

Trafford Civic Quarter Area Action Plan 2022-2037

Examination

Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs) Discussion Note

Introduction

This note provides a summary of the matters and issues, identified by the Inspector in the form of questions, and they will form the basis of the examination hearings which are programmed to commence on Tuesday 5 April 2022 at 10:00 hrs. The final hearing questions may be refined in the light of the Inspector's consideration of the hearing statements received prior to the examination hearings. The deadline for statements will be indicated in the accompanying Guidance Note.

Please note that the **word limit** for hearing statements is 3,000 words per question, e.g. Matter 4.1 (excluding supporting information, such as Appendices). Any statement which exceeds 3,000 words will be required to submit a summary of 10 per cent of the full statement or up to a maximum of 1,000 words, whichever is the shorter.

Matter 1 - Legal Requirements, Scope of the Local Plan, Policies Map and Duty to Co-operate

1.1 Legal Requirements:

- (i) *Does the Area Action Plan (which I will refer to as the Plan from now on) **meet all its legal requirements** (e.g. in relation to the Local Development Scheme; Statement of Community Involvement; and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended))? Are there any other legal compliance issues?*

- (ii) *Has the Council followed **due process** in its preparation of the Plan, including the process of determination of area wide policies?*

1.2 Scope of the Local Plan

- (i) *Is the scope of the Plan in line with the main aims and strategy of the adopted **Core Strategy** as set out above, including as set out in the Area Vision and in particular in relation to its eight strategic aims and opportunities which are set out on page 55 of the submitted Plan?*
- (ii) *Are the **challenges** set out in Section 2.7 (page 47) key to the Plan and is the summary of opportunities set out in section 2.8 (page 49) appropriate and deliverable?*

1.3 Policies Map

- (i) *I am assuming that the Land Uses Parameters Plan is another name for the Policies Map, which is required by the Act and Local Planning Regulations; in which case, is it better to refer to it as the Policies Map, for clarity and compliance with national policy?*
- (ii) *The Policies Map needs to include all the policies contained in the Plan which have a geographical application, whether or not they refer to land use changes. For example, policy CQ10.3 refers to new multi-storey car park (MSCP) solutions, with four sites included on the map at the foot of page 81. If these are proposed MSCP sites, or other expressions of consolidated parking, they need to be identified on the Policies Map.*
- (iii) *Whilst I do not have an issue with using the word 'predominantly' before each of the land uses in the key (legend), there needs to be more detail on the Policies Map regarding the housing quantum proposed to be allocated. It would be helpful for the Plan to refer to specific housing allocations along with any essential information relating to each site allocation. The Policies Map would also express key highways policies, such as the Wellbeing and Processional Routes and any other relevant transport policies included in the Plan.*

- (iv) *A helpful summary of what Local Plans should contain can be found in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), reference ID:12-002-20140306, which states, under the heading **What should a Local Plan contain?** the following paragraph: "The Local Plan should make clear **what** is intended to happen in the area over the life of the plan, **where** and **when** this will occur and **how** it will be delivered".*

1.4 Duty to Cooperate (DTC):

- (i) *Is the DTC, which covers some strategic matters, therefore **applicable to this Plan**, as a 'Part 2' Plan, and if so, has the Council adequately discharged the DTC in preparing the Plan?*
- (ii) *In particular, does the Plan satisfy the DTC in relation to planning for the longer-term **growth of neighbouring areas**?*

Matter 2 - Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)

- 2.1** *Is the Plan supported by the **SA and HRA**?*
- 2.2** *What evidence is there that the SA has influenced the Plan and/or undertaken a full assessment of **realistic alternatives**?*
- 2.3** *Do any **adverse effects** identified in the SA require significant mitigation, and how does the Plan address these issues?*
- 2.4** *Does **policy CQ4 – Sustainability and Climate Change** - require a reasonable level of commitment to achieving high levels of energy and water efficiency, and is the overall aim for new development to be carbon neutral by 2028 realistic?*
- 2.5** *Are the criteria for developers set out in part 2 of **policy CQ4** realistic as well as sustainable?*
- 2.6** *Should policy CQ4 make specific reference to the requirement for development proposals to adhere to the Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan by ensuring the movement of waste up the waste hierarchy?*

Matter 3 – The Vision and the Strategic Objectives and Opportunities for the regeneration of Trafford’s Civic Quarter

- 3.1** *Overall, are the vision and the strategic objectives and opportunities for the regeneration of Trafford’s Civic Quarter appropriate and does **policy CQ1- Civic Quarter Regeneration** - establish a sustainable and realistic framework to achieve them? Is the Plan in general conformity with the Local Plan Core Strategy and any emerging planning policy for relevant areas? Does the Plan effectively address the area’s lack of identity?*
- 3.2** *Do the Parameter Plans, building height parameters and framework for improved permeability and greenspace support the vision and strategic objectives of the Plan and provide a sustainable basis for the implementation of policy CQ1?*

Matter 4 – Housing

- 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.*
- 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?*
- 4.3** *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?

- 4.4** *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?*
- 4.5** *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?*
- 4.6** *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?*
- 4.7** *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?*
- 4.8** *Are there any other housing issues which the Plan should be addressing?*

Matter 5 – Mixed Use Communities

- 5.1** *Is the balance of uses proposed in **policy CQ3 – Mixed Use Communities** - appropriate for the Trafford Civic Quarter?*
- 5.2** *Is the provision of **50,000 sq m of new office floorspace** in the Civic Quarter over the plan period supported by the evidence?*
- 5.3** *Is it appropriate to allow for **Class E business uses** within the Civic Quarter, and if so, is there a need for the Council to use*

conditions and/or planning obligations to limit uses consented within Class E to those that help achieve the objectives of policy CQ2?

- 5.4** Should the Plan address the potential of permitted development rights to allow for the **change of use from office and other business floorspace to Use Class C3 residential**, for example where there is evidence that office to residential development rights is harming the stock of office floorspace in the Civic Quarter to the detriment of businesses and potential for economic growth?
- 5.5** Should the Plan ensure that there is a **sustainable balance between** the Government's policy of **significantly boosting the supply of homes** (NPPF60) with the **protection of employment land** and building a strong, competitive economy (NPPF Section 6) in the area of the Plan and Trafford as a whole?
- 5.6** Should the policy set out the requirements for **reasonable market testing** before allowing changes of use from employment to housing or other non-employment uses, and if so, what should the maximum period of market testing be?
- 5.7** Is the **impact of Covid-19** on the local economy significant, and if so, is there a case for changing any or all of policies in the Plan?
- 5.8** Given the projected increase in housing – and hence population – in the Civic Quarter, what is the rationale for significantly decreasing the overall **retail provision** in the area?
- 5.9** Is the policy proposing an **enhanced Stretford leisure centre** with increased capacity or just a refurbishment of existing provision at the existing centre? It is noted that Highways England draw attention to the fact that there has been no assessment of the redeveloped leisure facilities on trip generation, which they state should be clarified.
- 5.10** Should policy CQ3 contain more guidance on appropriate locations for **town centre uses**, e.g. hotels and retail uses, including reference to the sequential test (e.g. NPPF87)? Is the Plan's retail provision sufficient to serve the existing population plus retail demand generated by 4,000 additional housing units?
- 5.11** Should there be a greater emphasis in the policy on the need to enhance the **civic, cultural and tourism function** of the Civic Quarter?

Matter 6 – Urban Design

- 6.1 Policy CQ5 – Conservation and Heritage** - aims to strengthen and celebrate the historic urban grain. How would this urban grain be best described and are the three criteria for development proposals an appropriate and sustainable response to ensure the Plan is sound? How far should the policy reflect the area's sporting and cultural heritage, e.g., the Manchester Botanical Gardens and White City? Does the Plan provide sufficient focus on the area's unique heritage?
- 6.2** Do the criteria in **policy CQ6 – High Quality Urban Design** - provide an acceptable balance between giving overall direction whilst providing the freedom for design innovation?
- 6.3** Does the framework for **tall buildings** in the Plan provide the necessary clarity and should the relevant tall buildings criteria perhaps be set out within a policy, to give an 'up front' message? Is there a need for a policy to set out the parameters for tall buildings in the Civic Quarter, for example along the lines of some of the London Borough Plans (e.g., Lambeth and Newham)? Is the Big Picture changing with Manchester City Centre's commercial and residential boundaries expanding outwards into Trafford, and should the tall buildings policy in this Plan reflect this?
- 6.4** Should the Plan clarify the **strategic views** which are worthy of protection and are there other key criteria which should be included in the Plan?
- 6.5** What is the policy framework for **gateway locations**, and how does this relate to the framework for tall buildings? Is there scope for increased gateway opportunities with the Civic Quarter?
- 6.6** Are the principles set out in the **Design Code** appropriate for the Trafford Civic Quarter?
- 6.7** Should the Plan include any **additional protection for the area's heritage assets**? Is there a case for the designation of any additional Conservation Areas?
- 6.8** Are the **settings of key heritage assets**, such as Trafford Town Hall and the White City Gates, together with the historic area setting in the Eastern Neighbourhood, adequately defined in the

Plan? Does the Plan adequately protect the key views within the Civic Quarter, such as of the Clock Tower and the White City gates?

Matter 7 – Public Realm Principles

- 7.1** *Is **policy CQ7 – Public Realm Principles** - positively prepared, justified, effective and in accordance with national policy? Does it enhance the character and appearance of Conservation Areas and their settings, and heritage assets?*
- 7.2** *Given the **increased emphasis on trees** making an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments (for example, NPPF131), should the Plan be more proactive in its promotion of both new tree planting and highlighting the importance of retaining existing trees wherever possible?*
- 7.3** *Are any **additional public realm policies** needed, for example in relation to Active Design?*
- 7.4** *Is the **open space provision** in the Civic Quarter adequate to meet the needs of the area, including those of its increased population?*

Matter 8 – Wellbeing Route – Talbot Road

- 8.1** *Is **policy CQ8 – Wellbeing Route – Talbot Road** - positively prepared, justified, effective and in accordance with national policy?*
- 8.2** *Are any additional public wellbeing policies needed for Talbot Road?*

Matter 9 – Processional Route

- 9.1** *Is **policy CQ9- Processional Route** - positively prepared, justified, effective and in accordance with national policy?*
- 9.2** *Are any additional processional route policies needed?*

Matter 10 – Movement and Car Parking Strategy

- 10.1** *In relation to **policy CQ10 – Movement and Car Parking Strategy** - are there any issues arising from the development*

provision and the policies in the Plan which would result in detrimental or severe impact on the strategic highways network, both within the Civic Quarter and in the surrounding areas? Also, are there any potential highways/pedestrian safety issues? Has Highways England now reached an understanding on the impact of the Plan on the Strategic Highways Network, and in particular with Junction 7 of the M60 and Junction 3 of the M602?

- 10.2** *Is policy Q10 committed to **permeability**? If so, should it be more explicitly highlighted in the policy?*
- 10.3** *Does the evidence point to the **public transport nodes** serving the Civic Quarter having sufficient capacity to accommodate peak hour flows if the proposed development comes to fruition during the plan period?*
- 10.4** *Are the key **linkage/connectivity** issues satisfactorily addressed in the Plan?*
- 10.5** *Is the policy of **consolidation of surface car parking** justified and effective, for example in the context of demands on match days and taking account of the possible expansion of the capacity at the Old Trafford football ground within the plan period?*
- 10.6** *Is the **multi-storey car park (MSCP) strategy**, based on peripheral locations, justified? Are the four indicative MSCP locations shown on page 81 realistic or aspirational? What MSCP capacities are envisaged?*
- 10.7** *Should the Plan promote **sustainable travel mode targets** and if so, how effectively can they be monitored? Is there sufficient emphasis on the role of buses and the Metrolink?*
- 10.8** *Given that national policy supports **secure cycling** (e.g., NPPF106 (d)), should the Plan be addressing the issue of the need for secure cycle parking and dedicated cycle ways in more detail? Are the proposed dedicated cycle ways justified and realistic?*
- 10.9** *Are the proposals for **pedestrianised streets** and increased pedestrian space justified and realistic? Is the Plan's approach towards walkability within neighbourhoods justified and effective?*
- 10.10** *Are the proposed **green routes** justified and realistic?*

Matter 11 – Infrastructure and Obligations

- 11.1** *Is **policy CQ11 – Infrastructure and Obligations** - positively prepared, justified, effective and in accordance with national policy, for example in relation to NPPF56?*
- 11.2** *Are there any **critical infrastructure needs** that are not addressed in the Plan? For example, are there any sewerage, flood risk, drainage or water supply issues that could be described as significant constraints, and are there any infrastructure issues that could be described as 'showstoppers'? Does the policy need to be any more specific in relation to encouraging water efficiency measures, such as rainwater recycling, green roofs, water butts and permeable surfaces?*
- 11.3** *Are the **financial contributions** set out for planning applications for major development which are listed in policy CQ11 justified and will they support the effectiveness of the Plan? Does the evidence point to any significant viability issues? What is the definition of 'major development' which is to be used as the threshold for this policy?*
- 11.4** *Is the area-wide **Viability Assessment**, prepared by Continuum on behalf of Trafford Council, including its input data and methodology, a robust basis, compliant with the PPG on viability (2019), which underlines the effectiveness of the Plan? Are its basic assumptions sound?*

Matter 12 – Appendix 1 - The Neighbourhoods

- 12.1** *Does the Plan provide appropriate and realistic planning guidance in relation to the overall vision and detailed suggestions for specific sites for the following neighbourhoods:*

A: Central Neighbourhood

B: Southern Neighbourhood

C: Western Neighbourhood

D: Northern Neighbourhood

E: Eastern Neighbourhood

Matter 13 – Development Management, Uncertainties and Risks

13.1 *Does the Plan provide sufficient guidance to cover all the relevant aspects of **development management** which are required to achieve the satisfactory implementation of the Plan?*

13.2 *Overall, does the Plan take sufficient account of **uncertainties and risks**? How flexible is it?*

13.3 *Are the **monitoring** arrangements soundly based?*

Matter 14 – Are there any other issues of soundness which this examination should cover?

14.1 *Do any additional issues of soundness, relevant to this Plan, arise from the NPPF?*

14.2 *Are there any other soundness issues which this Examination should cover?*

Mike Fox

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31 January 2022