

## Manchester City Council Report for Information

**Report to:** Economy Scrutiny Committee – 9 February 2023

**Subject:** Local Plan Update

**Report of:** Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing

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### Summary

The report provides an update on the Local Plan. The report provides a general overview of current planning policy; an update on emerging planning policy (Places for Everyone and the Manchester Local Plan); and a summary of the current consultation on updates to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) expected this Spring; and potential future changes to NPPF via the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

### Recommendations

The Committee is recommended:

- (1) To consider and comment on the emerging Local Plan process; and
  - (2) To consider and comment on the proposals set out in the consultation on updates to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) expected this Spring; and potential future changes to NPPF via the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.
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### Wards Affected: All

**Environmental Impact Assessment** - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

The planning system will continue to help the city work toward zero carbon including by encouraging compact patterns of urban development, with housing accessible by active and public transport to employment and services; preserving and improving green and blue infrastructure by encouraging development in existing urban areas; and supporting zero carbon building standards through development planning processes.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

The Local Plan will include the completion of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA). To inform how the draft policies in the plan may impact on different protected or disadvantaged groups.

<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The city's planning system aims to improve Manchester's economic performance and spread the benefits of this growth across the city to reduce economic, environmental and social disparities, and to help create inclusive sustainable communities.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	The city's planning system incorporates a vision for Manchester of a knowledge-based economy flourishing within an entrepreneurial community, characterised by a fully skilled, inclusive working Population, and includes policies to deliver this through key strategic locations across the city.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The city's planning system aims to reduce economic, environmental and social disparities, and to help create inclusive sustainable communities.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The city's planning system aims to provide a framework within which the sustainable development of the city can contribute to halting climate change. It also aims to provide a network of distinctive, attractive and high-quality centres.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The city's planning system aims to improve Manchester's physical connectivity, through sustainable and accessible transport networks, to enhance its functioning and competitiveness and provide access to jobs, education, services, retail, leisure and recreation.

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

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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.

- Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan 2012 to 2027
- Report to Economy Scrutiny (22 July 2021) on Places for Everyone Publication Plan 2021: A Joint Development Plan Document for Nine Greater Manchester Local Authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan)
- Report to Economy Scrutiny (8 October 2020) on Proposed Planning Reforms, Local Plan and Greater Manchester Spatial Framework
- Places for Everyone Submission Plan (February 2022) and subsequent Examination documents (see the Examination Library at [GMCA – Places For Everyone Joint DPD | Helen Wilson Consultancy Limited \(hwa.uk.com\)](#))
- Government Consultation Proposals (December 2022) [Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 Manchester's Local Plan currently comprises the Core Strategy, saved Unitary Development Plan policies, the Greater Manchester Minerals Plan, and the Greater Manchester Waste Plan. The revised Local Plan will replace the Core Strategy that was adopted in 2012 and the remaining saved Unitary Development Plan policies, taking account of the Our Manchester Strategy, the emerging Places for Everyone (PfE) joint local plan, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and national planning policy guidance. This report provides an update on the emerging Local Plan. The report is split into three main parts:

- A general overview of current planning policy;
- An update on emerging planning policy (Places for Everyone and the Manchester Local Plan); and
- A summary of the current consultation on updates to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) expected this Spring; and potential future changes to NPPF via the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

## **2.0 Background**

2.1 The adopted Core Strategy is part of an overall strategy to deliver sustainable development in the city with connections to a wide range of other council strategies including the Our Manchester Strategy, Housing Strategy, Local Industrial Strategy, Strategic Regeneration Frameworks.

2.2 As required by Government, we are reviewing the city's Local Plan. This dovetails with the joint local plan, Places for Everyone, that is very well advanced (currently at the hearings stage). The emerging policy framework presents an opportunity to consider how potential changes can be developed to strengthen the existing framework in the Core Strategy, across the range of policy issues including climate change; balancing the demand for space from the various aspects of built development; planning on how we move around the city; working with partner organisations to deliver essential utilities provision; and continuing to maintain a high-quality design approach.

2.3 The government is consulting on updates to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) expected this Spring; and potential future changes to NPPF via the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. A summary of the key proposals is set out in section 3.

## **3.0 Main issues**

### **Current Planning Policy**

3.1 The Core Strategy was adopted in 2012. Whilst the policy landscape inevitably has changed over the ensuing period, it is important to bear in mind that many policies in Core Strategy continue to function as envisaged. This has a bearing on any changes brought forward in the emerging local plan where it will be important to retain existing policy that is fit for purpose.

- 3.2 The Core Strategy is monitored on an annual basis via the Authority Monitoring Report. The reports are published on the Council's website with the latest version, and online versions back to 2012, available at the following web address [Authority Monitoring Report | Authority Monitoring Report | Manchester City Council](#). The report provides a comprehensive update on policies in the Core Strategy measured against a set of indicators across economic, social and environmental factors.

## **Emerging Planning Policy**

### **Manchester Local Plan**

- 3.3 The emerging Manchester Local Plan presents an opportunity to review current planning policy in the city. The updated plan will set out how the city should meet the need for new development over the next 15–20 years. It will identify where new development should happen, which green spaces and other aspects of the environment should be protected or enhanced, and how transport and other infrastructure will be improved. While the Local Plan will cover a period up to 2040, it will be reviewed every five years to ensure that its policies and proposals remain up to date.
- 3.4 The Local Plan will include policies to address the key overarching challenges set out below.
- Action on climate change - policies that help meet our zero-carbon target by 2038 at the latest.
  - Balancing demand for space – linking residential development to economic opportunities; and ensuring a balance with social and environmental infrastructure.
  - Deliver a sustainable transport system – linking planning policy to other strategies including the City Centre Transport Strategy; Active Travel Strategy; 2040 Transport Strategy (Local Investment Plans); and Clean Air proposals.
  - Infrastructure Planning – working with the providers of essential water, sewerage, power and digital services to ensure the city functions effectively with new and improved infrastructure.
  - Delivering well designed places – taking forwards established guidance (residential quality guidance) and incorporating into updated design guidance for the city.
- 3.5 Underpinning these key matters will be a range of policies to deal with the follow issues:
- Economy - creating jobs people need for a healthier, more equal Manchester (building on the strengths in the city's universities, hospitals, digital and creative sectors).
  - City centre – balancing the need for jobs, homes and sustainable transport
  - Places to live – providing for the mix of housing needed in the city; considering the future roles for district centres; and thinking about where new social and environmental opportunities may be brought forward.

- Sustainable and resilient city – linkages into the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy; addressing clean air and flood risk; and supporting wildlife and biodiversity.

3.6 To inform the development of policy, there are a range of studies that support the local plan with the latest evidence. A summary of the evidence base is set out in the table below. Aspects of the evidence base come from the Places for Everyone joint local plan process by the virtue that some strategic matters (e.g. housing and employment land requirements) have been set out in the joint local plan. The evidence base from this work is denoted by the initials PfE in brackets against the relevant study.

<b>Completed</b>	<b>Commissioned</b>	<b>Commissioning</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Housing Market Assessment (PfE)</li> <li>• Flood Risk Assessment (Stage 1 and 2) (PfE)</li> <li>• Economy (PfE) /Employment Land Update (MCC)</li> <li>• Energy - Currie and Brown Study (PfE)</li> <li>• Local Area Energy Plan (GMCA and MCC)</li> <li>• Our Rivers, Our City</li> <li>• Biodiversity Strategy</li> <li>• Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment</li> <li>• Local Nature Recovery Strategy (PfE)</li> <li>• Tree Opportunity Mapping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Space Study (nearing completion)</li> <li>• Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (nearing completion)</li> <li>• Purpose Built Student Accommodation study (nearing completion)</li> <li>• Net Zero new development (Updating previous commissioned work)</li> <li>• Housing Needs Assessment (commissioned)</li> <li>• Biodiversity Net Gain (GMEU study nearing completion; Manchester study commissioning);</li> <li>• Retail and Leisure Study (commissioned)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage/Conservation Areas study (commissioning)</li> <li>• Hotels study (commissioning)</li> <li>• Design study (commissioning)</li> <li>• Local Plan Viability study (to be commissioned)</li> </ul>

3.7 The timetable for the local plan is set out in the council’s Local Development Scheme (LDS). The latest version reflects the current state of play with respect to Places for Everyone joint local plan. This is important as the PfE contains policies and spatial strategy that the Manchester Local Plan will

dovetail with. The key stages of the emerging Manchester Local Plan are set out below.

**Table 2.4 - Manchester Local Plan Timetable**

<b>Milestone Stage</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Consultation on Issues	February 2020 – May 2020 (complete)
Consultation on Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18)	Summer 2023
Consultation on Publication Draft Local Plan (Regulation 19)	Winter 2023
Submission of Local Plan	Spring 2024
Examination of Local Plan	Summer 2024
Adoption of Local Plan	Winter 2024

## **Places for Everyone**

- 3.8 The Places for Everyone joint local plan is nearing the completion of hearing sessions as part of the examination of the plan. There will be a further round of formal consultation on any proposed changes (main modifications) to the plan later this year; followed by adoption of the plan by individual full councils of the constituent local authorities.
- 3.9 The PfE contains specific policies and allocations that directly relate to Manchester including:
- A Spatial Strategy that identifies the significant agglomeration of economic activity at the centre of Greater Manchester within the City Centre and a wider central economic area that includes Central Park and the Etihad campus; the inner areas of the city region, surrounding the City Centre that benefit from a position adjacent to an enormous concentration of economic activity; and to maximise the benefits to Greater Manchester of the continued operation and sustainable growth of Manchester Airport; and
  - Thematic policies that include an intention to achieve a carbon neutral city no later than 2038; and cover a range of other key matters including flood risk, water resources, air quality, economic and housing matters, heritage, culture, education and skills, health, and sport and recreation; and
  - Specific allocations at Medipark Extension and Global Logistics that set out key economic developments to further develop the opportunity that the Medipark Extension offers because of its proximity to Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (Wythenshawe Hospital) and the wider Roundthorn Medipark Enterprise Zone development is significant; Global Logistics as a key location close to a major international airport, and with improvements to local transport infrastructure, can play a full part in maximising future economic growth.

## **Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy**

- 3.10 Government published proposals under the auspices of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill (LURB) (reforms to national planning policy) on 22 December 2022 ([Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-reforms-to-national-planning-policy)). The consultation seeks views on the proposed approach to updating the National Planning Policy Framework. It also seeks views on the proposed approach to preparing National Development Management Policies, how this might develop policy to support levelling up, and how national planning policy is currently accessed by users. The consultation is split into two main parts – information and 58 questions about the proposed changes emerging from the LURB; and a tracked changes version of the proposed next iteration of the NPPF.
- 3.11 The proposed changes to be introduced via the LURB can be summarised as follows:
- Around half of the consultation questions focus on housing issues with key proposals around five-year land supply; housing requirements in local plans; and changes to the Housing Delivery Test (HDT);
  - A number of other specific housing related matters covering:
    - Social rent – the govt intends to change the NPPF in the future to give greater importance to social rent. It is looking at widening the definition of affordable housing for rent for example to include community-led developments;
    - Encouraging development on small sites;
    - Developer accountability – looking at making applicants' past "irresponsible planning behaviour" either a material consideration when the LA is determining planning applications from them in the future or allowing LAs to decline to determine future applications from these applicants. The govt is asking for views on what types of behaviour would be in scope for this;
    - Monitoring of build out progress on sites; and
    - Consideration of an 'alignment policy' which will look at replacing the Duty to Cooperate mechanism.
  - Includes additional wording in the proposed change to ensure that food security considerations are factored into planning decisions that affect farm land; and
  - Enable new methods for demonstrating local support for onshore wind development.
- 3.12 Alongside these specific changes, the consultation calls for views on a wider range of proposals, particularly focused on making sure the planning system capitalises on opportunities to support the natural environment, respond to climate change and deliver on levelling up of economic opportunity, and signals areas that are expected to be considered in the context of a wider review of the Framework that will follow Royal Assent of the Bill. The government will consult on the detail of these wider changes next year, reflecting responses to this consultation.



- 3.13 The final aspect of the consultation sets out the envisaged role for National Development Management Policies (NDMPs). The consultation states that
- “These are intended to save plan-makers from having to repeat nationally important policies in their own plans, so that plans can be quicker to produce and focus on locally relevant policies. National Development Management Policies should also provide more consistency for small and medium housebuilders, who otherwise must navigate a complex patchwork of similar but different requirements.”
- 3.14 The intention is that National Development Management Policies are set out separately from the National Planning Policy Framework, which would be re-focused on principles for plan-making. This consultation calls for views on how to implement NDMPs and the government will consult on the detail next year ahead of finalising the position.
- 3.15 Appendix A of this report provides further details on the consultation with a broad outline of the response proposed by the city council.

#### **4.0 Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended:

- (1) To consider and comment on the emerging Local Plan process; and
- (2) To consider and comment on the proposals set out in the consultation on updates to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) expected this Spring; and potential future changes to NPPF via the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

#### **5.0 Appendices**

Appendix 1 – National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Consultation