Built Environment

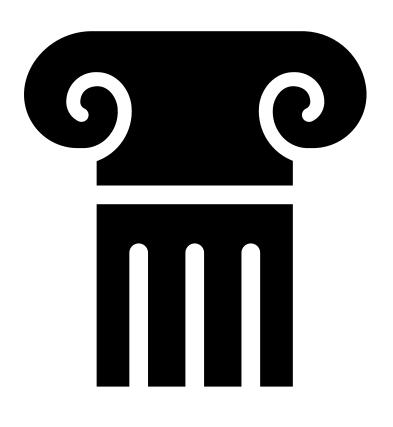




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12. Built Environment

Introduction

- 12.1. The quality of the built environment shapes how people live, work, and interact with their surroundings. Well-designed buildings and public spaces are essential for the health, safety, and well-being of residents and visitors, enhancing everyday life across Trafford.
- 12.2. This chapter sets out policies to ensure that development in the borough is high-quality, sustainable, and responsive to local character. Key issues covered include ensuring places are well-designed, inclusive, safe, and enhance the character of the surrounding area.
- 12.3. Policy will also ensure tall buildings are located in suitable locations and appropriately designed in relation to their surroundings. Trafford's rich heritage and history will also be safeguarded through the conservation and protection of heritage assets.
- 12.4. Furthermore, policy will cover other key topics such as managing the impact of noise and vibration and land contamination and remediation.

Corporate Plan Priorities



Policy Exclusions from the Local Plan

12.5. The Local Plan needs to be read alongside Places for Everyone (PfE) and national policy / guidance. Policy requirements which are adequately covered by other existing policies have, where possible, not been duplicated in the Local Plan. This includes policies within the Places for People chapter, as well as policies on digital connectivity.



Well-Designed Places

Policy BE1: Design

- A. Development must be of a high standard of design and construction and make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the borough.
- B. All development must clearly demonstrate where appropriate, via a written submission to the satisfaction of the Council, how the proposal would be compatible with the surrounding area, by:
- Ensuring built form, layout, massing, scale, height and materiality are appropriate to the development's function and local context;
- Making best use of opportunities to enhance the character and quality of the immediate area, including where appropriate the street scene; and
- iii. Not adversely impacting the amenities and / or operations of existing occupiers / land uses by virtue of overbearing, overshadowing, overlooking, visual intrusion, noise and/or disturbance, odour or in any other way.
- C. Proposals must also promote sustainable development, by:
- Locating development in well-connected areas, accessible via good public transport links and, where possible, high quality active travel links.
- ii. Reducing potential carbon emissions through the application of the energy hierarchy, as outlined in PfE Policy JP-S2;



- D. Where appropriate, incorporate multi-functional green spaces which provide both biodiversity habitat benefits and improved natural capacity to mitigate the impacts of a changing climate, as required by Policies Gl6 and Gl10.
- E. Development proposals must be designed to be safe and inclusive for all by:
- i. Ensuring buildings and spaces are designed in a way to be inclusive to different users (e.g. age, gender, mental and physical ability) through reducing physical barriers and where possible, create opportunities for community activity and interaction.
- ii. Where appropriate, ensuring that streets and public spaces are designed to provide safe and attractive environments for those walking, wheeling and cycling.
- iii. Ensuring built form is designed in a way that reduces opportunities for crime and avoids or minimises real and perceived danger as far as possible, through measures such as passive and natural surveillance, active frontages, and effective lighting.
- iv. Where appropriate, addresses resilience to terrorism and natural hazards in a manner which is proportionate to the threat and the size and nature of the development.

Places for Everyone Links

JP-P1

Relevant Strategic Objectives

SO3 and SO10

12.6. Trafford consists of a varied network of places, both urban and rural, with strong and established identities. A key challenge for this Local Plan will be to ensure that the existing local character and charm of Trafford's built, and natural environments are maintained and enhanced, whilst ensuring that the delivery of needed homes, jobs, services and facilities are provided to support local communities.



- 12.7. Good design is a fundamental part of achieving many of the aims of the Plan. Good design is not just about creating aesthetically pleasing buildings, it is about placemaking and strengthening the connection between people and the places they share, promoting a sense of identity and helping to improve people's health and well-being. It should also strengthen existing historic and natural environments where possible and leave a long-term positive legacy.
- 12.8. Fundamental to good design is also the transition to net zero carbon development. This means encouraging a range of measures that secure energy efficiency and energy generation so that buildings operate without adding to greenhouse gas emissions, are constructed in ways that use natural resources prudently and enable future occupants to travel and live in ways that can help them to reduce their carbon footprint.
- 12.9. High quality design is fundamental to achieving all of the above, and the Council will expect all development proposals to be of the highest quality practically possible. To ensure this takes place the Council will encourage early engagement in the planning process for all major proposals, proposals in areas sensitive to change, and proposals involving potentially sensitive uses.
- 12.10. Supporting the Local Plan, the Council adopted its first Trafford Design Code in 2024. The document sets out additional design guidance which reflects and responds to the unique character and appearance of Trafford's localities. The Council will expect all development proposals to take into consideration the relevant elements of the Trafford Design Code, and any equivalent future design related documents.

Do you support Policy BE1? Are there any changes required which would improve the policy? Please provide any supporting evidence which you think is relevant.



Tall Buildings

Policy BE2: Tall Buildings

- A. The Council will consider proposals for well-designed tall buildings, of a high architectural standard and high-quality materials, in appropriate locations. For the purposes of this plan, tall buildings are considered to be either six stories or more, or 30 metres or more in height.
- B. The following broad locations are considered to be the most suitable areas to accommodate tall buildings:
- i. Town Centres (Altrincham, Sale, Stretford and Urmston);
- ii. Strategic Development Areas within Trafford North which have a strategic masterplan, such as the Civic Quarter, Pomona and Stadium District and Wharfside; and
- iii. Appropriate locations within 800 metres of a railway station or Metrolink stop.
- C. All proposals for tall buildings must clearly demonstrate how they would:
- Have a positive impact on the distinctiveness of the surrounding neighbourhood through the use of high-quality design, architecture and materials.
- ii. Respect and enhance the existing character and appearance of the neighbourhood (having regard, but not limited to - scale and massing, urban grain and public realm).
- iii. Respect and not adversely impact the amenities and / or operations of nearby existing occupying land users / uses (having regard, but not limited to noise and wind impacts, overshadowing, privacy and outlooking).
- iv. Provide high quality and human scale interfaces at street level, incorporating active frontages.
- v. Where appropriate, include the provision of elevated amenity space (for example in the form of private balconies, communal roof gardens etc).



vi. Reduce energy consumption (including mitigating the impacts of heat loss and / or solar gain).

Places for Everyone Links

JP-P1

Relevant Strategic Objectives

SO10

- 12.11. In the right locations tall buildings can make an important contribution towards delivering new homes and support high quality place-making, particularly in well-connected areas in walking distance of high frequency public transport.
- 12.12. Poorly designed tall buildings can, however, seriously harm the character and identity of a place and the value of important views. Principal failings with tall buildings are often poor design quality, a lack of understanding of context, poor interaction at street level, and limited / no access to outdoor amenity space.
- 12.13. Trafford Council has produced / in the process of developing a number of documents which set out additional requirements / guidance for the design of tall buildings. These include the Civic Quarter Area Action Plan and Trafford Design Code. Masterplans are currently being developed for the New Carrington and Davenport Green (Timperley Wedge) strategic allocations, and a new masterplan for the Stadium District and Wharfside is soon to be commissioned.
- 12.14. The above documents (along with any additional future local guidance) will be used in conjunction with the policies contained within the Local Plan when assessing proposals for tall buildings. The Council supports early pre-application engagement for all proposals involving a tall building(s).



Do you support Policy BE2? Are there any changes required which would improve the policy? Please provide any supporting evidence which you think is relevant.

Elevated Green Spaces

Policy BE3: Elevated Green Spaces

- A. The Council will encourage and support proposals which incorporate the provision of elevated green spaces on or in all types of appropriate development.
- B. Such spaces could incorporate green walls, green roofs and elevated amenity spaces which incorporate fixed areas of planting / green space. The inclusion of any such features should be considered and factored into the design process from an early stage, to help ensure its long-term functionality.
- C. Where such spaces have been designed to the satisfaction of the Council, support will be given for them to be incorporated within the proposals Biodiversity Net Gain provision requirement.

Places for Everyone Links

JP-P1 and JP-G8

Relevant Strategic Objectives

SO3, SO7 and SO10

12.15. Higher density / tall buildings have a unique opportunity to incorporate green features which could support biodiversity within more urban locations. Where well designed and considered features are factored into the design process from an early-stage features such as green walls, green roofs and elevated areas of green amenity space could also help to improve air quality, help improve street scenes and offer residents / building users access to green space.



- 12.16. Where carefully designed, elevated green spaces could help to maximise the efficient use of land (particularly previously developed land) as open space and biodiversity net gain requirements could be potentially be delivered above ground level.
- 12.17. To help ensure appropriate consideration and implementation of elevated green spaces, the Council will encourage early engagement from developers, on all proposals which have potential to include such provision.

Do you support Policy BE3? Are there any changes required which would improve the policy? Please provide any supporting evidence which you think is relevant.



Adverts and Signs

Policy BE4: Advertisements and Signage

- A. The Council will require all proposals involving advertisements and signage (including digital / electronic and illuminated) to be suitably located, well designed and responsibly managed. To ensure this proposals for advertisements and signage will be supported where they:
- Are appropriate, having regard to the character and appearance of the areas, the site and architectural features of the host building (or structure) in terms of siting, location, design, size, scale, number, colour and method of illumination;
- ii. Would not create an excessive, visually cluttered or overbearing feature of any location;
- iii. Would not interfere with public highway safety or management (including associated footpaths), cause light pollution or cause any other safety hazard;
- iv. Would not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of nearby residents and / or occupiers of sensitive uses (for example schools, nurseries and care homes); and
- v. Would not harm the significance of any listed building, conservation area or other heritage asset in accordance with Policy BE5: Heritage Assets.
- B. Where proposals include digital / electronic and / or illuminated advertisements or signage details must be submitted to the Council setting out the proposed method and level of luminosity and display type and functionality (e.g., still, moving or changing images etc).
- C. The Council will not support advertisements on shopfronts that are above fascia level or ground floor level, except in exceptional circumstances.

Places for Everyone Links

JP-P1



Relevant Strategic Objectives

SO10

- 12.18. The policy sets clear criteria to enable adverts to be placed in suitable locations without detriment to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It applies to all advertisements requiring advertisement consent under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.
- 12.19. Advertisements and signage should be designed to be complementary to and preserve the character of the host building and local area. The size, location, materials, details and illumination of signs must be carefully considered. The Council will resist advertisements where they contribute to or constitute clutter or an unsightly proliferation of signage in the area.

Consultation Question 12-4

Do you support Policy BE4? Are there any changes required which would improve the policy? Please provide any supporting evidence which you think is relevant.



Heritage and History

Policy BE5: Heritage Assets

- A. The Council will take a positive approach to the conservation of heritage assets and the wider historic environment, through being supportive of proposals which:
- i. Sustain and where possible, enhance the significance of heritage asset(s) and their setting,
- ii. Make a positive contribution to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place, and
- iii. Where appropriate, find new and sustainable uses for heritage assets, or retain them in viable uses consistent with their conservation.
- B. All proposals (including development that involves alteration, demolition or improved energy efficiency) affecting either a designated heritage asset or its setting, or a non-designated heritage asset, will be required to submit the following:
- A description of the heritage asset and its setting, proportionate to its significance.
- ii. A clear identification of the impacts of the impacts of the development proposal on the heritage asset and its setting.
- iii. A clear justification as to why the impacts could be considered acceptable.
- iv. Demonstrate how the proposal is consistent with national policy; and
- v. Demonstrate how the proposal is consistent with and local heritage guidance (including for example Conservation Area management plans).
- 12.20. Trafford's historic environment makes a major contribution to the attractiveness, character and local distinctiveness of the borough. The many heritage assets, both designated and undesignated, include buildings, monuments, archaeology, structures, parks, views, vistas,



- landscapes, sites and places of significance that contribute to the high quality of the historic environment.
- 12.21. Heritage assets are an irreplaceable record of the borough, which can contribute to our learning and understanding of the past including its social and economic history and are also a resource for the future. It is therefore essential that we seek to preserve and where appropriate, enhance these special buildings and sites.
- 12.22. In line with National guidance, the Local Plan sets out a positive approach to the management of the historic environment and makes clear to applicants the overarching approach to decision making for development which affects heritage assets.
- 12.23. Historic buildings, including those in conservation areas, can be sensitively adapted to meet the needs of climate change and energy saving while preserving their special interest and ensuring their long-term survival. In assessing applications for retrofitting sustainability measures to historic buildings, the Council will take into consideration the public benefits gained from the improved energy efficiency of these buildings, including reduction of fuel poverty. These considerations will be weighed up against the degree to which proposals will change the appearance of the building, taking into consideration the scale of harm to appearance and the significance of the building.

Do you support Policy BE5? Are there any changes required which would improve the policy? Please provide any supporting evidence which you think is relevant.



Designated Historic Assets

Policy BE6: Designated Heritage Assets

- A. Designated heritage assets and their settings (including Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas and Registered Parks and Gardens) will be given the highest level of protection to ensure that they are conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance and contribution to the historic environment.
- B. Where substantial harm or loss is identified, proposals will only be supported in exceptional circumstances in accordance with national planning guidance.
- C. Where a less than substantial level of harm is identified, the scale of harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- D. Conservation area boundaries are defined on the Policies Map.
- 12.24. Trafford is home to a wide range of designated heritage assets, with the most notable being the Dunham Massey Estate which includes the Grade I listed Hall, Stables and Carriage House buildings. Across the borough there are over 250 listed buildings, 21 designated conservation areas, three registered Parks and Gardens and a single Scheduled Monument.
- 12.25. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework any harm or loss of a designated heritage asset or its setting will require clear and convincing justification, which must be provided by the applicant to the Council. Policy BE5: Heritage Assets sets out the range of information the Council will expect to be submitted to assist in taking a balance view of the scale of harm and the significance of the asset, along with any public benefits.

Places for Everyone Links

JP-P2

Relevant Strategic Objectives

SO10



Do you support Policy BE6? Are there any changes required which would improve the policy? Please provide any supporting evidence which you think is relevant.

Other Historic Assets

Policy BE7: Non-designated Heritage Assets

A. A balanced consideration will be applied to proposals which may impact non-designated heritage assets. Proposals will be supported where the benefits of the scheme are considered to outweigh the scale of any harm or loss, having regard to the significance of the heritage asset.

Places for Everyone Links

JP-P2

Relevant Strategic Objectives

SO₁₀

12.26. The Council maintains a local list of non-designated heritage assets of architectural quality and / or historic interest. A particular emphasis of Trafford's Local List is to recognise the character and local distinctiveness of the north of the borough, large parts of which are not statutorily designated. The List includes assets in areas such as Stretford, Sale, Ashton upon Mersey, Old Trafford, Carrington, Partington, Urmston and Flixton. The List is not considered to be definitive, and further additions will be made as and when deemed appropriate.



Do you support Policy BE7? Are there any changes required which would improve the policy? Please provide any supporting evidence which you think is relevant.

Considerate Construction and Uses

Policy BE8: Noise and Vibration

- A. The Council will require a Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment to assess the impact of noise and vibration generating sources which may affect amenity during the construction and operational phases of development.
- B. The Assessment must demonstrate how the proposal:
- i. is located in the most appropriate location; and
- ii. protects and where appropriate, provides appropriate mitigation for both current and future occupiers against existing and proposed sources of noise and vibration, in accordance with the Agent of Change Principle.
- C. Development which has the potential to generate unacceptable levels of noise and / or vibration (taking into account appropriate mitigation) impact(s) on local residential amenity will not be supported.

Places for Everyone Links

JP-P1

Relevant Strategic Objectives

SO7

12.27. A key role of the planning system is to ensure that new development does not have an adverse impact on the amenity of existing properties, and that adequate levels of amenity will be enjoyed by future occupiers of the proposed development.



- 12.28. All development (including minor developments and extensions) can cause a disturbance to nearby residents or users of land and buildings resulting in the quality of their amenity being impacted. However, the continuance of established existing businesses should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them because of the introduction of new and incompatible land uses. Such matters are an important planning consideration in relation to amenity.
- 12.29. The dominant sources of ambient noise in the borough are from road and rail / tram traffic, and construction activity. Other significant sources are the borough's sporting stadiums, building services plant, and operational noise from restaurants, cafes and pubs (including from outdoor areas such as beer gardens and pavement seating), nightclubs, shops and other businesses, and the noise generated by the associated deliveries and servicing.
- 12.30. Noise generating development should, wherever possible, be located away from noise sensitive development (for example housing, schools and care homes). Conversely noise-sensitive development will not be supported in the vicinity of established noise-generating uses unless appropriate measures are taken to ensure that the noise does not adversely affect levels of amenity.
- 12.31. Vibration is typically a discrete issue caused by specific, temporary construction activities, poorly insulated building services equipment, or the movement of underground trains where there are track condition issues.
- 12.32. Issues of noise and vibration will be considered on a site-by-site basis having regard to the proposal, site context and surrounding uses. Owing to the specialist nature of interpreting technical acoustic reports and confirming compliance with noise standards, the advice of the Council's Environmental Protection Team will be sought on all applications where noise and vibration is likely to be an issue.



Do you support Policy BE8? Are there any changes required which would improve the policy? Please provide any supporting evidence which you think is relevant.

Contamination

Policy BE9: Land Contamination and Remediation

- A. The Council will require a Contaminated Land Assessment for proposals which may contain, or there is reason to suspect land which may meet the legal definition of contaminated land as a result of previous industrial activity, and or land potentially affected by landfill gas or a change to a more sensitive end use.
- B. The Assessment must demonstrate how:
- the nature and extent of contamination or instability issues and the potential effects this may have on the development and its future users; and
- ii. the measures needed to allow the development to go ahead safely considering the potential end users, in accordance with the Agent of Change Principle.
- C. Development which would have the potential to result in unacceptable impacts on the groundwater, human health, buildings and / or the wider environment (taking into account appropriate mitigation) will be resisted.

Places for Everyone Links

JP-P1

Relevant Strategic Objectives

SO7

12.33. Activities associated with industrial/commercial and agricultural processes can result in adverse ground conditions, which can pose a risk to



development, future site users and the environment. Within Trafford, there are sites affected by contamination as a result of previous land uses. In order to make the most effective use of previously developed land within Trafford, it will be important to ensure that where possible, such land is safely investigated and where necessary remediated to ensure the site is suitable for use for its intended purpose through the development process.

- 12.34. Where contamination is known or suspected, the site will be conditioned for an appropriate investigation through the development process and applicants should ensure that any potential issues are identified and discussed with the Council as early as possible. Development proposals will be expected to seek sustainable solutions to the remediation of contaminated land, where any risks are identified.
- 12.35. To ensure that a sufficient and proportionate level of information is provided, a Contaminated Land Assessment undertaken in accordance with the Land Contamination Risk Management (LCRM) guidance will need to be submitted with all new development proposals where contamination is suspected or known on the site (or adjacent land) and/or where the proposed development for a sensitive end use would be particularly vulnerable to the presence of contamination (for example, residential schemes, care homes, education facilities etc.).
- 12.36. The Local Planning Authority will review the submitted information and assess whether sufficient investigation has been undertaken and whether any proposed remediation is satisfactory.

Consultation Question 12-9

Do you support Policy BE9? Are there any changes required which would improve the policy? Please provide any supporting evidence which you think is relevant.



Digital Connectivity

Policy BE10: Digital Connectivity

- A. The Council will support the expansion of digital infrastructure to meet the needs of businesses and communities, particularly where this provides access to the most up-to-date digital infrastructure technology.
- B. All new development will be required to incorporate full fibre connections, including ducting to industry standards for efficient connections to existing networks, unless it can be proven that it is technically unfeasible.
- C. Provision of new digital infrastructure should be phased to ensure it comes forward at the same time or before the completion of new development. It will be expected that internet connections will be operational and immediately accessible to network providers when occupiers move into new properties.
- D. The Council will also support proposals which improve both access to, and increased performance of broadband in areas of the borough with poor network coverage / service provision (including the rural areas and Partington).

Telecommunication Masts

- E. Proposals for masts or telecommunications development will be required to demonstrate that:
- F. There are no reasonable opportunities for sharing a site, mast or facility with existing telecommunications infrastructure in the immediate area to the proposal.
- G. The siting, height and design of the proposed equipment will not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area in which it is to be located, including the significance and setting of heritage assets.
- H. Any building-mounted installations would be located and designed to minimise their impact on the host building.
- I. No interference would be caused to air traffic services or electrical equipment.



- J. No impact would be caused to highway safety or the movement of pedestrians and cyclists, and
- K. Provision is made for the removal of the structures and reinstatement of the site as soon as reasonably practicable after it is no longer required for telecommunications purposes.

Places for Everyone Links

JP-C1 and JP-C2

Relevant Strategic Objectives

SO4

- 12.37. The Council is committed to securing high quality communication infrastructure that is essential for growing a sustainable economy and for social well-being. Access to high quality digital infrastructure supports productivity and new business opportunities. It also facilitates social inclusion, enables home working, and improves access to a wide range of services that are increasingly provided online.
- 12.38. The Council will work with developers to ensure that the highest quality digital infrastructure is delivered at key development locations (such as the Civic Quarter, New Carrington and Davenport Green). Developers will be encouraged to have early discussions with strategic providers to ensure that the best available infrastructure provision is provided and made accessible on occupation of new development.
- 12.39. The government is committed to extending mobile geographical coverage across the UK and providing uninterrupted mobile signal on all major roads, and to be a global leader in 5G. Part 16 of the General Permitted Development Order (1995)¹ (as amended) allows telecommunications operators to install and replace certain types of telecommunications

¹ This can be found at:



- equipment, provided certain criteria are met without the need for planning permission.
- 12.40. Some smaller scale masts fall within 'permitted development' but require the 'Prior Approval' of the local planning authority. In these instances, the Council can exercise control over the siting and appearance of telecommunications equipment in the interests of protecting amenity. Appearance of a mast includes its materials, colour and design, and consideration of siting will involve its impact on the ecological value of the site, the wider landscape and its proximity to buildings and housing and the availability of alternative infrastructure in the area. The criteria in the Policy TM13 will be applied in these cases and for those more significant radio and telecommunications infrastructure that do not constitute permitted development. This includes maximising the use of existing infrastructure to avoid the over proliferation of new telecommunications structures.
- 12.41. It is also important that new developments must be 'future-proofed' with appropriate digital infrastructure, that will meet existing and future communication needs. New sites (residential and non-residential) should be provided with in-built broadband infrastructure to enable the delivery of high-speed broadband services. It is essential that the Council works with developers to make sure that the appropriate digital infrastructure is incorporated, including 5G networks (or future technologies as they become available).

Do you support Policy BE10? Are there any changes required which would improve the policy? Please provide any supporting evidence which you think is relevant.



Monitoring

- 12.42. Tables 12.1 to 12.7 of Places for Everyone (PfE) set out a monitoring framework covering the full range of topic areas contained within the plan. Key indicators relating to the Built Environment contained within this chapter of the Local Plan include the following:
 - Increase percentage of buildings on the "at risk register" with a strategy for their repair and re-use.
 - Number of premises with full fibre connectivity.
- 12.43. The Local Plan will not replicate the above PfE monitoring indicators. The following additional indicators have been identified to monitor the delivery of the Local Plan's Built Environment policies.

Indicator	Target
Number of tall buildings approved within the following suitable areas (as identified by Policy BE2): i. Altrincham, Sale, Stretford and Urmston Town Centres. ii. Strategic Development Areas within Trafford North (i.e., development areas with a strategic masterplan). iii. Appropriate locations within 800 metres of a (a) railway or (b) Metrolink stop.	Increase
Number of listed buildings and number of buildings within conservation areas lost through new development proposals.	Decrease
Number of planning applications with conditions attached relating to contaminated land.	No target
Number of planning applications approved for telecommunications masts (in total and within each Locality).	No target



The Local Plan should be read alongside the Places for Everyone Plan and national policy / guidance. Where possible, the Local Plan has not repeated or duplicated policy.

However, are there any policy areas related to this chapter which you consider are missing and which should be included in the Local Plan?