

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Executive
Date: 19 June 2023
Report for: Decision
Report of: Executive Member for Economy and Regeneration

Report Title

Trafford Design Guide and Code

Summary

In June 2022 the Executive Member for Economy and Regeneration approved the consultation draft Trafford Design Guide, the preparation of the Trafford Design Code as a Supplementary Planning Document and the subsequent consultation and publicity arrangements. Work has taken place since on producing the Trafford Design Code in accordance with the process recommended in the National Model Design Code. A consultation draft of the Trafford Design Code is now ready for publication and approval is sought for this consultation draft.

The appended Trafford Design Code incorporates much of the previous consultation draft Trafford Design Guide and it will be adopted as a single document. Much of the work has been carried out in-house by officers, utilising the £160,000 Section 31 grant from DLUHC awarded for participation in the Design Code Pathfinder Programme. Substantial community and stakeholder engagement has been carried out over the last 12 months and the feedback from this engagement has fed into all stages of the Code.

Work on a Wharfside Masterplan has also commenced as part of the Pathfinder programme, and will be the subject of a future report to the Executive, together with the separately commissioned Wharfside Development Framework.

Although reproduced as a single document in the appendices to this report, the Code is intended to be accessed on a web based digital platform, making the user experience much more streamlined.

The landing page for the Code enables users to access the introductory text and vision, including the Strategic Design Principles and Trafford Places incorporated from the previous Trafford Design Guide. There are thereafter nine code chapters, split further into subchapters and specific codes. The final section of the Code assists users in complying with it. The Code is intended to provide clear parameters for developers, applicants, officers and Members in understanding the level of design quality required for schemes in Trafford, and enabling robust decision making.

Following a further period of community and stakeholder consultation a final Code will be published for adoption in autumn 2023 and will be the subject of a future report to the Executive.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Executive:-

- Approves the consultation draft Trafford Design Code (TDC) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD);
- Notes that the content of the consultation draft Trafford Design Guide (TDG) SPD (June 2022) has been incorporated into the Trafford Design Code and supersedes it, cancelling this document with immediate effect;
- Approves the next stage of publicity and consultation arrangements for the Trafford Design Code SPD;
- Notes that the approval of the draft Code represents the successful completion of a Design Code within the 12 month DLUHC Design Code Pathfinders Programme.
- Notes that following the consultation process described in this report, a future report will seek approval for the content of the final Trafford Design Code SPD;
- Notes that an updated planning application Validation Checklist will be brought forward alongside the adopted TDC;
- Notes that a future report will seek approval for the consultation draft Trafford Wharfside Development Framework and Trafford Wharfside Masterplan.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

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Background Papers: None

Appendices

Appendix 1: Coding Plan
Appendix 2: Consultation Draft Trafford Design Code

<p>Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities</p>	<p>Securing high quality development underpins the Council's corporate priorities in a number of ways. For example the adoption of internal space standards and having access to green space within a development improves health and wellbeing and reduces health inequalities; access to high quality, affordable housing lifts people out of poverty; and by reducing carbon footprints, delivering new housing developments that are adaptable, sustainable and low-energy use, and promoting active travel, addresses the climate crisis.</p> <p>Policy L7 of the Core Strategy relates specifically to design and requires that development must be appropriate in its context, make best opportunities to improve the character and quality of an area, enhance the street scene or character of an area and make appropriate provision for open space.</p> <p>Good design also underpins the various Place Objectives and Strategic Objectives in the Core Strategy and policies relating to the supply of new homes, employment land, open space, transport and accessibility.</p> <p>Policy CQ6 of the Civic Quarter Area Action Plan relates to high quality design and requires all development to achieve high quality design which will be accessible and useable by all sections of the community. Policy CQ6.1 takes design policy further specifically in relation to tall buildings, and Policy CQ7 in relation to public realm. The importance of good design is central to the CQAAP as a whole.</p>
<p>Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework</p>	<p>Design quality is integral to PFE Policy JP-P 1 'Sustainable Places' of the draft Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document. This policy aims to make the region one of the most liveable city regions in the world, which is distinctive and with a clear identity which responds to the natural environment, landscape features, historic environment and local history and culture and enables a clear understanding of how the place has developed. Development should also be visually stimulating, creating interesting and imaginative environments which raise the human spirit through the use of green space, public art</p>

	<p>and quality design. This policy will, once adopted, be part of the development plan for Trafford.</p> <p>The Trafford Design Code SPD will be the detailed local response to this policy.</p>
Financial	<p>DLUHC, via Section 31 funding, have provided a one off grant of £160,000 to deliver the Design Code within the 12 month Design Code Pathfinder period. This has covered the costs of two posts for 12 months (c. £110,000) and the remaining monies have been directed to consultant support for a) assistance with consultation events; b) landscaping and planting coding; and c) the Wharfside Masterplan. The Wharfside Masterplan contribution (£14,000) was match funded with Evergreen funding (£11,000) and a contribution from the Planning consultancy budget (£10,000).</p> <p>All other officer resource required can be met from existing budgets.</p> <p>There will be an ongoing maintenance cost for the digital platform which will be subject to a future business case and the relevant procurement processes. Thus far the digital platform has been provided at no charge to the Council as it is a proof of concept exercise.</p>
Legal Implications:	<p>None arising specifically from the content of this report. The Design Code SPD will be the subject of a full and formal public consultation, in accordance with the relevant statutory processes.</p>
Equality/Diversity Implications	<p>Positive impact through the imposition of accessibility standards for new development.</p>
Sustainability Implications	<p>The Design Code will be underpinned by sustainability principles both in the specifics of new development and also in the promotion of, for example, active travel.</p>
Carbon Reduction	<p>The Design Code will be underpinned by sustainability principles to reduce carbon emissions and address the climate crisis.</p>
Resource Implications e.g. Staffing / ICT / Assets	<p>The Council's own development schemes for its assets will need to comply with the guidance in the Design Code which will need to be taken into account in any development appraisal.</p> <p>DLUHC have provided a one off grant of £160,000 to deliver the Design Code within the 12 month Design Code Pathfinder period. This will cover the cost of two officer posts for 12 months. As the work has been delivered primarily in house, backfilling of posts of officers redeployed on the Design Code work has been required to ensure the continuation of the day to day work of the</p>

	<p>Planning Service.</p> <p>If the Trafford Design Code remains an online and interactive digital resource then there will be an ongoing maintenance cost for the digital platform.</p>
Risk Management Implications	The project plan for the Trafford Design Code includes consideration of the risks in not delivering the project within the 12 month Design Code Pathfinder programme, and which identifies proposed mitigation measures.
Health & Wellbeing Implications	Likely to have a positive impact in the imposition of standards for, for example, internal space, outdoor amenity space and green space.
Health and Safety Implications	N/A

1. Background

- 1.1 Work on the Trafford Design Guide started in 2019, with the commissioning of LDA Design to draft the Guide. This work included a series of consultation ‘design days’ and workshops across the Borough, attended by various interested parties and stakeholders, culminating in a well-attended Design Symposium held at Trafford Town Hall in January 2020. Unfortunately, whilst this consultation informed the initial draft stage of the Trafford Design Guide, the Covid-19 pandemic led to the work being paused before the document reached completion.
- 1.2 Work on the Design Guide recommenced in spring 2021 and in July 2021 the government announced their intention to run what eventually became the Design Code Pathfinders Programme. Officers saw an opportunity to obtain funding to build on the work on the Trafford Design Guide and in February 2022 and following a competitive process, the Council was selected as one of the Pathfinders and one of only five Local Planning Authorities awarded the maximum Section 31 grant of £160,000. In total twenty five Local Planning Authorities and neighbourhood groups have taken part in the Pathfinder Programme, which commenced in May 2022. Those Councils producing area wide Codes are generally at the same stage of the process as the Trafford Design Code – with a draft Code either at or nearing completion and adoption anticipated later in 2023.
- 1.3 In June 2022 the Executive Member for Economy and Regeneration approved the consultation draft of the Trafford Design Guide and the preparation of a Trafford Design Code as Supplementary Planning Documents, together with consultation and publicity arrangements. Since that time extensive public and stakeholder consultation has been carried out, a digital platform solution identified and commissioned as a proof of concept, and the Code drafted.
- 1.4 Further reflection by officers on the content and format of the Trafford Design Guide and Trafford Design Code, and in particular the use of a fully accessible interactive digital platform, has led to the merging of the two documents into one. Some of the content will be guidance and some will be coding, but it will read as one document and will be called the Trafford Design Code. It is considered to be good practice to underpin coding with broader principles set out in guidance. For the avoidance of doubt most of the content of the previous consultation draft Trafford Design Guide has been incorporated into the Trafford Design Code in some form, albeit visually the

digital platform is almost unrecognisable from the consultation draft Trafford Design Guide.

- 1.5 Throughout the process of drafting the Trafford Design Code and carrying out consultation, officers have benefitted from formal and informal support, advice and training from DLUHC, the Office of Place, Urban Design London, the Design Council and other Pathfinder local planning authorities. This has included regular seminars and progress reviews and two substantive analysis and feedback sessions with the Design Council, one of which was a whole day event.
- 1.6 Much of the work on the Code has been carried out in house by officers – intentionally using the DLUHC grant monies as an opportunity to upskill planning staff and embed a new Heritage and Urban Design team in the Planning Service. The Service has benefitted as a whole and will continue to benefit from the upskilling opportunities that the Pathfinder programme has offered, not just those officers directly involved in producing the Code. Some consultant support has also been obtained from Barnes Walker (landscape) Royal Pilgrim (community engagement) and Capita (digital platform and the Wharfside Masterplan). The digital platform has been provided pro bono by Capita as the Code is being used for their proof of concept testing although there will be an ongoing maintenance cost for the platform if the Council wishes to continue with the arrangement.
- 1.7 Officers have also been invited to present the emerging coding work at Planning Advisory Service and Royal Town Planning Institute events as an exemplar for other local planning authorities, particularly in relation to the approach to identifying Area Types. The Design Council have also indicated their intention to use Trafford as a best practice case study on their website.
- 1.8 Consequently, approval is now sought for the consultation draft of the Trafford Design Code SPD, which incorporates the content of the previous consultation draft Trafford Design Guide.

2. Policy Status

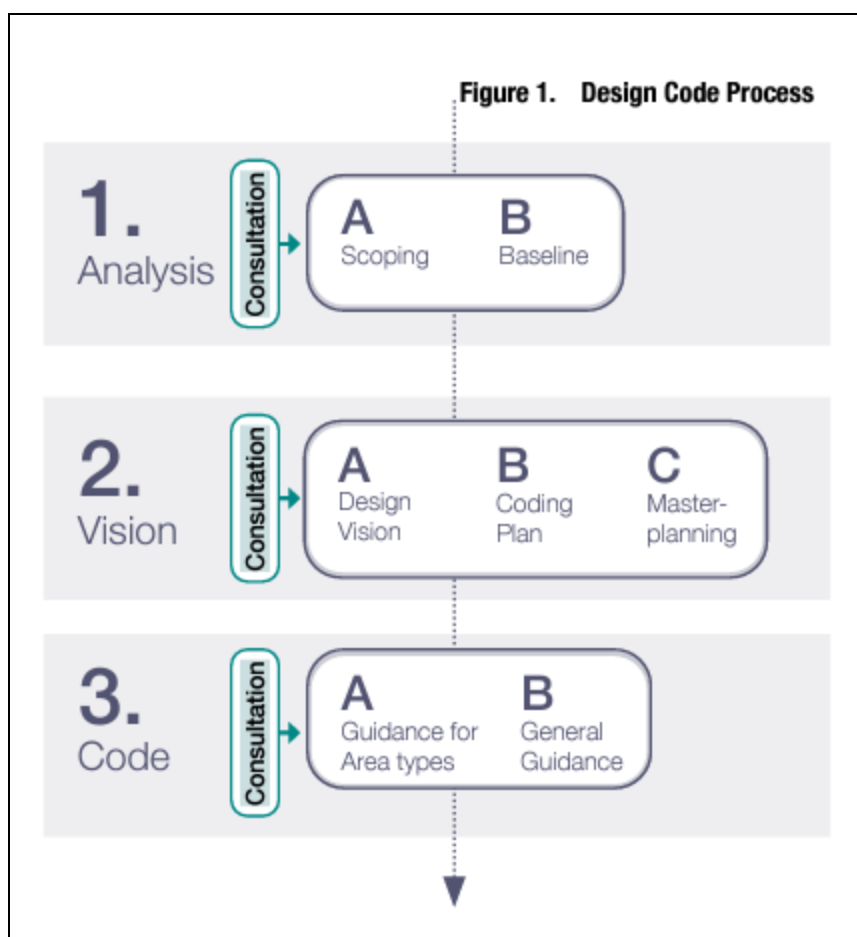
- 2.1 Design is a key element of sustainable development and being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. Paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that to provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, all local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code.
- 2.2 Paragraph 129 of the NPPF states that design guides and codes can be prepared at an area wide, neighbourhood or site specific scale and to carry weight in decision making should be produced either as part of a plan or as supplementary planning documents.
- 2.3 Design guides and design coding are distinct approaches, albeit much of the baseline work can be utilised as an evidence base for both. Often design guidance underpins a design code and provides the vision for it, with the code building in detailed requirements on top of guidance, which is the approach officers have taken here. A Local Planning Authority may have either adopted design guidance or coding or both (or coding only in relation to specific sites) but in order to underpin robust planning decision making and deliver quality places, full coverage with both is desirable and will become increasingly necessary in the light of emerging legislation and policy.

- 2.4 A design guide is a document which sets out the general design principles and standards that development proposals should follow in the area, building on policies in the development plan. Good local design guides are concise, positive documents which are accessible and use tools such as illustrations and checklists to highlight key design issues and possible solutions. They are most effective when used alongside other relevant design tools (e.g. codes).
- 2.5 A design code is a set of simple, concise, illustrated design requirements that are visual and numerical wherever possible to provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. Design codes can provide a more specific steer on what is acceptable when they are visual and numerical, rather than relying on detailed policy wording, as well as being easier to engage with. They can also give developers greater certainty about what may be acceptable when seeking planning permission and can help lead to faster decisions based on whether a proposal complies with a code, which can help to speed up the delivery of development. The content and level of detail in design codes will vary according to the scale at which a code is applied.
- 2.6 It is intended that the Trafford Design Code will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Code will therefore need to have clear links to the adopted Core Strategy (particularly Policy L7 – Design) and to the adopted Civic Quarter Area Action Plan (CQAAP) (particularly Policies CQ6 – High Quality Design, CQ6.1 – Tall Buildings and CQ7 – Public Realm Principles), although other Core Strategy and CQAAP policies will be relevant. The Code will also need to hook from the Places for Everyone development plan which will also contain relevant design policies. The emerging Trafford Local Plan will need to follow on with a consistent approach and locally specific policy.
- 2.7 In time, if the government’s proposals for ‘supplementary plans’ are realised (SPDs with the same status as development plans) it may be appropriate to readopt the documents under this procedure. With no certainty about this legislation at present, advice from DLUHC is to proceed as SPD.
- 2.8 The Design Code is not intended to replicate or supersede existing Conservation Area Appraisals and Conservation Area Management Plans but overarching principles underpinning good design will be as relevant in conservation areas as outside them. The Design Code will complement and build on the existing robust management plan guidance.
- 2.9 The guidance is however intended to replace a number of dated SPGs (mainly dating from the early 1990s) but also the more recent PG1 – Residential Development (2004) and SPG2 – A56 Corridor Guidelines (2007).
- 2.10 The Code focuses on new development. It is not intended to provide guidance on retrofit for buildings or streets – for example climate change mitigation installed on existing buildings or measures to improve the accessibility of existing public realm. It also does not cover householder development and SPD4 – A Guide for Designing House Extensions and Alterations, will remain in force.
- 2.11 It is expected that the scope of the Code will expand over time. As it emerges, further coding, guidance and masterplanning could be bolted on to the Code. For example, the Wharfside Masterplan is following on as part of the Pathfinder programme and the

emerging masterplans for New Carrington and Timperley Wedge could also be adopted as part of the Code, which would give them further weight. In time, as other SPDs and the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans are reviewed and revised, they could become part of the Code.

3. The Coding Process

- 3.1 The Trafford Design Code has been drafted in accordance with the principles and processes set out in the National Model Design Code (NMDC). The purpose of the NMDC is to provide detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design.
- 3.2 The NMDC forms part of national planning practice guidance and the government recommends that the advice in the guidance on how to prepare design guides and codes should be followed. The NMDC sets out a three stage, seven step process for preparing a local design code. The preparation of the Trafford Design Code has been undertaken broadly in accordance with this process, albeit due to the crossover between the Guide and Code, not always in a linear fashion.



Source: National Model Design Code pg.6 'Coding Process'

- 3.3 Stage 1 – Analysis. This first stage of the coding process includes 'scoping' - agreeing the geographical area to be covered by the code and the policy areas it will address; and 'baseline' – bringing together the analysis that will underpin the code and inform its contents. Much of this work was undertaken in association with the initial drafting of the Trafford Design Guide, in particular in identifying the boroughwide scope and the characteristics and special qualities of 'Trafford Places'. The analysis was undertaken via a mixture of fieldwork and utilising existing documents and resources such as the

Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Report and the Trafford Landscape Strategy, some of the Places for Everyone evidence base and the existing masterplans and frameworks for allocated sites.

- 3.4 Stage 2A – Design Vision and 2B – Coding Plan. The NMDC advocates that, when preparing a design code for the whole local planning authority area, one approach is to divide the area into ‘area types’ which are areas of character that will be used to set common parameters in the code. Area types can be identified through characterisation studies, mapping analysis and the experience of officers and local communities.
- 3.5 The exercise to draw up a Coding Plan identifying different Area Types took place following the visioning consultation in summer 2022. This was initially a paper map based exercise based on Council officers’ own knowledge and experience, but has been refined following consultation and taking the advice of the Design Council. Area Types do not necessarily correlate with the Trafford Places identified in the Design Guide and are broadly divided into previously identified allocations for substantial new development, existing established areas of built development, and countryside areas. The Area Types are as follows:-
- New Places – High Rise, High Density: covering Strategic Locations in the north of the Borough – Pomona, Trafford Wharfside, the Civic Quarter, and Trafford Waters.
 - New Places – Low Rise, Low Density: broadly covering the New Carrington and Timperley Wedge allocations in Places for Everyone, with the exception of the land south of the Red Brook in New Carrington.
 - Town Centres: the town centres of Altrincham, Sale, Stretford and Urmston.
 - Industrial and Commercial: Trafford Park and Broadheath.
 - Suburbs: the remainder of the existing built up area of the Borough where development is anticipated to predominantly come forward on infill sites.
 - Rural and Villages: broadly covering Warburton, Dunham and their rural surroundings and including land in New Carrington south of the Red Brook.
 - Green Belt and River Valleys: everything not covered by the above, where little, if any development is anticipated and which can be covered by general code-wide design principles.
- 3.6 The Area Types are shown on a map base in Appendix 1.
- 3.7 Stage 2C – Masterplanning. Where a design code covers larger sites, the NMDC suggests it may be necessary to produce a masterplan as part of the design coding exercise. Larger sites in this context means sites which are specifically allocated in the development plan (either adopted or emerging). For the Trafford Design Code, these were the ‘New Places’ – both ‘High Density, High Rise’ and ‘Low Density, Low Rise’ – comprising Pomona, Trafford Wharfside and Trafford Waters which are identified as Strategic Locations in the adopted Core Strategy, the Civic Quarter with its own Area Action Plan, plus the now well advanced New Carrington and Timperley Wedge allocations from Places for Everyone.
- 3.8 Of the large sites, only Trafford Wharfside does not already have an adopted masterplan or design framework in some format¹. The Trafford Wharfside

¹ Pomona has an adopted Masterplan, the Civic Quarter Area Action Plan includes a masterplan and design code, Trafford Waters has a Design Framework secured via planning condition and New Carrington / Timperley Wedge have masterplanning exercises being carried out as part of the Places for Everyone allocation process.

Development Framework was separately commissioned in June 2022 but is a high level piece of work to set the vision for Trafford Wharfside. The work on the Design Code therefore identified a gap in the baseline information for Trafford Wharfside broadly corresponding with Coding Process 2C in the NMDC. DLUHC encouraged officers to dedicate the remaining Pathfinder grant funding to this piece of work and to investigate opportunities for match funding.

- 3.9 Consequently in May 2023, following a tendering exercise, Capita were commissioned to produce a Trafford Wharfside Masterplan which will sit between the emerging Wharfside Development Framework and the Trafford Design Code. Work on the masterplan has now commenced.
- 3.10 The completed masterplan will be a key document setting parameters and robust urban design principles for the Trafford Wharfside area. Together with the Trafford Wharfside Development Framework and the Trafford Design Guide and Code the document will enable the Council to deliver transformational change of exemplar design quality across the Wharfside area.
- 3.11 It is also expected that the Masterplan will have a dual purpose – as well as forming part of the Trafford Design Code it can also serve as an evidence base document for the emerging Trafford Local Plan. This is an approach that some other Pathfinder authorities are taking and is encouraged by DLUHC.
- 3.12 Once consultation drafts have been completed, the Trafford Wharfside Development Framework and Masterplan will be the subject of future reports to the Executive, likely in autumn 2023. Consultation on both documents will then be carried out. Given that DLUHC encouraged the commissioning of this masterplanning work some way through the Pathfinder Programme, they are satisfied that this piece of work is not as advanced as the emerging Design Code and there is no expectation that it will be completed by June 2023.
- 3.11 Stage 3A – Guidance for Area Types and 3B – Code Wide Guidance. The work to draft the specific coding and guidance contained within the Trafford Design Code has taken place throughout the project, albeit with much of the work taking place after consultation events and taking into account the feedback from them. Some of the guidance has been transferred directly from the consultation draft Trafford Design Guide, some has been adapted from content in that document, and some is entirely new and has been drafted afresh.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 There has been significant public and stakeholder consultation carried out thus far and it has been a substantial element of the project. There have been a variety of methods used, including online, face to face drop in events and workshops, and specifically targeted consultation aimed at particular interest groups. The Pathfinder programme has required that community consultation be both wide and deep and officers have made best endeavours in this regard. Officers have been commended by the Design Council for their engagement strategy with children at the pupil workshops held at St. Ambrose College, which were open to all year groups.
- 4.3 Although there has been some correlation, the various stages of consultation have not necessarily fitted exactly with each stage of the coding process. So that discussion and debate was not stifled (albeit the workshops were facilitated) people have been able to air their views regardless of which stage of the coding process they were most

relevant to. For example, responses to the consultation draft Trafford Design Guide fed into the scoping (breadth and coverage of the code), vision (potential area types and topics to cover), and code (content of the code and what should be guidance and what should be code).

4.2 During the summer of 2022 there were two consultation exercises carried out:-

- An online consultation in relation to the consultation draft Trafford Design Guide with a questionnaire for interested parties to air their views. This ran between 1 July 2022 and 9 September 2022. 40 responses were received.
- A series of consultation events held in the town centres of Altrincham, Sale, Partington, Urmston and Stretford and at Limelight in Old Trafford which took the format of drop in roadshow type events running across a morning or afternoon. A survey, including a visual preference survey was used. 271 survey responses were received.

4.3 Subsequently, in November 2022 a number of stakeholder workshops were held. These were either area based or topic based. A broad range of stakeholders and other interested parties were invited and the events were advertised by way of social media and posters displayed in the relevant areas.

4.4 Area based events were held in Urmston, Warburton, Altrincham, Stretford, Partington and Sale. These were held in a workshop format to understand what attendees thought of their area now and what they thought should be coded for to improve the quality of future development. The events at Altrincham and Partington were particularly well attended.

4.5 The topic based events were focused on Inclusive Design, Movement and Active Travel, Sustainability and Landscaping and Nature. The topics were based on the Council's corporate priorities, the baseline work in the Trafford Design Guide and feedback from the visioning exercise in the summer.

4.6 Following the November 2022 events, further targeted consultation sessions / workshops were held with the following interest groups / organisations:-

- GMCA Housing, Planning and Ageing Group
- Greater Sport
- Historic England
- St. Ambrose College (pupil workshop)
- Trafford Building Control
- Trafford Deaf Partnership
- Trafford Public Health
- Trafford Strategic Housing Partnership
- Ward Members

4.7 The feedback from these consultation events has informed the content of the Code. In very broad terms, the feedback received was that attendees wanted characterful new development in the Borough which reflected local context, but that the Code should not stifle innovation or be so prescriptive that an architect could only 'design by numbers'. There was wide ranging support for the inclusion of measures to improve the accessibility, inclusivity and sustainability of new development, but that the Code should also be mindful of development viability.

- 4.8 A detailed consultation statement will be published alongside the final draft of the Code for adoption in the autumn, which will summarise the feedback received at all stages of consultation and officers' response.
- 4.9 As it has emerged officers have also been informally testing the Code and its principles against a selection of new development proposals to understand its implications. One of these schemes has recently been dismissed at appeal on design grounds. It has proved particularly useful for small infill sites in the urban area with a distinct context but where exact replication of existing building design is not possible or appropriate. Further testing of the Code on a broader range of development types will take place following publication of the consultation draft.

5. The Trafford Design Code - Overview

- 5.1 The Trafford Design Code is intended to be accessed and used via a web based digital platform. The digital platform has been built and designed in accordance with the gov.uk standards and guidelines for government digital publishing and services. It has been designed to be fully accessible with options to, for example, change the contrast, size and spacing of text and / or view a dyslexia friendly version of the Code. The digital platform also enables a user to interact only with the information they need and move between the sections of the Code relevant to them. However, the Code can be read 'cover to cover' if required and this version of the Code can be found at Appendix 2.
- 5.2 There are interactive tools and graphics throughout the Code which cannot be properly reproduced in a pdf format and are consequently not included in the appendices to this report other than as a placeholder. However, these tools are intended to assist users of the digital platform in understanding and using the code rather than providing the Code content itself.
- 5.3 The landing page for the Code immediately sets out the options available to users. The introductory part 'Learn about the Code' is split into three sections – Learn how to use this Design Code, Strategic Design Principles and Understand Trafford's Places. This section comprises the 'how' and the 'why' of the Design Code and its vision. The vision is, in short, designing for the way people live, creating quality and healthy places and design influenced by Trafford's rich heritage and culture. Underpinning this are the eight strategic design principles which are consistent with the consultation draft Trafford Design Guide.
- 5.4 The next section of the landing page are the coding sections – 'View the Design Code for your project'. This is split into nine chapters: Innovation; Landscape and Nature; Streets and Public Realm; Neighbourhoods and New Places; Commercial and Non-Residential Buildings; Tall Buildings; Residential Sites and Multiple Homes; Houses; and Apartments.
- 5.6 Each code chapter has an introductory page which gives some context for the particular code and then general guidance (rather than coding) together with best practice case studies. Each subchapter of the code can be accessed at the top of the page. Within each subchapter are the various codes which are numbered for easy reference. There are also relevant links to further non-Trafford guidance such as Manual for Streets.

5.7 This is an example of the layout of the code (note on the digital platform all the links will be clickable).

Houses
[Download as pdf](#)

Accessibility

Introduction


All homes should be designed to be inclusive and accessible to all anticipated building users, regardless of the immediate needs of their occupants. Access to communal landscapes and facilities should not be compromised for those with mobility difficulties and they should not be made to feel excluded by poorly laid out designs.

Codes in this Section

- [Accessibility standards](#)
- [Accessible external areas](#)
- [Accessible parking](#)

Features of accessible houses

- Firm and level pathway around edge of house
- Stable pathway on both sides of vehicle
- Additional side entrance
- Low or no threshold doors
- Level hard surface in garden
- Wide entrances to house
- No change in level or slope where cars cross pavement
- Wide and level pavement with firm stable surface materials
- Paths and entrances protected from weather



[View Part M Building Regulations](#)

HAC1

Accessibility standards

CODE	Description	Evidence	Further guidance
	<p>All new homes must be designed to meet Building Regulations M4(2) Category 2: Accessible and adaptable dwellings. Building Regulations M4(3) Category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings must be provided in accordance with the New Trafford Local Plan.</p>		

[View Part M Building Regulations](#)

5.8 The final section on the landing page is 'Get help with your project'. This includes case studies and a glossary of terms to assist both built environment professionals and the community who may not be so familiar with some of the technical language used. This section will include, in time, tools to assist applicants in creating a 'Statement of Compliance', and a Design and Access Statement (a standard requirement for most planning applications) but as it requires additional documentation to be submitted with a planning application, will need to be brought forward via changes to the planning application Validation Checklist.

5.9 Overall the Code is intended to deliver a statement of the Council's intent for the quality of new development, and clear requirements to meet in order to comply with it. It is intended to provide greater certainty for developers in delivering schemes in Trafford, and assist officers when they apply their professional planning judgement to proposals, and the Planning Committee in determining applications. It will also give a robust basis for defending planning appeals on design grounds.

6. Next Steps

6.1 The final requirement of the Design Code Pathfinder Programme is the submission of the Code to DLUHC which took place on 9 June 2023. The Code was provided in both text only and digital forms. It is expected that DLUHC will provide feedback on the Code and feedback may also be received from other organisations such as the Design Council.

6.2 Following approval of the consultation draft by the Executive, the Trafford Design Code SPD will be published on the online platform for consultation purposes, alongside a questionnaire. Free text responses will also be possible. Consultation will start in late June or early July 2023 and run for a minimum of six weeks. During the consultation period, a developers' forum and architects' forum will be held, together with community drop in session(s) and the consultation draft Code will be presented to Planning Committee for their views.

6.3 The Council's planning application Validation Checklist will be updated to incorporate compliance requirements with the Code and through the use of digital tools. The review of the Validation Checklist is an officer and Planning Committee function and will be progressed alongside the adoption of the Code, with the intention to take an updated Validation Checklist to Planning Committee in the autumn, followed by a period of consultation, and adoption of the revised Validation Checklist before the end of 2023.

6.4 The output from the consultation, forums, testing and feedback from DLUHC and other organisations will inform the content of the final Trafford Design Code. This will be approved by Planning Committee before being returned to the Executive for adoption in the autumn.

7. Other Options

7.1 Other options are not to approve the consultation draft Trafford Design Code. However, the Council has been awarded £160,000 from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) as part of the Design Code Pathfinder programme in order to progress the Code. It is likely that in time design guidance and coding will become a statutory requirement and the Pathfinder programme enables the Council to be an early adopter. It will give officers and Members of the Planning Committee a tool kit to resist developments of poor design and to improve design quality in the Borough. The Council's case at planning appeals will be further strengthened as a result of adoption, where planning applications have been refused on design grounds. Adoption as SPD will give the Design Code more weight as a material planning consideration.

8. Reasons for Recommendation

8.1 The Executive is requested to:-

- Approves the consultation draft Trafford Design Code (TDC) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD);
- Notes that the content of the consultation draft Trafford Design Guide (TDG) SPD (June 2022) has been incorporated into the Trafford Design Code and supersedes it, cancelling this document with immediate effect;
- Approves the next stage of publicity and consultation arrangements for the Trafford Design Code SPD;
- Notes that the approval of the draft Code represents the successful completion of a Design Code within the 12 month DLUHC Design Code Pathfinders Programme.
- Notes that following the consultation process described in this report, a future report will seek approval for the content of the final Trafford Design Code SPD;
- Notes that an updated planning application Validation Checklist will be brought forward alongside the adopted TDC;
- Notes that a future report will seek approval for the consultation draft Trafford Wharfside Development Framework and Trafford Wharfside Masterplan.

8.2 The reasons for this recommendation are as follows:-

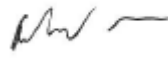
- The adoption of the Trafford Design Code will put into place a robust, government backed set of design policy and guidance for use in planning decisions, which will enable the Council to elevate design standards and bring forward high quality new development, with community buy in;
- The Code would support the Council's corporate priorities and send a clear message about the quality of new development expected in the Borough to contribute to these;
- The approval of the consultation draft Code will enable officers to report to DLUHC that they have successfully produced a Design Code within the 12 month Design Code Pathfinders Programme;
- The adoption of the Code will enable the continued upskilling of existing staff and will be of benefit in staff recruitment, retention and succession;
- The Code will provide a framework for the adoption of future masterplanning and relevant planning guidance.

Key Decision No

Finance Officer Clearance *(type in initials)*.....PC 19.05.23.....

Legal Officer Clearance *(type in initials)*.....TR 19.05.23.....

[CORPORATE] DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE *(electronic)*



To confirm that the Financial and Legal Implications have been considered and the Executive Member has cleared the report.