

Manchester Local Plan (Publication Draft) Regulation 19

1. Topic Paper: Local Plan – Relationship to National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); Places for Everyone; and Saved Policies from existing MCC Local Plans

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Manchester's review of the local plan began with an initial formal stage in 2020 with a consultation on Issues and Options. The draft Local Plan, containing detailed policies, was consulted on in 2025 (Regulation 18). The plan is now at an advanced and final stage of the process required by legislation with consultation at the Regulation 19 stage before submission to the Secretary of State for examination. The Regulation 19 consultation on the draft Local Plan will take place between 17 August until 28 September 2026.
- 1.2. Under the current national planning system, the “development plan” for Manchester consists of a number of local plans. The development plan for Manchester currently consists of the following documents:
 - Places for Everyone Joint Local Plan (adopted 2024)(PfE)
 - Core Strategy (adopted 2012)
 - A number of saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan (adopted 1995)
 - Greater Manchester Minerals Plan (adopted 2013), and
 - Greater Manchester Waste Plan (adopted 2012)
- 1.3. The Manchester Local Plan will replace the Core Strategy and the remaining saved Unitary Development Plan policies. The development plan will therefore simplify to a degree albeit retaining the PfE, and the Minerals and Waste Plans.

2. National/Sub-Regional Context

National

- 2.1 The Manchester Local Plan has been prepared within the framework established by national planning policy and guidance. The National Planning Policy Framework

(NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and provides the basis for the preparation of local plans. The NPPF states that, "Local Plans and spatial development strategies are examined to assess whether they have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements, and whether they are sound." The four test of soundness are set out below.

- "Positively prepared - the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development".

This means that the Council must produce a plan which promotes economic growth and makes provision for the homes, employment and infrastructure which it determines is needed.

- "Justified - the plan should be an appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence".

This means that the Council must have considered other policies and determined its approach based upon the most up to date and robust evidence including population figures, economic forecasts, Strategic Housing Market Assessment, land availability etc.

- "Effective - the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities".

This means that the Council must be confident that the policies within the Plan can be achieved within the Plan period (2022 to 2039).

- "Consistent with national policy - the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies within the National Planning Policy Framework".

The NPPF sets out the Government's policies for planning in England. Policies within the Manchester Local Plan must not conflict with these policies.

Sub Regional

- 2.2 The Manchester Local Plan has been prepared within the strategic planning framework established by the Places for Everyone Joint Local Plan (PfE), adopted in March 2024, which forms part of Manchester's statutory development plan.
- 2.3 The Local Plan is consistent with PfE and gives local expression to its strategic objectives by providing detailed policies and guidance for development within Manchester. It does not seek to revisit strategic matters that have been established through PfE, including the housing requirement, strategic spatial strategy, strategic site allocations and Green Belt boundaries. The draft Local Plan sets out more detailed policies, reflecting local circumstances. In some cases, health and education

being examples, it is considered that PfE provides the necessary detail to cover these matters without the need to develop further policies within the draft Local Plan.

3. Plan Period

3.1 The Manchester Local Plan runs to an end date of April 2039. This is consistent with the Places for Everyone Joint Local Plan, which as previously noted provides the strategic planning framework. **Version of NPPF.**

3.2 The current published version of the NPPF (December 2024) contains Annex 1 which details the implementation of national policy for decision making and plan making purposes. Paragraph 234 states,

“For the purpose of preparing local plans, the policies in this version of the Framework will apply from 12 March 2025 other than where one or more of the following apply:

...

c. the plan includes policies to deliver the level of housing and other development set out in a preceding local plan (such as a joint local plan containing strategic policies) adopted since 12 March 2020;

...”

3.3 The Manchester Local Plan falls within the category described at Paragraph 234 (c). PfE is the preceding local plan (joint local plan containing strategic policies).

3.4 PfE was examined alongside the 2021 version of the published NPPF that was current at the time. It was previously noted that the Manchester Local Plan is consistent with PfE, and this is the specific legal test that must be met with respect to the Manchester Local Plan. The consistency with PfE has been highlighted at appropriate places within the draft plan. As a result, the Manchester Local Plan has been developed on a basis of consistency with the 2021 version of the NPPF as a first point of principle. Notwithstanding that approach, regard has been paid to the latest current version of the NPPF (2024) to ensure “future proofing” of the plan where significant material changes were evident that needed to be taken account of within the plan.

3.5 The NPPF (2024) included the following key changes:

- Updated the approach to housing targets;
- Strengthened climate and sustainability policies;
- Added matters related to Green Belt (concept of grey belt);
- Provided greater prominence to social rent and affordable housing delivery;

- Provided a stronger focus on the need to prepare local plans at a quicker pace and set out transitional arrangements to incentivise local authorities to progress plans promptly.

- 3.6 The matters pertaining to housing targets and changes to the approach to Green Belt are not relevant to the Manchester Local Plan as PfE has set out the housing requirement for the city and undertaken a comprehensive review of the Green Belt across Greater Manchester, including within Manchester.
- 3.7 The other key matters in paragraph 3.4 relating to climate and sustainability policies; and social rent/affordable housing have been taken account within the Manchester Local Plan as appropriate.

4. Saved Policies

- 4.1 The current development plan consists of the following documents:
- Places for Everyone Joint Local Plan (adopted 2024)(PfE)
 - Core Strategy (adopted 2012)
 - A number of saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan (adopted 1995)
 - Greater Manchester Minerals Plan (adopted 2013), and
 - Greater Manchester Waste Plan (adopted 2012)
- 4.2 On adoption of the Manchester Local Plan, expected towards the end of 2027, the following existing plans and policies will be replaced in their entirety:
- Core Strategy (adopted 2012)
 - Saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan (adopted 1995)