

Green Infrastructure and New Development

- 9.21 High quality green and blue infrastructure in the right place provides a wide range of benefits to society, known as ecosystem services. Areas of strategic green and blue infrastructure are of particular importance to the character and appearance of the borough and fundamental to creating a high-quality network of green and blue spaces and features.
- 9.22 This policy sets out how the planning and design of new development is expected to take account of green and blue infrastructure, to maintain and enhance the multiple functions and benefits of green and blue infrastructure.

Policy G3 – Green Infrastructure and New Development

Development should plan, deliver and manage green and blue infrastructure to support nature positive outcomes. Development will be permitted provided:

- a. it does not lead to a net loss of green and blue infrastructure quality and functionality on the site or its immediate surroundings, having followed the mitigation hierarchy. Mitigation or compensation for any loss of green and blue infrastructure will need to be secured by a condition or s106 obligation;
- b. it does not adversely affect the integrity, function and value of the green and blue network;
- c. the proposals maximise opportunities for high quality, functional green and blue infrastructure to deliver community benefits; and,
- d. where the council considers it appropriate, a plan for its future management and maintenance is agreed.

Applicants will be expected to provide sufficient information with their application to demonstrate that green and blue infrastructure has been properly considered in the design of a scheme, including a description of the existing green and blue infrastructure assets within and adjoining the site.

Proposals for major development must be supported by a green and blue infrastructure proposal demonstrating a measurable increase in the overall quality and function of green and blue infrastructure, as part of a design and landscape-led approach to place-making.

Applications must be accompanied by:

- e. a plan showing existing green and blue infrastructure provision together with an evaluation of those assets within and surrounding the development site including condition, function and value;
- f. a detailed proposal demonstrating how the scheme will improve the condition, value, function and connectivity of green and blue infrastructure; and,
- g. an Urban Greening Factor calculation (Policy G5).

Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure

Development that would result in the loss, fragmentation or isolation of areas of strategic green and blue infrastructure, as identified on the policies map, will only be permitted where:

- h. the impacts cannot be avoided or mitigated; and
- i. the development would provide benefits that outweigh the harm; and there are no realistic alternatives; and
- j. appropriate mitigation and/or compensation is agreed with the council following a robust, evidence-based assessment of green infrastructure functionality and quality.

Places for Everyone Links:

Policy JP-G2 Green Infrastructure Network

Reasoned Justification

- 9.23 The requirement for development to demonstrate consideration of green and blue infrastructure should be appropriate to the scale of development. The council will exercise discretion and take a proportionate approach.
- 9.24 National planning guidance highlights the importance of protecting and enhancing green and blue infrastructure as natural capital. The role of green and blue infrastructure in the context of planning and development is to help to achieve well-designed places, promote healthy and safe communities, mitigate climate change and flooding, and support nature recovery.
- 9.25 Green and blue infrastructure can provide a wide range of social, economic and ecological functions, which provide multiple benefits for people, known as ecosystem services. The extent to which green infrastructure provides ecosystem services depends on how it is designed and maintained, and the maturity and health of the biodiversity that underpins it.
- 9.26 Green and blue infrastructure needs and opportunities should be considered at the earliest stages of development proposals, as an integral part of development and infrastructure provision, and take account of existing natural assets and the most suitable locations and types of new provision. Proposals should maximise the delivery of multiple benefits from nature by protecting and enhancing the functions of green and blue infrastructure. Proposals should also reflect the framework of guidance set out in Natural England's Green Infrastructure Standard, including the five principles of what good green infrastructure is and why it's important.
- 9.27 The areas of strategic green and blue infrastructure, as identified on the policies map, provide the backbone of the green and blue network and are therefore particularly important for the range of functions and benefits they provide and their role in sustaining a coherent and connected network.
- 9.28 Proposals should have full regard to local evidence on landscape, green and blue infrastructure, and open space, alongside the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy in order to identify the priority functions of these areas.

- 9.29 Where major development could adversely affect areas of strategic green and blue infrastructure, ecosystem services functions should be identified and evaluated to demonstrate how development proposals will be nature positive and make a measurable contribution to the green and blue network. An industry-leading natural capital tool should be used to enable the council to properly consider the impacts and evaluate the requirements for mitigation or compensation where appropriate e.g., Natural England's Environmental Benefits from Nature, or the CIEEM accredited Nature Tool.