

Socioeconomics and Human Health

Appendix 8.1 Policy and Guidance

8.1 The assessments found within ES Vol 1 Chapter 8 Socioeconomics and Human Health have been informed by the following legislation, policies and guidance.

International Legislation

8.2 There is no international legislation relating to the assessment of socioeconomics.

8.3 There is no international legislation relating to the assessment of human health.

National Legislation, Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

8.4 The National Planning Policy Framework¹ (NPPF) (revised in December 2024) remains a material consideration for planning decisions by Local Planning Authorities and for the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans.

8.5 The latest iteration of the NPPF (published December 2024) states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to sustainable development through interconnected economic, social, and environmental objectives (paragraph 8).

8.6 The economic role emphasises building a “strong, responsive, and competitive economy” ensuring suitable land use availability. The social role prioritises supporting “strong, vibrant, and healthy communities” by addressing housing needs and “fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places”.

8.7 The NPPF lists six planning principles (paragraph 135) that should underpin both plan-making and decision-making. These include contributing to the achievement of sustainable development; effective engagement between plan makers and communities; and being accessible to assist public involvement.

8.8 These principles are further developed within the following key sections:

- **Chapter 5** – Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes emphasises diverse, high-quality housing supply responsive to demographic trends, market needs, and local demands, supporting affordable and mixed-tenure housing, including social rent (paragraph 64);
- **Chapter 6** – Building a Strong, Competitive Economy outlines the need for policies and decisions that accommodate sector-specific requirements to foster local economic growth, including supporting innovation hubs and modern infrastructure needs (paragraph 87);
- **Chapter 7** – Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres encourages residential development in town centres to enhance vitality and addresses adaptive reuse of spaces to meet community needs (paragraph 90);
- **Chapter 8** – Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities highlights the role of planning in improving health and wellbeing by ensuring access to schools, safe public spaces, and facilities that promote social interaction and cohesion (paragraph 96);
- **Chapter 11** – Making Effective Use of Land emphasises the role of planning to promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing
- where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (paragraph 125); and

¹ MHCLG (2024) National Planning Policy Framework December 2024 (revised February 2025). Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

- **Chapter 12** – Achieving Well-Designed Places underlines the importance of local, high-quality, and sustainable design to foster better living environments (paragraph 131).

8.9 For large-scale developments, promoting med-use layouts is vital to reduce travel needs for work, shopping, leisure, and education, aligning with updated sustainable transport guidelines (paragraph 111).

8.10 The provision of high-quality open spaces and sports facilities is emphasised as critical for community health and well-being. Policies must be informed by robust, up-to-date assessments of needs and opportunities for recreational spaces, with added benefits for nature and climate resilience (paragraph 103).

Regional Policy and Guidance

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan 2022 – 2039

8.11 The GMCA Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan² provides a comprehensive framework aimed at delivering sustainable and inclusive growth across the boroughs of Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford, and Wigan. With a vision to transform Greater Manchester into an economically vibrant, environmentally sustainable, and socially inclusive city-region, the plan sets out milestones for development up to 2039.

8.12 The strategic vision is underpinned by several key objectives:

- **Meet Housing Needs:** Increase the number of net additional dwellings, ensure a diverse mix, and boost affordable housing;
- **Create Neighbourhoods of Choice:** Prioritise brownfield land use, focus new homes in growth areas and town centres, and ensure accessibility to public transport hubs;
- **Promote Economic Growth:** Develop high-value employment clusters, facilitate diverse employment sites, and leverage national and international assets;
- **Reduce Inequalities:** Ensure access to skills training and employment, strengthen northern competitiveness, and improve public transport;
- **Promote Sustainable Movement:** Enhance the transport network, encourage active travel, and implement infrastructure for cleaner vehicles;
- **Achieve Carbon Neutrality:** Promote patterns that minimise travel needs, enhance energy efficiency, and integrate renewable energy solutions;
- **Enhance Natural Environment:** Protect landscapes, improve access to green spaces, and promote biodiversity;
- **Support Infrastructure:** Ensure developments are served by necessary physical and social infrastructure including schools, health facilities, and transport; and
- **Foster Health and Wellbeing:** Improve access to healthy food, reduce air pollution impacts, and maximise health benefits from green spaces

8.13 The plan includes specific policies to realise these objectives:

- **Policy JP-H1:** Housing Supply: Targets delivery of homes to meet local needs by optimising land use;
- **Policy JP-E1:** Employment Areas: Encourages creation of employment clusters to boost job opportunities;
- **Policy JP-S2:** Health and Social Care Facilities: Ensures development plans address local healthcare needs;

² Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2022) GMCA Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan 2022 – 2039. Available at: <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-housing/strategic-planning/places-for-everyone/pfe-adoption/>

- **Policy JP-S3:** Education and Childcare Facilities: Requires provision of quality educational and childcare facilities;
- **Policy JP-S4:** Play and Informal Recreation: Promotes inclusion of accessible play areas in residential developments;
- **Policy JP-S5:** Sports and Recreation Facilities: Supports development of high-quality sports and recreation spaces;
- **Policy JP-G4:** Open Space: Protects and promotes the creation of green spaces;
- **Policy JP-C1:** Integrated Transport Network: Supports development patterns that minimise travel needs and integrate sustainable transport options; and
- **Policy JP-S1:** Sustainable Development: Emphasises the need to maximise economic, social, and environmental benefits from growth.

8.14 Through these strategic objectives and policies, the GMCA Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan aims to ensure that the growth over the coming years is inclusive, sustainable, and beneficial for all residents of Greater Manchester.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Strategy 2025-2035

8.15 The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Strategy³ aims to position Greater Manchester as a pioneer in economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. The Strategy, underpinned by the Greater Manchester Strategy, envisions a city-region that thrives economically, supports its residents to realise their full potential, and ensures equitable growth across all boroughs.

- 8.16 The strategic vision is anchored by several core objectives:
- **Economic Strengthening:** Promoting high-value sectors and fostering innovation to boost global competitiveness, while addressing productivity disparities;
 - **Inclusive Growth:** Ensuring all residents benefit from economic prosperity through equitable access to jobs, housing, education, and health services; and
 - **Environmental Sustainability:** Committing to carbon neutrality by 2038, enhancing green infrastructure, and promoting sustainable development practices.
 - **Quality of Life:** Improving health and well-being by ensuring access to healthcare, opportunities for active lifestyles, and reducing health inequalities.

- 8.17 Health and well-being are also key to the GMCA Strategy, reflected in specific policies aimed at improving community health:
- **Health Infrastructure:** Ensuring new developments provide adequate healthcare facilities to meet community needs. Coordinating with local and Greater Manchester-wide health strategies to enhance healthcare services;
 - **Healthy Lifestyles:** Promoting active travel and access to green spaces to encourage physical activity and improve mental well-being. Initiatives to improve air quality by facilitating public transportation, cycling, and walking; and
 - **Healthy Food Access:** Enhancing access to healthy food options across all communities, addressing dietary-related health issues, and supporting local food initiatives.

8.18 Through these objectives and policies, the GMCA Strategy aims to create a resilient, healthy, and inclusive Greater Manchester. The approach emphasises sustained economic growth balanced with environmental stewardship and social equity, ensuring long-term prosperity for all residents.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Housing Strategy 2024

- 8.19 The Greater Manchester Combined Authority Housing Strategy (2024)⁴ provides the strategic framework for housing delivery across Greater Manchester, setting out how housing growth will support inclusive economic development, improved health outcomes, and reduced inequalities across the city-region.
- 8.20 The Strategy recognises housing as a key social determinant of health and seeks to address challenges relating to housing affordability, quality, availability, and accessibility. It aligns housing delivery with wider objectives for regeneration, economic participation, environmental sustainability, and health and wellbeing.
- 8.21 Key objectives of the GMCA Housing Strategy relevant to socioeconomics and human health include:
- Increasing the supply of homes to meet identified needs, including affordable, social, and specialist housing;
 - Improving housing quality, safety, and energy efficiency to support physical and mental health and reduce fuel poverty;
 - Reducing homelessness and housing insecurity;
 - Supporting place-based regeneration to strengthen communities and local economies; and
 - Promoting the delivery of healthy neighbourhoods with access to green space, services, employment opportunities, and sustainable transport.

8.22 The Strategy also emphasises the importance of partnership working with local authorities, health bodies, and developers to ensure that housing growth is supported by appropriate social and health infrastructure.

8.23 The Socioeconomics and Human Health assessments have had regard to the GMCA Housing Strategy in considering population change, housing-led regeneration, demand on services, and potential implications for health inequalities arising from the Proposed Development.

Local Policy and Guidance

Manchester City Council (MCC) Places for Everyone (Local Plan)

8.24 The Manchester Places for Everyone Local Plan⁵, which covers Manchester City Council, provides the statutory development framework for the city and sets out policies to guide sustainable growth, improve health and wellbeing, and reduce socio-economic inequalities.

- 8.25 Key Local Plan policies relevant to the assessment of socioeconomics and human health include those which seek to:
- Promote healthy, inclusive and resilient neighbourhoods;
 - Ensure access to employment, education, healthcare and community facilities;
 - Deliver a sufficient supply of high-quality housing, including affordable housing;
 - Improve environmental quality, including air quality and access to green and open space; and
 - Support sustainable transport and active travel.

8.26 Policies relating to housing delivery, employment land provision, social infrastructure, open space, and sustainable movement have informed the identification of health determinants and pathways considered within the assessment. The socioeconomics and human health assessments have had regard to the Local Plan’s objectives to address health inequalities and support inclusive economic growth.

³ Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2025) GMCA Strategy 2025 – 2035. Available at: <https://togetherwearegm.co.uk/>
⁴ Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2019) GMCA Housing Strategy 2019 – 2024. Available at: <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/2257/gm-housing-strategy-2019-2024.pdf>

⁵ Manchester City Council (2024) Places For Everyone Joint Development Plan Document For Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan 2022 To 2039 Adopted 21 March 2024. Available at: <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/2drduk0t/places-for-everyone-joint-development-plan-dec24.pdf>

Manchester City Council (MCC) Core Strategy Development Plan Document

8.27 The Manchester City Council Core Strategy Development Plan Document⁶ (2012) establishes the spatial vision and strategic objectives for development in the city and explicitly recognises the role of planning in improving health outcomes.

8.28 Relevant Core Strategy policies include:

- **Policy SP1 – Spatial Principles**, which promotes sustainable development, accessibility, and the efficient use of land;
- **Policy SP2 – Spatial Distribution of Development**, which focuses growth in accessible locations close to services, employment and public transport;
- **Policy H1 – Overall Housing Provision**, supporting delivery of housing to meet identified needs;
- **Policy H4 – Affordable Housing**, aimed at addressing housing affordability and reducing inequality;
- **Policy EC1 – Employment and Economic Growth**, supporting job creation and economic participation;
- **Policy CC1 – Climate Change Mitigation**, promoting sustainable design and reduced exposure to environmental health risks; and
- **Policy EN1 – Design Principles**, which seeks to create safe, attractive and inclusive environments that support health and wellbeing.

8.29 The assessment considers how the Proposed Development aligns with these strategic policies and contributes to positive socio-economic and health outcomes for existing and future populations.

Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents

8.30 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) prepared by Manchester City Council have been reviewed where applicable. These include SPDs relating to design and placemaking, planning obligations, developer contributions, and health and wellbeing.

8.31 SPDs provide additional guidance on how Local Plan and Core Strategy policies should be implemented at the site level, including expectations for mitigating adverse effects and maximising health benefits. The principles contained within relevant SPDs have informed mitigation and enhancement measures identified within the Socioeconomics and Human Health assessments.

Topic Specific Guidance and Industry Standards

Additionality Guide (2014)

8.32 The Additionality Guide⁷ (2014) has informed the approach to assessing socio-economic and health effects by ensuring that impacts attributed to the Proposed Development are additional to baseline conditions, existing trends, and other committed development.

8.33 This guidance supports transparent consideration of causality, scale and attribution, particularly in relation to employment effects, population change, and associated health outcomes.

ISEP (formerly IEMA) publications including Social Impact Assessment in EIA in the UK, Delivering Proportionate EIA, Demystifying Cumulative

Effects, Determining Significance for Human Health in Environmental Impact Assessment and other good practice guidance

8.34 Guidance published by the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP), formerly IEMA, has informed the scope, methodology and reporting of the Socioeconomics and Human Health assessments.

8.35 Key guidance includes:

- Social Impact Assessment in EIA in the UK;
- Delivering Proportionate EIA;
- Demystifying Cumulative Effects; and
- Determining Significance for Human Health in Environmental Impact Assessment.

8.36 These publications have guided the identification of relevant receptors and health pathways, the consideration of cumulative and in-combination effects, and the approach to determining the significance of effects.

ISEP Guide to Scoping in Human Health Assessment and Health in Environmental Impact Assessment

8.37 The ISEP Guide to Scoping in Human Health Assessment and Health in Environmental Impact Assessment has informed the scoping process, ensuring a proportionate and evidence-based approach. The guidance supports a focus on material health effects, appropriate spatial and temporal boundaries, and population groups likely to be affected, including vulnerable groups.

HUDU and other relevant guidance on planning for health, health infrastructure and healthy built environments

8.38 Guidance produced by the Health and Urban Development Unit (HUDU), alongside other relevant planning-for-health resources, has informed consideration of healthcare capacity, social infrastructure provision, and healthy placemaking.

8.39 This guidance has supported assessment of potential demand on healthcare services arising from population change and informed the identification of mitigation measures and planning obligations where appropriate.

⁶ Manchester City Council (2012) Manchester's Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document. Available at: https://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/5672/core_strategy

⁷ Homes and Communities Agency (2014) Additionality Guide 4th Edition 2014. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7ec4b9e5274a2e87db1c92/additionality_guide_2014_full.pdf