



# **Development in the City 2024/2025**

The 2024/25 Authority Monitoring Report of Manchester City  
Council

Monitoring the delivery of the Local Plan

April 2024 - March 2025

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## 1 Executive Summary

Manchester's 2024/25 Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) summarises the City's development from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, based on key indicators measuring policies in the Local Plan. It should be read alongside the Places for Everyone Annual Monitoring Report 2025.

The City has a strong and competitive economy, good infrastructure, and its population has continued to grow. The latest Census data (2021) from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) is 552,000 and the ONS 2022 based subnational population projections indicate that Manchester's population will reach 621,700 by 2030. The City's latest forecasting model (MCCFM W2024 (final)), which takes into account planned development, and differs in its migration assumptions, predicts a stronger rate of growth, with 707,628 residents expected by 2030. Evidence from indicators within this AMR show that Manchester is continuing to make substantial progress towards achieving the sustainable development goals set out in the Local Plan.

Development that supports economic growth has remained steady, with almost 133,000 sqm of gross (93,000 sqm net) employment-related floorspace being completed over the past year. 76% of the

employment development floorspace took place inside the Regional Centre which includes offices, industry and warehousing, retail, hotels and leisure.

There were 3,138 units new housing units completed (net of demolitions) between April 2024 and March 2025. New homes continue to be built in sustainable locations with good public transport connections to key services, social infrastructure and employment locations.

In Manchester's neighbourhoods, district centres have remained focal points for community activity, showing resilience compared to general trends across the country. Vacancy rates were lower than national levels, and the proportion of E(a) retail uses has remained stable, despite the growing importance of on-line shopping.

Investment in sustainable modes of transport continued during 2024/25, supporting growing numbers of sustainable trips made by walking and wheeling, cycling and using public transport. This included continued investment in active travel infrastructure and further development of the Bee Network, with local bus services in Greater Manchester returning to local control – the first area to do so in 40 years.

The Green and Blue Infrastructure (G&BI) Strategy and the accompanying Stakeholder Implementation Plan was adopted in July 2015, refreshed in 2021 and work is beginning on its review. In collaboration with partners, it has continued to deliver many benefits 'on the ground' throughout 2024, delivering 8,897 trees of which 5,549 are hedge trees, including four new orchards.

New development schemes, from strategic regeneration frameworks (SRFs) and masterplans to individual applications, were encouraged to incorporate new or improved G&BI. The work on G&BI continues to inform the evolution of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan and these links will continue to be strengthened.

Measures are being taken to reduce dependency on the car and increase walking, cycling and public transport use. Meanwhile, the most recent BEIS figures for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions indicate a further reduction in 2023 (latest data) to 3.1 tonnes per capita emissions, significantly lower than the regional and national averages.

The Places for Everyone Plan, the Strategic Plan for the nine districts of Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan, progressed to Submission stage in February 2022 and an examination of the plan commenced between November 2022 and July 2023. The Plan was found

sound and following adoption on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024 became part 1 of Manchester's Local Plan. It sets out the spatial strategy, scale of economic and residential development for each district and includes key locations for delivery, a town centre hierarchy, strategic transport schemes and other strategic infrastructure.

In Spring 2020, the review of the Local Plan commenced with the Issues Consultation. An updated Local Plan will enable the Council to further strengthen its support for sustainable development to ensure that the potential of the City and the needs and aspirations of its residents are fully met. The Issues Consultation included the consideration of a number of key strategic matters. The draft Local Plan is due to be considered by the City Council's Executive Committee in September 2025 ahead of a public consultation later that month.

## 2. Introduction

**This is Manchester's Authority Monitoring Report for April 2024 to March 2025 and should be read alongside the Places for Everyone Annual Monitoring Report 2025.**

The Council produces an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) to inform the public about recent achievements and progress towards achieving the Spatial Objectives in the Local Plan. In Manchester, the Local Plan consists of the 2012 Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) and the 2024 Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE), together with a set of saved Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies, and the Greater Manchester Joint Waste DPD and the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals DPD.

The Core Strategy was prepared in the context of the 2006-2015 Manchester Community Strategy. The Manchester Community Strategy was replaced by the Our Manchester Strategy 2015-25 and reset as part of the Council's Covid-19 recovery planning in 2021. It focusses on:

- A thriving and sustainable City
- A highly skilled City
- A progressive and equitable City
- A liveable and low carbon City

- A connected City

It is a document developed for the City as a whole and is monitored annually via Manchester's State of the City Report, which provides a broad overview of progress towards the City's overarching vision. The Authority Monitoring Report focuses on the spatial objectives in the Local Plan, which relate particularly to development and its impact on the local environment.

Manchester's Local Plan plays a crucial role in delivering the Council's vision for the City, by providing a policy framework that guides investment and supports the delivery of development and essential infrastructure in a sustainable manner. The Core Strategy identified six key strategic Spatial Objectives:

**SO1. Spatial Principles** - provide a framework within which the sustainable development of the City can contribute to halting climate change

- support a significant further improvement of the City'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

- SO3. Housing** - provide for a significant increase in high quality housing provision at sustainable locations throughout the City, to both address demographic needs and to support economic growth
- SO4. Centres** - provide a network of distinctive, attractive and high quality centres, strengthening local identity, providing essential services close to homes and local access to healthy food
- SO5. Transport** - improve the physical connectivity of the City, through sustainable and accessible transport networks, to enhance its functioning and competitiveness and provide access to jobs, education, services, retail, leisure and recreation
- SO6. Environment** - protect and enhance both the natural and built environment of the City and ensure the sustainable use of natural resources, in order to mitigate and adapt to climate change, support biodiversity and wildlife, improve air, water and land quality, recreational opportunities and provide networks of high quality green infrastructure, ensuring that the City is inclusive and attractive to residents, workers, investors and visitors

The local development policies in the Core Strategy are grouped under the six spatial objectives above and are accompanied by monitoring indicators that are intended to measure progress

towards these objectives. The following chapter analyses the findings of this monitoring for 2024/25, highlighting some of the significant achievements during this period.

Monitoring the plan on a regular basis helps to assess whether the key objectives of the plan are continuing to be met, and whether the plan and its policies are still appropriate, bearing in mind that rates and patterns of development are also influenced by the wider context in which it operates.

## Setting the Scene

The City has a strong and competitive economy, good infrastructure, and its population has continued to grow. The latest Census data (2021) from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) is 552,000 and the ONS 2022 based subnational population projections indicate that Manchester's population will reach 621,700 by 2030. The City's latest forecasting model (MCCFM W2024 (final), which takes into account planned development, and differs in its migration assumptions, predicts a stronger rate of growth, with 707,628 residents expected by 2030.

Between 2022 and 2023 (latest available data) Manchester's GVA grew by 11.2%, this was ahead of the national rate which grew by 9.1% over the same period. When we look at GVA per head, again Manchester continues to be ahead of the national rate, with Manchester's GVA per head being £61,859 compared with £36,632 in England. The number of employees in Manchester in 2023 was recorded at 453,000 which was a 5.8% increase on the figure from 2022. The number of enterprises increased by 34.3%, from 17,045 in 2015 to 22,895 in 2024.

The two sectors that are most contributing to Manchester's increased GVA are Financial and Insurance activities & Professional, Scientific and Technical activities contributing 14.7%

and 14.2% respectively in 2023. Between 2015 and 2023, the Financial and Insurance activities sector grew by 6,000 employees and accounts for 5.5% of all employees in Manchester. The Professional, Scientific and Technical grew by 24,000 and accounts for 13.9% of Manchester employees, an increase of 2.7 percentage points from 2015. The 2.7 percentage point increase was the largest seen across all 18 employee sectors in Manchester.

Further information on the demographic and economic context and trends can be found in the State of the City Report 2024.

Manchester City Council is part of the wider Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) made up of the ten Greater Manchester districts and an elected Mayor. The GMCA has powers in relation to transport, housing, planning, policing, business support, skills, health and social care, together with control over substantial budgets, giving considerable freedom and flexibility to make decisions that meet the City region's needs.

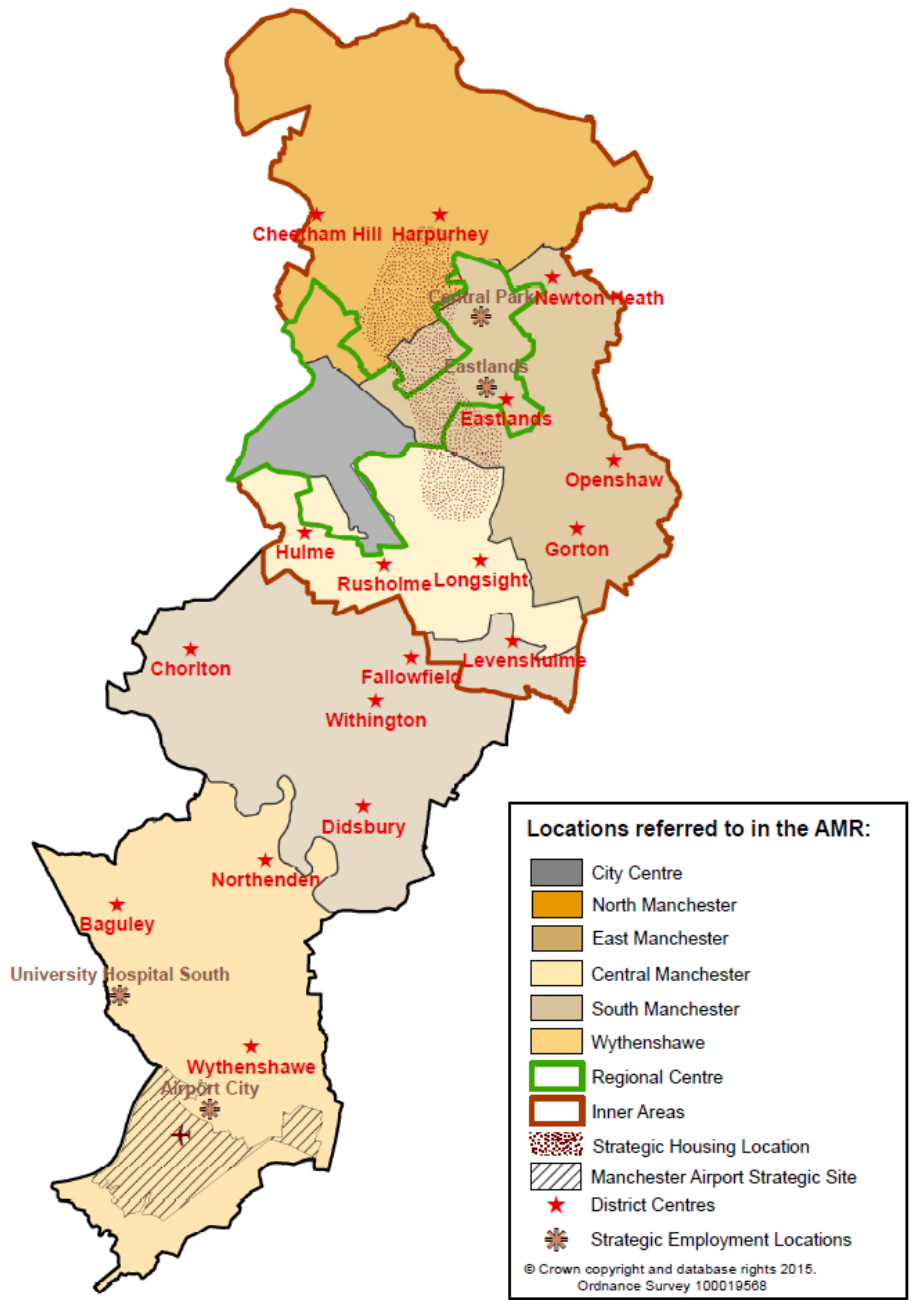
Further details of the monitoring framework and the Local Plan can be found in **Appendices A to C**. Updates on the Local Development Scheme, the Statement of Community Involvement, Neighbourhood Planning, and action taken under the 'Duty to Co-operate' on strategic matters can be found in **Appendices D to G**. The complete indicator data tables, with targets, trends and

comparators where relevant, can be found in **Appendix H**. The current data relates mainly to the period April 2024 to March 2025. There are exceptions to this where data is not available for the exact time period, or where it makes sense to provide more recent information.

### **3. Development in Manchester in 2024-25**

The following analysis considers whether the strategic Spatial Objectives for Manchester, set out within the Core Strategy, are being successfully delivered. It presents, for 2024-25, achievements and progress in relation to the relevant policy indicators listed in Appendix H to assess the plan's six spatial objectives in turn.

The following map shows the location of key geographical areas within Manchester that are referred to in the analysis. This shows the City divided into 6 areas. These areas were succeeded by 3 larger regeneration areas (North, Central, and South) in 2015, but the Core Strategy still refers to the previous geography and the analysis will continue to relate to them, where appropriate, for 2024/25.



## **SO1. Spatial Principles**

**Objective: Provide a framework within which the sustainable development of the City can contribute to halting climate change.**

Within the context of mitigation and adaptation to climate change, the framework will guide the scale and distribution of economic, housing, transport, environmental, health, education and other service and infrastructure investment across the City.

The creation of a framework which allows the sustainable development of the City is the first of the Core Strategy objectives. The strategic principles which guide this development are set out in Policy SP1 and refer to:

- the Regional Centre as the focus for economic growth;
- Manchester Airport as a secondary hub;
- the creation of neighbourhoods of choice with the majority of new housing located in the Inner Areas (which cover North, East, and Central Manchester and the City Centre);
- good access to services such as education and health;
- the promotion of public transport, walking and cycling;
- a network of open spaces.

These key themes of economy, housing, centres, transport, and environment are developed in the subsequent chapters of the Core

## Strategy.

In line with this objective, the Regional Centre remains the focus for economic and commercial development, with a vibrant retail and cultural offer and a significant amount of high-quality living accommodation. During 2024/25, 76% of floorspace and 47% of land developed for employment was in the Regional Centre. In the last year completions have included:

- Erection of an office building in the City Centre at 4 Angel Square
- Partial demolition and reconfiguration of 70 Great Bridgewater Street to create a new office building in the City Centre
- A change of use at Mayfield Depot in the City Centre comprising theatre, music, dance, performance-related activity spaces, sports facilities, cinema and conferencing, food and drink operators, arts exhibitions and markets.

These developments are supporting the fastest-growing sectors in Manchester: business, financial and professional services and cultural, creative and digital; and science, research and development.

As in previous years, the vast majority of new housing (92%) in 2024/25 was built within the Regional Centre and Inner Areas. The schemes with the largest numbers of units completed this year

within the Regional Centre and Inner Areas included two blocks at the Square Gardens Downing co-living scheme at First Street, which delivered 1,187 bedrooms comprising a mix of co-living shared apartments and self-contained studios; and nearby the 51 storey Three60 tower at Great Jackson Street (443 dwellings).

This pattern of development enables more residents to live close to employment within the Regional Centre, reducing travel to work distances and encouraging use of the public transport network and active travel. This is one of the ways in which the City is moving towards its target of reducing carbon emissions to be net zero by 2038. Good progress has been made towards this target despite a growing population and in 2023 (most recent figure) total Citywide estimated CO<sup>2</sup> emissions were 48% lower than the 2005 baseline. In 2019 the City Council declared a climate emergency, following this the carbon emission target was reviewed and the aim was set of making Manchester a zero-carbon City by 2038 or before.

However, over a five-year period from 2018 to 2022, Manchester emitted 9.8 million tonnes of CO<sup>2</sup> (m t CO<sup>2</sup>), against a total carbon budget of 15m t CO<sup>2</sup>, allocated to last until 2038 and beyond (until 2100). This means that 64% of the City's total carbon budget has been utilised in its first five years. Despite an overall downward

trajectory, urgent action at pace and scale is needed in all sectors to ensure Manchester stays within its carbon budget. Since 2005, positive progress can be seen as Manchester's emissions have fallen significantly, and this downward trajectory has been driven by the introduction of more renewable energy into the national grid as well as by positive local action. In the same timeline, Manchester has significantly upped its climate game, making bold climate commitments, working collaboratively to deliver action, and reporting transparently on the progress being made. The City is now recognised by Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) as a climate change leader alongside global cities like Paris, New York and Tokyo.

Manchester Airport passenger numbers grew to more than 31 million in 2024/25, representing a return to pre-pandemic levels. Manchester Airport is now in the final stages of a £1.3 billion transformation of Terminal 2 and plans have also been unveiled for a multi-million pound investment in Terminal 3 to improve the passenger experience and provide additional capacity, following the closure of Terminal 1 in 2026. The airport's economic role is expected to expand further with the future development of MIX Manchester, a new 185,000sqm science, innovation and manufacturing campus in an unrivalled strategic location which promotes Manchester on the world stage.

Good access to services, including jobs, shops, health and education facilities is being maintained throughout the City as new housing is completed, with all residents continuing to be within a 30 minute travel time (walking, wheeling, cycling, or public transport) of health facilities, schools, employment and a foodstore.

Improvements to both the quality of and access to open space in and around Manchester continue to be promoted through the Manchester Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy and accompanying Stakeholder Implementation Plan, adopted in July 2015, refreshed in 2021 and monitored annually. This includes the projects like Cyan Lines which aims is to provide a 100 mile network of linear parks and walking and cycling routes predominantly in the City Centres of both Manchester and Salford

## **SO2. Economy**

**Objective: Support a significant further improvement of the City'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.**

The Regional Centre will continue to be the main focus for business, retail, higher education, leisure, cultural and tourism development, to further develop its role as the main employment location and primary economic driver of the City region. The growth of Manchester Airport will entail a significant increase in employment.

This Core Strategy objective is supported by a suite of policies relating to economic growth, with the focus of this growth being: the Regional Centre, City Centre, Manchester Airport and strategic employment locations.

The City's economy continues to grow. Between 2022 and 2023 (latest available data) Manchester's GVA grew by 11.2%, this was ahead of the national rate which grew by 9.1% over the same period. When we look at GVA per head, again Manchester continues to be ahead of the national rate, with Manchester's GVA

per head being £61,859 compared with £36,632 in England. The number of employees in Manchester in 2023 was recorded at 453,000 which was a 5.8% increase on the figure from 2022. The number of enterprises increased by 34.3%, from 17,045 in 2015 to 22,895 in 2024.

The two sectors that are most contributing to Manchester's increased GVA are Financial and Insurance activities & Professional, Scientific and Technical activities contributing 14.7% and 14.2% respectively in 2023. Between 2015 and 2023, the Financial and Insurance activities sector grew by 6,000 employees and accounts for 5.5% of all employees in Manchester. The Professional, Scientific and Technical grew by 24,000 and accounts for 13.9% of Manchester employees, an increase of 2.7 percentage points from 2015. The 2.7 percentage point increase was the largest seen across all 18 employee sectors in Manchester.

Increased investor confidence has led to a consistent pace of commercial development. In recent years, total employment space completed in the City has reflected this investor confidence and during 2024/25, 55,200sqm of offices and 7,525sqm of industrial/warehousing space was completed in Manchester (see Chart of Employment Completions below).

Chart 1: Employment Completions 2024-2025



In 2024/25, two significant office completions took place, one brand new development at Angel Square and a partial demolition and reconfiguration of 70 Great Bridgewater Street to create a new office building. These high-quality schemes offer flexible Grade A office floorspace.

In 2024/25 retail completions were at 16,663sqm of new floorspace and of these completions, 21% took place in the City Centre. B&M upgraded and expanded its premises in Harpurhey Shopping Centre increasing its retail space by 3,740 square metres.

Manchester’s visitor economy has continued to thrive. The City remains the third most visited destination in the UK by international visitors, after London and Edinburgh. Manchester’s hotel sector has increased further during 2024/25 with the completion of the alterations to Pearl Assurance House associated with its conversion

to a Malmaison Manchester Hotel. In November 2024, Manchester Metropolitan University officially opened their new state-of-the-art Science and Engineering building which will provide a home for 8,300 students. An application was also approved for the continued temporary change of use of the former Mayfield Depot providing the provision of a world-class culture venue hosting a diverse and engaging programme.

Between July 2024 and July 2025 (latest data) the claimant count in Manchester has seen a decrease of 2,180 and now stands at 25,740 claimants. So far in 2025, the month with the highest claimant count was March 2025 with 26,335. It should be noted that under Universal Credit a broader span of claimants are required to look for work than under Jobseeker's Allowance. The level of the Claimant Count is likely to be higher than it would have been otherwise, due to claimants being unemployed.

In order to continue to meet the Council's economic objectives, as the economy continues to grow, it will be important to ensure that the increased job opportunities are accessible to all sections of the resident population from all areas of the City. This will mean ensuring that new employment generating development continues to be located and designed to be accessible by a range of transport means and by sustainable transport and active travel measures wherever possible.

## **Regional Centre**

In 2024/25, 93% of employment floorspace developed for office was in the Regional Centre. The majority of this was either in the City Centre or on the edge of the City Centre.

In the planning pipeline, a significant proportion of floorspace is within the Regional Centre. Approximately 483,685sqm of office floorspace is under construction, and over 263,992qm of office floorspace has planning permission but construction has not commenced.

In terms of development, major schemes have continued to progress apace throughout 2024/25. The erection of a large building at Angel Square added over 22,000 sqm of office floor space. The 6.5-acre public park at Mayfield which opened in September 2022 has already proved very popular and has kick-started further commercial elements of the Mayfield Development scheme. Ambitious plans for commercial space at Mayfield will see the delivery of approximately 150,000 sqm of high-quality workspace, retail and leisure opportunities; there is also the potential for up to 10,000 new jobs. During 2024, it was the official launch of the construction of 'The Republic', the first sustainable office building within Mayfield Park designed to meet the high

demand for quality environmentally friendly office spaces in the City. Work is now nearing completion on the first phase of the St Michael's development in the heart of the Civic Quarter. Scheduled to open June 2025, there will be 3,159 sqm. of premium and contemporary workspace tailored for professional businesses. Offering versatile suites set to accommodate anywhere from 2 to 100 desks, these serviced offices are meticulously designed to foster productivity and bolster success. On top of this it will include a world-class rooftop restaurant.

Proposed growth in office provision over the next 20 years is also expected in Piccadilly, Sister (formerly known as ID), First Street, Manchester Science Park, Great Ducie Street, St. Mary's Parsonage and in parts of East Manchester, proposing almost 1.4 million sqm of additional floorspace.

The Regional Centre remains the main employment location and economic driver of the City and City Region, in line with Core Strategy policy SP1.

## **City Centre**

Manchester's economy and employment offer continues to grow, broaden and diversify, and the City Centre is a major driver of this growth. During 2024/25, 98,844sqm employment related

development comprising retail, office, leisure/education and hotel completed in the City Centre and Fringe. Almost a half of this 2024/25 growth was due to three large buildings including office buildings at both Angel Square and Great Bridgewater Street along with an education University building.

Growth in employment development is set to continue over the next 15 years with an additional 2.2 million sqm of offices expected by 2041.

Manchester's high-growth sectors in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA) and number of jobs have remained consistent over recent years. These sectors include business, financial and professional services; cultural; creative; cyber security; digital; advanced materials and manufacturing; wholesale, and retail. The majority of businesses in these sectors are located in the City Centre. Cultural, health, innovation, creative and digital industries continue to make a significant contribution to Manchester's economy, making the City a more attractive place to live, visit, work and study.

Manchester's population growth has also been concentrated in and around the City Centre, with students, graduates and young professionals in particular attracted by the growth in skilled jobs and an increasingly attractive accommodation, leisure and cultural offer. New apartment-led residential development will add further capacity

in the future. In 2024/25, 2,129 dwellings were completed in the City Centre (Core Strategy City Centre boundary).

Manchester City Centre is made up of a collection of distinct and recognisable neighbourhoods. Featured below are examples of the type of development and approach to areas in the City Centre:

Mayfield – a 20-acre site providing the opportunity to create a distinctive City Centre district. Development will see the delivery of 1,300 new homes, approximately 150,000 sqm of high-quality workspaces, and retail and leisure opportunities, including two hotels and the 6.5 ha City Centre park, the first in Manchester for more than 100 years.

First Street – over the past decade, phased development has delivered major regeneration, creating a mixed-use neighbourhood providing a new cultural facility, 240,000 sqm of new commercial space with 100,000 sqm of office space, and retail, leisure and hotel space. Future phases of development, include Grade A commercial floor space, alongside new residential development.

St. Johns - completed in June 2023 is Aviva Studios (The Factory), a world-class cultural space in the heart of the City. It is one of the biggest developments of its kind in Europe, Aviva Studios (The Factory) will be the permanent home for MIF. It will present a year-

round programme, featuring artists from around the world, as well as creating jobs, skills and training opportunities for people from across the City.

The London Road Fire Station has a permission and has commenced on site for a mixed-use scheme comprising retail, offices and a hotel.

Previously known as ID Manchester, Sister is a joint venture between The University of Manchester and Bruntwood SciTech. The draft SRF for ID Manchester was approved for public consultation by Manchester City Council's Executive Committee on 28 June 2023. Once completed, Sister will create over 10,000 new jobs and bring significant economic, social and environmental benefits to the City. Totalling over 371,000 sqm, the illustrative masterplan has the potential to accommodate over 2 million sq ft of commercial and retail space, and over 1,500 homes.

In 2024/25 there were 15 major planning approvals, of which four were major residential planning approvals. The four residential schemes will provide 1,281 units. Three approvals were for major office development whilst the rest consisted of a variety of uses.

City Centre footfall is measured at five locations (King Street, Market Street, New Cathedral Street, St Ann's Square, Exchange

Square – Arndale steps), giving an insight into trends in the number of City Centre shoppers. Taking 2024/25 as a whole, City Centre footfall increased by 5% compared to 2023/2024.

## **The Airport**

Manchester Airport is the Global Gateway to the North. It supports Manchester's international role, outward looking focus and connectivity, by providing direct connections to cities in Europe, the United States of America, the Middle East, and in south and east Asia (all important export markets and economic growth areas).

Manchester Airport continues to attract new routes, including Mumbai and Addis Ababa in 2025 and a number of new European destinations planned for 2026. Passenger numbers for Manchester Airport in 2024/25 were 31,136,773, an 8.4% increase on 2023/24. This represents a return to pre-pandemic levels.

Manchester Airport has now almost completed a £1.3 billion transformation programme of investment and improvement, with new terminal capacity allowing greater throughput of passengers and the opportunity to grow to a capacity of 55 million passengers per annum using its two runways. The new Terminal 2 facilities will serve more than 70% of passengers passing through the airport. More than 30 million passengers have already travelled through the

terminal extension since it opened in 2021, and it was recently awarded the prestigious UNESCO-backed *Prix Versailles* recognizing its outstanding design. A further multi-million-pound investment to upgrade and expand Terminal 3 has also been announced.

Manchester Airport also continues to play a key role in air freight and mail movements, with freight tonnage increasing by 22% in 2024/25.

Airport City North now known as Mix is being planned as a major new employment area expected to create a significant number of jobs in a new science, innovation and manufacturing campus. Global Logistics to the south of the Airport is a large-scale logistics location with infrastructure delivery and take-up of warehouse space by businesses required to co-locate with the Airport to support its growth, including distribution companies such as DHL and Amazon.

The proportion of passengers accessing the airport using sustainable modes of transport is also increasing, with 18% of passengers accessing the airport using sustainable transport in 2024/25, a year-on-year increase of 4.7%. In terms of sustainable access to the airport, the percentage of passengers accessing the airport by non-car modes in the first six months of 2023 was 16%.



### **SO3. Housing**

**Objective: Provide for a significant increase in high quality housing provision at sustainable locations throughout the City, to both address demographic needs and to support economic growth.**

The emphasis will be on providing a good range of high-quality housing, (in terms of size, type, tenure, accessibility and price) including affordable housing across the City; to create sustainable lifetime neighbourhoods with high quality environments, good local facilities and with easy access to employment opportunities.

In recent years, Manchester has experienced rapid population growth, largely as a result of the inward migration of people seeking work in the City's growing economy, and this is forecast to continue. These new residents are looking for good quality affordable accommodation, both for owner-occupation and in the private rented sector. There continues to be a need for social housing delivered by registered providers and the City Council. It is essential to provide a choice of size, type, tenure, and value, in sustainable and attractive locations, if the City is to continue to attract and retain economically active people. Core Strategy policies play an important role in supporting this goal.

Manchester's Housing Strategy, launched in June 2022, aims to meet demand for all types of housing in every part of the City, while committing to build 36,000 homes up to 2032. Of these, 10,000 will be affordable housing.

The annual net housing need figure for Manchester, as set out in the Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan, is 3,533 units per year from April 2022.

In 2024/25, 3,419 new homes (gross) were completed across the City, which is again higher than in the previous year. A total of 8,318 (gross) units have been completed since 2022. These figures include communal establishments such as purpose-built student accommodation and sheltered accommodation which is not made up of self-contained units. Different ratios are applied to bedspaces in the various types of communal accommodation to come up with a completions figure, as required by the Government's Housing Delivery Test Measurement Rule Book.

There were 281 demolitions in 2024/25, making a net residential completions figure of 3,138 dwellings. The demolitions include 535 bedrooms of purpose built student accommodation bedrooms at Owen's Park in Fallowfield (equating to 223 units demolished after the PBSA communal accommodation ratio is applied). The Owen's

Park site is being redeveloped to provide replacement student accommodation, with completion expected within five years.

The PfE figure of 3,533 is also used when assessing five-year supply and for the purposes of the Government's Housing Delivery Test. The Housing Delivery Test looks at net completions over the previous three-year period and is used to determine whether a LPA needs to produce an Action Plan to address housing under-delivery (National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 79) and to calculate the level of buffer to add to the five year housing supply (NPPF paragraph 78). Achieving 95% of the requirement counts as meeting the Housing Delivery Test, which Manchester City Council has achieved each year since the test was introduced, so the Council has not had to prepare an Action Plan to date. The most recent published Housing Delivery Test is 2023 (results published Dec 2024) and showed Manchester had delivered 129% of the required housing over the past three years.

In total there were 25,130 units in the planning pipeline at the end of March 2025. This comprised 17,825 units in schemes already under construction, and 7,305 units in schemes with planning approval where construction had not yet started at this date.

The City Centre contains 43% of the planning pipeline (10,815).

Large permissions granted in 2024/25 include 1,037 flats at Great Jackson Street across two 56-storey blocks (Park Place) and two large student accommodation schemes on the east side of Upper Brook Street (adjacent to the Core Strategy City Centre boundary, but within the proposed Local Plan City Centre boundary) with over 1,700 bedrooms between them as a mixture of cluster flats and studios.

As demand for housing and commercial space has grown in the City Centre, significant new opportunities for development have come forward on the fringe of the City Centre and beyond.

In some instances, this involves repurposing existing residential and commercial sites that require significant infrastructure investment, including opportunities within Victoria North and other parts of north Manchester. Expanding outwards from the City Centre, the residential-led Victoria North regeneration project has the potential to contribute up to 15,000 new homes over the next 10–15 years, of which 20% will be affordable. Victoria North is the City's biggest opportunity to deliver an ambitious affordable housing plan. A well-planned, place-based approach to development, it will provide a diversity of housing types that reflect the City's changing demographic, including much-needed family homes. There are also opportunities adjacent to the extending City Centre including Holt Town and Miles Platting. At the southern end of the City, the

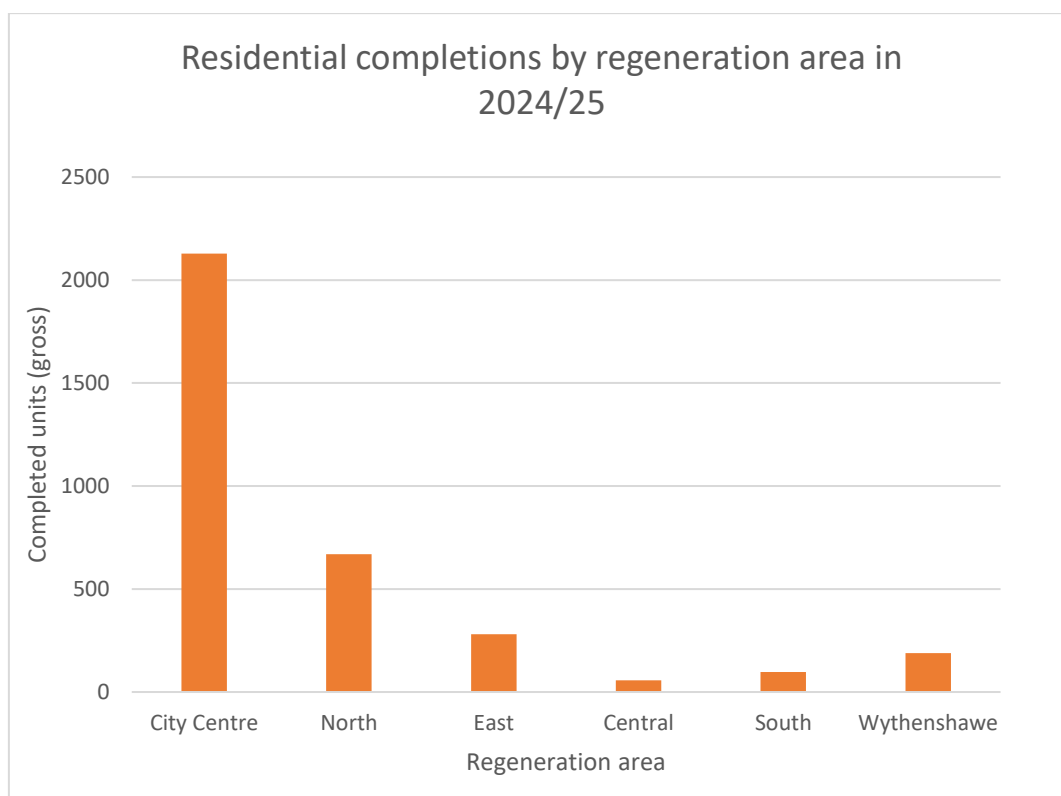
£500 million regeneration of Wythenshawe Town Centre will deliver around 2,000 new homes through a partnership between Manchester City Council and placemaker Muse, as well as a new public square, new shops and net zero commercial, community and cultural space.

The graph below shows gross housing completions in 2024/25 by strategic regeneration framework (SRF) area<sup>1</sup>. As last year, the majority of completions were in the City Centre, with almost two thirds of the gross completions in 2024/25 built in the City Centre.

Chart 2: Residential Completions by Regeneration Area in 2024/25

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<sup>1</sup> These SRF areas were current in 2012 when the Core Strategy was adopted and there are a number of CS indicators which are based on them.



In 2024/25, 84% of net residential completions in Manchester were flats. The average density of residential completions within the City Centre was 1,204 units per hectare in 2024/25 - well in excess of the target density of at least 100 dwellings per hectare for this part of the City, as has always been the case.

The number of empty homes on the Council Tax register in 2024 was 1.99%. Empty property figures can sometimes be misleading in Manchester as new properties may be technically empty, for example a new tower block in the City Centre which in time will be occupied.

In 2024/25 there has also been 511 additions to the number of affordable housing units added consisting of:

- 205 social rent;
- 117 affordable rent;
- 19 discounted market rent;
- 109 shared ownership; and
- 61 rent to buy.

The number of affordable housing completions in 2024/25 is 511 homes. As part of the ongoing work to meet the affordable housing targets in the Housing Strategy (2022-2032), the affordable pipeline is expanding with c. 1,500 new affordable homes currently under construction (including 904 new affordable homes expected to complete in 2025/26) and a further c. 1,750 with planning permission, as of April 2025.

We want our residents to live in the homes they want and need. With this in mind, the Council is working to significantly upscale the delivery of new affordable homes through a number of programmes of work designed to help deliver the homes needed by our most vulnerable residents. Working collaboratively with our Registered Provider (RP) partners and through our joint ventures in Victoria North will be fundamental to our success.

The Council is also looking to improve energy efficiency of its existing social housing stock – which represents around a third of all homes in Manchester – in line with our net zero carbon ambitions. It is progressing Project 500, a housing initiative that will deliver new low carbon affordable housing on smaller Council-owned brownfield sites across the City in partnership with Manchester’s network of registered providers. This programme will increase the number of low carbon affordable homes available to Manchester residents, while bringing underused brownfield sites back into use. Phase 1 will deliver 357 homes across 22 sites. All sites have planning permission secured (137 in 2023/24 and 220 in 2024/25), 143 homes are under construction across 11 sites and 44 homes across 2 sites have achieved completion & are occupied. New homes in Phase 1 are social rent (73%), Manchester Living Rent (20%) or affordable home ownership through Shared Ownership or Rent to Buy (8%). Phase 2 sets out to deliver a further 160 affordable homes across 12 brownfield sites with further planning applications anticipated in 2026/27.

The efficient use of both land and buildings is supported through several Core Strategy policies. The Council encourages development in sustainable, brownfield locations and 97% of residential completions in 2024/25 were on brownfield land, exceeding the Core Strategy target of 90%.

## **SO4. Centres**

**Objective: Provide a network of distinctive, attractive and high quality centres, strengthening local identity, providing essential services close to homes and local access to healthy food.**

Developments providing additional services and retail will be encouraged in the district centres where such development is consistent with the City's retail hierarchy. Particular emphasis will be given to development that helps to create distinctive local character.

District centres are the core commercial and service hubs at the heart of Manchester's neighbourhoods, where people access key services and have the chance to meet and interact with their community. Retailing has been experiencing wider changes in how people shop in general with more shopping taking place online. Manchester's district centres have proved relatively resilient when compared to national trends with few closures or increases in vacancy rates.

In 2024/25, 4,226sqm of commercial floorspace was created in district centres. In recent years retail provision has increased in district centres. District centres continue to be the main location for

convenience shopping and are also visited to access services for those living in the local community and by people working nearby. The Core Strategy promotes residential growth in and around centres, and the Council undertakes proactive centre management to encourage people to continue using them.

The Council undertakes regular surveys of the City's district centres. The survey in 2024 showed that the proportion of shops remained similar to the 2015 survey, at 41%. Vacancy levels were at 10% across the City's district centres, which is significantly below the national average of 13.9% and a sign of stability. The number of pubs in centres has been decreasing as they close and change use, making up only 2% of all uses in centres in 2024 compared to 5% in 2009. The Council adopted a Hot Food Takeaway Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in March 2017, to protect the vitality and viability of centres and also consider the food environment around schools. Previous AMR report monitoring data demonstrates that the growth of hot food takeaways has stabilised over recent years as hot food takeaways make up 8% of district centre uses in 2024. This figure has now remained consistent over the past decade.

## **SO5. Transport**

**Objective: Improve the physical connectivity of the City, through sustainable and accessible transport networks, to enhance its functioning and competitiveness and provide access to jobs, education, services, retail, leisure and recreation.**

Transport is a key enabler to achieve Manchester's strategic objectives. Improved transport links will help support further regeneration and development across Manchester, helping to tackle issues including worklessness, social exclusion and poverty, and meeting our environmental targets.

As described in the [Our Manchester Strategy](#), our residents are better connected by transport than ever before, but we need to go further to provide a comprehensive, efficient, sustainable and fully integrated sustainable transport system across the City that supports a growing economy and a larger number of people living in, working in and visiting Manchester. This will be enabled through delivery of ambitious plans to make walking, wheeling and cycling the natural choice for most trips. This will be supported by an integrated, accessible, safe, and affordable public transport system across the City.

Many parts of the City are well served by public transport, including cycle hire, bus, tram and rail, and we are working in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester to deliver a range of schemes that improve the connectivity and capacity of active travel and public transport infrastructure. This will be complemented by improvements to the quality, frequency and reliability of public transport services across the City-region. Manchester has a well-established local network of bus, tram and rail services, and good connections to other areas of the country and beyond; with direct rail services to major cities and population centres across the UK and Manchester Airport providing global connectivity. A key challenge over the coming years is to ensure that the necessary public transport capacity and sustainable transport infrastructure is in place to support future growth.

The Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 is Greater Manchester's statutory Local Transport Plan. It was adopted in 2017 and sets out the strategic approach to transport planning across the City-region. The Strategy was updated in 2021 to take account of progress made and Greater Manchester's trailblazing approach to devolution, and adopted alongside the Greater Manchester Transport Delivery Plan 2021-2026, which described the projects that would be delivered or developed in support of the Strategy. The Delivery Plan includes Local Implementation Plans for each Greater Manchester district, providing more detail on key

local transport issues and opportunities with a focus on neighbourhood and town centre spatial themes.

The Manchester Active Travel Strategy and Investment Plan was adopted by the Council in February 2023 and sets out the scale of our ambition for walking, wheeling and cycling, including a target for 15% cycling mode share by 2028.

Manchester and Salford City Councils, in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester, also produced and adopted in 2021 a City Centre Transport Strategy to 2040. This Strategy sets out more detail about how Greater Manchester transport strategy will be implemented in the regional centre, as well as setting City Centre-specific sustainable mode share targets.

Across Manchester investment in transport improvements has supported a rising trend in active travel and public transport usage. This has been especially pronounced for peak time commuting trips into the City Centre, where there is a target for 90% of trips during the morning peak to be made by walking and wheeling, cycling or public transport by 2040, and in line with the Core Strategy objective of further developing the City's sustainable and accessible transport networks. In 2024, 79% of all trips into the City Centre in the morning peak (7.30-9.30am) were by sustainable modes

(walking and wheeling, cycling, and public transport). While the overall number of trips has reduced, this represents a return to pre-pandemic sustainable mode share.

**Table 1: Trips made to City Centre in the morning peak by non-car modes (%) (The morning peak is 07:30-09:30)**

<b>Modes of transport</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>All non-car modes*<sup>2</sup>:</b>	79%	76%	74%	60%	74%	78%	63%
<b>Public transport</b>	62%	60%	59%	45%	57%	64%	55%
<b>Cycle</b>	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	0.6%
<b>Walking</b>	15%	14%	13%	13%	15%	12%	7.%

The on-going expansion of the Metrolink network is improving connectivity across Manchester and the wider City region. Services now run on seven lines to 99 stops, covering nearly 105km. An

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<sup>2</sup> Source: Manchester City Centre cordon count, TfGM © Crown Copyright 2020

extension of the network to Trafford Park opened in March 2020, with a further extension to Terminal 2 at the Airport planned.

Improvements to Greater Manchester's bus network continue, with all services brought back under local control via the Bee Network in January 2025. Bus services across Greater Manchester are now coordinated locally, enabling further progress to be made toward a fully integrated transport network. Contactless 'tap and go' payments were launched across all bus services in March 2025, simplifying the ticketing structure and integrating with existing contactless payments on Metrolink trams, ensuring passengers always pay the cheapest fare over the day or week. The hopper ticket was also introduced, meaning all £2 single tickets can now be used across multiple buses within a 60 minute period.

Evaluation of the Bus Priority Package to enable more reliable and punctual bus services to key destinations such as employment, education, health, leisure and retail centres has shown clear performance gains on key routes in Manchester. Overall, the programme has enabled increased direct access to destinations such as both Manchester universities, the hospitals site on Oxford Road, greater connectivity within and between Manchester's neighbourhoods and communities, improved links to the wider transport network and other parts of Greater Manchester, and better cycling and pedestrian crossing facilities.

The Council continues to encourage an increase in walking, wheeling, and cycling as modes of choice for local journeys.

Through the planning process, the Council works with developers to plan places that encourage walking, wheeling, and cycling as much as possible. The Council currently has 26 Active Travel schemes either already under construction or at development stage as part of our capital pipeline. Walking and wheeling have grown their share of morning peak journeys into the City Centre.

Further details of transport developments can be found in the State of the City Report 2024.

## **SO6. Environment**

**Objective: Protect and enhance both the natural and built environment of the City and ensure the sustainable use of natural resources, in order to mitigate and adapt to climate change, support biodiversity and wildlife, improve air, water and land quality, recreational opportunities and provide networks of high quality green infrastructure, ensuring that the City is inclusive and attractive to residents, workers, investors and visitors.**

The development of networks of green infrastructure across the City and City Region, together with protecting and enhancing townscape character and securing a high standard of design in all development proposals, will promote healthy, low-carbon lifestyles, contribute to a sense of wellbeing, and help to facilitate the sustainable and inclusive growth of the City.

One of the Council's key environmental aims relates to climate change. As a City, Manchester has been collectively working towards a target of zero carbon by 2038 but the monitoring data trails two years behind with CO<sup>2</sup> emission and the new targets will be measured against the data as it catches up. Manchester's Climate Change Partnership (MCCP) and Manchester Climate Change Agency are responsible for setting the City's targets for all

partners. The latest data on Manchester's direct, energy-related emissions shows that the City's carbon emissions fell by 5% in 2022, a decrease that is also seen in the national emissions data because of warmer temperatures and higher energy prices resulting in less energy being used to heat buildings. This was despite an increase in emissions in some sectors showing continued recovery from COVID-19 pandemic. Since 2005, Manchester's emissions have fallen by 48%. This downward trajectory has been driven by the phasing-out of coal and the introduction of more renewable energy into the national grid as well as by positive local action. In 2019 the City Council declared a climate emergency, following this the carbon emission target was reviewed and the aim was set of making Manchester a zero-carbon City by 2038 or before. Since 2018, Manchester's emissions should have reduced by 49% in keeping with the targeted budget, but it has only achieved a reduction of 16%. If Manchester is to stay within its carbon budget and reduce emissions in the region, then urgent action will be required to increase both the pace and scale of climate action.

**Table 2: CO2 emissions in Manchester since 2005**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (Kilotonnes/KT)</b>	<b>% change from 2005 baseline</b>	<b>Per capita emissions (tonnes)</b>	<b>Manchester population ('000s, mid-year estimate)</b>
<b>2005</b>	3,471.8	-	7.6	455.7
<b>2006</b>	3,547.4	2.17%	7.6	463.7
<b>2007</b>	3,393	-2.27%	7.2	470.5
<b>2008</b>	3,392.4	-2.29%	7.1	477.4
<b>2009</b>	3,047.1	-12.23%	6.3	483.8
<b>2010</b>	3,215.1	-7.39%	6.5	492.6
<b>2011</b>	2,919.3	-15.91%	5.8	502.9
<b>2012</b>	3,122.5	-10.06%	6.2	506.9
<b>2013</b>	3,036.2	-12.55%	5.9	510.8
<b>2014</b>	2,666.8	-23.19%	5.2	515.4
<b>2015</b>	2,563.2	-26.17%	4.9	523.3

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<b>2016</b>	2,373.4	-31.64%	4.4	533.4
<b>2017</b>	2,274	-34.50%	4.2	537.0
<b>2018</b>	2,250.6	-35.17%	4.2	540.7
<b>2019</b>	2,171.5	-37.45%	4.0	545.9
<b>2020</b>	1,909.2	-45.01%	3.5	547.3
<b>2021</b>	2,000.6	-42.38	3.6	550.6
<b>2022</b>	1,881.4	-45.81	3.3	566.8
<b>2023</b>	1,795.2	-48.29	3.1	579.9

Source: BEIS Estimated CO<sub>2</sub> emissions dataset 2005-2022

The Council has identified its own target to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as part of its contribution to the overall City-wide target and is on track to achieve its goal to become a zero-carbon organisation by 2038 or earlier. So far, over £320million has been invested in climate change projects. That funding has come from national and local schemes as well as our own investments. This has helped projects such as retrofitting the City's social homes. This work improves their energy efficiency as well as cutting harmful emissions. The Climate Change Action Plan 2025-30 details how the Council will continue to deliver dramatic reductions in the amount of carbon (the biggest contributor to harmful climate change) which is pumped into the atmosphere as a direct result of its own operations. Under the plan, the Council will aim to reduce its emissions by 44% from 2025 to 2030 – saving almost 43,000 tonnes of carbon. This would enable the organisation to remain on track to meet its goal of becoming zero carbon by 2038, building on the successes of the previous plan for 2020-25. The Climate Change Action Plan 2025-30 will also address how the Council will continue to play and strengthen its leadership role in influencing and supporting residents and businesses in the City to reduce their own emissions and lobbying for national and international policies and initiatives to help tackle climate change. The new plan aligns with the Citywide plan for the same period which has been produced by Manchester Climate Change Agency and Manchester

Climate Change Partnership. To ensure the Council as an organisation remains on track to become zero carbon by 2038, it has to stay within a science-based carbon budget and has identified the maximum amount of carbon it can emit over each five-year period. For 2020-25, this 'carbon budget' was 126,336 tonnes. The Council was able to stay within this – emitting only 122,000 tonnes of carbon – through a range of measures including retrofitting 40 of its buildings to improve energy efficiency, new LED street lighting and replacing more than half of its bin lorries with electric alternatives. For 2025-30 this maximum amount allowed falls to 79,300 tonnes, which requires a reduction of around 41,500 tonnes over the period. The Council's emission reduction programme is targeting slightly more than that – saving 42,871 tonnes.

Manchester's built environment must address resilience to the likely impacts of climate change. As a City, we must adapt our buildings, infrastructure, and natural environment to cope with hotter, drier summers; warmer, wetter winters; and more frequent periods of extreme weather, with for example improved surface water management and flood defences. We have continued to seek to direct development away from high probability flood areas. Yet again, no planning permissions in 2024-25 were granted contrary to Environment Agency advice.

Manchester's work on green and blue infrastructure has continued to be guided by the Green and Blue Infrastructure (G&BI) Strategy and the accompanying Stakeholder Implementation Plan, adopted in July 2015 and refreshed in 2021.

This award-winning Strategy provides more detail to underpin the environment policies within the Core Strategy and creates the vision that encourages the collaborative approach needed to achieve the high-quality green infrastructure referred to in SO6.

### **Manchester Local Plan**

A new Local Plan for Manchester is in development and will provide greater detail and Manchester specific policy approaches, building on environment policies in strategic plan PfE. Much of the research work completed as part of our Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, such as Our Rivers Our City, Biodiversity Strategy and Tree Capacity work, will provide evidence for the environmental policies within the new Local Plan. The planning policy framework created by both PfE and Manchester's Local Plan will ensure that we can protect and enhance our G&BI assets, in the context of achieving the housing and employment growth that our City and future residents need.

## **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Local Nature Recovery Strategy**

The Environment Act 2021 introduced Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as a requirement for Local Planning Authorities. This came into force in February 2024 for major developments and in April 2024 for smaller sites. Virtually all developments are expected to provide a 10% uplift in biodiversity provision, on site if possible or alternatively off site as near as possible to the development site. Work is still underway to create registered sites for biodiversity where the 10% uplift cannot be provided on site. Figures relating to BNG provision since the introduction of mandatory BNG will be reported in March 2026.

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority is the Responsible Authority tasked with writing and publishing the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). MCC officers contributed to its development throughout 2024 and the draft LNRS was approved for public consultation from November 2024 to January 2025. The GM LNRS will reflect and align with priorities already identified within the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy, reinforcing the importance of some of the key ecological networks across the City, such as the river valleys, Sites of Biological Importance and Local Nature Reserves. The aim is for the LNRS to be approved in late 2025.

The momentum behind delivering key large scale GI related schemes has continued, as illustrated by the schemes identified below:

### **Cyan Lines Project**

‘Cyan Lines’ aims to connect all of Manchester/Salford City Centres’ blue and green assets into a coherent network of walking and cycling routes for residents to enjoy and be more connected to nature. The proposals are at an early stage of development. The aim is to provide a 100 mile network of linear parks and walking and cycling routes predominantly in the City Centre, across Manchester and connecting through to Salford over a period of 10 years.

### **Medlock Valley Nature Partnership**

A two year, £1.2 million Species Survival Fund partnership project along the entire length of the Medlock Valley was approved by DEFRA and the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2024. The project is being driven by the Medlock Valley Nature Partnership. The project will enhance habitats at seven sites across the Medlock Valley, covering almost 30ha. All upstream work will have a long-term benefit to Manchester, slowing the flow, reducing flood risk and increasing habitat connectivity.

### **Bee Network Travel Routes**

The Manchester Active Travel Strategy and Investment Plan (MATSIP) was approved by Executive in February 2023. Ambition 2 of the Strategy aims to double the number of people who live within a 10-minute walk or cycle from local green spaces.

Work continues on a £1.5m programme of improvements to the 'Yellow Brick Road' route connecting the Ashton Canal with the Fallowfield Loop.

The flagship Chorlton Cycleway project was completed in March 2024, delivering a continuous protected cycle route from Deansgate, through Hulme and Chorlton.

### **Tree planting**

Manchester has received confirmation that its bid to the Forestry Commission's Urban Tree Challenge Fund has been successful, with £560,000 going towards the purchase, planting, and maintenance of 828 new trees in communities across the City over the next two years (2024/5 and 2025/6). These will be large mature trees and will be planted in agreed locations across seventeen wards.

This complements the already extensive planting through the Tree Action MCR programme and has effectively turned £1million investment into nearly £1.5million on tree planting across the City since 2020.

By the end of the 2024/ 25 season working with partners we have planted 8897 trees of which 5549 are hedge trees, including four new orchards.

### **Key Environmental Assets**

Manchester has one Site of Special Scientific Interest, an area of ancient woodland at Cotterill Clough in Wythenshawe, which remains in a 'favourable' condition. There are 37 sub-regionally designated Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs), 25 of which are currently in active conservation management.

In 2024/25 Manchester declared a new Local Nature Reserve(LNR) at Southern Cemetery. As of 2024/25 the City has in total 11 Local Nature Reserves covering 470 hectares and is working towards the Natural England target of 1ha of LNR per 1000 residents.

The Water Framework Directive requires all waterways to achieve 'good' ecological status or potential by 2027; in Manchester in 2022

(latest data available), none were 'good', 12 were 'moderate', 3 were 'poor' and 2 were 'bad'.

There continue to be 35 Conservation Areas within Manchester, designated to manage and protect areas of special architectural and historic interest. The number of Grade I, II\* and II listed buildings is respectively 15 Grade I, and 82 Grade II\* and 752 Grade II.

Manchester has a substantial amount of brownfield land, which is an important resource for future development. The Council's Contaminated Land Strategy<sup>3</sup> and the Local Plan together support the remediation and safe re-use of potentially contaminated land, with 16ha remediated through Planning's development management process during 2024.

The total amount of household waste has decreased slightly compared to the previous year. The proportion of waste, which is recycled and composted has decreased very slightly, with 38.9% recycled/re-used/composted in 2024/25 which is attributed to a fall in organic waste. However, this compares favourably to only 3.3% in 2001-02.

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<sup>3</sup> MCC Contaminated Land Strategy, updated March 2011

Air quality in Manchester is improving on a long-term basis and the measures being taken to reduce dependency on the car and increase walking, cycling and public transport use will help this trend to continue. Currently, Manchester is within acceptable limits for all of pollutants prescribed in the national air quality strategy except the annual concentration of nitrogen dioxide, which regularly exceeds the objective. Nitrogen dioxide levels are particularly high in the City Centre and close to busy roads. Manchester continues to meet the Local Air Quality Management objectives for all of the pollutants prescribed in the national air quality strategy. Despite meeting legal limits for particulates, pollutants and NO<sub>2</sub> remain a serious concern in Manchester, as they do in the rest of Greater Manchester and most other urban areas. The main source of NO<sub>2</sub> is road vehicles, in particular older diesel vehicles, but for fine particulates (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) the main source is from domestic solid fuel burning. Manchester is working with the other Greater Manchester Councils to try and reduce the impact of this pollutant by discouraging the use and misuse of appliances such as wood burning stoves and reminding residents of smoke control area rules.

**Table 3: Air quality statistics – annual mean concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and particulate matter PM<sub>10</sub> (shown as a concentration value µg/m<sup>3</sup>)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Manchester Oxford Road NO<sub>2</sub> (µg/m<sup>3</sup>)</b>	<b>Manchester Oxford Road PM<sub>10</sub> (µg/m<sup>3</sup>)</b>	<b>Piccadilly Gardens NO<sub>2</sub> (µg/m<sup>3</sup>)</b>	<b>Piccadilly Gardens PM<sub>10</sub> (µg/m<sup>3</sup>)</b>
2015 (baseline)	66	28	39	20
2016	66	27	40	20
2017	65	27	36	20
2018	62	30	35	21
2019	59	26	36	20
2020	36	18	27	15
2021	44	18	30	15
2022	43	18	29	17
2023	41	18	27	15
2024	44	20	27	15

Source: Air Quality England

Following on from publication of the Greater Manchester Low-Emission Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan in 2016, the 10 Greater Manchester Authorities, working with GMCA and TFGM have produced a Clean Air Plan, aimed at reducing roadside NO<sub>2</sub> emissions to legal levels by tackling air pollution from traffic. The current non-charging, investment-led Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan was prepared with Government to achieve legal NO<sub>2</sub> Limit Values in the shortest possible time and by 2026 at the latest. Modelling carried out on behalf of Greater Manchester's 10 local authorities showed that the City region can bring air quality within legal limits without the need for and faster than a charging Clean Air Zone. Air quality across Greater Manchester is getting better thanks to major investments in cleaner, greener public transport.

Newly released figures show that air pollution dropped again in 2024 in the City region. In 2019, 129 places where air quality is measured had illegal levels of nitrogen dioxide. Having been reduced to 64 in 2023, it fell further in 2024 to 38. As part of Greater Manchester's accelerated investment in public transport, the Bee Network is helping reduce air pollution by introducing more low and zero-emission buses. More than 300 electric buses are now serving communities – ten times more than before the Bee Network took control of bus services. A further £2.5 billion in wider government transport funding will also help Greater Manchester fully electrify its bus fleet by 2030. Transport for Greater

Manchester (TfGM) is also modernising bus depots to support electric vehicles for the Bee Network. Depots in Manchester have already been upgraded with charging infrastructure. It's all part of Greater Manchester's wider clean air approach that avoids charging drivers by focusing on investment in cleaner transport instead.

## 4. Conclusion

Manchester has a strong, competitive economy and good infrastructure, and there are many indicators in the 2024/25 AMR which show substantial progress over the year period towards achieving the sustainable development goals set out in the Local Plan. The City's population has continued to grow. Economic development completions remained at a high level, especially for offices, retail, hotels and leisure in the Regional Centre. District centres have also remained vibrant, and the proportion of retail uses has remained stable, despite the growing importance of on-line shopping. Net housing completions remained high, which will support forecast growth in the population. Investment in sustainable modes of transport continued. Carbon emissions decreased and progress is being made through various interventions to deliver net zero by 2038. Significant investment in the City's green and blue infrastructure took place, with more planned through both large and small-scale schemes. The Council will carry on working with partners and wider stakeholders to ensure that its policies continue to protect and enhance environmental assets, and to support and promote sustainable lifestyles and growth.

The emerging Local Plan will be informed by a comprehensive evidence base. The Council has commissioned studies across a

range of issues including housing needs; retail and leisure trends/needs; biodiversity net gain and urban green factor; net zero new buildings; open space study; employment land review; and a hotels/short term lets study.

The Places for Everyone Joint Local Plan was adopted in March 2024 and will guide district-level local plans in terms of the scale and location of economic and residential development; and provide thematic policies that will apply across the nine authorities involved in the joint plan. The Local Plan review will enable the Council to further strengthen its support for sustainable and inclusive development, to ensure that the potential of the City and the needs and aspirations of its residents are fully met.

