

A Green and Blue Network

- 9.12 The borough's green and blue network comprises the many and varied multi-functional green and blue spaces which provide benefits for people and the environment. This includes parks and open space, natural areas such as woodland and meadows, rivers and ponds, as well as canals, grass verges, street trees, green roofs and walls, and sustainable urban drainage schemes.
- 9.13 This policy seeks to protect, maintain and enhance a resilient, well-connected and high-quality network of green and blue infrastructure for its contribution to quality of life, promoting good mental and physical health, creating liveable places and supporting economic growth.

Policy G2 – A Green and Blue Network

The borough has a significant amount of green and blue infrastructure which provides important benefits for communities. These ecosystem services include managing flood risk, urban cooling, improving air quality and supporting biodiversity.

Across the borough, the many and varied green and blue spaces are important in their own right and add significant value and distinctiveness to the local area. However, it is the combination of, and interrelationships between, these areas that is particularly significant. Ensuring that there is a high-quality network of green and blue infrastructure is therefore vital to the borough's long-term success and quality of life.

The council will take a strategic approach to planning and managing green and blue infrastructure. We will protect, maintain, and enhance an interconnected network of natural and semi-natural spaces to maximise ecosystem service benefits for people.

Development should have regard to the value and functions of green and blue infrastructure, recognizing the importance of all green and blue spaces, regardless of size, for their contribution to the overall network. Proposals should set out how the resilience, integrity and multi-functionality of the overall network will be improved, identify opportunities to enhance quality and connectivity of green and blue infrastructure, and reduce fragmentation and severance of the network.

The council's emerging green infrastructure and open space assessment will provide an important source of evidence to help identify need, priorities and opportunities.

Places for Everyone Links:

Policy JP-G2 Green Infrastructure Network

Reasoned Justification

- 9.14 The requirement for development to contribute to the green and blue network does not apply to householder applications, applications for change of use, listed building consent and advertising. However, these types of minor development should seek

opportunities to provide enhancements green and blue features where possible. The council will exercise discretion and take a proportionate approach.

- 9.15 National policy requires local plans to take a strategic approach to protecting, maintaining and enhancing networks of green and blue infrastructure, and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a landscape scale, to deliver a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.
- 9.16 At a Greater Manchester level, the Places for Everyone Joint Plan provides strategic context through the identification of the following priority types of green and blue infrastructure, alongside the Local Nature Recovery Strategy: river valleys and waterways; uplands; urban green spaces; and trees and woodland.
- 9.17 Places for Everyone has identified three areas of the borough as having strategic potential for the delivery of ecosystem services at a Greater Manchester level:
- South Pennine Moors
 - Roch Valley
 - Hollingworth Lake and surrounds
- 9.18 High-quality green and blue infrastructure makes an important contribution to healthy and sustainable development, and is fundamental to creating successful, vibrant and healthy places to live and work. Our green and blue infrastructure is essential to the future success of Rochdale, not just because of the wide variety of environmental objectives that it helps to meet but also because it improves quality of life, supports economic growth, enhances the image of the Borough, assists in mitigating the impacts of climate change, and promotes social objectives such as good physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- 9.19 We want to ensure that everyone has access to a high-quality network of green and blue infrastructure close to where they live and work. We will do this by protecting and enhancing existing provision, and creating new infrastructure where needed, to provide a functioning, well-connected network throughout the Borough and beyond.
- 9.20 The larger, core components of Rochdale's Green Network will be identified and mapped including open spaces, nature conservation sites, and strategic green and blue infrastructure. The core areas of the Network are complemented by opportunity areas identified in the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy, and other green and blue infrastructure features including trees and scrub, smaller areas of woodland and grassland, gardens, ponds, green roofs and verges.