

HEARING STATEMENT: MATTER 4

CIVIC QUARTER AREA ACTION PLAN

**TRAFFORD COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE INSPECTOR'S
MATTERS, ISSUES AND QUESTIONS**

Matter 4 - Housing

DATE: March 2022

Introduction

This hearing statement has been prepared by Trafford Council in response to the Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions for the Examination hearing sessions. It addresses Matter 4: Housing

The following key documents are relevant to this response:

- The Civic Quarter Area Action Plan Regulation 19 Version (January 2021) **A01**
- Trafford Core Strategy **J01**
- Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels **J13**
- Trafford Housing Needs Assessment 2019 **J14**
- Places for Everyone Regulation 19 **J04**
- Emerging Trafford Local Plan **J03**

In addition, this hearing statement contains the following appendices:

- APPENDIX 1: Housing trajectory

- 4.1** *How does **policy CQ2 – Housing**, for up to **4,000 new homes** within the Trafford Civic Quarter relate to the adopted Trafford Core Strategy and more recent assessments of housing need in Trafford and the emerging Trafford Local Plan? Has any allowance been made for non-delivery of planning permissions for new dwellings within the plan period? In other words, is this figure supported by the evidence of housing demand, housing need, deliverability and viability? Should the figure be phased, and should it be expressed as a maximum, an approximation or a minimum? A detailed housing trajectory and identification of key housing allocations, linked to the Policies Map, is needed.*

Relationship between Adopted and Emerging Plans

- 4.1.1 As shown in the Council's response to Matter 1 the scope of the CQAAP and the adopted Core Strategy are well aligned, including the relationship between the strategic objectives for both plans.
- 4.1.2 The Core Strategy (adopted in 2012) identified the Lancashire County Cricket Club Quarter as being a Strategic Location for development (Policy SL3). The intention was to set the boundary for this area in the Land Allocations Plan however the production of this plan was paused and a draft was never publicly consulted on.
- 4.1.3 The strategic proposal for SL3 was that "*A major mixed-use development will be delivered in this location to provide a high quality experience for visitors balanced with new, high quality residential neighbourhood centred around an improved stadium at Lancashire County Cricket Club*".
- 4.1.4 Whilst the main thrust for SL3 of delivering a major mixed use development is maintained in the CQAAP, the residential capacity for the area is no longer in line with the vision for the area. Policy SL3 was to cover a smaller area than that of the CQAAP, an area directly surrounding Lancashire Country Cricket Club (LCCC), Trafford Town Hall, the police station and stretching a little beyond the A56 with few major vacant or underused development sites. It did not include the former Kellogg's site, which appears to be because at the time it was not anticipated that this site would come forward for residential development. It was considered that the SL3 area could deliver up to 400 new homes, based on an analysis of development opportunity sites, many of which are not in the Civic Quarter AAP boundary (but are in SL3). That figure was not based on wholesale transformational change of the wider area which is what the AAP seeks to achieve and for which the area is ideally suited. It is considered that 400 is not a relevant capacity for the CQAAP to replicate as the plan is seeking to bring real change and over a larger plan area. As of March 2022, 259 new homes have been delivered with the SL3 area and a scheme

for a further 150 is currently under construction – thus already meeting the SL3 aspiration. 636 units from the SL3 area are in the Council's 5 year housing land supply. This demonstrates that the potential number of new homes which can be delivered far exceeds 400. Further the 400 was based on a density of between 43 and 85dph, averaging 68dph. In this area of transformational change it is considered that replicating that sort of density would be inappropriate in principle, would not deliver the scale of change required or enable the comprehensive regeneration which the area requires.

- 4.1.5 When considering the Core Strategy policies against the NPPF (undertaken in April 2019¹) to determine their consistency, policy SL3 was found to be generally consistent with the NPPF. However with regards to housing land supply and heritage it was considered partly out of date. In respect of housing land supply, this was because the target of 400 homes was based on the housing trajectory in the Core Strategy, and since then the Council must now use the standard method and apply a 20% buffer for historical non-delivery, generating a much larger housing requirement. Therefore the area of the CQAAP covers a larger geographical area and, together with a higher density of development than was generally anticipated forward at the time of the Core Strategy, has led to an increased capacity of brownfield sites within the area, in line with national planning policy.
- 4.1.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, July 2021) seeks for planning policies to make effective use of land “in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or “brownfield” land” (para 119). The CQAAP is comprised, in the main, of brownfield land, in a sustainable location, well served by existing public transport networks and therefore has the ability to deliver at higher densities. This naturally and beneficially results in a much greater quantum of residential development than that identified in Policy SL3 of the Core Strategy. It is judged by reference to for example the K site that the resultant density necessary to secure 2500 and 4000 (namely around 170d/ha overall is readily and appropriately achievable and is a minimum).
- 4.1.7 Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels (GMAL) published by the Transport for Greater Manchester are a detailed and accurate measure of the accessibility of a point to both the conventional public transport network (i.e. bus, Metrolink and rail) and Greater Manchester Local Link (flexible transport service), taking into account walk access time and service availability. The CQAAP area falls within GMAL levels 6 and 7 out of a possible maximum of level 8. The area is clearly therefore highly accessible and well-served by a range of by public transport modes.

¹ [Agenda Item 7 - Compliance Review of local Development Plan Policies.pdf](https://trafford.gov.uk/agenda-item-7-compliance-review-of-local-development-plan-policies.pdf)
(trafford.gov.uk)

- 4.1.8 The Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) (2019) considered the borough-wide needs of Trafford as a whole, providing place specific recommendations. The CQAAP falls within the recommendations for Old Trafford. However as the Old Trafford Place stretches north to Pomona and south to the Mersey Valley beyond Stretford only a small portion of this “place” is encompassed within the plan area.
- 4.1.9 The HNA identified a shortage of 3 and 4 bed apartments in the whole of the Old Trafford area as well as a need for 79.2% of all new affordable dwellings (164 per year) to be one and two bed apartments.
- 4.1.10 The CQAAP has identified that it will address the need for predominantly one and two bed apartments in Trafford, particularly within Old Trafford delivering 25% of these as affordable homes. The CQAAP is also expected to deliver some family housing, in the form of town houses and ground floor duplex apartments. 20% of the units in the FCBS masterplan (Viability Assessment – Appendix 1) are assumed to be 3 / 4 bed. If the Inspector considers it necessary and appropriate, Policy CQ2 could be amended to specify the dwelling mix at 30% 1 bed, 50% 2 bed and 20% 3 / 4 bed to reflect the masterplan.
- 4.1.11 The delivery of homes in the CQAAP will be through a design led approach that has been judged to be able to deliver high density housing appropriately. High density development in this location makes the best use of brownfield land in a highly sustainable location and will provide a significant proportion of new homes for Trafford. The identified quantum of development, in plan period, has been considered as part of the land supply for the PfE plan preparation process, which sets out the overall housing need for the city region. This is carried into the AAP and will be reflected in the emerging Trafford Local Plan which will make specific housing allocations in the existing urban area.
- 4.1.12 As the HNA recommendations for “Old Trafford” Place cover a much larger area than that of the CQAAP, these traditionally lower density residential areas outside of the AAP area will be able to accommodate the need for larger family housing on individual development sites. The CQAAP is expected to deliver predominantly one and two bedroom apartments, however that does not preclude three or four bedroom homes coming forward, as demonstrated on the scheme for the former Kelloggs site.
- 4.1.13 The emerging Trafford Local Plan does not set the housing target for Trafford as this is being set by the Joint Local Plan for 9 of the Greater Manchester Authorities - Places for Everyone Plan (PfE); submitted 14th February 2022. The CQAAP has been considered as part of the identified land supply for Trafford which has in turn informed the housing target for PfE through the shared distribution of housing growth across all Districts that are producing

the joint plan. The housing land supply has been tested through viability considerations for the production of PfE and more specifically for the CQAAP.

Allowance for non-delivery of planning permissions

4.1.14 An allowance has been made for the non-delivery of existing planning permissions. The housing trajectory includes anticipated completions from sites within the AAP with commenced and extant planning permission, those where there is a resolution to grant permission as well as those identified as being deliverable within the housing land supply. There are a number of other known sites within the CQAAP that have been considered as part of the Viability Assessment and which make up the broader housing land supply within the plan area but which are not currently subject to applications and do not have planning permission. These sites however are in various stages of discussion with the Council about their future development intentions. Outside of this there are also likely to be other windfall sites which are anticipated will come forward beyond the plan period as a result of increased development activity and market interest in the area up to 2037. A 20% windfall allowance has been assumed.

4.1.15 Notwithstanding the significant quantum of committed, planned and anticipated development that will come forward within the AAP, an allowance of 10% for non-delivery has been assumed. However, when taking into the consideration the highly accessible nature of the Civic Quarter, planned public realm improvements through the Wellbeing and Processional Routes and high-quality developments, it is considered that any non-delivery from individual developments will be subsumed into and/or encompassed within other developments and proposals within the area. It is also expected that some sites will be able to come forward well above the densities assumed in the masterplan. Consequently, any sites that may not be delivered as currently envisaged, are unlikely to affect the ability to meet the overall amount of residential development for the area.

Minimum, Maximum or Approximate Housing Figure

4.1.16 For the reasons set out above and in responses to other MIQs and supporting evidence, the Council considers the submitted plan to be sound.

4.1.17 However, should the Inspector be minded to modify the plan in respect of Policy CQ 2, the Council propose that it be amended to make explicit the number of homes that can be delivered within the plan period as follows:

4.1.18 The AAP is expected to deliver up to approximately 4,000 new homes overall, with a minimum of 2,500 delivered within the plan period.

Specific Housing Allocations and Trajectory

- 4.1.19 Owing to the CQAAP being an area based plan, to guide and steer a significant amount of planned and/or committed development within the next 10-15 years, it is not considered necessary or expedient to allocate specific housing sites. This approach aims to provide sufficient flexibility for the market to deliver viable schemes that collectively achieve the overall vision for the area set out in the planning policy framework of the CQAAP in line with paragraphs 33 and 82(d) of the NPPF. Not being prescriptive on housing site allocations will allow the area to flexibly respond to changes in the planning system particularly in relation to Class E uses and permitted development rights as well as market forces.
- 4.1.20 Notwithstanding the above, the housing trajectory provided at Appendix 1 can be directly attributed to known development sites for which there is evidence, or intelligence to demonstrate that they are deliverable, have developer interest and which has been used in the viability considerations for the CQAAP. The Viability Assessment for the CQAAP (Evidence base document [C-01](#)) took into consideration a masterplan for the area which identified potential housing sites and their anticipated capacities.

4.2 *Although the Civic Quarter has good public transport, cycling and pedestrian connectivity both within the area of the Plan and with nearby areas, including Manchester City Centre and Salford Quays, can the area be described as sustainable in relation to the potential for **increased family housing**? For example, should the Plan include increased amounts of open space, including children's play facilities?*

4.2.1 It is anticipated that the CQAAP will help to deliver some family housing. However as stated in the response to Matter 4.1 this is an area based plan which sets the planning framework to guide the development of the Civic Quarter but does not allocate specific housing sites with identified capacities; allowing for flexibility on the quantum of development.

4.2.2 The deliberate flexibility afforded by the CQAAP will allow for residential development to come forward on a site-by-site basis, allowing schemes to provide and/or contribute towards open space and children's play facilities on a case-by-case basis, managed through the planning application process.

4.2.3 Notwithstanding the above, the CQAAP identifies open spaces, both existing and new, which will be further improved and enhanced over the plan period. Schemes which come forward for family housing will be considered in line with other adopted planning policies (Core Strategy policies R5 and L8 as well as accompanying Supplementary Planning Document 1) to ensure that appropriate open space provision is being made.

4.2.4 For the reasons set out above and in responses to other MIQs and supporting evidence, the Council considers the submitted plan to be sound.

4.2.5 However, should the Inspector be minded to modify the plan in respect of Policy CQ2, the Council propose that it be amended to make explicit that family housing should form an element of all development proposals by specifying the dwelling mix (the same amendment to CQ2 which is suggested in the response to 4.1 above). The plan shows areas where open space is expected to be provided, but the amendment proposed in the Council's response to Matter 7.4, in respect of open space, could also address this issue.

4.3 *Is there a need for any **qualitative parameters** in the Plan, such as provision for affordable housing, starter homes, older persons' accommodation (Use Class C2), care homes, accessible housing, or student housing? Regarding the latter point, is there a need for the Plan to address the potential impact of concentrations of student accommodation on the living conditions of established residential communities, for example through the requirement of a student management plan which would appropriately mitigate potential harm to residential amenity?*

4.3.1 It is considered that qualitative parameters for specific types of new housing would be more effectively managed through the emerging Trafford Local Plan. This is because they are Borough wide targets, and do not translate precisely to a much smaller area. It is also not proposed to repeat existing, emerging policy or government policy.

4.3.2 The submitted Joint Local Plan - Places for Everyone requires all new homes to be built to M4(2) adaptable standards, as does the emerging Trafford Local Plan. The emerging Trafford Local Plan also requires 2% of units in developments of 100 units or more to meet the wheelchair accessible M4(3) standard.

4.3.3 Starter homes (now First Homes) are required by government policy as 25% of any affordable housing provided. A report has been taken to Planning Committee confirming that as of March 2022, the First Homes requirement will be taken into existing Core Strategy policy, and the mix of affordable housing tenures required will be 25% First Homes, 37.5% intermediate housing and 37.5% affordable / social rent. This mix is also reflected in the emerging Trafford Local Plan. This can be secured by planning condition or S106. This national policy does not therefore need to be repeated locally.

4.3.4 There is a target of 1943 units (of the overall housing target) identified in the emerging Trafford Local Plan for older persons' accommodation. This includes 1402 units of specialist older persons' accommodation and 541 units of C2 care facilities.

4.3.5 There is no target set for the provision of student housing in either the Core Strategy or the emerging Trafford Local Plan. The extent of the need for student housing in the Civic Quarter, generated by UA92, remains uncertain, exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic and a shift to at least some remote learning. This is demonstrated by Academy Apartments, which is located directly opposite UA92, and which contains 90 studio and one bed apartments but is marketed to both students and young professionals.

4.3.6 Nevertheless, it would be expected that the majority of the need for student housing associated with UA92 would be in purpose built accommodation. This is particularly because there is a Boroughwide Article 4

Direction in place to remove permitted development rights for HMOs of between 3 and 6 bedrooms which was made in order to protect the amenity of existing residential communities. Alongside the Article 4 Direction and Policy L7 of the Core Strategy, there is an adopted Supplementary Planning Document which controls the extent and concentration of HMO accommodation. It would also be anticipated that planning conditions would be imposed, if necessary, on purpose built student accommodation or HMOs to protect residential amenity. This could include student housing management plans (albeit the condition would need to be precise and enforceable).

4.3.7 Consequently, it is considered that there are sufficient specific qualitative parameters to manage the delivery and occupation of various house types through existing or emerging local planning policy and/or current national policy.

4.3.8 The plan as submitted is therefore considered to be sound and no amendments to it are considered necessary. However, if the Inspector would consider it helpful, a proportion of the housing target (and / or taking into account a windfall allowance) could be dedicated to either older persons' accommodation and student housing. It is suggested, based on housing need and the emerging Trafford Local Plan, that 10% of new homes should be older persons' accommodation. The number of student homes required is uncertain and if there is a specific requirement it would need to be identified in an up to date Housing Needs Assessment.

4.4 *In line with recent trends in other conurbations, is the development of **large-scale purpose-built shared living** viewed as a likely trend during the plan period? If so, does the policy need to set out appropriate safeguards, e.g. in relation to functional living space, communal space, public transport accessibility and the need to mitigate any harm to residential living conditions, e.g. through the requirement for an appropriate management plan?*

4.4.1 It is not anticipated that a co-living or shared living model will be a likely trend. There has been one pre-application enquiry about this housing typology (in c. 2018) but it did not progress beyond an enquiry, and the proposal fell away. It was not in the Civic Quarter area (although it was relatively close by). It is believed that part of the reason for it falling away was that the Council raised serious concerns about the poor level of amenity provided for future occupiers of the development in respect of their available living space and the conditions within it (50% of bedrooms 'borrowed' light from living areas and were not directly lit). It is currently understood that this site will be coming forward as an apartment scheme in the next 12 months after some enabling works.

4.4.2 All other proposals for high density living have been for individual apartments, and the Council insists (successfully) on Nationally Described Space Standards being met. It is also considered that the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for sufficient indoor living and outdoor amenity space to protect wellbeing and mental health, which would make this model less attractive in the market. The Council's existing and emerging development management policies could be used to determine planning applications if any did come forward.

4.4.3 However, if the Inspector were minded to modify the plan as submitted, the Council would not object to an addition to Policy CQ2 to address these matters and embedding the NDSS into AAP policy.

4.5 *Should the requirements in the Plan for **affordable housing** (AH) reflect the policy provisions of the adopted Core Strategy and is this appropriate in viability terms? At first glance, there appears to be an inconsistency between a 25% AH requirement in this Plan and a 40% AH requirement in the emerging Trafford Local Plan. Can these two AH requirements be reconciled?*

4.5.1 The viability position in the Civic Quarter has moved on significantly since the adoption of the Core Strategy. The adopted Core Strategy sets out that in 'cold' market locations, in which the Civic Quarter falls, a 5% contribution to affordable housing will be sought. This is increased to 10% under 'good' market conditions, which the Borough has been operating under since November 2018. 'Moderate' market locations require 25% affordable housing and 'hot' market locations require 45% (both in 'good' market conditions).

- 4.5.2 However, since 2018, there has been a step change in the nature and density of schemes being proposed in the Civic Quarter, with far higher density schemes than were envisaged coming forward at the time of the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy only viability tested schemes up to 140 dph and nonetheless found some of those outperformed the norm. As such, the Core Strategy includes a policy that where the nature of the development meant that it would perform differently in viability terms to generic developments (Policy L2.12d), in such cases up to 40% affordable housing would be sought, via a site specific viability appraisal. This was to catch sites which were coming forward at much higher densities, particularly in the Strategic Locations. Planning application data from the Civic Quarter has demonstrated that those applications coming forward do perform differently in viability terms, and that (in some cases much) more than 10% affordable housing can be viably provided. As such, and given the level of infrastructure required, it was considered appropriate to specifically viability test the Civic Quarter AAP rather than rely on the Core Strategy and L2.12d. The Plan was tested at 20% and 25% as these reflected the 'moderate' market locations to the south and west (either in normal or good conditions), and mindful of the significant plan wide infrastructure requirements which are necessary to make it a successful place.
- 4.5.3 Inconsistencies between the emerging Trafford Local Plan and the Civic Quarter AAP are due to the emerging Trafford Local Plan not yet being viability tested. Once it is, it is anticipated that a more granular and scaled approach to affordable housing contributions, along the lines in the Core Strategy, will emerge. It would be expected that areas proposing densities similar to those in the Civic Quarter would produce a comparable affordable housing requirement (subject to the level and cost of other required infrastructure).
- 4.5.4 This exercise was also carried out for the Core Strategy. At that time, the 2006 Housing Market Assessment set out an overall requirement of 60:40 market: affordable housing, then the Economic Viability Study tested the impact of the affordable housing and other infrastructure provision on the viability of sites. This led to the four pronged approach of cold, moderate and hot locations, together with those sites which may 'perform differently'.
- 4.5.5 Consequently, it is considered that there is sufficient specific viability evidence to justify the policy position contained within the CQ AAP and that any inconsistencies with the emerging Trafford Local Plan are likely to be reconciled once the Local Plan has undergone a thorough viability assessment.
- 4.5.6 The plan as submitted is therefore considered to be sound and no amendments to it are considered necessary.

4.6 *Is there sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the proposed new homes total within the Civic Quarter can be **implemented over the plan period**, and is this linked to a housing trajectory?*

4.6.1 As detailed in response to Matter 4.1 the sites that form part of the identified land supply within the CQAAP area have been used to inform the housing trajectory as appended to this response to Matter 4. The CQAAP is an area based plan that does not allocate specific housing sites, providing sufficient flexibility for the market to determine how the area takes shape up to 2037 within the policy framework of the CQAAP.

4.6.2 All sites identified to come forward in plan period are linked to specific known development opportunities, with the time period which they are anticipated to come forward guided by their planning permission status, ownership status and other deliverable intelligence.

4.6.3 As set out at 4.1 the housing trajectory includes anticipated completions from sites within the AAP with commenced and extant planning permission, those where there is a resolution to grant permission as well as those identified as being deliverable within the housing land supply. There are a number of other known sites within the CQAAP that have been considered as part of the Viability Assessment and which make up the broader housing land supply within the plan area, which not currently subject to planning permission. These sites however are in various stages of discussion with the Council about their future development intentions.

4.7 *Would the Plan at adoption be able to demonstrate that it has made a meaningful contribution towards a **five-year supply** of specific, viable and deliverable sites to meet the Council's housing needs?*

4.7.1 Trafford's identified land supply includes sites within the CQAAP, 1,266 of which contribute to the five year housing land supply (as at 1st March 2022) as defined by national policy.

4.7.2 This equates to 18% of the current 5 year housing land supply.

4.8 *Are there any other housing issues which the Plan should be addressing?*

4.8.1 Policy CQ2 covers the main components necessary for an effective and implementable housing policy, it is considered, and with Policy CQ11 as the means for securing affordable housing. In acknowledging the Area Action Plan's expectation that higher density and higher rise development is likely to be the dominant housing type, Policy CQ2 has been drafted to also ensure that new development would deliver good standards of residential amenity for prospective occupiers, whilst preserving that of existing surrounding residents and uses. This includes securing appropriate siting, scale and design, internal private amenity space, as well as ensuring that car parking, servicing and refuse management are suitably catered for. Other housing matters can more effectively be managed through other emerging policy – specifically Places for Everyone and the emerging Trafford Local Plan.

4.8.2 The list of proposed minor modifications to the Area Action Plan would extend this further with reference to the need for careful consideration where residential and non-residential uses would be juxtaposed (again acknowledging the aspirations of the Area Action Plan for a mix of uses to be incorporated). These residential amenity considerations are also supported by the Design Code in Appendix 2 of the Plan.