sustainability, the development of a zero carbon city and place making.
- 2.2 Integral to our economic growth ambitions and the attraction, retention and growth of our population within the city will be the need for the city to continue to provide a housing offer that not only meets the requirements of households who work, and will be working, in our economy but also addresses the diversity of our city today and tomorrow. In doing so the Manchester Residential Growth Strategy and 2016/17 Action Plan acknowledged that the city faces a number of challenges:
- Globally cities generate 70% of global greenhouse gases, largely from energy consumption and transportation. Within Manchester the existing property base and the new housing stock must respond positively to the environmental challenges the city faces;
  - The city must provide homes in places where people want to live and that can deliver the lifestyle requirements of our residents; and
  - The city must respond to the diversity of our residents and their housing requirements: the needs of younger and older households; those individuals with disabilities; and the demands of those households with children, especially those who want to live in our City Centre.

- 2.3 Over the next twenty years it is forecast that our city will continue to expand, diversify and grow our economy, building on the strong asset base that has been put in place over the last thirty years. The Manchester Residential Growth Strategy and 2016/17 Action Plan, that was considered by the Executive in March 2016, set out the an ambition to deliver a minimum of 25,000 homes over the next ten years in the city and an action plan to secure delivery of that ambition.
- 2.4 Against this background the Strategy and Action Plan set out very clearly a requirement to encourage excellence in residential design for Manchester and to ensure that the Guidance which is brought forward becomes embedded in proposals for all new residential development in the city. The significant increase in residential development that is forecast over the next decade and beyond will demand a new framework to improve residential design quality across all developments.
- 2.5 Finally, it should be noted that our decision to develop a Residential Design Guide led to discussions with Salford City Council who, as a result of those discussions, asked to participate in the development of the guidance with a view to using the outcomes of the work to help inform design within the Salford City Council area.

### **3.0 The Development of Draft Manchester Residential Quality Guidance**

- 3.1 To ensure that a new Residential Design Guide for the City was developed in a manner which responds to the broad range of communities of interest within the City some of whom will have divergent views, a “Sounding Board” was established to advise, challenge and guide the development of the Residential Design Guide. The following individuals were invited, to be members of that Sounding Board:

- Stephen Hodder, Chair of Hodder & Partners and President RIBA in 2014/15;
- Andy von Bradsky - former Chair PRP Architects and Member of the RIBA Housing Group;
- Daren Whitaker, Director, Renaker Build Ltd;
- Faye Whiteoak, Development Director, Redrow Homes;
- Dan Gray, Technical Director, Laing O'Rourke;
- Jim Chapman, Visiting Professor of Architecture, Manchester School of Architecture;
- Cllr Bernard Priest, Deputy Leader of Manchester City Council and lead on Housing & Regeneration;
- Cllr Kate Chappell, Executive Member (Environment), Manchester City Council (to July 2016);
- Cllr Rosa Battle, Executive Member (Environment), Manchester City Council (July 2016 onwards) and
- Cllr Derek Antrobus, Assistant Mayor (Planning), Salford City Council

Stephen Hodder was asked to chair the Sounding Board.

3.2 To support the Sounding Board a multi-disciplinary team, led by Deloitte Real Estate in partnership with Planit-IE and RTKL, provided expertise in the areas of Planning, Urban Design, Place Making and Architecture. This team were appointed to develop the draft Guidance document for the Sounding Board. This involved the team undertaking: extensive desktop research and evaluation; stakeholder engagement through a series of “City Conversations” with a wide range of stakeholder groups ; the preparation of the draft Residential Design Guide; supporting the public consultation process and redrafting the Guidance document for final Executive approval..

#### **4.0 Draft Manchester Residential Quality Guidance: the approach to Public Consultation; Consultation Feedback and Proposed Amendments**

##### Approach

4.1 A variety of media forms were used by the City Council to promote the consultation on the draft Manchester Residential Quality Guidance. Professional Institutions, Developers, Statutory Agencies and a range of Manchester based interest groups were contacted. Manchester Confidential published an article on the consultation and the Twitter accounts of both the RIBA North West (8,000 followers) and the City Council (90,000 followers), with the latter posting information on the consultation 11 times. In respect of the City Council’s twitter account the posts received 14 likes and three people commented on them all about affordable houses being needed. 22 people re-tweeted our post and 47 clicked the link straight through to the consultation page on our website.

##### Consultation Feedback

4.2 During the six week consultation period (21<sup>st</sup> August – 2<sup>nd</sup> October) a total of 74 written responses were received, 50 of 74 responses (68%) agreed or strongly agreed with the draft document. Eight responses (11%) disagreed with the draft document. The overwhelming majority of responses were largely supportive of the document with a small number of respondents commenting on a number of the recommendations and suggesting proposed changes.

4.3 A total of 5 organisations responded to the draft document and are listed below. The responses, which were largely supportive of the draft document but as noted above they made some proposed amendments.

- Environment Agency
- Historic England
- Age Concern
- Age Friendly Manchester (AFM) Design Group and Manchester Women's Design Group (MWDG)
- Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service.

##### Proposed Amendments to the Draft Guidance

- 4.4 The Residential Design Guide Sounding Board meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> October provided an opportunity to review and consider the comments received on the draft document. A response to all consultation comments is enclosed at Annex 1.
- 4.5 While all comments have been considered, the Sounding Board agreed that not all would require amendments to the draft Guidance. Where suggestions have not resulted in amendments to the draft they are considered to have already been sufficiently addressed within the document or fell outside the remit of the Guidance.
- 4.6 A headline summary of the main changes proposed in response to consultation are as follows:
- Further clarification of the planning status of the document will be provided on page 17 'Planning Policy and Other Guidance.
  - The draft document will be updated to reflect wider representation of different groups living in Manchester. The document will be made clearer (in terms of size and font colour) with the addition of page numbering throughout the guidance document.
  - The draft document will be updated to include external references to existing Historic England Guidance such as Streets for All, Sustainable Growth in Historic Areas and Design and Heritage Champions to encourage and promote development which responds positively areas of historical significance.
  - The draft document will be updated to reflect support for maintaining or enhancing the city's waterway and will be a key theme throughout.
  - Reference to emergency service access will be made within the 'Make it Practical' and secure reference to secure bin storage will be noted in 'Make it Practical'.
  - The document will be updated to make specific reference to ensuring access for disabled people and include reference for an appropriate level of disabled spaces to be provided as part of residential developments, in response to demand.
- 4.7 Annex 2 of this report provides a final draft version of the "The Manchester Residential Quality Guidance" which has been considered by the Sounding Board. As with the initial draft that was published for consultation the final version of the Guidance cross references but does not seek to replicate existing policy and regulations that will continue to apply to all new residential development. Developers will be expected to refer to the Guidance throughout the planning and development process to help identify and articulate the contribution of their development towards the neighbourhood, the block and the home.

- 4.8 New development will be expected to comply with the Guidance. However, where a proposal does not the only justification for exception will be on the grounds that the proposed scheme produces exemplary and innovative design and / or the scheme delivers significant over-riding public benefits.
- 4.9 It is proposed that the “Manchester Residential Quality Guidance” document will be as a material consideration in the Council’s decision making as a Local Planning Authority. It is also proposed that when the review of the Manchester Development Plan is commenced (currently anticipated to start in 2017) that the Manchester Residential Quality Guidance is subjected to the prescribed Development Plan process as part of the development of the new Plan.

## **5.0 Concluding Remarks**

- 5.1 At the heart of creating a successful city where people want to live is the need to promote excellence in design – at the neighbourhood level, the street level and in the homes where we want our residents to live. To bring our ambitions for excellence in design together the Manchester Residential Design Sounding Board has brought forward a final version of the “Manchester Residential Quality Guidance” document. This document sets out a city ambition for raising the quality of new residential development in the city, contributing to our zero carbon ambitions for the city and helping to create the conditions within which the development industry will deliver homes that are well designed in neighbourhoods that meet the lifestyle requirements of our residents.
- 5.2 Recommendations can be found at the front of this report.

## **6.0 Contributing to the Manchester Strategy**

### **(a) A Thriving and sustainable city**

- 6.1 Manchester is the fastest growing city in the UK, - the 2011 Census established the City’s population as 503,000, a 19% increase from 2001, with the city centre increasing its population from a few thousand in the late 1990s to circa 24,000 by 2011. Providing the right quality and diversity of new residential accommodation for its increasing population will be critical to maintaining this continued growth and success.

### **(b) A highly skilled city**

- 6.2 There is a relationship between quality housing provision and better employment and education outcomes. Adopting design quality principles can contribute to improving these outcomes.

### **(c) A progressive and equitable city**

- 6.3 The Manchester Residential Quality Guidance seeks to promote new housing which, amongst other things, is fit for purpose in the long term and can accommodate the needs of residents throughout their lives. The Guidance

also seeks improve the lives of people in the city by providing opportunities to bring people together.

**(d) A liveable and low-carbon city**

- 6.4 The Manchester Residential Quality Guidance seeks to promote development that will be designed with full regard to the principles of sustainability, including accessibility for all, energy efficiency and the contribution that the public realm can make to the 'greening' of the City.

**(e) A connected city**

- 6.5 The Manchester Residential Quality Guidance seeks to promote the development of neighbourhoods that make it easy for people to get around by means other than the car.

**7.0 Key Polices and Considerations**

**(a) Equal Opportunities**

- 7.1 The draft Manchester Residential Quality Guidance has been the subject of local consultation, giving all stakeholders opportunities to engage in the process.

**(b) Risk Management**

- 7.2 Not applicable

**(c) Legal Considerations**

- 7.3 If adopted by the Executive the Manchester Residential Quality Guidance will become a material consideration for the Council as Local Planning Authority.

**Annex 1: Draft Manchester Residential Quality Guide: Summary of Statutory and Residential Consultation Responses**

Consultee	Summary Comments
Environment Agency	<p>The EA encourages a development approach which ensures the protection and sensitivity near Manchester’s rivers and streams and take advantage of opportunities for enhancing key green infrastructure. The EA states that majority of waterbodies flowing through the borough are currently failing their statutory environmental objectives and therefore there is scope for new development to positively shape and better integrate rivers/streams.</p> <p>The EA states that there is significant opportunity in the borough to improve waterbodies and river valleys, in particular within the city centre where the valleys of River Irk and Medlock navigate and not just on the edge.</p> <p>The Agency would support new riparian residential development that takes opportunities to restore these heavily modified/culverted and WFD failing river waterbodies. Accordingly, the EA would like to see the following incorporated into new riparian development where feasible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enlarged public open space areas adjacent to the rivers</li> <li>• new riparian development design is based around ‘front facing’ residential dwellings in order to integrate positively with the river.</li> <li>• Integrate flood storage and attenuation requirements as part of biodiversity and landscape enhancement measures</li> <li>• Ensure riparian development engineering a bio - engineering approach</li> <li>• The height and massing along the river corridor should be carefully considered to ensure there is a good daytime light provision along the river corridor and public realm, avoiding long term shading from inappropriately sighted or high buildings in close proximity to the river and public open space areas</li> <li>• encourage deculverting of waterways</li> <li>• incorporate long term management/monitoring of waterways</li> </ul>
Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS)	<p>GMFRS requires that reference is made to the inclusion of fire and emergency service access and facilities in new developments.</p> <p>Specifically, sprinkler systems should be included in developments and arson protection design elements should be considered such as protection from bin fires.</p>

Consultee	Summary Comments
	<p>The car parking guidance should reference emergency service access. Car parking provision should not be the minimum required, but be adequate enough to avoid double parking and the blocking of emergency service access.</p>
<p>Natural England</p>	<p>Natural England does not consider that this Residential Quality guide poses any likely risks or opportunity in relation to their statutory purpose and does not wish to comment.</p>
<p>Age Concern</p>	<p>Suggests more guidance is needed for minority groups with more photos of these included in the guidance, and that some of the page numbers might be difficult to read for the visually impaired.</p> <p>Specific reference to wheelchair storage and access is needed (with photos included). Specific suggestions are as follows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• P47 Photo 07 – suggest title says ‘Regular seating for those that want or need it’</li> <li>• P56 – something that often increases when we get older.</li> <li>• Easy to get around – suggests reference is made to access for ambulances, wheelchairs, mobility scooters</li> <li>• Mention need to be able to get coffins in lifts without upending (lift extensions?)</li> <li>• Enhance Walkability – Include photos of blind person or deaf signing on street</li> <li>• P73 – reword to refer to an increasing ‘older’ population (last paragraph)</li> <li>• P87 – mentioned that waste system is difficult for people with dementia. Suggested referring to making waste storage systems very clear and easy to understand</li> <li>• P111 – requested that reference to the elderly is changed to ‘the frail’.</li> <li>• General comment,-requested that white page numbers on coloured background are made clearer as they are very difficult to read by the visually impaired.</li> </ul>
<p>Age Friendly Manchester (AFM) Design Group and Manchester Women's Design Group (MWDG).</p>	<p>Age Friendly Manchester (AFM) Design Group and Manchester Women's Design Group (MWDG) are keen to ensure that the design of housing, and of neighbourhoods, is accessible and inclusive and attractive to all ages and reflect the needs and aspirations of women. A summary of the comments are as follows:</p>

Consultee	Summary Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Design Group recommends that reference copies of the draft Guidance, including alternative formats, should be made available as part of the public consultation process.</li>   <li>• Recommends that the images used in the Guidance should reflect the ages, ethnicities, genders and abilities of Manchester's citizens.</li>   <li>• The Guidance should explain its relationship to other relevant city council guidance such as the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD (adopted in April 2007). For example, is it intended that the new Guidance will supersede the SPD.</li>   <li>• The Guidance should require compliance with Design for Access 2, unless acceptable justification is provided. The requirement to 'Enhance Walkability' (page 67) and to 'Provide easy access to public network' (page 69), for example, should include a specific reference to ensuring access for disabled people.</li>   <li>• The Guidance should include specific reference to the public health benefits of good quality environments and that representatives of the Health Authority are involved, from as early a stage as possible, in the formulation of the Guidance.</li>   <li>• Recommends more prescriptive standards are included request for public open space.</li>   <li>• The proposals for lighting, planting, managing and maintaining these areas should be specified, and approved, as part of the planning application.</li>   <li>• The blanket provision of high rise development is short-term and neither age-friendly nor sustainable. In the view of the Design Group such development does not meet the aspirations expressed in the Committee report 'to accommodate the needs of residents throughout their lives'.</li>   <li>• The Design Group recommends that the Guidance incorporates the concept of 'Complete Streets' (a mixture of terraced housing and mid-rise blocks).</li>   <li>• It should be a key aspiration of the Guidance to vary the type of housing on offer in the city centre. To give people the opportunity to continue to remain in their homes as they enter later stages of their lives.</li>   <li>• Recommends that NHS and social care representatives, as well as the Health and Well-being Board, are involved</li> </ul>

Consultee	Summary Comments
	<p>from as early a stage as possible in the formulation of the Guidance. It is felt that the high-rise typology does not provide the flexibility for adaptations and extensions should the needs of the occupant(s) change, for example, through disability, ageing and/or the increasing demand for multi-generational living.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommends that the Guidance should either specify how to achieve housing that is inclusive, or is capable of adaptation, or advise on where such guidance is available.</li> <li>• Recommends that the Guidance specifies the requirement for affordable housing in the city, both for purchase and for rent.</li> <li>• Recommends that lifts be provided for all residential developments above ground level, to accommodate disabled and older people and for disabled and/or elderly visitors. The design of internal lifts (page 116) should accommodate wheelchair users and have appropriate controls for disabled people.</li> <li>• The recommended parking standards (page 91) appear only to relate to 'apartments'. The Design Group recommends that the Guidance includes comprehensive parking standards for all types of residential accommodation.</li> <li>• In view of the increasing use of mobility scooters by older and disabled people, the Design Group recommends that the guidance on the design of internal layouts should specifically include for the storage and charging of mobility scooters.</li> <li>• Important that technical features, such as temperature controls within new housing, are accessible and easy to understand and operate. The Design Group recommends that the Guidance includes specifications for accessible technical features.</li> <li>• The Guidance states the requirement for bins and bin stores (page 93). The Design Group recommends that bins and bin stores should be designed to be easily accessed and used by older and disabled people.</li> </ul>
Historic England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requests that reference is made to the various Conservation Areas across the city and promote development which responds positively to these areas in particular on pg.29-33.</li> <li>• Requests that when referring to a mix of old and new,</li> </ul>

<b>Consultee</b>	<b>Summary Comments</b>
	<p>that reference is made to the Building in Context toolkit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recommends the promotion of sustainable reuse of heritage assets at pg.32.</li><li>• Recommends reference is made to Historic England's Guidance (Streets for All, Sustainable Growth in Historic Areas and Design and Heritage Champions).</li><li>• Recommends promotion of street legibility and hierarchy by encouraging the creation of well signalled legible entrances.</li><li>• Recommends that the wording on pg.123 is reconsidered to better reflect the language used in section 12 of the NPPF.</li></ul>