New Developments

Policy GI6: Green Infrastructure in New Developments

A. All development proposals must demonstrate how they will contribute to the protection, enhancement (including quality and/or the multi functionality), and expansion of the Green Infrastructure network. This includes incorporating green and blue infrastructure within schemes and considering its impact on connectivity, biodiversity, local amenity and heritage assets.

B. Green Infrastructure and landscaping must be designed to:

i. Be fit for purpose and function.

ii. Be of a high quality and compatible with the surrounding landscape, and townscape character.

iii. Integrate with the drainage network to mitigate the effects of climate change and significant rainfall events.

iv. Be clearly defined as public or private space; and

v. Optimise the benefit to wildlife habitat including biodiversity net gain.

C. All proposals for major development must be supported by a dedicated green infrastructure plan, which may be included within a site wide landscape strategy, and will be required to:

i. Include an Urban Greening Factor (UGF) calculation, in accordance with Natural England's latest guidance, demonstrating how the development will meet a UGF score of:

- 0.4 as a minimum for residential development on brownfield development sites
- 0.5 as a minimum for residential development on greenfield development sites
- 0.3 as a minimum for non-residential development

ii. Demonstrate a landscape-led development, which responds to the context of the development site, including heritage assets, to retain and enhance landscape across the site and ensure green infrastructure is fundamental to the design;

iii. Identify the developments contribution to nature recovery and the creation and restoration of wildlife rich habitats, including Local Wildlife Sites.

iv. Protect, provide and enhance green infrastructure in line with other local plan policies, in particular Policies OS1, OS4, NE1, NE4, GI10, and TM1;

v. Submit a long-term landscape management, maintenance and funding plan to demonstrate that the green features will remain effective throughout the life of the building, or minimum of 30 years.

D. Where it is considered that the development will have a detrimental effect on the quantity, quality or function of existing green infrastructure, then the development will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that an assessment has been made and suitable mitigation measures proposed. Any mitigation measures should be of equal or greater value than that which is to be compromised or lost through development.

E. In the majority of cases, new green infrastructure will be required as on-site specific mitigation and enhancements and could also contribute to achieving requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain (Policy GI10 and PfE Policy JP-G8). Where specific circumstances justify off-site provision, a financial contribution will be sought as part of a S106 agreement.

Places for Everyone Links

Policy JP-G2; JP-G3; JP-G6; JP-G7; JP-G8; JP-S4; JP-C6.

Relevant Strategic Objectives

SO2; SO3; SO7; SO8; SO9

8.24. The 25 Year Environment Plan places particular emphasis on the importance of greening our towns and cities with an aim to improve existing green infrastructure, encouraging more investment in the environment and supporting more sustainable forms of development.

Natural England's GI Framework sets out the standards and principles for England. The Trafford Design Code (2024) also outlines a landscape-led approach to shaping design proposals.

8.25. The context of the development site should be appraised to retain and enhance landscape across the site. Nature based solutions such as SuDS, including green roofs, and rain gardens, should be an integral part of a development's green open space network. Development should aim to incorporate Green Infrastructure assets that are multi-functional by supporting as many of the benefits listed in Policy GI2 and requirements of this policy.

8.26. The Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) seeks to bring 50% of GM's Local Wildlife Sites into active management for nature conservation as well as the restoration and creation of 1,800ha of wildlife-rich land. Development proposals must demonstrate how they contribute to nature recovery and the aspirations of the LNRS through green infrastructure.

8.27. Developers must show how green infrastructure will be managed, maintained and monitored for a minimum of 30 years to ensure its longevity, in line with Natural England's GI Framework.

Urban Greening

8.28. Urban greening includes all standard blue and green infrastructure plus green roofs, living walls etc. Urban greening provides a wide range of benefits for air quality, noise, urban heat island effect, rainwater run-off, biodiversity enhancement, recreation, and health and wellbeing of Trafford's communities. This will increase in importance as weather patterns continue to change with rising average temperatures, summer droughts and more intense rainfall events periodically through the year. The inclusion of blue infrastructure such as rain gardens and rainwater harvesting can help to minimise water use.

8.29. Evidence demonstrates a positive correlation between urban greening and good mental and physical health. The provision of large green spaces

in Trafford's more densely populated urban environment is difficult to achieve. Small areas of soft landscaping, green walls and green roofs, associated with buildings and the public realm, will play a vital role in promoting wellbeing. Increased access to green spaces will be sought.

Urban Greening Factor (UGF)

8.30. The Urban Greening Factor (UGF) forms one of the five headline green infrastructure standards introduced in 2023 by Natural England as part of their Green Infrastructure Framework. UGF is a planning tool that can be used to improve green infrastructure delivery through the process of development and regeneration. UGF will be used to evaluate the amount of green spaces, landscape and permeable surfaces on all major development sites.

8.31. The UGF works by assigning a factor score to each surface cover type proposed in a planning application. Scores range from 1 for semi natural vegetation, through to 0 for impermeable sealed surfaces. The full list of factor scores for varying surfaces is based on Natural England's guidance and is provided in Appendix 2. It is calculated by multiplying the area of each surface cover type by its factor; each figure is then added together and divided by the total area within the development site boundary that is commonly referred to the red-line boundary.

Figure 8-10: Urban Greening Factor Calculation

$$\text{Urban Greening Factor Score} = \frac{\text{Sum of each Surface Area type (m2)}}{\text{(Surface Area A x Factor A + Surface Area B x Factor B + Surface Area C x Factor C, etc.)}}{\text{Total site area (m2)}}$$

8.32. The inclusion of UGF in new development will result in an increase in green cover across Trafford and should be integral to planning the layout and design of new buildings and developments. It should be considered from the beginning of the design process to achieve design excellence and a sense of place.

Developer Contributions

8.33. Where the scale of development would be too small to accommodate on-site Green Infrastructure provision, the Council will, where reasonable, seek developer contributions either towards the improvement of existing green spaces or towards the provision of new Green Infrastructure in an area of need.

8.34. Where compensation is required for the loss of existing Green Infrastructure, then the provision of new or enhanced Green Infrastructure as required by the scale of the development should be in addition to the requirement for compensation.

8.35. The Council will also seek developer contributions for the future management and maintenance of Green Infrastructure, where appropriate.

Consultation Question 8-6

Do you support Policy GI6? Are there any changes required which would improve the policy? Please provide any supporting evidence which you think is relevant.