

# AGENDA FOR CABINET



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**To: All Members of Cabinet**

**Councillors :** E O'Brien (Leader and Cabinet Member, Strategic Growth) (Chair), C Cummins (Cabinet Member, Housing Services), C Morris (Cabinet Member, Culture, Economy & Skills), A Quinn (Cabinet Member, Environment, Climate Change and Operations), T Rafiq (Cabinet Member, Corporate Affairs and HR), L Smith (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member, Children and Young People), T Tariq (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member, Health and Wellbeing), S Thorpe (Cabinet Member, Finance and Transformation) and S Walmsley (Cabinet Member, Communities and Inclusion)

Dear Member/Colleague

## **Cabinet**

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Cabinet which will be held as follows:-

<b>Date:</b>	Wednesday, 6 November 2024
<b>Place:</b>	Bury Town Hall
<b>Time:</b>	6.00 pm
<b>Briefing Facilities:</b>	If Opposition Members and Co-opted Members require briefing on any particular item on the Agenda, the appropriate Director/Senior Officer originating the related report should be contacted.
<b>Notes:</b>	

## **AGENDA**

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members of Cabinet are asked to consider whether they have an interest in any of the matters of the Agenda and, if so, to formally declare that interest.

### **3 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Questions are invited from members of the public about the work of the Cabinet.

Notice of any question must be given to Democratic Services by midday on Monday, Monday 04<sup>th</sup> November. Approximately 30 minutes will be set aside for Public Question Time, if required.

### **4 MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

Questions are invited from Elected Members about items on the Cabinet agenda. 15 minutes will be set aside for Member Question Time, if required.

Notice of any Member question must be given to the Monitoring Officer by midday Friday 01<sup>st</sup> November.

### **5 MINUTES *(Pages 5 - 18)***

Minutes from the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024 are attached.

### **6 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY, 2025/26 BUDGET PROPOSALS AND PERFORMANCE UPDATE *(Pages 19 - 56)***

Report from the Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation attached.

### **7 NORTHERN GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (SPD) – CONSULTATION DRAFT *(Pages 57 - 216)***

Report from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth

### **8 NORTHERN GATEWAY (INVESTMENT ZONE / ATOM VALLEY STRATEGIC OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE) *(Pages 217 - 226)***

Report from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth

### **9 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY 2024-28 *(Pages 227 - 314)***

Report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion

### **10 ACQUIRING PROPERTIES FOR CHILDREN'S HOMES IN BURY *(Pages***

315 - 344)

Report from the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

**11 SOCIAL VALUE STRATEGY** *(Pages 345 - 368)*

Report from the Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion

**12 SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICE CONTRACT** *(Pages 369 - 376)*

Report from the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

**13 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE REVIEW AND VOLUNTARY EXITS PROPOSALS** *(Pages 377 - 384)*

Report from the Cabinet Member for HR & Corporate Affairs attached.

**14 MINUTES OF ASSOCIATION OF GREATER MANCHESTER AUTHORITIES / GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY**  
*(Pages 385 - 432)*

To consider the minutes of meetings of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority held on 12 July 2024 and 27<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

**15 URGENT BUSINESS**

Any other business which by reason of special circumstances the Chair agrees may be considered as a matter of urgency.

**16 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

To consider passing the appropriate resolution under Section 100 (A)(4), Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the reason that the following business involves the disclosure of exempt information as detailed against the item.

**17 NORTHERN GATEWAY (INVESTMENT ZONE / ATOM VALLEY STRATEGIC OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE) - PART B** *(Pages 433 - 534)*

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Gillian Eagle-Cooper

Is the market hall still being maintained since it's closure ? If not why not ? As surely this would add to any additional costs of potential repairs!

I cannot attend the meeting and require my response via email please.

The Market Team have continued to maintain the Market Hall to ensure that the fabric of the building does not deteriorate whilst a long-term strategic plan is being developed.

The cost of the Market Hall maintenance is forecast to be £80k per year and is funded by the Market Revenue budget. It is important that safety is paramount, as practically possible, especially with a red flagged unsafe environment.

Jennifer Eagle-Cooper.

In October of 2023 you closed the market hall due to raac concrete what other problems has since been found that its potentially costing in excess of £6million to have the building repaired. Unfortunately I cannot attend and would like my response emailed back to me.

The Market Hall traders have been advised of the costs associated with £6m initial basic assessment to repair. Items included in the assessment were replacement roofs, replacement of the external elevations and glazing, internal fabric of the building, and mechanical and electrical. This did not include management fees.

Further work to determine more accurate costs was undertaken as was an options appraisal for a long-term permanent plan. In each instance, these costs associated with the proposed options were much higher than first realised and therefore further work must be carried out to ensure that the long-term plan meets the needs of the wider town centre and the market within the means of the resources available.

Following the options appraisal commissioned by the council, the true cost is significantly higher than the first appraisal. This is due to the initial appraisal looking at the basic need to make the building safe rather than assessing all possibilities for the market hall for the long-term future.

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**Minutes of:** **CABINET**

**Date of Meeting:** 25 September 2024

**Present:** Councillor E O'Brien (in the Chair)  
Councillors C Cummins, C Morris, A Quinn, T Rafiq, T Tariq,  
S Thorpe and S Walmsley

**Also in attendance:** Councillors M Smith and R Bernstein.  
Lynne Ridsdale, Chief Executive, Jacqui Dennis, Monitoring  
Officer, Will Blandamer, Executive Director, Health and Adult  
Care, Jeanette Richards, Executive Director Children and  
Young People, Rachel Stirk, Service Manager (Education  
Services), Kate Waterhouse, Executive Director of Strategy and  
transformation, Donna Ball, Executive Director of Operations,  
Neil Kisson, Director of Finance, Cris Logue, Assistant Director  
of Strategy, Planning & Development, Dave Wiggins, Service  
Manager - Strategic Planning & Infrastructure and Chloe  
Ashworth, Democratic Services.

**Public Attendance:** One member of the public was present at the meeting.

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor L Smith

**CA.226 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Lucy Smith.

**CA.227 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**CA.228 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Two questions were received in advance of the meeting as the questioners were not in attendance, the Chair reported that responses would be made available online and shared with the questioners outside of the meeting.

**CA.229 MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

There were no Member questions.

**CA.230 MINUTES**

**It was agreed:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 04 September 2024 be approved as a correct record.

**CA.231 CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR DISPLACED INDOOR MARKET HALL TRADERS  
OPERATING IN THE MILLGATE SHOPPING CENTRE**

Councillor Morris, Cabinet Member for Culture, Economy and Skills reported that in October 2023 Bury Indoor Market was closed due to the discovery of Reinforced Aerated Autoclaved Concrete (RAAC) which posed a significant Health and Safety risk.

Following the closure, 49 Traders (62 Units) who operated within the hall were either relocated, had their units reconfigured to continue operating, or arranged alternatives for their business.

During the consultation with traders to organise relocation, opportunities to move traders into the Millgate Shopping Centre presented themselves as Bury Council had recently entered a Joint Venture with Bruntwood to purchase the Millgate to regenerate the area, which links to the Bury Town Centre Master Plan.

By committing support, the traders that are now operating within the Millgate Shopping Centre are receiving a continued subsidy, which is over and above their rent and service charge, which is at a continued cost to the council of £163,250 plus variable utility charges throughout the proposed occupation period to March 2025.

The level of subsidy is unsustainable and is creating increased budget pressures on Bury Council.

The traders were advised that the subsidy would be revisited and reviewed in 12 months. As traders were not relocated together, the date when the 12 months expires varies considerably.

It is proposed that traders operating within the Millgate Shopping Centre be given notice that the subsidy they are receiving ends in March 2024. This will allow traders 6 months' notice to either negotiate with the Millgate Shopping Centre for a formal lease or to consider alternatives.

In response to a question regarding the cross-party group to look at appraisals members were informed there will be another meeting and a further update is anticipated to take place at the next Cabinet meeting in November.

In response to a query regarding support given and how people were targeted Councillor Morris reflected that the Council focused on ensuring traders were offered a place to operate and continue trading.

## **DECISION:-**

- Traders operating within the Mill Gate Shopping Centre be given notice that the support they are receiving ends in March 2025. This will allow traders time to either negotiate with the Mill Gate Shopping Centre for a formal lease or to consider alternatives, for example, relocation.
- The total cost of the emergency response to the closure of the Indoor Market Hall is approved by the Cabinet as it is now over £500,000.00 which deems it a key decision.

## **Reasons for recommendations:**

Although Bury Council is committed to Bury Market and the continued development of the Town Centre, continued support for a small number of relocated traders operating within the Mill Gate will create a considerable ongoing strain on Council budgets. Continued financial support for relocated Market Traders operating within the Mill Gate creates inequity for Mill Gate retailers. The continued support cost could be utilised to deliver the preferred option of the Market Hall feasibility study. Any decision in relation to an executive function which results in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function concerned, in this case, the

expenditure in excess of £500,000.00, is deemed as a key decision and must be approved by Cabinet.

**CA.232 DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT 18 – DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS FOR STRATEGIC SITE ALLOCATIONS AT ELTON RESERVOIR AND WALSHAW**

Councillor O'Brien, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth reported that this item concerns a new draft supplementary planning document that seeks to support the recently adopted Places for Everyone plan and the strategic housing sites at Elton Reservoir and Walshaw.

Members were asked to approve the draft supplementary planning document for a six-week period of consultation in order to establish stakeholder views on its content. Following consultation, all comments received will be fully considered and changes made where appropriate before the supplementary planning document is brought back to Cabinet for approval to adopt.

In response to a question regarding the provision of infrastructure requirements and the Council's ability to enforce the infrastructure requirements regardless of the size of plot members were advised the purpose of the Places for Everyone Masterplan is to ensure this is done all developers must work towards this.

Members were encouraged to promote engagement with residents and to participate themselves.

**DECISION:-**

- Cabinet approves the draft Supplementary Planning Document 18 – Development Frameworks for Places for Everyone Strategic Site Allocations at Elton Reservoir and Walshaw attached at Appendix 1 for a six-week public consultation commencing no earlier than 15 October 2024; and
- Cabinet delegates approval to the Executive Director of Place to make minor non-material editorial amendments to draft Supplementary Planning Document 18 – Development Frameworks for Places for Everyone Strategic Site Allocations at Elton Reservoir and Walshaw before consultation commences.

**Reason for recommendations:**

To ensure that stakeholders have an opportunity to have their say on the draft SPD.

**CA.233 HOLCROFT MOSS PLANNING OBLIGATIONS CONSULTATION DRAFT JOINT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

Councillor O'Brien, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth reported that this item concerns another new draft supplementary planning document that supports a policy in the recently adopted Places for Everyone plan. The Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations supplementary planning document applies across the whole Places for Everyone plan area and is, therefore, being prepared jointly by the nine Places for Everyone districts.

Holcroft Moss is situated within the borough of Warrington and is a lowland raised bog that is thought to be the only known example in Cheshire that has never been cut for peat. It is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and forms part of the Manchester Mosses Special Area of Conservation and therefore warrants strong protection.

**DECISION:-**

- Cabinet approves the draft Holcroft Moss SPD attached at Appendix 1 as the basis for a six-week public consultation commencing no earlier than 1st November 2024.
- Cabinet delegates approval to the Executive Director of Place to make minor, non-material modifications to the draft Holcroft Moss Supplementary Planning Document before consultation commences, subject to consultation and agreement with the eight other Places for Everyone authorities.

**Reason for Recommendations:**

To enable stakeholders to have the opportunity to provide comment on the draft Holcroft Moss Supplementary Planning Document before it is formally adopted.

**CA.234 BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY**

Councillor Quinn, Cabinet Member Environment, Climate Change and Operations reported that this item relates to the Bury Biodiversity Strategy which embraces the first consideration of what the Council can do to meet its biodiversity duty. It outlines the current state of biodiversity in the Borough and the actions that we can take to conserve and enhance our biodiversity assets.

A draft version of the Strategy was approved for consultation by Cabinet in December 2023 and consultation subsequently took place between 9 January and 20 February 2024. The consultation responses received are summarised in the Consultation Report which is attached at Appendix B. Following consideration of the responses, several changes have been made to the Biodiversity Strategy and these are also set out in Appendix B.

Following a discussion regarding the monitoring of bio-diversity members were informed that the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit will have an ongoing role. To be qualified to monitor sites a person requires responsible body status, which anyone with this expertise can apply for. Further information on who monitors currently will be shared with Cabinet once known.

**DECISION:-**

- Cabinet note the responses to the public consultation and the proposed post-consultation revisions as set out in Appendix B.
- Cabinet adopt the revised Bury Biodiversity Strategy (Appendix A), noting that it will be reviewed within the next five years.
- Cabinet delegate authority to the Executive Director (Place), to make any minor non-material editorial amendments to the Biodiversity Strategy ahead of its final publication.

**Reason for recommendations:**

To ensure that the Council has an up-to-date strategy in place for the conservation and enhancement of Bury's biodiversity assets.

**CA.235 NORTHERN GATEWAY (GOVERNANCE / INVESTMENT ZONE / MDC)**

Councillor O'Brien, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth reported that following the adoption of the Places for Everyone Plan in March, we are working towards delivering the Northern Gateway site and the economic growth and employment opportunities that it brings.

It is proposed that governance structures are put in place to ensure robust control, management and monitoring of the various workstreams.

This would provide a single statutory body and formalise joint working arrangements with Rochdale and the Combined authority.

The report also raises that the fact that the Northern Gateway site forms part of Greater Manchester's Investments Zone, which is designed to help the site deliver growth and innovation in the advanced manufacturing and materials sector.

#### **DECISION:-**

- Cabinet endorses the development of formal of joint working arrangements with Rochdale Council to progress work on Atom Valley and Northern Gateway.
- Cabinet approve Northern Gateway as part of Greater Manchester's Investment Zone.
- Cabinet note in principle the award of Investment Zone funding from the Investment Zone Flexible Spend fund for the purposes of delivery of the Western Access highway project.
- Cabinet approve the procurement of a consultant to appoint and lead a multi-disciplinary team to advance the Northern Gateway site to a maximum sum of £600,000 to be funded from the IZ funding and in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- Cabinet delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer to finalise and execute any associated agreements.
- Cabinet endorses the Western Access Procurement Strategy at Appendix F and delegates authority to the Executive Director (Place – Business, Growth and Infrastructure) to make adjustments to it as the Northern Gateway project progresses.
- Cabinet endorses the interim governance arrangements for Northern Gateway, including approval of Northern Gateway's:
  - a. Governance Framework,
  - b. Business Plan as appended to Part B of this report and
  - c. Procurement Strategy.
- Cabinet authorises officers to explore potential delivery options for Northern Gateway, including exploration of Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC). Further reports will be brought to Cabinet with recommendations following conclusion of this workstream.
- Cabinet notes the Rochdale Borough Council's intention to take a similar report to their Executive.

#### **Reasons for recommendation(s):**

- Significant progress is now being made to bring forward Northern Gateway allocations JPA1.1 and JPA1.2, which form part of the Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ). This includes the recent adoption of Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan in March 2024 and the designation of Northern Gateway as part of the Greater Manchester IZ.
- The designation of the Greater Manchester IZ attracts significant funding alongside other financial incentives including the retention of business rates.
- As result of these policy interventions and funding opportunities, there is a need for more structured and formalised working, resourcing and governance arrangements with Rochdale Council and GMCA to realise the opportunities, confirm the structure to move effectively into the delivery phase and ensure adherence to forthcoming government criteria relating to any funding.
- Following the adoption of PfE in March 2024 and the on-going work on the Northern Gateway Development Framework (due to come to Cabinet later in the year), priority areas of work have been identified going forward, which are included in this report, informing the recommendation herein.
- The IZ funding has been allocated from 1st April 2024, with a year-one spend deadline of 31st March 2025, along with other revenue funding, there is a need to move projects

forward swiftly and flexibly to respond to these funding opportunities. As such, the report seeks delegations to the Executive Director (Place - Business Growth and Infrastructure), Leader of the Council and relevant Portfolio holder(s) to facilitate these processes and implement the respective Delivery and Procurement Strategies.

## **CA.236 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS FOR EDUCATION SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT-CONSULTATION DRAFT**

Councillor O'Brien, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth reported that this item relates to the supplementary planning document 17, which sets out how the Council will deal with developer contributions towards education.

In June 2024, Cabinet members approved a draft of SPD17 for consultation purposes. Consultation was subsequently undertaken over a six-week period running from 15<sup>th</sup> July to 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

The comments received and the Council's response to these are set out in the Consultation Statement which is appended to this report.

Following consideration of the consultation responses, a small number of changes have been made to the SPD and Members are now asked to note the consultation responses and to approve the revised SPD for adoption.

### **DECISION:-**

- Cabinet note the responses to the public consultation and the proposed post-consultation revisions as set out in Appendix 2 to this report.
- Cabinet approve the revised SPD as the final version to be adopted and published.
- Cabinet delegate authority to the Executive Director (Place), to make any minor non-material editorial amendments to the SPD ahead of its final publication.

### **Reasons for recommendation(s)**

SPD17 sets out how the Council will deal with developer contributions for education when determining planning applications for relevant developments that may impact on education provision, such as school places. The adoption of the document will ensure that all relevant planning applications are considered against up-to-date procedures, legislation and national planning policy.

## **CA.237 DELIVERY OF A NEW SEMH SECONDARY SPECIAL SCHOOL - LAND PROPOSAL TO DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION (DfE) & OAK LEARNING PARTNERSHIP**

Councillor O'Brien, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth reported that Bury Council is committed to delivering a new special school, working in collaboration with the Department for Education (DfE) and Oak Learning Partnership.

The scheme will be funded and delivered through the Department for Education Free School Programme with the Council being required to make a modest Capital contribution towards site remediation costs. Indicative Capital costs of £475,000 have been received by the Department for Education in relation to the Council's obligations. Following detailed assessment these will be the subject of a further report to Cabinet once confirmed. Provision has been made within the Children & Young People Capital Programme to meet these costs.



A member reflected on comments from the community brought up at full Council regarding access. In response Councillor O'Brien advised that he is confident that those who currently use the site regularly will be able to continue and currently, work is taking place with Bury Football Club to consider other offers also.

#### **DECISION:-**

- Cabinet approve the disposal of the land on a long leasehold basis in accordance with the proposed terms as set out in section 4 of this report
- Cabinet instruct the Monitoring Officer to enter into lease arrangements with the DFE.
- Cabinet note that a full proposal of quantified abnormal costs will be submitted to Cabinet for approval at a later date.

#### **Reasons for recommendation(s)**

To unlock the delivery of a new SEMH secondary special school.

The proposed site boundaries ensure stakeholder considerations including strategic site access, future transport routes and contractor site management.

The PSV agreement between the Council and Department for Education (DfE) sets out the requirement for new specialist educational provision, including new Resourced Provision and new Free Special Schools.

The agreement has been subject to consideration by Cabinet and the Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee and is subject to governance provided by the PSV Delivery Board and Schools Capital Board. The development of new specialist provision seeks to ensure access to a high quality continuum of provision, enabling the majority of children and young people with additional needs to access local provision, with appropriate capacity and resources to meet need.

The proposed new school will greatly enhance Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) provision in the borough and increase the overall range and type of provision that is available to support the successful education of children and young people in Bury. In addition, it will provide support for children in mainstream schools in Bury who may be experiencing SEMH difficulties.

#### **CA.238 BURY ART MUSEUM**

Councillor Morris, Cabinet Member for Culture, Economy and Skills reported that the report relates to the Bury Art Museum roof which needs a large capital programme to repair it at a total cost of £ 655,050.04

The Council bid for a grant from the Arts Council MEND Fund and was successfully awarded £589,545 to which the Council have approved a matched amount of £65,505

The Council will need to enter into a deed of covenant with the Arts Council guaranteeing the building will remain as an Arts Museum for a further period of 15 years.

Members were advised that once the building contractor is appointed, we will know more details about how long the Art Museum may need to be closed and further information will be brought to a future Cabinet meeting along with additional information about taking an Art Museum programme out into community venues.

#### **DECISION:-**

- Cabinet note the award of £589,545 from The Arts Council with £65,505 match funding from Bury Council with a total cost of £ 655,050.04
- Cabinet request approval to draw down of the £589,545 grant to Bury Council in phases as set out in the Arts Council Awards Schedule
- Cabinet note the Grant Agreement requirement to enter into Deed of Covenant with The Arts Council of England with restriction on title over the freehold of the building for a period of 15 years. This means Bury Council commits the building to a minimum period of 15 years as an Art Museum.
- Cabinet instruct the Monitoring Officer to undertake all legal work associated with the grant agreement.
- Cabinet note the procurement process for a Quantity Surveyor and Construction Manager £12,278 limit and Heritage Architect £32,350 limit.
- Cabinet approve the start of the procurement for a main building contractor for [works] up to a value of £526,924. This will be subject to a further Cabinet report in December 2024 to approve the contract.

**Reason for recommendations:**

Approval to draw down the budget, approve the requirement to enter into a Deed of Covenant and approve the procurement process is sought so that the first phase of the MEND grant is released by The Arts Council.

**CA.239 CORPORATE PARENTING - ANNUAL ADOPTION REPORT**

Councillor O'Brien, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented the Annual Adoption Report. This is the annual report from the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA): Adoption Now. Adoption Now acts as the adoption agency on behalf of six local authorities: of Bury, Bolton, Blackburn with Darwen, Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside.

Members reflected on the recent work and training delivered by young people and how beneficial it was to members.

**DECISION:-**

- Cabinet members note the report and consider the key issues raised within the report.

**Reasons for recommendation(s):**

Under the national standards for adoption, all adoption agencies must provide to their responsible body, in this case the executive side of the local authority, a written report on the management, outcomes and financial state of the agency. The report must enable the executive to monitor the management and outcomes of the services in order to satisfy themselves that the agency is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children and/or service users, Further the report should enable the executive to satisfy themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of registration. The report should also address any previous issues raised that require action or remedy. The annual report seeks to satisfy this requirement.

Regional Adoption Agencies were formed from 2017 onwards with the aim of improving outcomes for children by delivering services at a larger scale and encouraging innovative practice. Local authorities retain a statutory responsibility for adoption, but delegate some or all this work to RAAs. On 1 August 2023, there were 32 RAAs delivering services on behalf of 149 local authorities. This means that RAAs are responsible for delivering most of the adoption practice in England.

Bury children are allocated to and held by Adoption Now social workers at the conclusion of care proceedings when a Placement Order is made authorising the placement of a child with a prospective adopting family.

**CA.240      PROCUREMENT OF LD2 SMOKE ALARM INSTALLATION PROGRAMME, IN RELATION TO FRA COMPLIANCE WORKS.**

Councillor Cummins, Cabinet Member for Housing Services reported that the report seeks formal approval of a contract to the approved bidder. The regulator requires the stock to be upgraded in line with current regulations, Pennington Choices Limited carried out a full review of general needs and sheltered blocks which identified a range of works necessary to ensure compliance, the LD2 smoke detection upgrade works are within the scope to complete.

**DECISION:-**

- Cabinet approve the award of a contract to the winning bidder AB Electrical and Building Ltd for the initial period to 31 March 2025 with the option to extend for a further 12 months until March 2026 at a value of £920,000.
- Cabinet delegate finalisation of the terms of the contract to the Director of Law and Democratic Services in consultation with the Executive Director (Strategy & Transformation).

**Reasons for recommendation(s):**

Tenders were received from six contractors through the Procure Plus electrical framework, the tender was on a price and quality basis, it was procured through a mini competition. The winning bidder scored highest overall in the evaluation process. The evaluation of the tenders was carried out on a 70:30 price and quality/social value basis.

Corporate Procurement, (via STAR Procurement) has reviewed and is satisfied with the approach taken and the outcome.

**CA.241      2024/25 CORPORATE PLAN - SIX MONTH UPDATE**

Councillor Thorpe Cabinet Member, Finance and Transformation reported that this report highlights progress against the 2024/25 Corporate Plan that was agreed by Cabinet in April.

Whilst remaining true to the LET'S Vision for 2030 to achieve inclusive economic growth and reduce deprivation, the Plan focused the input of the Council towards delivering that vision through three strategic objectives: Sustainable growth; Improving children's lives; and Tackling inequalities.

Discussions took place regarding collaborative working and all departments supporting each other to achieve better outcomes for residents.

**DECISION:-**

- Cabinet notes the update on progress against the Corporate Plan 2024/25.
- Agrees the development of a revised delivery plan for the remainder of this financial year.

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

To enable transparency and robust monitoring of performance and delivery of the Corporate Plan.

**CA.242 Q1 FINANCE POSITION**

Councillor Thorpe, Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation reported the 2024/25 forecast revenue outturn position as at 30 June 2024, and the 2024/25 forecast capital outturn position as at 30 June 2024.

With regards to a question regarding the ISG going into administration and if any due diligence took place before the awarding of the contract. Members were advised that a response will be provided following the meeting.

In response to a member question regarding commissioning contracts members were informed that some commissioning contracts can be done in a commercial and competitive way, however others are specialist. One challenge is per placement costs and as a Council we try to positively influence this, we hold North West comparative data and we are in the 'medium group' although we are beholden to the market. It was agreed that this information can be shared with the Cabinet following the meeting.

**DECISION:-**

- Cabinet noted the 2024/25 forecast revenue outturn position as at 30 June 2024 of a £2.620m overspend (1.17%) against a net budget of £224.480m.
- Cabinet approved the in-year updates and re-phasing of the capital programme, revising the capital delivery programme for 2024/25 to £90.312m which will form the basis for future in-year monitoring and reporting of performance.

**Reasons for recommendation(s):**

To update members on the Council's budgetary position and actions taken or being taken to ensure budgetary targets are achieved.

This report is in accordance with the Council's financial procedure regulations.

**CA.243 UNIT 4**

Councillor Thorpe, Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation reported that the Council's current Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Financial Management system is supplied by Unit 4 (formerly Agresso Business World Software). The initial contract was signed back in 2004 and implemented for use by the Council from April 2006 onwards.

**DECISION:-**

- Cabinet approved the direct award of a contract to Unit 4 through the Crown Commercial Services (CCS) G-Cloud 13 framework for the continued use of the Unit 4 Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Financial Management System for a period of three years from 1st January 2025 with the option to extend for a further period of one year at the discretion of the Council.
- Cabinet delegated finalisation of the terms of the direct award including any clarifications to the Director of Law and Democratic Services in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation.

**Reasons for recommendation(s):**

The Council has a legal obligation to have in place a financial management system to ensure that appropriate accounting records, management accounting functions and financial controls are in place so that finances are kept under review on a regular basis.

**CA.244 ESTABLISHING A BURY LOCAL BEE NETWORK FORUM**

Councillor O'Brien, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented a report which sets out the proposal to establish a Bury Local Bee Network Forum. This Forum will help to ensure that the Bee Network, Greater Manchester's integrated transport system, develops in a way that meets Bury's local needs and priorities, and supports our ambitious growth plans and Let's Do It vision.

**DECISION:**

Cabinet noted the establishment of a Bury Local Bee Network Forum.

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

Establishing a Bury Local Bee Network Forum will help to ensure that the Bee Network meets Bury's local needs and priorities as it develops. It will also provide a Forum where local transport issues can be raised and where the impact of, and opportunities arising from, decisions made by the GM Bee Network Committee can be considered. It will also provide a Forum where consultations on local and city-region transport matters can be considered.

The Greater Manchester Bee Network Committee has recommended that all GM Local Authorities establish a Forum in their areas to ensure better control and coordination over deployment of services across the Bee Network.

**CA.245 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC****Decision:**

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100 (A)(4), Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, for the reason that the following business involves the disclosure of exempt information as detailed against the item.

**CA.246 CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR DISPLACED INDOOR MARKET HALL TRADERS OPERATING IN THE MILLGATE SHOPPING CENTRE (PART B)**

Councillor Morris, Cabinet Member for Culture presented the Part B report regarding continued support for displaced Indoor Market Hall traders in the Millgate Shopping Centre. The report set out the full financial details.

**DECISION:-**

- Traders operating within the Mill Gate Shopping Centre be given notice that the support they are receiving ends in March 2025. This will allow traders time to either negotiate with the Mill Gate Shopping Centre for a formal lease or to consider alternatives, for example, relocation.
- The total cost of the emergency response to the closure of the Indoor Market Hall is approved by the Cabinet as it is now over £500,000.00 which deems it a key decision.

**Reasons for the decision:**

- As set out for Part A.

**CA.247 NORTHERN GATEWAY (GOVERNANCE / INVESTMENT ZONE / MDC) (PART B)**

Councillor O'Brien, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented the Part B report regarding Northern Gateway. The report set out the business case.

**DECISION:-**

- Cabinet endorses the development of formal of joint working arrangements with Rochdale Council to progress work on Atom Valley and Northern Gateway.
- Cabinet approve Northern Gateway as part of Greater Manchester's Investment Zone.
- Cabinet note in principle the award of Investment Zone funding from the Investment Zone Flexible Spend fund for the purposes of delivery of the Western Access highway project.
- Cabinet approve the procurement of a consultant to appoint and lead a multi-disciplinary team to advance the Northern Gateway site to a maximum sum of £600,000 to be funded from the IZ funding and in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- Cabinet delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer to finalise and execute any associated agreements.
- Cabinet endorses the Western Access Procurement Strategy at Appendix F and delegates authority to the Executive Director (Place – Business, Growth and Infrastructure) to make adjustments to it as the Northern Gateway project progresses.
- Cabinet endorses the interim governance arrangements for Northern Gateway, including approval of Northern Gateway's:
  - a. Governance Framework,
  - b. Business Plan as appended to Part B of this report and
  - c. Procurement Strategy.
- Cabinet authorises officers to explore potential delivery options for Northern Gateway, including exploration of Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC). Further reports will be brought to Cabinet with recommendations following conclusion of this workstream.
- Cabinet notes the Rochdale Borough Council's intention to take a similar report to their Executive.

**Reasons for the decision:**

- As set out for Part A.

**CA.248 UNIT 4 (PART B)**

Councillor Thorpe, Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation presented the Part B report regarding Unit 4. The report set out the financial details.

**DECISION:-**

- Cabinet approved the direct award of a contract to Unit 4 through the Crown Commercial Services (CCS) G-Cloud 13 framework for the continued use of the Unit 4 Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Financial Management System for a period of three years from 1st January 2025 with the option to extend for a further period of one year at the discretion of the Council.
- Cabinet delegated finalisation of the terms of the direct award including any clarifications to the Director of Law and Democratic Services in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation.

**Reasons for the decision:**

- As set out for Part A.

**COUNCILLOR E O'BRIEN**  
**Chair**

**(Note: The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.11 pm)**

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<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Decision Type:</b> Key
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<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b> 06 November 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Draft 2025/26 Revenue Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2026/27 through to 2027/28	
<b>Report of</b>	Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation	

### Summary

1. To present to members the updated budget position over the three years 2025/26 to 2027/28, comprising:
  - Refreshed budget assumptions and funding movements.
  - Draft revenue budget proposals.
2. To inform members of the updated budget gap of £34.918m for the three years 2025/26 to 2027/28 before applying any of the offsetting draft revenue budget proposals, comprising:
  - 2025/26 £23.443m
  - 2026/27 £4.814m
  - 2027/28 £6.661m
3. To present a draft set of budget proposals totalling £9.441m, which are in line with the Council's strategy to closing the budget gap over the medium-term.
4. To inform members of the remaining budget gap of £22.327m, comprising:
  - 2025/26 £19.458m
  - 2026/27 £1.179m
  - 2027/28 £1.690m
5. To inform members of the forecast reserves position over the three years 2025/26 to 2027/28.
6. To set out the 2025/26 budget setting process ahead of Budget Council on 19 February 2025.
7. To agree to commence public consultation on the budget proposals contained within the report.

### Recommendation(s)

8. Approve the set of draft revenue budget proposals totalling £9.441m for inclusion in the Cabinet proposals for the setting of the 2025/26 revenue budget to be considered by Council on 19 February 2025.

9. Approve the draft revenue budget proposals where necessary for consultation between 11<sup>th</sup> November – 23<sup>rd</sup> December.
10. Note that the outcomes of the budget consultation will be reported back to Members and used to inform the budget setting proposals and referred to Overview & Scrutiny Committee for their consideration.
11. Note the remaining budget gap of £22.327m over the three years 2025/26 to 2027/28.
11. Note the forecast reserves balances over the three years 2025/26 to 2027/28.

### **Reasons for recommendation(s)**

12. The Council has a legal requirement annually to set a balanced budget and Council Tax and where necessary undertake consultation with the public, businesses, stakeholders and internally with staff and through Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
13. To update members on the Councils budgetary position and set out the work plan to reduce the forecast budget gap ahead of Budget Council on 19 February 2025.

### **Alternative options considered and rejected**

14. The current assumption within the MTFS is for an on-going 4.99% annual Council Tax increase (2.99% general precept and 2% adult social care precept).
15. An alternative option could be made to increase its 'relevant basic amount of council tax' above the levels that will be set out in the 2025/26 Local Government Finance Settlement published later in the year, but this would require holding a local referendum and a majority vote.
16. A 1% increase or decrease in Council Tax is the equivalent to c£1m.

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#### **Report Author and Contact Details:**

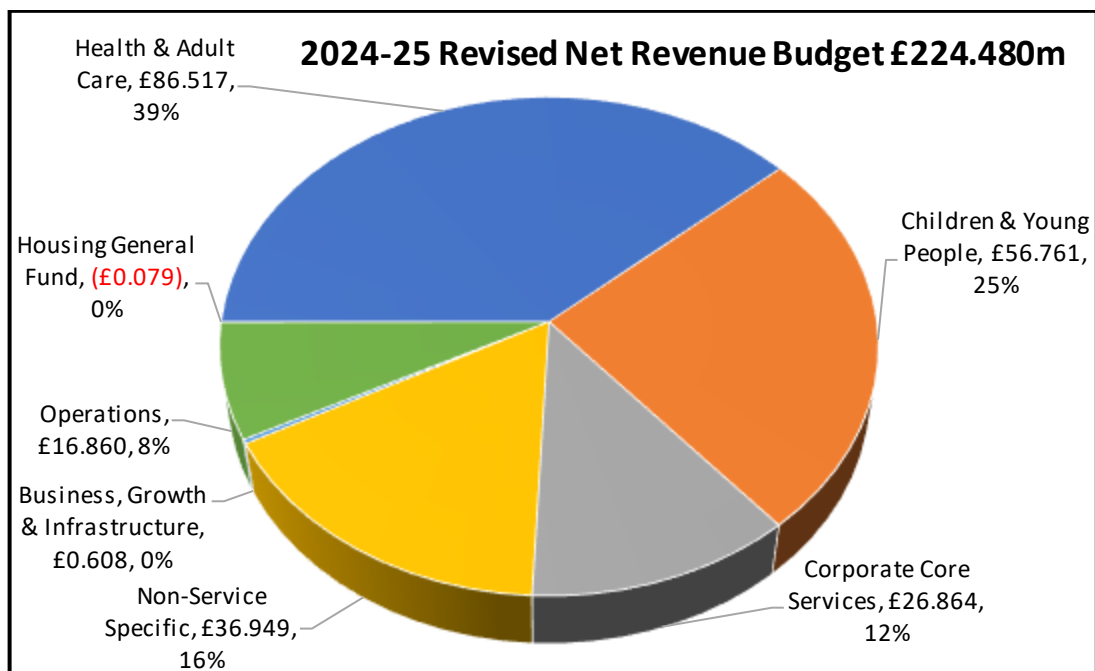
*Name:* Neil Kissock  
*Position:* Director of Finance  
*Department:* Corporate Core Department  
*E-mail:* [n.kissock@bury.gov.uk](mailto:n.kissock@bury.gov.uk)

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## Background

### 2024/25 Base Budget

17. The budget report presented to Budget Council on 21 February 2024 set out the Council's budget requirement for the 2024/25 financial year and provided details on the Council's reserves position. This process is in accordance with statutory requirements and proper accounting practices.
18. Council approved a net revenue budget of £209.608m for 2024/25, which included an approved use of reserves of £15.131m held within the Non-Service Specific Directorate, to address the structural funding deficit and balance the revenue budget.
19. Following updates to the Local Government Finance Settlement, a further review of fees & charges and a representation of the budget, Council on 17 July 2024 approved an updated net revenue budget of £224.480m and a £1.982m reduction in the use of reserves from £15.131m to £13.149m
20. The graph below shows the representation of the net revenue budget of £224.480m by Directorate.



21. A further analysis of the net revenue budget by type of expenditure & income shows the main areas of budget spend being staffing, demand & contracts and sales fees & charges, as shown in the table below:

Budget Group	Inc/Exp	Budget Control Group	Revised Budget £m
Net Budget	Exp	Staff & Related Expenses	£114.066
Net Budget	Exp	Demand & Contractual	£155.620
Net Budget	Exp	Other Expenditure	£11.226
<b>SERVICE EXPENDITURE TOTAL</b>			<b>£280.912</b>
Net Budget	Inc	Government Grants	(£6.785)
Net Budget	Inc	Other Grants & Contributions	(£23.968)
Net Budget	Inc	Sales, Fees & Charges	(£38.153)
Net Budget	Inc	Other Income	(£3.537)
<b>SERVICE INCOME TOTAL</b>			<b>(£72.443)</b>
<b>SERVICE RECHARGES TOTAL</b>			<b>(£20.294)</b>
<b>SERVICE RESERVES TOTAL</b>			<b>(£0.180)</b>
Net Budget		Housing Benefit	(£0.136)
Net Budget		Precepts & Levies	£27.934
Net Budget		Treasury & Capital Financing Costs	£5.830
Net Budget		Provisions & Contingency	£2.857
<b>OTHER EXPENDITURE &amp; INCOME ITEMS TOTAL</b>			<b>£36.485</b>
<b>NET REVENUE BUDGET TOTAL</b>			<b>£224.480</b>
Funding		Council Tax	(£110.199)
Funding		NNDR	(£71.282)
Funding		Funding Grants	(£29.850)
<b>FUNDING TOTAL</b>			<b>(£211.331)</b>
<b>CORPORATE RESERVES TOTAL</b>			<b>(£13.149)</b>
<b>GENERAL FUND TOTAL</b>			<b>£0.000</b>

#### 2024/25 Q1 Forecast Outturn Position

22. Delivery of the 2024/25 budget is critical to maintaining the Council's future MTFS position & budget proposals, as emerging & recurring additional demand & cost pressures will increase the budget gap position.
23. The 2024/25 quarter 1 position presented to 25 September 2024 Cabinet showed projected forecast £2.620m overspend (1.17%) against the net revenue budget of £224.480m, as shown in the table below.
24. The two main areas contributing to the £2.620m overspend are:
- Adults: the Care in Community budget is forecast to overspend by £1.250m.

- Children's: home-to-school transport is forecast to overspend by £0.500m and the Children Looked After (CLA) budgets are forecast to overspend by £1.500m.

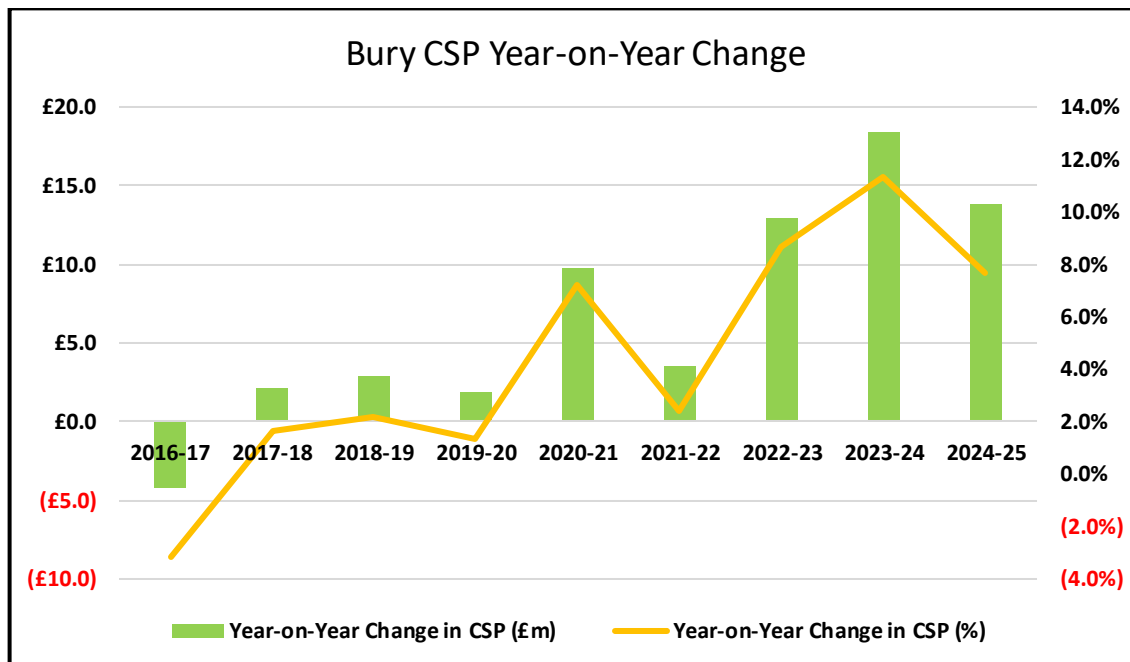
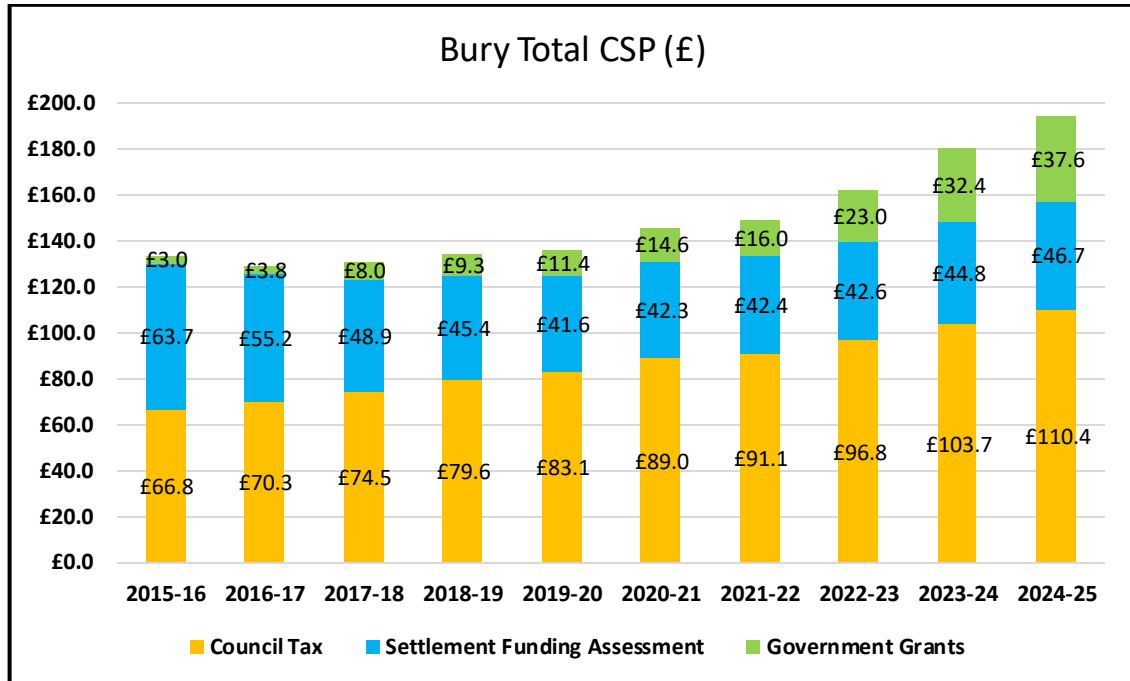
These service areas make-up a significant and increasing proportion of the revenue budget reflecting the additional demand for, and cost of, the services being commissioned, which are national issues and not unique to Bury.

2024/25 Q1 Forecast Outturn	Revised Budget £m	Forecast Outturn £m	Forecast Variance £m	Forecast Variance %
<b>Directorate:</b>				
Health & Adult Care	£86.517	£87.750	£1.233	1.43%
Children & Young People	£56.761	£58.676	£1.915	3.37%
Corporate Core Services	£26.864	£27.245	£0.381	1.42%
Non-Service Specific	£36.949	£36.197	(£0.752)	(2.04%)
Business, Growth & Infrastructure	£0.608	£0.642	£0.034	5.59%
Operations	£16.860	£16.669	(£0.191)	(1.13%)
Housing General Fund	(£0.079)	(£0.079)	£0.000	0.00%
<b>NET REVENUE BUDGET</b>	<b>£224.480</b>	<b>£227.100</b>	<b>£2.620</b>	<b>1.17%</b>
<b>Funding:</b>				
Council Tax	(£110.198)	(£110.198)	£0.000	0.00%
Business Rates	(£71.282)	(£71.282)	£0.000	0.00%
Government Funding Grants	(£29.851)	(£29.851)	£0.000	0.00%
<b>FUNDING</b>	<b>(£211.331)</b>	<b>(£211.331)</b>	<b>£0.000</b>	<b>0.00%</b>
<b>Use of Reserves:</b>				
Budget Stabilisation Reserve	(£13.149)	(£13.149)	£0.000	0.00%
<b>USE OF RESERVES</b>	<b>(£13.149)</b>	<b>(£13.149)</b>	<b>£0.000</b>	<b>0.00%</b>
<b>BUDGET POSITION</b>	<b>£0.000</b>	<b>£2.620</b>	<b>£2.620</b>	<b>1.17%</b>

## Financial Overview

### Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS)

25. To provide funding certainty and allow councils to plan ahead, in December 2015 the Government offered councils a four-year funding settlement for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20. Over the five years since of 2020/21 to 2024/25 the Government has limited this to one-year only settlements, that makes it extremely difficult for councils to forecast with any certainty and strategically plan ahead.
26. Core Spending Power (CSP) is a measure of the resources available to local authorities to fund service delivery. It sets out the money that has been made available to local authorities through the LGFS.
27. The graph below sets out the figures for local authority Core Spending Power (CSP) from 2015-16 through to 2024-25.  
[Note figures for 2015-16 have been adjusted to ensure a consistent measure of local authority income over time].



## Statistics

28. The tables below provide a geographical analysis of both Council Tax & Core Spending Power (CSP) by population & no of dwellings over Greater Manchester authorities.

Council Tax 2024-25						
GM Districts	Council Tax Requirement (CTR) (excl. local precepts) £m	Rank	Council Tax Base (CTB) for Council Tax Setting Purposes	Rank	Ave Band D (2 Adult equivalent) Council Tax (excl. local precepts)	Rank
Bolton	£141.750	5	80,001	4	£1,771.84	7
Bury	£110.199	10	57,409	10	£1,919.55	5
Manchester	£229.259	1	134,938	1	£1,699.00	8
Oldham	£116.155	8	59,380	8	£1,956.13	3
Rochdale	£114.718	9	58,500	9	£1,960.99	2
Salford	£150.008	4	76,722	6	£1,955.21	4
Stockport	£194.568	2	98,397	2	£1,977.39	1
Tameside	£117.867	7	64,723	7	£1,821.12	6
Trafford	£127.109	6	79,362	5	£1,601.63	9
Wigan	£152.077	3	97,900	3	£1,553.39	10

LGFS 2024-25						
GM Districts	2024-25 Core Spending Power (CSP) £m	Rank	Population Mid 2023	Rank	Dwellings As At Sept 2023	Rank
Bolton	£284.298	4	302,383	3	127,753	5
Bury	£180.846	10	195,476	10	85,020	10
Manchester	£608.215	1	579,917	1	248,286	1
Oldham	£248.826	6	246,130	6	98,569	8
Rochdale	£242.588	7	229,756	9	96,964	9
Salford	£302.654	3	284,106	5	131,995	4
Stockport	£282.606	5	299,545	4	132,623	3
Tameside	£235.828	8	234,666	8	104,975	6
Trafford	£200.143	9	237,480	7	103,391	7
Wigan	£306.276	2	339,174	2	152,025	2

Analysis of CTR & CSP by Population & Dwelling								
GM Districts	CTR (per head) £	Rank	CTR (per dwelling) £	Rank	CSP (per head) £	Rank	CSP (per dwelling) £	Rank
Bolton	£468.78	8	£1,109.56	8	£940.19	7	£2,225.37	6
Bury	£563.75	2	£1,296.15	2	£925.16	8	£2,127.10	8
Manchester	£395.33	10	£923.37	10	£1,048.80	3	£2,449.66	3
Oldham	£471.93	7	£1,178.41	5	£1,010.95	4	£2,524.39	1
Rochdale	£499.30	6	£1,183.10	4	£1,055.85	2	£2,501.84	2
Salford	£528.00	4	£1,136.46	6	£1,065.29	1	£2,292.92	4
Stockport	£649.55	1	£1,467.08	1	£943.45	6	£2,130.89	7
Tameside	£502.28	5	£1,122.81	7	£1,004.95	5	£2,246.52	5
Trafford	£535.24	3	£1,229.40	3	£842.78	10	£1,935.79	10
Wigan	£448.37	9	£1,000.34	9	£903.00	9	£2,014.64	9

Average	£506.25	£1,164.67	£974.04	£2,244.91
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29. Core Spending Power (CSP): Bury receives the 8th lowest funding per head of population across the Greater Manchester authorities based on Core Spending Power (CSP) at a rate of £925.16 for 2024/25 compared to a GM Average of £974.04.
30. If Bury received the average funding per head as its GM neighbours, it would benefit from an additional £9.5m per annum.

## 2025/26 LGFS

31. Whilst the new Government is committed to returning to multi-year settlements, the current expectation is that there will be another one-year settlement for 2025/26, with a longer-term settlement in place from 2026/27 which may then be accompanied by changes to the funding system for local government including the long delayed new fair funding formula.
32. Our core assumption is for a 'rollover' one-year settlement for 2025/26 with funding levels broadly in line with the current position. The Budget Statement from the Chancellor at the end of October may provide some indication of the changes in funding levels for 2025/26 but the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement will not be published until mid to late December and therefore could represent a benefit or pressure compared to the current funding assumptions for future years included within the MTFS.

## **Budget Process**

### 2025/26 Budget Approach

33. The vision for Bury 2030 is built upon conversations with communities and with a simple goal for Bury to:

***Stand out as a place that is achieving faster economic growth than the national average, with lower than national average levels of deprivation.***

Progress to achieving the vision for Bury 2030 will be measured by tracking seven core outcome measures of:

- 1) Improved quality of life.
- 2) Improved early years development.
- 3) Improved educational attainment.
- 4) Increased adult skill levels and employability.
- 5) Inclusive economic growth.
- 6) Carbon neutrality by 2038.
- 7) Improved digital connectivity.



34. The Let's Do It! strategy of:

***Let's ... All work together with a common approach.***

***Do it! ... Deliver on our plans for community and economic development where we all play a part.***

Sets out four clear principles that will drive everything the Council does of

- 1) **Local** neighbourhoods.
  - 2) An **Enterprising** spirit.
  - 3) Delivering **Together**.
  - 4) A **Strengths-based** approach.
35. Rolling two-year delivery plans will be produced with a clear set of priorities to create the conditions for change. The current 2024-25 Corporate Plan sets out the vision for a council that is financially sound, delivers its statutory responsibilities and contributes to the Borough's LET'S Do It! outcomes.
36. Three core strategic priorities for 2024/25 were proposed, delivery of which will also secure financial stability. The priorities overlay the "business as usual" departmental functions which are described separately in service planning documents.

The three core strategic priorities for 2024/25 are defined as follows:

- 1) **Sustainable Inclusive Growth** – Further delivery of sustainable housing, the levelling up programmes, strategic regeneration along with the Local Plan, Northern Gateway Masterplan and our continued commitment to carbon neutrality.
  - 2) **Improving Children's Lives** – This priority details Educational Improvement including the three A's (Attainment, Attendance and Academisation) and the continued delivery of the SEND and Social Care improvement plans as well as a review of the Youth Justice service.
  - 3) **Tackling Inequalities** – Since the pandemic our inequalities have widened and therefore this continues to be a key priority in 2024/25 including a review of the wider determinants of health: work, housing anti-poverty, tackling behaviours that lead to poor outcomes, system wide prevention and targeted interventions within our neighbourhoods.
37. The connection between these priorities of the Corporate Plan and the MTFS have been illustrated through the increased demand data for Children's Social Care, SEND, Adult Social Care and Housing, all of which have placed in year pressures on the budget as reflected in [21-23] above. As such, further work is being undertaken to look at how work on these areas can be re-focused to reduce in-year projects and support the budget strategy.

38. *We will be carrying out budget consultation with the public and with our staff. Public consultation will take place between 11<sup>th</sup> November and 23<sup>rd</sup> December. We will consult by use of a survey, engagement with stakeholders and community groups to consider the extent to which they agree with the principles used for budget setting and the principles within LETS to maintain support for the most vulnerable whilst ensuring balanced budgets.*

We will engage with the public on specific proposals in relation to car parking and the trimming and dimming of street lighting and ask the public their views on additional areas where the Council can make savings. The outcomes of the consultation will be used to inform the final budget options which will be considered by Council in February 2025.

## Budget Movements: Assumptions & Funding

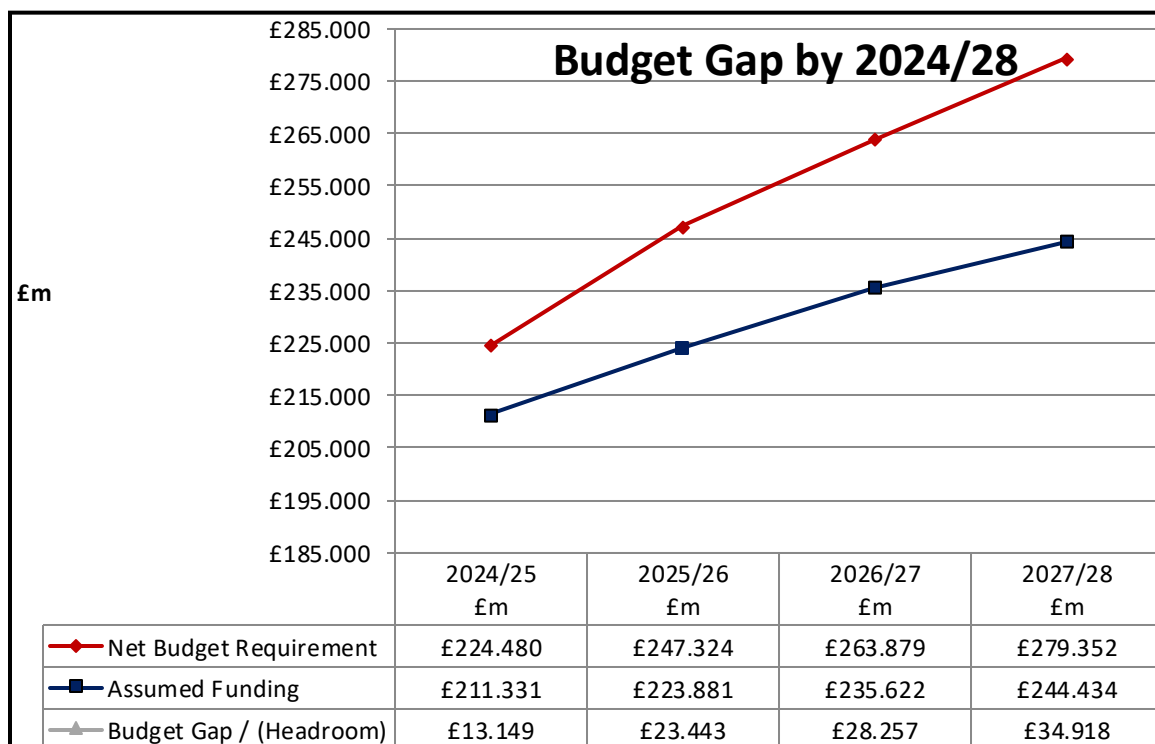
### Budget Update: November 2024

39. The MTFS position reported to Cabinet on 16 July 2024 showed an overall budget gap of £23.591m in 2025/26, rising to £27.918m by 2026/27. Since July a review of the MTFS budget assumptions & assumed funding has been undertaken, in addition to the MTFS being rolled over for the three-year period 2025/26 to 2027/28.
40. The table below summarises the budget movements since July 2024, to show the budget gap position for the three-years 2025/26 to 2027/28 at November 2024 of £34.918m, a net increase of £7.000m before savings proposals are included.
41. However, it should be noted that £6.661m of the increase relates to the additional year of 2027/28 being added to the MTFS and a net increase of £0.339m for the two years of 2025/26 to 2026/27.

2025/26 - 2027/28 Budget Movements Summary	Nov-24		
	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
<b>BUDGET GAP [JULY 2024]</b>	<b>£23.591</b>	<b>£4.327</b>	<b>£0.000</b>
<b><u>Budget Assumptions Movements:</u></b>			
Revision of Pay Award Assumptions	(£4.000)	(£1.100)	£2.100
Revision of the Capital Financing Assumptions	(£1.750)	£0.750	£0.250
Update Adults Inflation (incl. RLW) & Demand Assumptions	£1.420	£1.603	£7.579
Update Children's Staffing Establishment	£1.616	(£0.577)	£0.000
Update Children's Inflation (incl. RLW) & Demand Assumptions	£5.633	£1.924	£4.795
Update Other Inflation & Demand Assumptions	£0.028	(£0.052)	£0.749
Update Sales, Fees & Charges Assumptions	£0.727	£0.100	£0.000
<b>NET BUDGET</b>	<b>£3.674</b>	<b>£2.648</b>	<b>£15.473</b>
<b><u>Funding Movements:</u></b>			
Insertion of 2027/28 Taxbase	£0.000	£0.000	(£0.924)
Insertion of 2027/28 Council Tax	£0.000	£0.000	(£6.200)
Update Collection Fund Collection Rate & Arrears	(£3.822)	(£2.161)	£0.000
Insertion of 2027/28 Funding Grants	£0.000	£0.000	(£1.688)

ASSUMED FUNDING	(£3.822)	(£2.161)	(£8.812)
UPDATED BUDGET GAP [NOV 2024]	£23.443	£4.814	£6.661
CUMULATIVE BUDGET GAP [NOV 2024]	£23.443	£28.257	£34.918

42. The chart below shows the budget gap of £34.918m over the three years 2025/26 to 2027/28, whilst Council on 21 February 2024 approved a budget, updated on 17 July 2024, this is supported by £13.149m use of reserves.
43. The chart below excludes the use of reserves, to demonstrate that the net revenue budget and future cost & demand pressures to deliver services exceeds the current level of funding provided by Government to the Council.



### Budget Assumptions

44. Budget assumptions increase by £58.860m over the three years 2025/26 to 2027/28, significant items include:
- Pay Award:** has been reduced from 6% for 2025/26 and 3% for 2026/27 to 4% for 2025/26 and 2% for both 2026/27 & 2027/28, to reflect both the downward movement in inflation & revised inflation forecasts, since the last MTFS update.
  - Capital Financing:** the re-phasing of the capital programme, agreed at the September Cabinet meeting, has been factored into a revised borrowing profile and impact on forecast revenue capital financing costs.

- **Real Living Wage:** 5% uplift for 2025/26 as confirmed by the Living Wage Foundation, and 5% for both 2026/27 & 2027/28.
- **Adults Community Care Budget:** inflation increase of 2% for all three years and demand growth of £1.5m (2.00%) for 2025/26, £1.3m (1.70%) for 2026/27 & £1.8m (2.31%) for 2027/28.
- **Adults Transition Budget:** demand growth of £1.5m (238.00%) for 2025/26, £2.4m (111.00%) for 2026/27 & £0.8m (19%) for 2027/28.
- **Children Looked After Budgets:** inflation (8%), demand growth (8%) and catchup of £7.1m for 2025/26, £3.5m for 2026/27 & £4.1m for 2027/28.

### Funding

45. Assumed funding increases by £33.103m over the three years 2025/26 to 2027/28, significant items include:
- **Council Tax Base:** 0.75% increase for growth in all three years and a 1% increase in the collection rate for both 2025/26 & 2026/27. The collection rate increase represents an ambitious improvement target for the service with every additional 1% collected equating to an additional c.£1m of income and will therefore be closely monitored.
  - **Council Tax Relevant Basic Amount:** on-going assumption that government will keep the referendum limit at the current 2.99% over the three years.
  - **Council Tax Social Care Precept:** on-going assumption that government will continue with the social care precept of 2% over the three years.
  - **Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit:** assumed increase in the collection of arrears and reduction in the arrears provision.
  - **Government Funding Grants:** on-going assumption the existing quota & level of grants provided by government continue over the three years, with inflation uplift applied to specific grants.

### Summary

46. A subjective breakdown of the updated £34.918m budget gap is shown in the table below:

2025/26 - 2027/28 Budget Estimates	Nov-24		
	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
<b>Net Budget b/fwd</b>	<b>£224.480</b>	<b>£247.324</b>	<b>£263.879</b>
Prior Year Budget Assumptions: Pay Award	(£1.900)	£0.000	£0.000
<b>Net Budget b/fwd</b>	<b>£222.580</b>	<b>£247.324</b>	<b>£263.879</b>
<b><u>Budget Assumptions:</u></b>			
Pay Award	£4.060	£2.164	£2.100
Pay Base Movements	£1.689	(£0.012)	£0.000
Employee Vacancy/Scale Factor	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Agency Staff	£0.000	(£0.530)	£0.000
Contractual Inflation	£5.073	£5.219	£4.597
Real Living Wage	£3.351	£3.519	£3.695
General Inflation	£0.174	£0.191	£0.200
Demand/Volume/Activity Base Movements	£8.423	£5.321	£4.631
Grants, Contributions & Income Recovery	(£0.715)	(£0.786)	£0.000
Sales, Fees & Charges Levels	£0.542	£0.100	£0.000
Recharges HRA, School, Capital & Internal	(£0.310)	(£0.114)	£0.000
Service Reserve Movements	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Housing Benefit	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Precepts & Levies	£1.095	£1.086	£0.000
Treasury & Capital	£0.914	£1.429	£0.250
Provisions & Contingency	(£0.378)	(£0.118)	£0.000
Other	£2.000	£0.000	£0.000
<b>Total Budget Assumptions</b>	<b>£25.918</b>	<b>£17.469</b>	<b>£15.473</b>
<b><u>Approved Budget Proposals:</u></b>			
Savings Proposals	(£3.074)	(£0.914)	£0.000
Policy Proposals	£1.900	£0.000	£0.000
<b>Total Approved Budget Proposals</b>	<b>(£1.174)</b>	<b>(£0.914)</b>	<b>£0.000</b>
<b>NET BUDGET</b>	<b>£247.324</b>	<b>£263.879</b>	<b>£279.352</b>
<b><u>Assumed Funding:</u></b>			

Council Tax	(£119.065)	(£127.300)	(£134.424)
Business Rates	(£72.066)	(£73.440)	(£73.440)
Prior Year Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit	(£1.322)	(£1.983)	(£1.983)
Government Funding Grants	(£31.428)	(£32.899)	(£34.587)
<b>ASSUMED FUNDING</b>	<b>(£223.881)</b>	<b>(£235.622)</b>	<b>(£244.434)</b>
<b>ANNUAL INCREMENTAL BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>£23.443</b>	<b>£4.814</b>	<b>£6.661</b>
<b>CUMULATIVE BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>£23.443</b>	<b>£28.257</b>	<b>£34.918</b>

## Budget Proposals

### Budget Proposals

47. Since February 2024 Budget Council, the Council has undertaken the following activities to identify further budget proposals to close the budget gap:
- Further detailed analysis & review of existing budgets.
  - Held service budget review & challenge sessions.
  - Establishment of a Programme Management Office to support the production and delivery of budget savings.
  - Implementation of a new gateway process to performance monitor existing budget proposals and the development of new budget proposals.
  - Commencement of benchmarking & positioning exercise against Greater Manchester authorities and nearest neighbours.
48. The table below shows a summary of the budget proposals generated through the new gateway process and the impact of reducing the budget gap, a full listing of the draft budget proposals is provided in Appendix 1.

2025/26 - 2027/28 Budget Proposals Summary	Nov-24		
	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
<b>BUDGET GAP [NOV 2024]</b>	<b>£23.443</b>	<b>£4.814</b>	<b>£6.661</b>
<b><u>Draft Budget Proposals:</u></b>			
Draft Budget Proposals (Operational Decision)	(£3.930)	(£3.300)	(£1.612)
Draft Budget Proposals (Policy Decision)	(£0.055)	(£0.335)	(£0.209)
<b>Total Draft Budget Proposals</b>	<b>(£3.985)</b>	<b>(£3.635)</b>	<b>(£1.821)</b>
<b><u>Reprofiled Budget Savings</u></b>			
Reprofiled Budget Savings	£0.000	£0.000	(£3.150)
<b>Total Reprofiled Budget Savings</b>	<b>£0.000</b>	<b>£0.000</b>	<b>(£3.150)</b>
<b>ANNUAL INCREMENTAL BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>£19.458</b>	<b>£1.179</b>	<b>£1.690</b>
<b>CUMULATIVE BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>£19.458</b>	<b>£20.637</b>	<b>£22.327</b>

49. The above table shows that by taking forward the draft budget proposals of £9.441m and the £3.150m of reprofiled budget savings proposals, the budget gap will reduce by £12.591m, from £34.918m to £22.327m.

#### Budget & Staff Consultation

50. To identify additional savings that will support the delivery for a financially sustainable position, all services have been reviewed and this has initially resulted in the identification of savings totalling £9.441m. These are either for management action (£8.842m) that are within delegated powers for officer decisions and so can be immediately progressed and those that require Cabinet approval (£0.599m) and are subject to the overall budget consultation.
51. A number of previously agreed savings proposals totalling £3.150m have also been re-profiled for delivery in 2027/28 with detailed delivery plans in the process of being developed.

#### Management Actions

52. A considerable proportion of savings have been identified as management actions rather than policy decisions and are not expected to have a negative impact on service delivery. These savings total £8.842m. The most significant element of this relates to adult social care at £4.250m with the continuation and extension of measures designed to enhance health and social care delivery by developing a more robust strengths-based, person-centred care model. This will continue to focus on empowering individuals and improving care quality to maximise independence wherever possible and use benchmarking information to focus on areas of relatively higher cost.
53. The next largest savings area relates to estimated savings of £1.303m over the MTFS period linked to the upgrade of the Unit 4 finance system expected to be implemented by April 2026. This represents a major transformation programme for both finance and the wider council and require upfront capital investment with a detailed separate Cabinet report scheduled for a future Cabinet meeting to confirm the level of overall investment required and outlining the anticipated benefits. The timeframes for implementation are necessarily challenging and in advance of the detailed Cabinet report initial investment of c.£250k is required from earmarked reserves to continue with phase 1 of the programme which will be dedicated to laying the groundwork for the successful migration to the Unit4 ERP system in the cloud. The focus will be on mobilisation, technical preparation, and initiating the key transformation projects that will drive the broader changes within the council's operations.
54. There are also £1.500m of savings linked to mitigating the increasing costs of children's social care through keeping families together wherever possible and appropriate and meeting care needs in the most cost-effective way possible with the creation of council-owned Residential Children's Homes covered in a separate Cabinet report. Work has also been undertaken to take out vacant posts in the staffing establishment that are no longer required (£464k) and

savings also identified through the Organisational Delivery Model Review (existing Voluntary Exits Policy) (£312k), in particular relating to senior managers, in line with approved organisation design principles. There are a number of savings which will improve the cost-effectiveness of service delivery either through reducing cost without impacting negatively on service outcomes or through generating additional income.

### Policy Decisions

55. There are 2 savings proposals (Car Park Charges and Light Reduction – Trim and Dim) totalling £0.599m which will be subject to the overall budget consultation and will require Cabinet and Council approval as part of the budget process. Further details on these proposals are attached as appendices to the report and the figures presented within the revised MTFS are on the assumption that they will be agreed.

### **2025/26 Budget & 2026-28 MTFS Position**

#### Budget Summary

56. A summary of all the movements to the July 2024 budget gap of £27.918m to the November 2024 updated budget gap of £22.327m, is shown in the table below:

2025/26 - 2027/28 Draft Budget Summary	Nov-24		
	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
<b>BUDGET GAP [JULY 2024]</b>	<b>£23.591</b>	<b>£4.327</b>	<b>£0.000</b>
<b><u>Net Budget:</u></b>			
Budget Assumption Movements	£3.674	£2.648	£15.473
Draft Budget Proposals	(£3.985)	(£3.635)	(£1.821)
Budget Proposals to be Developed	£0.000	£0.000	(£3.150)
<b>TOTAL NET BUDGET MOVEMENTS</b>	<b>(£0.311)</b>	<b>(£0.987)</b>	<b>£10.502</b>
<b><u>Assumed Funding:</u></b>			
Funding Movements	(£3.822)	(£2.161)	(£8.812)
<b>TOTAL ASSUMED FUNDING MOVEMENTS</b>	<b>(£3.822)</b>	<b>(£2.161)</b>	<b>(£8.812)</b>
<b>ANNUAL INCREMENTAL BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>£19.458</b>	<b>£1.179</b>	<b>£1.690</b>
<b>CUMULATIVE BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>£19.458</b>	<b>£20.637</b>	<b>£22.327</b>

#### Budget Table



57. Based on the current budget assumptions & proposals and assumed funding, the 2025/26 net revenue budget would increase by £18.859m (8.4%), from £224.480m to £243.339m, as shown in the table below:

2025/26 - 2027/28 MTFS Summary	Nov-24		
	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
<b>Directorate:</b>			
Health & Adult Care	£92.645	£99.544	£106.114
Children & Young People	£64.928	£67.732	£70.158
Corporate Core Services	£25.723	£24.741	£24.228
Non-Service Specific	£42.333	£46.839	£49.189
Business, Growth & Infrastructure	£0.741	£0.502	£0.242
Operations	£17.048	£16.980	£16.909
Housing General Fund	(£0.079)	(£0.079)	(£0.079)
<b>NET BUDGET</b>	<b>£243.339</b>	<b>£256.259</b>	<b>£266.761</b>
<b>Assumed Funding:</b>			
Council Tax	(£119.065)	(£127.300)	(£134.424)
Business Rates	(£72.066)	(£73.440)	(£73.440)
Prior Year Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit	(£1.322)	(£1.983)	(£1.983)
Government Funding Grants	(£31.428)	(£32.899)	(£34.587)
<b>ASSUMED FUNDING</b>	<b>(£223.881)</b>	<b>(£235.622)</b>	<b>(£244.434)</b>
<b>ANNUAL INCREMENTAL BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>£19.458</b>	<b>£1.179</b>	<b>£1.690</b>
<b>CUMULATIVE BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>£19.458</b>	<b>£20.637</b>	<b>£22.327</b>

## Sensitivities, Risks & Opportunities

### Sensitivity

58. A sensitivity of the significant budget assumptions & funding items is shown in the table below:

Sensitivity Analysis	Potential Full Year Impact of 1% Movement £m
Council Tax (level, taxbase and collection rates)	+/- £1.191

Funding Grants	+/- £0.314
Pay Award	+/- £1.015
Real Living Wage	+/- £0.682
Adults Community Care: inflation and demand growth	+/- £1.296
Adults Transition Budget: demand growth	+/- £0.188
Children Looked After Budget: inflation and demand growth	+/- £0.897
Treasury & Capital Financing Costs	+/- £1.166

### Risks & Opportunities

59. Legislation requires that annually the Council sets a balanced and robust budget, which is sufficient to meet its legal obligations, and then its aspirations. This requires all plans to be costed, forecasts and estimates to be checked for reasonableness, and risks to be assessed across the many varied services the Council provides. This also includes an assessment for emergencies, severe weather and other service and strategic risks.
60. Robustness does not guarantee that all possible eventualities are identified, or that all budget estimates are precise. Actual income and expenditure will likely vary from the approved budget, but in the round, these will offset one another, and the approved budget will be sufficient to meet overall expenditure requirements.
61. In exercising their statutory duty the Director of Finance, in conjunction with the Executive Team, will take all matters and issues into consideration and will make a reasoned assessment of whether the budget is sufficient and robust. The Director of Finance will ensure that the minimum reserve level is maintained to ensure the Council can meet its legal obligations.
62. The Council faces various financial risks including:
  - The ability to deliver savings at agreed values and within agreed timescales.
  - Potential legal challenges to decisions.
  - Fees & charges income differing to assumptions.
  - Variations to external funding and grant allocations.
  - Demographic pressures.
  - Inflation & interest rates differing to assumptions.
  - Business Rates: potential costs of backdated appeals.
  - Variations to external levies & contracts.
  - Future changes to legislation.
  - Failure of Project Safety Valve to comply with the management plan.
  - Schools academisations deficits.
  - The significant financial challenge currently being faced by the NHS loca

## **Reserves & Balances**

### Reserve Forecast

63. In accordance with statutory regulations and CIPFA guidance, the levels of balances and reserves are reviewed during the budget process to ensure that they are currently sufficient, and that they will remain adequate over the medium term.
64. The Council's historic & medium-term approach involves using reserves to support the budget position while savings are being realised. The in-year assumption is that £13.149m of reserves will be required to enable the Council to achieve a balanced budget.
65. The table below shows a summary of the reserves following a strategic review with the creation of investment reserves to support the Council deliver future invest-to-save, regeneration & growth and transformation projects that will be required to deliver future budget proposals and close the budget gap of £22.327m.

GENERAL FUND RESERVES SUMMARY			Balance at 31 March 2024	Actual Transfers (In) / Out 2024/25	Forecast Transfers (In) / Out 2024/25	Balance at 31 March 2025	Forecast Transfers (In) / Out 2025/26	Balance at 31 March 2026	Forecast Transfers (In) / Out 2026/27	Balance at 31 March 2027	Forecast Transfers (In) / Out 2027/28	Balance at 31 March 2028
			£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
General Fund			(£10.000)	£0.000	£0.000	(£10.000)	£0.000	(£10.000)	£0.000	(£10.000)	£0.000	(£10.000)
Directorate Reserves	HAC		(£1.193)	£0.000	£1.193	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Directorate Reserves	CYP		(£0.351)	£0.084	(£0.344)	(£0.611)	£0.610	(£0.001)	£0.000	(£0.001)	£0.000	(£0.001)
Directorate Reserves	CCS		(£1.177)	(£0.211)	£0.339	(£1.049)	£0.633	(£0.416)	£0.416	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Directorate Reserves	BGI		(£0.450)	(£0.274)	£0.724	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Directorate Reserves	OPS		£0.000	(£0.020)	£0.020	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Directorate Reserves	HGF		£0.000	£0.000	(£0.002)	(£0.002)	£0.000	(£0.002)	£0.000	(£0.002)	£0.000	(£0.002)
Directorate Reserves	Trading Accounts		(£0.054)	£0.000	£0.000	(£0.054)	£0.000	(£0.054)	£0.000	(£0.054)	£0.000	(£0.054)
Directorate Reserves			(£3.225)	(£0.421)	£1.930	(£1.716)	£1.243	(£0.473)	£0.416	(£0.057)	£0.000	(£0.057)
Corporate Reserves	Investment	Invest-to-Save	(£1.519)	(£0.369)	£0.741	(£1.147)	£0.147	(£1.000)	£0.000	(£1.000)	£0.000	(£1.000)
Corporate Reserves	Investment	Regeneration	£0.000	£0.116	(£1.116)	(£1.000)	£0.000	(£1.000)	£0.000	(£1.000)	£0.000	(£1.000)
Corporate Reserves	Investment	Transformation	(£0.838)	£0.000	(£3.662)	(£4.500)	£0.000	(£4.500)	£0.000	(£4.500)	£0.000	(£4.500)
Corporate Reserves	Risk	Volatility/Demand	£0.000	£0.000	(£2.000)	(£2.000)	£0.000	(£2.000)	£0.000	(£2.000)	£0.000	(£2.000)
Corporate Reserves	Risk	Insurance	(£4.664)	£0.000	£0.273	(£4.391)	£0.000	(£4.391)	£0.000	(£4.391)	£0.000	(£4.391)
Corporate Reserves	Risk	DSG/PSV	(£6.000)	£0.000	£0.000	(£6.000)	£0.000	(£6.000)	£6.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Corporate Reserves	Stabilisation	Net Budget	(£48.111)	£0.854	£18.433	(£28.824)	£0.333	(£28.491)	£0.020	(£28.471)	£0.000	(£28.471)
Corporate Reserves	Stabilisation	Funding	(£7.193)	£0.000	£5.193	(£2.000)	£0.000	(£2.000)	£0.000	(£2.000)	£0.000	(£2.000)
Corporate Reserves			(£68.325)	£0.601	£17.862	(£49.862)	£0.480	(£49.382)	£6.020	(£43.362)	£0.000	(£43.362)
External Funding			(£13.634)	£0.000	£6.171	(£7.463)	£4.592	(£2.871)	£2.668	(£0.203)	£0.000	(£0.203)
Earmarked Balances Sub-Total			(£85.184)	£0.180	£25.963	(£59.041)	£6.315	(£52.726)	£9.104	(£43.622)	£0.000	(£43.622)
Schools Reserves			(£3.043)	£0.000	£0.000	(£3.043)	£0.000	(£3.043)	£0.000	(£3.043)	£0.000	(£3.043)
S106 Commuted Sums			(£6.162)	(£0.154)	£0.000	(£6.316)	£0.000	(£6.316)	£0.000	(£6.316)	£0.000	(£6.316)
Earmarked Reserves Total			(£94.389)	£0.026	£25.963	(£68.400)	£6.315	(£62.085)	£9.104	(£52.981)	£0.000	(£52.981)
GF RESERVES TOTAL			(£104.389)	£0.026	£25.963	(£78.400)	£6.315	(£72.085)	£9.104	(£62.981)	£0.000	(£62.981)

66. The table below shows an illustration of utilising reserves to fund the remaining budget gap for each of the three years 2025/26 (£19.458m), 2026/27 (£20.637m) & 2027/28 (£22.327m). That demonstrates an unsustainable financial position over the medium-term, whereby the Council will be unable to set a balanced budget in 2027/28, without identifying further savings proposals, and potentially sooner should any future events including in-year overspends have an adverse impact on the level of reserve balances.

Projected Balance of General Fund Reserves Balances	Balance at 31 March 2024 £m	Balance at 31 March 2025 £m	Balance at 31 March 2026 £m	Balance at 31 March 2027 £m	Balance at 31 March 2028 £m
<b>Projected GF Reserves Balance</b>	<b>(£104.389)</b>	<b>(£78.400)</b>	<b>(£52.627)</b>	<b>(£22.886)</b>	<b>(£0.559)</b>
General Fund	£10.000	£10.000	£10.000	£10.000	£10.000
Schools Reserves	£3.043	£3.043	£3.043	£3.043	£3.043
S106 Commuted Sums	£6.162	£6.316	£6.316	£6.316	£6.316
<b>GF Reserves excl. Statute &amp; Ring-Fenced</b>	<b>(£85.184)</b>	<b>(£59.041)</b>	<b>(£33.268)</b>	<b>(£3.527)</b>	<b>£18.800</b>

67. To reduce the dependence on reserves and address the structural funding shortfall, it is essential that further savings, efficiencies or income generation are identified over the three-year MTFS period 2025/26 to 2027/28 to stabilise the Council's finances over the medium-term.

## Budget Timeline & Workplan

### Timelines

68. The current timelines for 2025/26 budget setting is shown in the table below:

Report	Committee Meeting	Date
2025-26 Budget Report	Budget Overview & Scrutiny Committee	6 February 2025
	Budget Cabinet	12 February 2025
	Budget Council	19 February 2025

### Future Workplan

69. The aim between now and February is to significantly reduce the reported 2025/26 budget gap which is currently £19.458m, and therefore reduce the impact on reserves. A strategy has been developed to support this next phase of budget work, which is framed over the four themes of:

**1) Income:**

This includes ensuring that the strategic development activity is fully reflected in increased funding levels, all sales, fees and charges are reviewed to ensure they cover the full cost of service delivery, review of all grants and the applications of capital receipts to support transformation expenditure within the revenue budget in line with permitted flexibilities.

**2) Non-Statutory Service Transformation:**

This includes looking at the scope for becoming more cost-effective and efficient in our service delivery models including opportunities for automation and process improvement with a good example being the transformation work linked to the upgrade of Unit 4 which will come to a future Cabinet meeting and has £1.653m of efficiency savings linked to it over the four-year period of 2025/26 to 2028/29. This will be supported by the identification of the current cost of all non-statutory services currently being provided and options for cost reductions.

**3) Contain Growth / Demand Pressures:**

A significant proportion of the forecast funding gap is the result of ongoing increasing demand, and the cost of meeting that demand, particularly Children's and Adults Social Care. Whilst these are national issues and pressures not unique to Bury, focused activity is being undertaken to look at our current demand pressures and growth assumptions and develop proposals for how they can be further mitigated supported by a detailed analysis of our budgets and benchmarking information.

The largest area of spend within the council relates to our contractual expenditure which reflects some of the largest social care contracts but also contracts across all service areas. An approach is being developed which will be focused on the financial and service benefits of improving the alignment of strategic commissioning and procurement across the council along with embedding consistent and effective contract management arrangements.

**4) Health and Care:**

Whilst a significant focus on containing growth and demand in theme 3 above will necessarily be focused on Adults and Children's Social Care, a growing proportion of the council's budget is covering these areas and a focused programme of activity is underway to identify additional proposals designed to reduce the council's overall cost of care from the assumptions outlined currently within the MTFS. This will necessarily look at both the actual cost of services being commissioned and the approach required to accelerate a shift to lower cost models of support.

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**Links with the Corporate Priorities:**

*Please summarise how this links to the Let's Do It Strategy.*

70.

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**Equality Impact and Considerations:**

*Please provide an explanation of the outcome(s) of an initial or full EIA and make **specific reference regarding the protected characteristic of Looked After Children**. Intranet link to EIA documents is [here](#).*

71.

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**Environmental Impact and Considerations:**

*Please provide an explanation of the Environmental impact of this decision. Please include the impact on both **Carbon emissions** (contact [climate@bury.gov.uk](mailto:climate@bury.gov.uk) for advice) and **Biodiversity** (contact [c.m.wilkinson@bury.gov.uk](mailto:c.m.wilkinson@bury.gov.uk) for advice)*

72.

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**Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:**

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation

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**Legal Implications:**

This report updates members on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and sets out the steps needed to progress with the Council's budget setting process. It is proposed that consultation takes place with the public in relation to the budget proposals. The Council must consult where there are specific legislative requirements or where the public would legitimately expect the Council to do so. All consultation must take place at an early stage and must abide by the principles of good consultation. The outcomes from the consultation will be reviewed and brought to Cabinet for consideration. As set out in the body of the report workforce consultation will take place in relation to these proposals. In addition to the specific legislative requirements which will be specific to the proposal the Equality Act 2010 states that public bodies must have "due regard" to a variety of equalities objectives under the Equality Act 2010.

In order to ensure we have given due regard we need to demonstrate that we understand how decisions or policies can affect those with protected characteristics and whether they will be disproportionately affected. Consulting is therefore an important part of meeting the equality duty.

In setting the budget the Council has a duty to ensure:

- It continues to meet its statutory duties
- Governance processes are robust and support effective decision making

- Its Medium-Term Financial Strategy reflects the significant challenges being faced and remains responsive to the uncertainties in the economy by continuing to deliver against its savings targets
- Its savings plans are clearly communicated and linked to specific policy decisions, with the impact on service provision clearly articulated
- It has the appropriate levels of reserves and that it closely monitors its liquidity to underpin its financial resilience
- It continues to provide support to members and officers responsible for managing budgets
- It prepares its annual statement of accounts in an accurate and timely manner  
In exercising its fiduciary duty, the Council should be satisfied that the proposals put forward are a prudent use of the Authority's resources in both the short and long term; that the proposals strike a fair balance between the interests of Council taxpayers and ratepayers on the one hand and the community's interests in adequate and efficient services on the other; and that they are acting in good faith for the benefit of the community whilst complying with all statutory duties.

Section 28 of the Local Government Act 2003 also imposes a statutory duty on the Council to monitor during the financial year its expenditure and income against the budget calculations. If the monitoring establishes that the budgetary situation has deteriorated, the Council must take such action as it considers necessary to deal with the situation. This might include, for instance, action to reduce spending in the rest of the year, or to increase income, or to finance the shortfall from reserves.

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**Financial Implications:**

*To be completed by the Council's Section 151 Officer.*

73. The financial implications are as outlined in the report

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**Appendices:**

*Please list any appended documents.*

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**Background papers:**

*Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.*

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**

Term	Meaning

**APPENDIX 1**

	Nov-24
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2025/26 - 2027/28 Budget Proposals		2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
<b><u>Draft Budget Proposals (Operational Decision):</u></b>				
HAC Strategic Workforce Review	HAC	(£0.010)	(£0.061)	£0.000
CYP Strategic Workforce Review	CYP	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
CCS Strategic Workforce Review	CCS	(£0.186)	£0.000	£0.000
BGI Strategic Workforce Review	BGI	(£0.062)	£0.000	£0.000
OPS Strategic Workforce Review	OPS	(£0.145)	£0.000	£0.000
Adults Commissioning Review	HAC	(£1.000)	(£1.000)	(£1.000)
Single Handed Care Trial	HAC	(£0.200)	(£0.200)	(£0.200)
Personal Budget Review	HAC	(£0.250)	(£0.250)	£0.000
Direct Payment Reassessment to Include Therapy	HAC	(£0.050)	£0.000	£0.000
Discharge to Assess Reviews by Therapy	HAC	(£0.050)	£0.000	£0.000
Neighbourhood Housing Support	HAC	(£0.050)	£0.000	£0.000
Foster Carers	CYP	(£0.250)	(£0.100)	£0.000
Family Safeguarding Model	CYP	(£0.100)	(£0.050)	£0.000
Edge of Care	CYP	(£0.494)	(£0.106)	£0.000
IT Supplier Review [Digital]	CCS	(£0.065)	(£0.050)	£0.000
IT Licence Review [Digital]	CCS	(£0.050)	(£0.025)	£0.000
Unit 4 Reimplementation & Transformation Review	CCS	(£0.100)	(£0.853)	(£0.350)
Revenues and Benefits Structure Review	CCS	(£0.317)	£0.000	£0.000
Contact Centre Review [Digital]	CCS	(£0.100)	(£0.100)	£0.000
Creation of Council-Owned Residential Children's Homes	BGI	£0.000	(£0.400)	£0.000
Fleet Function Review	OPS	(£0.070)	£0.000	£0.000
Car Park Tariff Review	OPS	(£0.074)	£0.000	(£0.062)
Stores Function Review	OPS	£0.000	(£0.050)	£0.000
Salary Sacrifice Review	NSS	(£0.050)	£0.000	£0.000
Organisation Delivery Model Review	NSS	(£0.257)	(£0.055)	£0.000
<b>Total Draft Budget Proposals (Operational Decision)</b>		<b>(£3.930)</b>	<b>(£3.300)</b>	<b>(£1.612)</b>
<b><u>Draft Budget Proposals (Policy Decision):</u></b>				
Car Park Charges Review	OPS	(£0.055)	(£0.126)	£0.000
Light Reduction - Trim and Dim	OPS	£0.000	(£0.209)	(£0.209)
<b>Total Draft Budget Proposals (Policy Decision)</b>		<b>(£0.055)</b>	<b>(£0.335)</b>	<b>(£0.209)</b>
<b>TOTAL DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS</b>		<b>(£3.985)</b>	<b>(£3.635)</b>	<b>(£1.821)</b>

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<b>Reference</b>	30P08
<b>Executive Director</b>	Donna Ball
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	

## Section A

<b>Service Area</b>	Operations
<b>Budget Option Description</b>	Street Lighting Dimming

### Budget Reduction Proposal – Detail and Objectives

#### (What are we trying to achieve)

To reduce energy costs for streetlighting by expanding on the current dimming programme for all lanterns containing the Philips Citytouch system - soon to be transferred to their new Interact City system, and as carried out by many other authorities across the UK.

This is an expansion of the already embedded dimming scheme. The current dimming scheme has been in place for over 12 months, and we are actively dimming approx 500 roads across our highway network

#### Driver For Change: (Why are we doing this)

To reduce energy costs, further reduce carbon emissions, and to close the funding gap.

#### What is the solution? (Intervention/methodology which addresses the issue/impact)

To implement a dimming solution, over and above the current one which is a 50% dim from 00:00 to 06:00 hrs, that will still provide a good lighting service to the Borough which will further reduce energy costs over and above replacing older lamp sources with LED, but will not have a detrimental impact e.g. not dimming during peak times, etc.

This process will not be delivered on a blanket approach. Each road will be assessed by officers to ensure suitability.

Locations where exemptions will be applied include:

- Lights at major junctions/ roundabouts.
- In town centres where there is CCTV, high security businesses such as banks, and/or lots of people at night, for example near night clubs and train stations.
- Areas where street lights are needed to reduce road accidents or where the Authority considers it has a specific duty of care.

- Areas where there could be an increase in crime through reduced lighting, like pubs, clubs and specific night-time use in residential areas.
- Areas where for operational reasons the police require the highest levels of lighting including crime hotspots and increased lighting immediately following an incident.

**What is the impact of the solution? (How will this benefit?)**

A reduction in energy consumption and, therefore, costs, and also a further reduction in carbon emissions.

**Summary of Cost Savings.**

Summary of Cost Savings	24/25 £000	25/26 £000	26/27 £000	27/28 £000
Energy Costs			209	209
<b>TOTAL</b>				

**Section B**

***What impact does the proposal have on. Set out any impacts (positive and negative) on performance and costs***

<b>Property</b>
No Impact
<b>Service Delivery</b>
No Impact
<b>Organisation (Including Other Directorates/Services)</b>
No Impact
<b>Workforce – Number of posts likely to be affected.</b>
No Impact
<b>Communities and Service Users</b>

This is an extension of an already embedded programme of dimming. Too date there has been no negative feedback from communities or service users.

**Other Partner Organisations**

No Impact

**Section C****Key Risks and Mitigations**

Risks	Mitigations
Turning lights off may not be a popular action.	Equality Impact Assessment needs to be carried out along with consultation with members of Team Bury.
There are already two Capital programmes in progress in street lighting.	Additional staff/consultancy time for project management.
Time taken to complete the work and therefore delivery of the associated savings.	Existing GMCA Frameworks will be used for the work. Letting further contracts from The Chest to assist with the project. Taking on temporary staff (internal) to assist with the project.
Future energy prices decrease reducing estimated savings and increasing the time in which savings will be paid back.	Without this investment the Council would have to find additional funding to cover energy costs increases. This proposal will mitigate against the increases.
<p>There is an annual cost for the Philips City Touch system after the initial 10 year (given at time of lantern purchase) has expired.</p> <p>This is estimated at around £5 per lantern. The GMCA Street Lighting Group are looking at a contract for this to reduce these costs.</p>	<p>It may transpire that paying an annual fee for each lantern, takes up a significant amount of any savings achieved.</p> <p>The current settings of the lantern (including any dimming) will be maintained if the CityTouch subscription expires. However, remote alteration of lantern settings will no longer be available.</p>
<p>Delivery delays due to material shortages, etc., may extend estimated completion time.</p> <p>Price increases may result in less work being carried out and thereby reducing savings.</p>	Purchasing all the required materials at the start of the project would alleviate this and also negate any future price increases.
Energy calculations are quite complex and actual savings might be lower than estimated.	<p>A combination of previous examples, experience, and airing on the side of caution have been used to try and ensure that as accurate an estimate as possible has been achieved.</p> <p>Savings will still be achieved, and it is possible they may be even more than estimated.</p>

Increase in crime and anti-social behaviour and negative impact on the Safer Streets Strategy from Central Government.	None.
Variations in weather will affect the amount of energy savings, for example, sunny, bright days use less energy than dull, cloudy days. (The streetlights are programmed to switch on at a specific lux level (lighting level) which varies depending on weather conditions.)	None.

### Key Delivery Milestones

*Include timescales for procurement, commissioning changes etc.*

Milestone	Timeline
The completion of Phase Column and Lantern replacement	March 2025
The completion of Phase 3 Lantern replacement	March 2026

### Section D

Consultation Required?	No
------------------------	----

N/A	Start Date	End Date
Staff		
Trade Unions		
Public		
Service User		
Other		

### Section E

*Financial Implications and Investment Requirements*

<b>Investment requirements – Revenue and Capital</b>
Capital Funding has already been awarded for the replacement lanterns which will support the dimming process.
<b>Finance Comments – Will the proposal deliver the savings and within the agreed timescales?</b>

---

**Section F**

***Sign-Off***

	Signature	Date
Executive Director		
Chief Executive		



<b>Reference</b>	3OP10
<b>Executive Director</b>	Donna Ball
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	

**Section A**

<b>Service Area</b>	Operations
<b>Budget Option Description</b>	District Car Parking

**Budget Reduction Proposal – Detail and Objectives****(What are we trying to achieve)**

To undertake a review and to consider implementation of district car parking charges.

**(Why are we doing this)**

To determine if district car parking charges can be implemented without adversely impacting the vibrancy of our district centres. To protect residential areas we will need to consider a resident parking zone(RPZ) in the immediate vicinity of the car parks. This will be necessary to ensure motorists do not park in the residential streets, rather than pay the proposed rates suggested below. This element of the scheme is essential to ensure local residents are not impacted by this proposal

**What is the solution?**

A strategic review of all Parking Services controlled district car parks will be commissioned to assess the viability and likely consequences of implementing a regime of car parking charges.

**(How will this benefit?)**

Increase in parking revenue.

Any surplus in revenue generated by on street and/or off street car parking charges must be used in accordance with Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

**Summary of Cost Savings/Income Generation.****Financial Information**

It should be noted that any predicted increase in revenue must be used in accordance with Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. This restricts the use of the income to the management and maintenance of car parking services and other highway/transportation related

works. It would therefore be permissible to use any additional income to enhance the standard of our car parks, which often create a first impression of our district centres.

Additional income will not be fully achieved until implementation of RPZs are complete. Residents will incur an ongoing annual charge £35 per RPZ permit.

Multiple charging tariffs and occupancy levels have been considered, however officers believe that a flat charging regime of £2 with 50% occupancy is likely to be supported by the strategic car parking review.

The Fairfax Road and Longfield Centre car parks account for approximately 40% of our district car parking spaces. These car parks are due to be redeveloped as part of the imminent Prestwich Regeneration Scheme. The income generated by the redeveloped car park is included below based on the indicative charging regime described earlier, but the management costs for this car park are unknown and are not included in this document. The potential income generated by this proposal is set out below, with deductions for the operational costs detailed lower in the report.

Summary of Cost Savings/Income Generation	24/25 £000	25/26 £000	26/27 £000
Part year additional savings		55	
Full year additional savings			126
<b>TOTAL</b>			

## Section B

***What impact does the proposal have on. Set out any impacts (positive and negative) on performance and costs***

<b>Property</b>
The current district car parks will move to being chargeable. To support this, there would need to be infrastructure work required to install the pay and display machines.
<b>Service Delivery</b>
<b>Organisation (Including Other Directorates/Services)</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Workforce – Number of posts likely to be affected.</b>
There will be an increase in staff to manage the additional work that this scheme will generate
<b>Communities and Service Users</b>

This scheme represents an introduction of a charging structure for something our communities and service users have not previously paid for. Therefore, an extensive and wide ranging consultation plan will sit behind this scheme.

#### Other Partner Organisations

## Section C

### Key Risks and Mitigations

Risks	Mitigations
New/increased charges may drive parkers away from the car parks to seek free parking elsewhere i.e. on-street in adjacent residential areas.	Introduction of parking restrictions/residents parking schemes and other TROs
Financial assumptions - a tariff has not been set and how car park occupancy will vary based on which tariff is selected is not known.	Consultants to be appointed to carry out review of parking assets and to develop a strategy for charging with likely impacts modelled.
Future disposal of the Council's car parking assets.	Car park income to be a consideration in regeneration/improvement plans.
Political/reputational risk	Public and businesses likely to be against implementation of district charging and increased in tariffs.

### Key Delivery Milestones

*Include timescales for procurement, commissioning changes etc.*

Milestone	Timeline
Completion of strategic car parking review.	Dec 2024
Implement Statutory Orders (Parking Places Order)	Mar 2025
Procurement/Delivery/Installation – P&D Machines and Signage	Oct 2025
Establish RPZs and install other Traffic Regulation Orders	Oct 2026

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**Section D**

Consultation Required?	Yes – Extensive (Not Staff)
------------------------	-----------------------------

N/A	Start Date	End Date
Staff		
Trade Unions		
Public		
Service User		
Other		

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**Section E*****Financial Implications and Investment Requirements***

Investment requirements – Revenue and Capital
<p><b>Capital Required:</b> Implementation of district charging will require P&amp;D machines and new signage, approx. £170k required in 2025/26. RPZ design and implementation costs of approx. £50k required in 2026/27.</p> <p><b>Revenue Required:</b> Additional enforcement contract costs of approx. £40k/annum and additional PCN processing and administration costs of approx. £25k/annum and a £15k revenue/maintenance cost for the charging apparatus</p>
Finance Comments – Will the proposal deliver the savings and within the agreed timescales?

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**Section F*****Sign-Off***

	Signature	Date
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Executive Director		
Chief Executive		

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<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Decision Type:</b> Key
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<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b> 6 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Northern Gateway Development Framework Consultation Draft - Joint Supplementary Planning Document	
<b>Report of</b>	Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth	

### Summary

1. The Draft Northern Gateway Development Framework (NGDF) sets out the masterplan and phasing strategy for the Northern Gateway site. This is the largest strategic employment site allocated through the Places for Everyone Joint Plan (PfE), which was adopted in March 2024. The site straddles both Bury and Rochdale boundaries and the Framework will be used to deliver development across both districts.
2. A key requirement of PfE Policy JPA1.1 is that any proposals within the Northern Gateway allocation must be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan that has been agreed by Bury and Rochdale local planning authorities and that it shall include a design code and a clear phasing strategy.
3. The draft NGDF establishes the key principles for the development of the site and establishes a framework against which future planning applications on the site will be considered, sets out high level design principles and an approach to the delivery and phasing of infrastructure. In order to give the Framework additional planning weight in decision making, it is proposed that it is adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
4. Members are therefore being asked to approve the draft NGDF for an 8-week period of consultation in order to establish stakeholder views on its content. Following consultation, all representations received will be fully considered and changes made where appropriate before the SPD is brought back to Cabinet for approval to adopt.

### Recommendation(s)

5. It is recommended that Cabinet:
  - i approves the draft Northern Gateway Development Framework (NGDF) SPD (Appendix 1) as the basis for public consultation for at least six weeks commencing in November 2024.

- ii Delegates approval to the Executive Director of Place to make minor non-material editorial amendments to the draft Northern Gateway Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document before consultation commences.

### **Reasons for recommendation(s)**

6. To enable stakeholders to have the opportunity to provide comment on the draft Northern Gateway Development Framework and to comply with the statutory requirements on consultation.

### **Alternative options considered and rejected**

7. To not approve the SPD for consultation. This would prevent stakeholders from commenting on the SPD and would prevent the Council from being able to proceed to adopt the SPD because it is a statutory requirement that such documents must be consulted on before adoption.

---

### **Report Author and Contact Details:**

*Name: Cris Logue*

*Position: Assistant Director (Strategy, Planning and Development)*

*Department: Business, Growth and Infrastructure*

*E-mail: [c.logue@bury.gov.uk](mailto:c.logue@bury.gov.uk)*

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### **Background**

8. The Places for Everyone Plan (PfE Plan) is a joint development plan document of nine Greater Manchester authorities (excluding Stockport) which was adopted on 21st March 2024.
9. It is a long-term plan for jobs, new homes and sustainable growth which allocates large strategic sites for employment and housing. This includes the employment led allocation at Northern Gateway (Heywood/Pilsworth) (PfE Policy JPA1.1), which straddles the districts of Bury and Rochdale and sits alongside the M62 and M66 motorways. The site is one of the largest strategic employment allocations in the country and represents a transformational opportunity to deliver unprecedented levels of investment, jobs, homes and community benefits.
10. Northern Gateway will be a key driver in delivery growth ambitions, to make Bury stand out as a place that is achieving faster economic growth than the national average, with lower than average levels of deprivation.

### **Northern Gateway Development Framework (NGDF)**

11. Following its adoption on 21 March 2024, the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE) became a key part of Bury's statutory development plan alongside the saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals and Waste Plans.



12. A key requirement of PfE Policy JPA1.1 is that any proposals within the allocation must be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan that has been agreed by Bury and Rochdale local planning authorities and that it shall include a design code and a clear phasing strategy in line with PfE Policy JP-D1 'Infrastructure Implementation'.
13. This requirement is a critical stage in providing a bridge between the allocation of the site in PfE and subsequent planning consent.
14. Supplementary planning documents (SPDs) build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies in an adopted development plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues.
15. As they do not form part of the development plan, SPDs cannot introduce new planning policies into the development plan. However, they are a material consideration in decision-making.
16. The NGDF has been prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in accordance with the requirements of legislation and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Planning applications within the allocation will be required to align with the NGDF, including delivery of necessary and related infrastructure in a coordinated and timely manner.
17. This NGDF has been prepared jointly by Bury and Rochdale Councils with technical input from the Northern Gateway Development Vehicle LLP (NGDV) as the main site promoter and input from other landowners / stakeholders.

### **NGDF Role and Objectives**

18. Once adopted, this NGDF will establish the key principles for the development of the site and establish a framework against which future planning applications on the site will be considered. It will also help Bury and Rochdale Councils to ensure that the ambitions for the site are realised and the benefits to the communities of Bury and Rochdale are maximised.
19. The draft NGDF will:
  - Set out the councils' vision and strategic objectives for the site shaped by public consultation and stakeholder collaboration
  - Facilitate a coordinated and comprehensive masterplanning approach, to be implemented consistently across multiple planning applications
  - Establish key development requirements that all planning applications relating to land within the site are expected to adhere to

- Provide an overarching spatial Development Framework to communicate development and design parameters, including land use, access, movement and green infrastructure
- Provide design principles and guidance, to inform the more detailed design considerations and approaches needed to deliver the Northern Gateway vision, and
- Describe the proposed approach towards delivery of physical infrastructure.

### **Scope and Content of the draft NGDF**

20. Chapter 1 introduces Northern Gateway and the role and purpose of the SPD. Chapter 2 sets out the strategic planning context, including Places for Everyone Policy JPA1.1 and sets out how this site aligns with other corporate strategies and the pivotal role of this site within the wider Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ).
21. Linked to this, Chapter 3 sets out the vision and objectives relating to both this site and the wider Atom Valley MDZ. For Northern Gateway it identifies six 'Pillars of Development' and '12 Key Principles'. The delivery of these is integral to ensuring that the vision for Northern Gateway as a world-class business community that will help to drive inclusive growth and economic prosperity is achieved.
22. Chapter 4 identifies the economic, social and environmental outcomes that the delivery of the site is expected to achieve. In terms of the economic outcomes this is based on the delivery of a world-class employment park that attracts a number of quality businesses. The key social outcome is to deliver fully inclusive growth which has a permanent, positive impact on the surrounding area. In achieving these two outcomes, it is important that the delivery of development does not have a detrimental impact on the environment. This is to be achieved by maximising opportunities to provide net gains for biodiversity, creating a comprehensive green infrastructure network and ensuring that the objective of net zero carbon for both the development and the Greater Manchester area is integral to the design from the outset.
23. A detailed analysis of the site and its surroundings is provided in Chapter 5. This covers matters such as transport links, topography, ecology, heritage, utilities and noise/air pollution. This detailed assessment is fundamental in understanding how the site can be developed and concludes with a summary of the site opportunities and constraints. This chapter provides the key step to the subsequent chapters dealing with the requirements, proposals, parameters and guidance for new development.

24. Chapter 6 covers the key development principles for the site and illustrates how an understanding of the site, its constraints and opportunities, has informed a design approach which has resulted in the production of the illustrative Development Framework Plan which shows how the design principles can be realised spatially across the Northern Gateway site.
25. Chapter 7 identifies several different character areas across the site. The identification of character areas is important in a site as large as Northern Gateway to create an attractive, enjoyable and safe place which responds to key site attributes, constraints or proposed uses across different parts of the site.
26. Chapter 8 addresses the importance of embedding an approach to sustainable development in delivering Northern Gateway. This is necessary in order to meet Greater Manchester's ambition to become a carbon neutral city region by 2038. This ambition is supported by Bury and Rochdale Councils through respective declarations of climate emergencies.
27. Given the scale of the opportunity, full delivery of the site is expected to take place over a 20-year period. Development is expected to come forward in a series of phases alongside necessary infrastructure provision and a flexible approach is needed to be responsive to opportunities. Chapter 9 sets out the key issues in terms of phasing and infrastructure that need to be considered. An Infrastructure, Phasing and Delivery Strategy will be produced alongside the SPD. However, as this strategy is likely to be updated regularly to reflect new information and available funding, it is proposed that is not included within the SPD but is instead a separate document produced through collaboration between the two Councils and key stakeholders.
28. Chapter 10 commits to a review of the NGDF should there be a change in circumstances which would have implications for the guidance provided in the NGDF.

### **Consultation and Adoption**

29. In preparing this draft NGDF, there has been early engagement with a range of stakeholders. This has been crucial in gaining valuable information about long-term aspirations for the site and infrastructure required to deliver and achieve the full potential of the site. Dialogue will continue throughout the consultation process to help shape any revisions of the NGDF before it is approved.
30. The NGDF is being prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 which are reflected in

our Statement of Community Involvement. The Regulations set out that a draft SPD must be:

- Screened to determine whether Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitat Regulation Assessment is required. The outcomes of the screening opinion will be published alongside the draft NGDF.
- Made available for public consultation for a 4-week minimum period.
- Made available for inspection, at a Council's principle office and at other places within its area as the local planning authority consider appropriate, during normal working hours.
- Made available as an online copy.

31. The NGDF will be prepared in accordance with these regulations. The Council's website will be used as the main point of contact for the formal consultation. The NGDF online consultation will be promoted via social media (Facebook and Twitter) to raise awareness of the proposals and to issue reminders of the consultation closing date. These should direct residents to the formal consultation website.
32. Printed copies of the NGDF will also be placed in key public buildings (Town Hall and libraries) to allow members of the public to participate in the consultation process.
33. Publicity materials including posters will be located at key locations to signpost residents to the on-line information or to view proposals in person.
- 5.1 Residents and businesses will be able to view and discuss the proposals with Council officers at two drop in sessions being held on:
  - 5.2 Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December – Unsworth Academy – 3:30pm – 7:30pm.
  - 5.3 Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December – The Old Police Station, Heywood – 3.30pm - 7.30pm
34. It is proposed that the final version of the NGDF is brought back to Cabinet in March 2025 to determine whether to adopt the NGDF, highlighting the responses received during consultation and any amendments made as a result.

### **Timescales**

- 5.4 It is proposed that consultation on the draft NGDF takes place for at least six weeks commencing in November 2024.
  35. This would allow for consideration of comments received and for any amendments to the NGDF to be made before the final version is taken back for formal Cabinet approval in March 2025.
-

## Links with the Corporate Priorities:

*Please summarise how this links to the Let's Do It Strategy.*

36. Places for Everyone forms part of Bury's statutory development plan. It sets out statutory policies and strategic site allocations that will guide future growth and development in the Borough. A key part of the Plan is to rebalance the Greater Manchester economy by significantly boosting the economic output from the north through the delivery of new housing and employment that will benefit both Bury and its residents. The 'Lets Do It' strategy specifically refers to Places for Everyone as having a key role to play in the delivery of its objectives and priorities.

---

## Equality Impact and Considerations:

*Please provide an explanation of the outcome(s) of an initial or full EIA and make **specific reference regarding the protected characteristic of Looked After Children**. Intranet link to EIA documents is [here](#).*

37. The attached Equality Impact Assessment concludes that there are no negative impacts on equality and a positive impact recorded.

---

## Environmental Impact and Considerations:

*Please provide an explanation of the Environmental impact of this decision. Please include the impact on both **Carbon emissions** (contact [climate@bury.gov.uk](mailto:climate@bury.gov.uk) for advice) and **Biodiversity** (contact [c.m.wilkinson@bury.gov.uk](mailto:c.m.wilkinson@bury.gov.uk) for advice)*

38. Environmental impacts and concerns will be assessed and monitored as project delivery commences and will be in-line with existing Council policies. The Northern Gateway Development Framework will seek to meet policy requirements, including physical, social and environmental impacts including biodiversity net gain.

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## Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Stakeholders to not engage in the consultation on the draft Supplementary Planning Document.	The SPD is being prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 which are reflected in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. However, the consultation process will be kept under review and will be adjusted if additional stakeholder engagement is required.

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### **Legal Implications:**

*To be completed by the Council's Monitoring Officer.*

39. The statutory requirements for the preparation of SPDs are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the "Consultation and Adoption" section of this report set out how these requirements are being followed. When consulting, the Council must also ensure it complies with its own Statement of Community Involvement. Before adoption of the SPD, Cabinet will need to consider the issues raised during the consultation and how those issues have been addressed. SPDs do not form part of the development plan so they cannot introduce new planning policies. They are however a material consideration in determining planning applications.

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### **Financial Implications:**

*To be completed by the Council's Section 151 Officer.*

40. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

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### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Northern Gateway Development Framework Consultation Draft Supplementary Planning Document

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### **Background papers:**

*Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.*

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**

Term	Meaning
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
PfE	Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan

# Northern Gateway Development Framework (JPA1.1)

Supplementary Planning Document  
CONSULTATION DRAFT

November 2024



ROCHDALE  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Bury  
Council

### Bury Council

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Department for Business Growth and  
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Duke Street  
Bury BL9 0EJ

[planning.policy@bury.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@bury.gov.uk)

### Rochdale Borough Council

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Smith Street  
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**Date of issue**  
November 2024

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# Foreword

The recently approved Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan designates the Northern Gateway site for a primarily employment-focused development, with about 1.2 million square metres of space. This project is expected to create around 20,000 new jobs, benefitting residents of Bury, Rochdale, Greater Manchester, and surrounding areas.

The site is a key part of the Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone, which was created to promote high-tech industries, innovations, and economic growth. Its goal is to position Greater Manchester as a leader in cutting-edge industries.

The Northern Gateway offers a truly transformative opportunity to reshape the local economy and create a lively, accessible, and dynamic business hub for various industries, including specialised areas for advanced manufacturing. It will feature a variety of building sizes and attract everything from new start-ups and growing local businesses to international companies looking to invest.

Northern Gateway is more than just a business hub. It offers the chance to build a new community, with new homes, green spaces, and transport infrastructure that will provide lasting benefits to the people of Bury, Rochdale, and beyond. This development aims to create a lasting legacy for future generations.

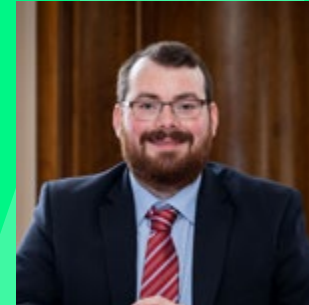
We (Bury Council and Rochdale Council) are proud to present the Draft Northern Gateway Development Framework, which outlines a clear plan, vision, and objectives for the site. This framework will set the guidelines for evaluating future planning applications and identify the essential infrastructure needed to support the site's long-term development.

"This is a true game-changer, a once in a lifetime opportunity to bring jobs and investment to our part of the world. It will play a crucial role in building prosperous communities in Bury and the wider area for generations to come"

**Cllr Eamonn O'Brien, Leader of Bury Council**

"The Northern Gateway, as part of the wider Atom Valley, presents us with a transformative opportunity to rebalance the Greater Manchester economy and bring thousands of high-quality jobs, improved transport links to surrounding areas and increased prosperity to the Rochdale borough and beyond."

**Cllr Neil Emmott, Leader of Rochdale Council**



**Cllr Eamonn O'Brien, Leader  
of Bury Council**



**Cllr Neil Emmott, Leader of  
Rochdale Council**

# > Northern Gateway





# Introduction

This draft Northern Gateway Development Framework (NGDF) relates to the Heywood/ Pilsworth (Northern Gateway) site



# 01

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# 01. Introduction

This draft Northern Gateway Development Framework (NGDF) relates to the Heywood/ Pilsworth (Northern Gateway) site, that is allocated for employment-led development under Policy JPA1.1 of the recently adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE) and forms part of the wider ‘Northern Gateway’ development opportunity.

1.1 Northern Gateway comprises two PfE allocations within the wider North-East Growth corridor which straddle the districts of Bury and Rochdale:

- Heywood/Pilsworth – Policy JPA1.1, and
- Simister/Bowlee – Policy JPA1.2.

1.2 This draft NGDF relates solely to the JPA1.1 allocated site (hereafter known as ‘the site’). A separate development framework is to be prepared for the JPA1.2 allocation.

1.3 The role of the NGDF is to inform the preparation of the Design Code(s) and Infrastructure Phasing and Delivery Strategy (IPDS) for the site and to effectively bridge the gap between the allocation of the site in PfE and the subsequent detail of the development that will emerge through planning applications on the site.

1.4 The preparation of the NGDF and its supporting evidence has enabled key issues to be identified and addressed to the satisfaction of all parties at an early stage in the planning process. Fundamentally, the Development Framework establishes the parameters against which future planning applications will be considered and identifies the necessary infrastructure required to support the development of the site.

1.5 The NGDF has been prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and once adopted it will be a material consideration in the determination of all planning applications relating to the site.

1.6 The site straddles the administrative boundary of Bury and Rochdale and is positioned at a strategically important intersection around the M60, M62 and M66 motorways. It represents a highly accessible opportunity for growth in Greater Manchester with wider benefits on a regional and national level. It will enable the delivery of a large, nationally significant employment opportunity to attract high quality businesses and investment on the M62 corridor coupled with a significant number of new homes and supporting services and facilities.

1.7 A central theme of PfE's spatial strategy is to deliver inclusive growth across the city region complemented by a key aim to significantly boost the competitiveness of the northern parts of Greater Manchester. The scale and location of the site will help to deliver these fundamental objectives. It will help to rebalance the Greater Manchester economy, ensure PfE plays its part in driving growth within the north of England and significantly improve Greater Manchester's competitiveness both nationally and internationally.

1.8 This NGDF has been prepared jointly by Bury and Rochdale Councils (hereafter collectively referred to as 'the councils'), with technical input from the Northern Gateway Development Vehicle LLP (NGDV) as the main site promoter and input from other landowners / stakeholders, including National Highways and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM). This engagement has helped to identify and understand expectations and key issues around the delivery of the site during the early stages of preparing the NGDF and all parties are committed to securing the comprehensive development of the site.

## The Purpose of the NGDF

### Places for Everyone Context

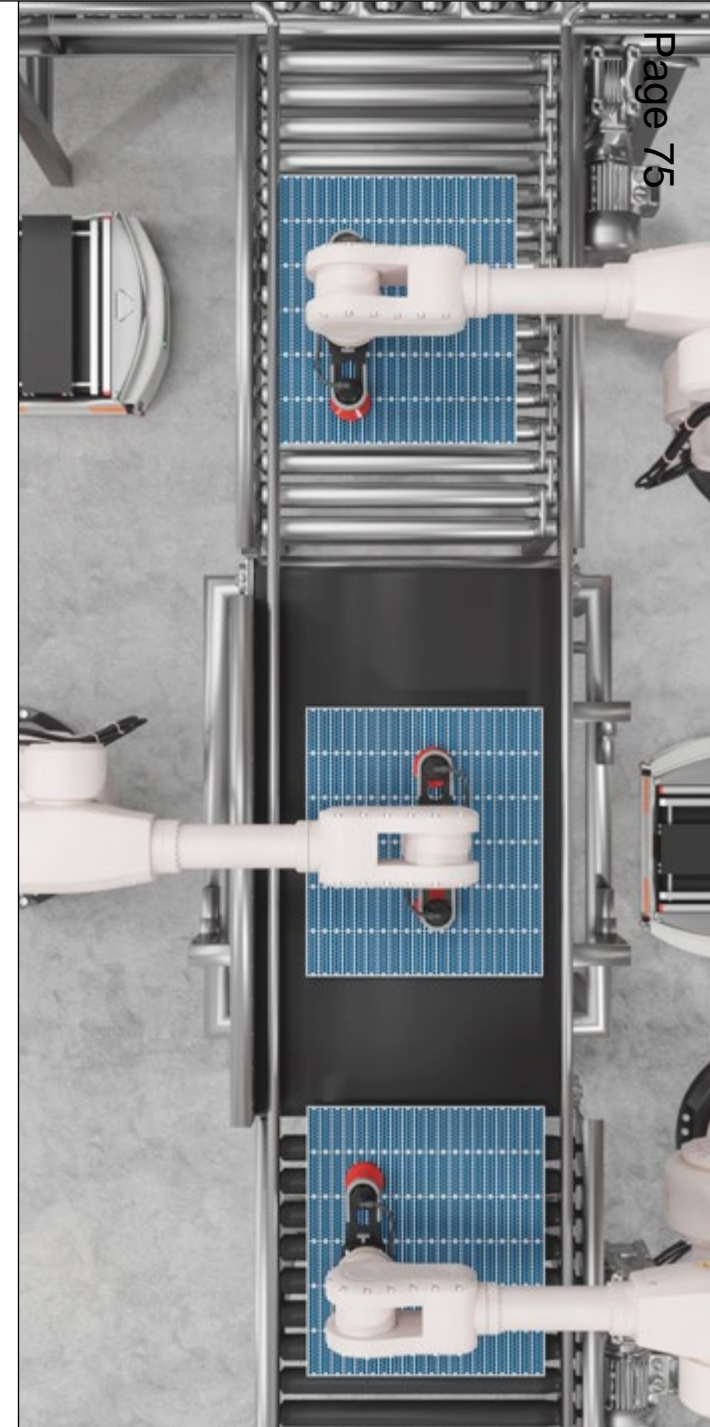
1.9 Places for Everyone (PfE) is a long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth. It was prepared by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) on behalf of the nine authorities and was adopted in March 2024.

1.10 PfE Policy JPA1.1 includes the following requirement:

"Development at this allocation will be required to be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan, design code and infrastructure phasing and delivery strategy, in line with Policy JP-D1 'Infrastructure Implementation', that has been agreed with the local planning authorities."

1.11 This draft NGDF supplements PfE Policy JPA 1.1 and sets out a comprehensive Development Framework and high level design principles. Design Code(s) are expected to come forward at planning application stage.

1.12 A comprehensive Infrastructure Phasing and Delivery Strategy (IPDS) for the site is being prepared in accordance with the PfE Policy JPA1.1 and JP-D1 and should be read alongside the NGDF SPD. The IPDS will remain a 'living document' and will be subject to regular updates and amendments outside of the NGDF SPD process in order to be responsive to constraints and opportunities, and the availability of funding, as the site is brought forward.





## NGDF Role and Objectives

**1.13** Once adopted, this NGDF will establish the key principles for the development of the site and establish a framework against which future planning applications on the site will be considered. It will also help Bury and Rochdale Councils to ensure that the ambitions for the site are realised and the benefits to the communities of Bury and Rochdale are maximised.

**1.14** This draft NGDF will:

- Set out the councils' vision and strategic objectives for the site shaped by public consultation and stakeholder collaboration
- Facilitate a coordinated and comprehensive masterplanning approach, to be implemented consistently across multiple planning applications
- Establish key development requirements that all planning applications relating to land within the site are expected to adhere to
- Provide an overarching spatial Development Framework to communicate development and design parameters, including land use, access, movement and green infrastructure
- Provide design principles and guidance, to inform the more detailed design considerations and approaches needed to deliver the Northern Gateway vision, and
- Describe the proposed approach towards delivery of physical infrastructure.

**1.15** This NGDF has been produced in accordance with the requirements of legislation and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

**1.16** This NGDF establishes a clear framework for development at the site and will be a material consideration in the determination of all future planning applications within the allocation boundary. In accordance with the adopted PpE, planning applications will be required to align with the Development Framework and supporting guidance set out in this NGDF including delivery of necessary and related infrastructure in a coordinated and timely manner.



## NGDF Structure

**1.17** This NGDF has been structured to reflect the sequence of key stages in its production, as follows:

- **Chapter 2** – Chapter 2 – Strategic Policy Context: In preparing the NGDF, consideration has been given to alignment of the site with national, regional and local policy.
- **Chapter 3** – Vision and Strategic Objectives: The overarching vision for the site and the strategic objectives which will help achieve the vision.
- **Chapter 4** – Local and Strategic Outcomes: An outline of the economic, social and environmental benefits the site will deliver.
- **Chapter 5** – Understanding the Site and Surroundings: Identifies the site within its wider strategic setting and sets out the site conditions. An overview of the planning policy context and planning history. Concluding with site constraints and opportunities.
- **Chapter 6** – Key Development Principles: An introduction to the Development Framework for the site and presentation of the key design principles.
- **Chapter 7** – Design Principles and Character Areas: Presentation of strategic design principles for a series of character areas within the site. This chapter presents a high-level framework to which future planning applications for individual phases must accord.
- **Chapter 8** – Sustainability: Sets out the expectations and likely benefits from the site with respect to net zero, carbon, energy, resource efficiency and climate resilience which, collectively, would make a significant contribution to climate change mitigation and address the impacts of climate change.
- **Chapter 9** – Phasing, Infrastructure and Delivery: Analysis of existing infrastructure including means of access, local and strategic highway network, community facilities and utilities / services. This chapter also includes details how the site will be delivered in the future and roles and responsibilities.
- **Chapter 10** – Monitoring and Review: An outline for the ongoing strategy for engagement with key stakeholders in line with the requirements of PfE Policy JP-D1 and commitments to monitoring and review.

## SITE SIZE

634<sub>Ha</sub>

## LOCAL COMPARISON

560<sub>Ha</sub>      260<sub>Ha</sub>

MANCHESTER  
AIRPORT      HEATON  
PARK

(1.13x BIGGER)      (2.44x BIGGER)

## UK COMPARISON

10.9<sub>Ha</sub>      289<sub>Ha</sub>

02  
ARENA      CITY OF  
LONDON

(33.7x BIGGER)      (2.19x BIGGER)

## Overview of the Site

1.18 The site covers an area of around 634 hectares (1,567 acres) and is positioned at a strategically important intersection directly to the east of the M66, directly to the north west of the M62 and north of the M60. The site straddles the administrative boundary of both Bury and Rochdale. 327 hectares of the site are within Bury and 307 hectares are within Rochdale.

1.19 The site is situated to the east of Bury and to the south of Heywood and is in close proximity to neighbouring town centres. From the centre of the site (approx. Birch Business Park), as the crow flies, the distances are as follows; Heywood (2.8km), Middleton (3.7km), Whitefield (4.2km), Bury (4.4km) and Rochdale (7.3km).

1.20 The site consists primarily of agricultural land. There are a number of farms within the site as well as Birch Business Park, Birch Motorway Services and Pike Fold Golf Course. Whittle Brook, running south east to north west through the site creates a clear division between the south western and central portion of the site. Moss Hall Road (changing to Whittle Lane to the south east) creates another clear division between the central and north eastern portion of the site.



1.21 The site is allocated for substantial employment-led development. This will be supported by new communities within the site as well as at Simister/Bowlee (JPA 1.2) which have transformational potential in enabling new housing, community facilities and new transport infrastructure to come forward in what is currently an area with significant pockets of high deprivation, low skills and worklessness.

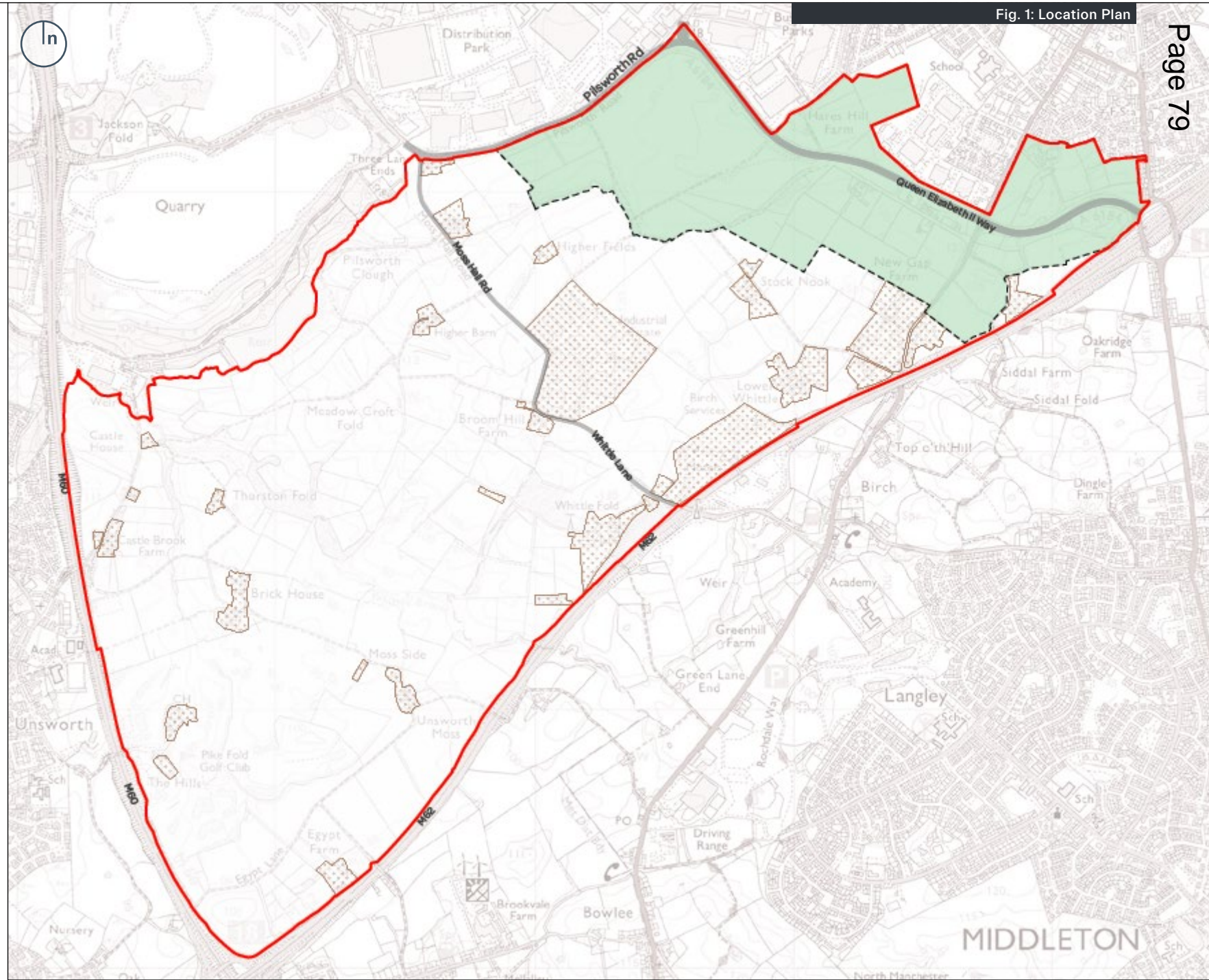
1.22 To be successful and sustainable, the employment and housing opportunities need to be accessible by a range of transport modes and be linked directly to existing and new communities in the surrounding area via new recreational routes and corridors of green infrastructure which in turn provide an attractive setting for development. Outside of the motorway network, much of the area proposed for development is currently served by an inadequate transport network and this will require substantial investment to improve connectivity, potentially including investment in rapid transit. The prospective residents will require new community facilities, and these will be provided in accessible locations within walking distance of homes.

1.23 Full delivery of the site is expected to extend beyond the PfE plan period (i.e. beyond 2039) and will need to incorporate extensive supporting infrastructure.

1.24 Part of the site is already being delivered in the form of the South Heywood development; a large mixed-use development which was approved in March 2020 and is currently under construction. This comprises the South Heywood employment area, 1,000 new homes and includes the recently built 2.2km link road, Queen Elizabeth II Way, which joins Junction 19 of the M62 motorway to existing employment areas off Pilsworth Road.

Fig. 1: Location Plan

-  Allocation Boundary
-  South Heywood Application Area
-  Existing Development
-  Existing Road







## Boundaries








1.25 North west - The north western boundary of the site is defined by wooded vegetation and public footpaths along Hollins Brook, running adjacent to a series of fishing ponds and a reservoir. Beyond is Pilsworth quarry/landfill site and Heywood Distribution Park.

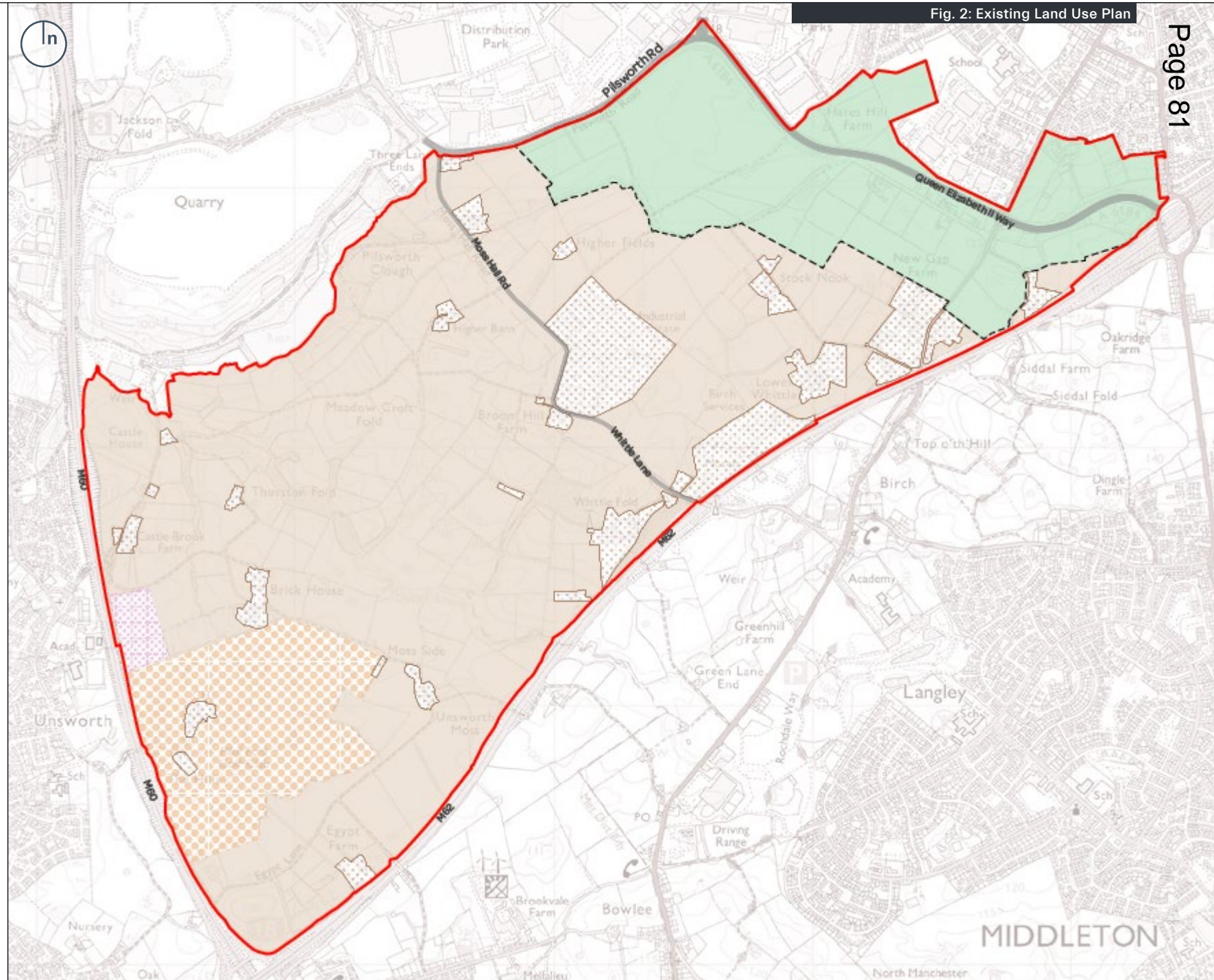
1.26 North east - The north eastern boundary is defined by the extent of the South Heywood Masterplan; beyond which is Heywood Distribution Park and existing residential development in Heywood.

1.27 South east - The M62 corridor, including Birch Services, runs along the entirety of the south eastern boundary. Beyond the M62 there is agricultural land, some of which forms part of the other site within the Northern Gateway allocation – known as Simister/Bowlee (Policy JP Allocation 1.2) – which is allocated for a 1,550 dwelling residential development, and the existing settlement of Simister.

1.28 West - The M66 corridor defines the western boundary, beyond which there is open space and existing residential communities of Unsworth and Whitefield within Bury.

Fig. 2: Existing Land Use Plan

-  Allocation Boundary
-  South Heywood Application Area
-  Existing Development
-  Existing Road
-  Agricultural Land
-  Recreational Land - Golf Course
-  Recreational Land - Sports Pitches



## NEW EMPLOYMENT FLOORSPACE

 1.2m<sup>sqm</sup>

## NEW RESIDENTIAL HOMES

 1,200

## GROSS DIRECT FTE JOBS CREATED

 21,455

## NET ADDITIONAL CONSTRUCTION JOBS

 15,600

## Northern Gateway Development Framework

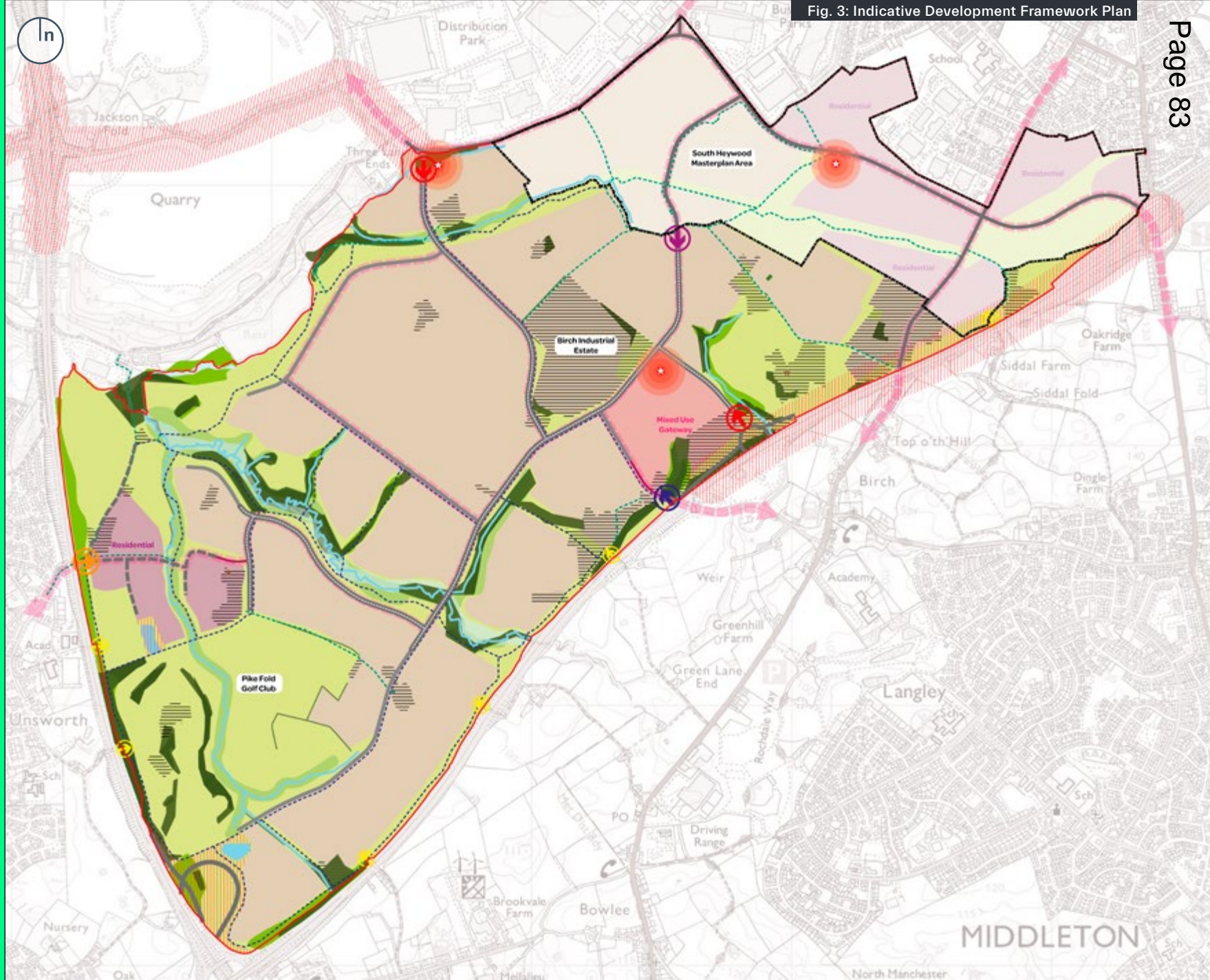
1.29 Consistent with the Places for Everyone allocation, development at Northern Gateway, informed by the Northern Gateway Development Framework (NGDF), will deliver an employment-led, mixed-use development, comprising approximately 1,200,000 sqm of B2 / B8 floorspace (with around 935,000 sqm being delivered within the plan period), approximately 1,200 new homes, a new primary school and an appropriate range of supporting and ancillary services and facilities, such as a new local centre, hotel, leisure and conference facilities, as well as new and improved sustainable transport, active travel and highways infrastructure and multifunctional green and blue infrastructure.



Fig. 3: Indicative Development Framework Plan

- Allocation boundary
- Potential developable area
- Existing built development
- South Heywood Application area
- Green open space
- Woodland
- Woodland Riparian Corridor
- Woodland/Priority Habitat
- Watercourse
- Water body
- Listed Building (Grade II)
- Indicative Highway Improvement Area
- Proposed Access Point (all traffic)\*
- Potential Access Point (all traffic)
- Access Point (no HGV)
- Access Point (Bus Only)
- Access Point (Pedestrian / cycle access)
- Primary Road (all traffic)
- Secondary Road (all traffic)
- Residential Road (no HGV)
- Bus Road (bus only)
- Retained Footpath
- Relocated/New Footpath & Cycle Route
- Employment uses
- Residential uses
- Mixed-use
- Gateway location
- Bus enabled route

\* Proposed access point direct to Strategic Road Network



# Strategic Policy Context

Places for Everyone (PfE) is a long-term joint development plan for nine Greater Manchester authorities for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth.



# 02



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## 02. Strategic Policy Context

### Planning Policy Context

#### Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan

2.1 Places for Everyone (PfE) is a long-term joint development plan for nine Greater Manchester authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth. It has been produced by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) on behalf of the nine authorities and became part of the statutory Development Plan on 21st March 2024.

2.2 The PfE Joint Development Plan:

- sets out how the nine authorities should develop over the plan period to 2039
- identifies the amount of new development that will come forward across the nine authorities, in terms of housing, offices, and industry and warehousing, and the main areas in which this will be focused
- supports the delivery of key infrastructure, such as transport and utilities
- protects the important environmental assets across the city region
- allocates sites for employment and housing outside of the existing urban area, and
- defines a new Green Belt boundary for Greater Manchester.

2.3 PfE highlights the opportunity for growth along the 'North-East Growth Corridor' (PfE Policy JP-Strat 7), focused on the M62 corridor from Junction 18 to Junction 21, extending across parts of Bury, Rochdale and Oldham. Three sites have been allocated as part of the North-East Growth corridor, two of which make up the 'Northern Gateway' (including the JPA1.1 site). The Policy also identifies the potential for growth at Kingsway Business Park. As set out below, the Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ) has been established to realise the potential of the North-East Growth Corridor.

2.4 PfE also proposes investment in new public transport infrastructure and routes to connect Bury and Rochdale Town Centres with the Northern Gateway sites and to Manchester City Centre. The North-East Growth Corridor can help to connect the eastern and central parts of the city region with economic growth and investment opportunities. The proposed new sustainable rapid mass transit corridor will provide improved accessibility and link employment opportunities within the cross-borough Northern Gateway sites.

### Policy JP Allocation 1.1: Heywood / Pilsworth (Northern Gateway)

2.5 JPA1.1 Heywood / Pilsworth has been identified as a large, nationally significant location for new employment-led development within the Northern Gateway opportunity area between Bury and Rochdale.

2.6 PfE Policy JP Allocation 1.1 states:

Development at this allocation will be required to:

1. Be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan, design code and infrastructure phasing and delivery strategy, in line with Policy JP-D1 'Infrastructure Implementation', that has been agreed with the local planning authorities;
2. Be of sufficient scale and quality to enable a significant rebalance in economic growth within the sub-region by boosting the competitiveness of the north of the conurbation and should;
3. Deliver a total of around 1,200,000 sqm of industrial and warehousing space (with around 935,000 sqm being delivered within the plan period). This should comprise a mix of high quality employment premises in an attractive business park setting in order to appeal to a wide range of business sectors including the development of an Advanced Manufacturing Park;
4. Deliver around 1,000 additional homes along with a new primary school in the eastern part of the allocation to support the early delivery of the infrastructure and provide a buffer between existing housing and the new employment development;
5. Deliver around 200 new homes, which includes an appropriate mix of house types and sizes and the provision of plots for custom and self-build housing (subject to local demand, having regard to Bury's self-build register and other relevant evidence), in the west of the allocation off Castle Road ensuring that an appropriate buffer is incorporated to separate this part of the allocation from the wider employment area and that appropriate highways measures are in place to prevent the use of residential roads by traffic associated with the wider employment area;
6. Deliver an appropriate range of supporting and ancillary services and facilities, such as a new local centre, hotel, leisure and conference facilities. These should be in accessible locations and of a genuinely ancillary scale that is appropriate to the main employment use of the allocation;
7. Make provision for new and improved sustainable transport and highways infrastructure having regard to the indicative transport interventions set out in Appendix D in accordance with Policy JP-C8;
8. Make provision for affordable housing in accordance with local planning policy requirements;
9. Make financial contributions for offsite additional primary and secondary school provision to meet needs generated by the development in accordance with policy JP-P5;
10. Ensure the design and layout allows for effective integration with surrounding communities, including active travel links and connections to local services, employment opportunities and over the M62 to proposed new development at Simister/Bowlee (JPA1.2);
11. Retain and enhance existing recreation facilities (including Castlebrook High School playing fields and Pike Fold Golf Course) or, where necessary, make provision for replacement facilities that are equivalent or better in terms of quantity and quality and in a suitable location;
12. Make provision for new, high quality, publicly accessible multi-functional green and blue infrastructure including the integration and enhancement of existing features such as Brightly Brook, Whittle Brook and Castle Brook;
13. Make provision for compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt in the vicinity of the site in accordance with Policy JP-G2;
14. Strengthen the boundary of the Green Belt to the north of the site around Pilsworth Cottages, Brightly Brook and Pilsworth Fisheries such that they will comprise physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent;
15. Ensure that any development is safe from and mitigates for potential flood risk from all sources including Whittle Brook, Castle Brook and Brightley Brook and does not increase the flood risk elsewhere. The delivery of the allocation should be guided by an appropriate flood risk and drainage strategy which ensures co-ordination between phases of development;
16. Provide an appropriate buffer between the development and the motorway/local road network where required to serve multiple functions including air quality, noise, visual mitigation and high-quality landscaping;

17. Take appropriate account of relevant heritage assets, and their settings, including Brick Farmhouse and Lower Whittle Farmhouse Grade II Listed Buildings in accordance with Policy JP-P2;
18. Carry out a detailed assessment and evaluation of known and potential archaeological sites including Meadow Croft Farm, historic landscape features and built heritage assets, to establish specific requirements for the protection and enhancement of significant heritage assets;
19. Consider the extraction of any viable mineral resources within Mineral Safeguarding Areas, in accordance with Policy 8 of the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan (or any relevant policies in subsequent minerals plans); and
20. Undertake hydrological and ground investigations to determine the extent and quality of any peat identified in the south-western part of the site to inform the potential for restoration and the comprehensive masterplanning of the site which should ensure that the loss or deterioration of any irreplaceable habitat is avoided.

### Other PfE Policies

2.7 PfE also sets out a range of other policies relating to development management and technical / environmental matters which have also been taken into account in preparing this SPD.

### Local Plan Policies

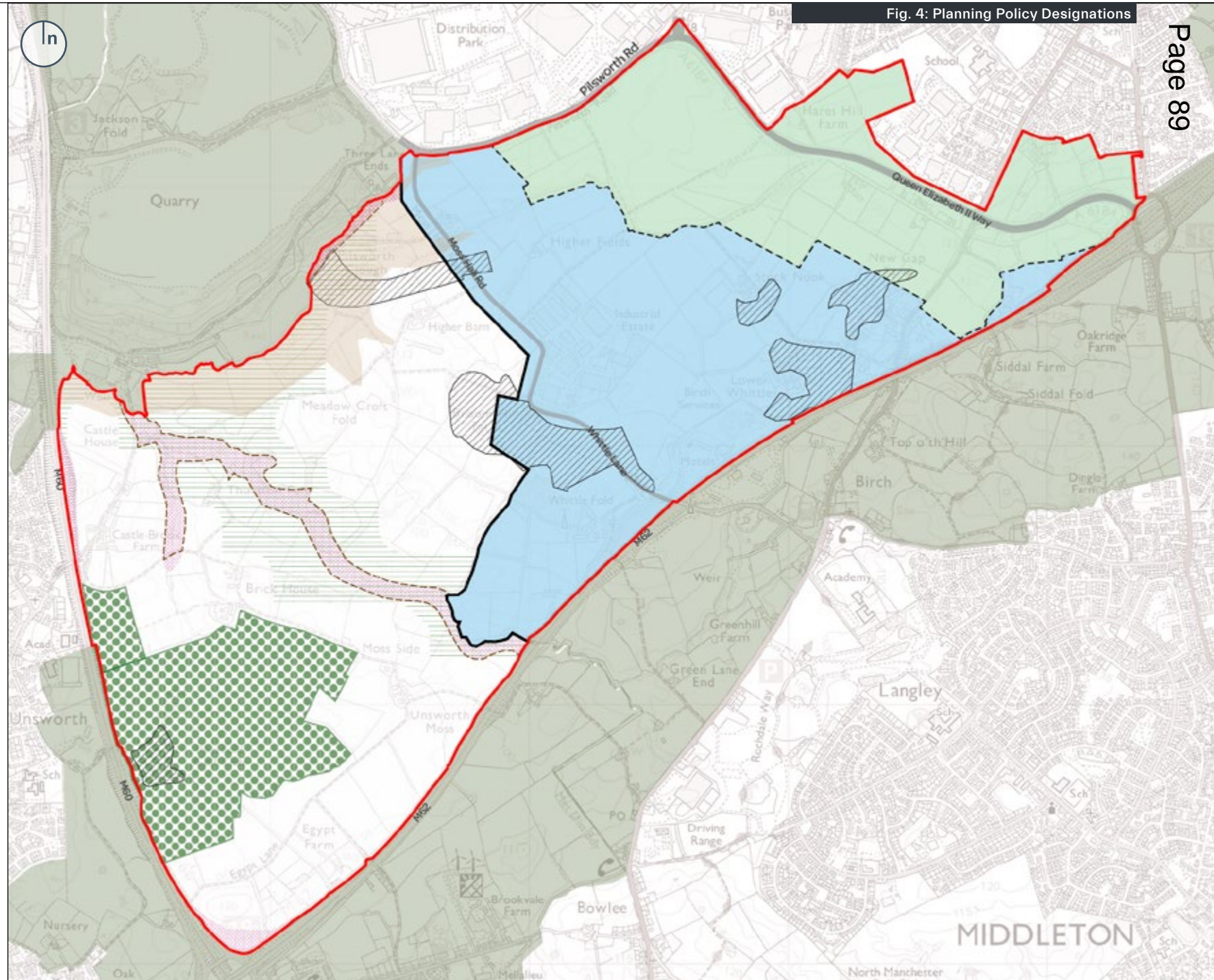
2.8 In addition to PfE, the adopted Local Plans for Bury and Rochdale also set out a range of policies relating to development management and technical / environmental matters which have also been taken into account in preparing this SPD. These include:

- Saved Policies of the Bury Unitary Development Plan (adopted 1997)
- The Rochdale Core Strategy (adopted 2016)
- Saved Policies of the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (adopted 2006)
- The Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan (adopted 2012)
- The Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan (adopted 2013)

2.9 Both councils have commenced preparation of new Local Plans that will support PfE and establish more detailed policy relating to development management and technical / environmental considerations.

Fig. 4: Planning Policy Designations

-  Allocation Boundary
-  South Heywood Application Area
-  Bury & Rochdale Boundary
-  PFE Green Belt
-  Protected Recreation
-  UDP River Valleys
-  UDP Wildlife Links & Corridors
-  Area of Search: Sand and Sandstone
-  PFE Green Infrastructure
-  PFE Urban Fringe Farmland
-  PFE Incised Urban Fringe Valleys
-  PFE Mosslands and Lowland Farmland
-  Existing Roads





## National Planning Policy Framework & Planning Practice Guidance

**2.10** The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) ('the NPPF') sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied, including guidance for plan-making and decision-making.

**2.11** The NPPF confirms that in order to achieve sustainable development, the planning system has three overarching interdependent objectives, including:

- An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- An environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

**2.12** This SPD has been prepared with full regard to the policies set out within the NPPF, as well as the Planning Practice Guidance which supports it.

**2.13** The new Labour Government has recently completed consultation on proposed reforms to the NPPF and other changes to the planning system. It is currently anticipated that the amended NPPF will be published towards the end of 2024, or early in 2025. Once published, the amended NPPF will supersede the December 2023 version.



**This SPD has been prepared with full regard to the policies set out within the NPPF, as well as the Planning Practice Guidance which supports it.**



## Atom Valley

**2.14** Atom Valley is a Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ) within the Atom Valley Growth Location identified in Places for Everyone, and was established in August 2022 with the focus being on three key sites:

- Northern Gateway, in Rochdale and Bury
- Kingsway Park, in Rochdale
- Stakehill, in Rochdale and Oldham

**2.15** The Atom Valley Growth Location is the single largest employment opportunity for the city-region. Collectively these three sites have the potential to provide 1.6 million square meters of employment space, generating 20,000 high-quality jobs and facilitating the construction of 7,000 new homes.

**2.16** Atom Valley is led by a partnership of developers, industrialists, universities, and local government. The vision is to create an extensive and interconnected manufacturing “mega-cluster”, which builds on existing local strengths in advanced manufacturing, materials, and machinery in the local area. Bringing together world-class research, manufacturing, research and development, it aims to shape the future while levelling up communities.

**2.17** Beyond providing ample space and opportunity, Atom Valley MDZ stands out as an unparalleled industrial development in the UK and beyond, thanks to the combination of Manchester’s leading research facilities and leisure opportunities. Situated at the heart of a vibrant city region, it fosters collaboration among businesses and institutions, with quick access to the motorway network and Manchester city centre just seven miles away.

**2.18** As a long-term, large-scale regeneration endeavour, this project will play a pivotal role in levelling up the northeast of Greater Manchester and enhancing the overall prosperity of the city region.

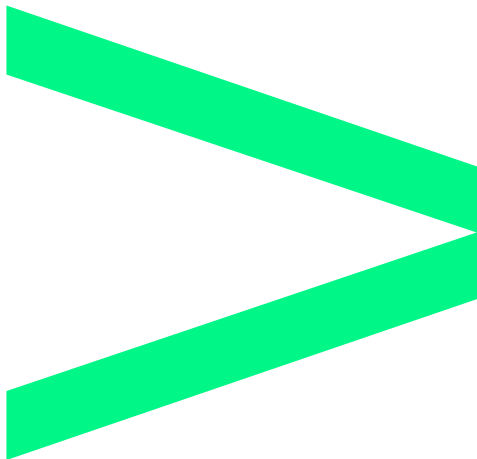
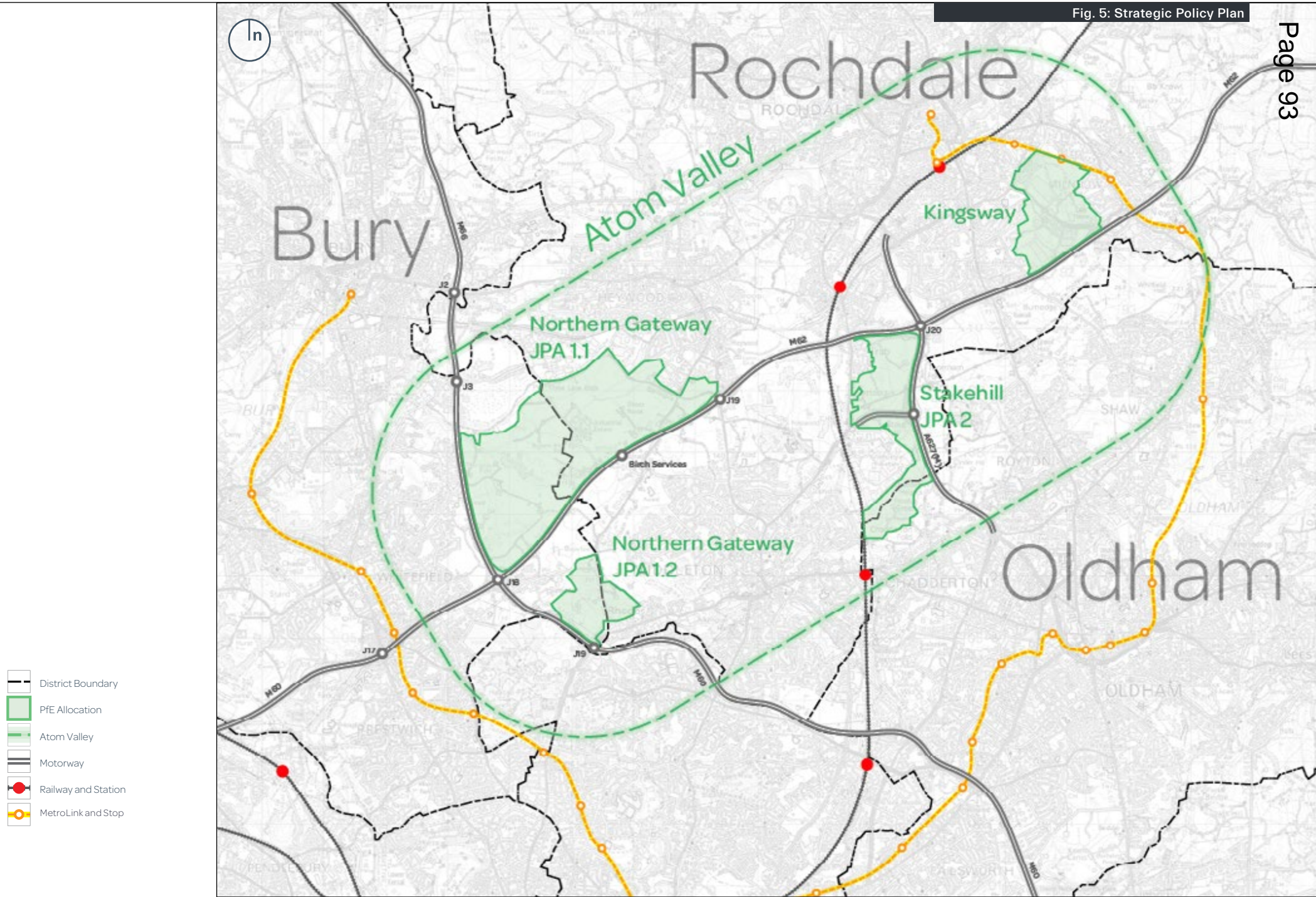




Fig. 5: Strategic Policy Plan



## Alignment with Corporate Strategies

**2.19** This NGDF has been prepared with full regard to the existing corporate strategies of Bury and Rochdale Councils, which are summarised below.

### Bury 2030 Strategy, 'LET'S Do It!'

**2.20** In July 2020, Bury Council and NHS Bury Integrated Care Partnership launched an ambitious community strategy, LET'S Do It!, which sets out a vision that by 2030 the borough of Bury will stand out as a place that is achieving faster economic growth than the national average, with lower than national average levels of deprivation.

**2.21** The Let's Do It Strategy is underpinned by the guiding principles of:

- Local neighbourhoods: empowered residents, families and local communities within the townships at the heart of decision making to make a difference to people's lives.
- An enterprising spirit: Harnessing that spirit to raise aspirations, remove barriers, and maximise opportunities to grow and develop for local people and businesses.
- Delivering together: To deliver a new relationship between public services, communities and businesses which is based on co-design, accountability and shared decision making to focus on wellbeing, prevention, and early intervention.
- A strengths-based approach: a borough in which people are helped to make the best of themselves, by recognising and building on the strengths of all local children, families and communities and taking an evidence-led understanding of risk and impact to ensure the right intervention at the right time.

**2.22** The Bury 2030 Strategy seeks to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity, which specifically includes land at Northern Gateway.

### Bury's Economic Strategy 2024–2034

**2.23** The Economic Strategy sets out the framework and priorities to guide and steer Bury Council and its partners collaborative approach to delivering a sustainable, competitive, inclusive and resilient local economy that fulfils its growth potential, while making a significant contribution to Greater Manchester's wider economic growth ambitions over the next decade and beyond.

**2.24** Whilst Bury's economy is integral to supporting Greater Manchester's growth agenda, it is recognised that there is a distinct imbalance even within the Greater Manchester economy with economic output from the north of the conurbation, including Bury, falling behind that of the central and southern areas of Greater Manchester.

**2.25** Through a clear, comprehensive and ambitious strategy, Bury is well placed to play a key role in driving forward sustainable economic growth in the borough and in Greater Manchester. This will be achieved through the realisation of identified key opportunities. For example, the realisation of significant new and higher-skilled employment opportunities through the release of employment land at Atom Valley / Northern Gateway, which presents a 'game changing' opportunity for Bury and for Greater Manchester.

### Rochdale's 'People, Place and Planet Council Plan 2028'

**2.26** Through this strategy Rochdale Council have set out an ambition to work collaboratively to reduce inequalities and deliver sustainable opportunities and services that will benefit our people, place and planet.

**2.27** This is underpinned by various key priorities, which includes achieving a thriving, fairer and sustainable economy by providing space and support for high value business development, innovation and job creation; supporting people in attaining and maintaining good employment; creating more supply, quality and choice in the housing market (social and high value homes); and enhancing transport systems to make it easier for people to access services, jobs and amenities.

## Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040

**2.28** The Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 sets out Greater Manchester's long-term ambition for transport, with a vision for the city region to have "world-class connections that support long-term sustainable economic growth and access to opportunity for all".

**2.29** The strategy sets out a strong commitment to provide a transport system which: supports sustainable economic growth and the efficient and effective movement of people and goods; improves the quality of life for all by being integrated, affordable and reliable; protects the environment and supports the target to be net zero carbon by 2038 as well as improving air quality; and capitalises on new technology and innovation.

**2.30** It sets a vision (referred to as the 'right mix vision') that 50% of all journeys in Greater Manchester are made by walking, cycling and public transport by 2040. This will mean one million more sustainable journeys every day enabling the delivery of a healthier, greener and more productive city region.

## Northern Gateway Transport Framework

**2.31** A Transport Framework is being developed specifically for Northern Gateway and will consider the potential and patronage for sustainable travel options to and from the site. A Transport Programme which includes sustainable transport schemes, associated phasing and possible funding sources for priority transport interventions will also be included within the Framework.

**2.32** The framework will feed into the Northern Gateway Infrastructure Phasing and Delivery Strategy and planning applications will need to align with this strategy.

## Bury Local Transport Strategy

**2.33** The Bury Local Transport Strategy was approved by the Council in October 2023 and sets out a plan for transport investment in Bury for the next 20 years and beyond, covering all modes of travel in the borough. The strategy aligns with the 'Let's Do It' vision for Bury and the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 and will be used to help secure investment for transport in the Borough.

**2.34** The strategy seeks to link residents to new opportunities and to deliver on the Council's inclusive growth ambitions by connecting people to jobs, education, leisure and tourism. Ensuring that Bury residents can access Northern Gateway and the potential new jobs is a key priority within the strategy. Key strategic transport interventions that are expected to be required to support delivery of the Northern Gateway site are also identified, including junction improvements for the M66 (junctions 2 and 3) to facilitate vehicular, public transport and active travel movement.

## Rochdale Borough Transport Strategy

**2.35** The Rochdale Borough Transport Strategy (2014 refresh) provides a framework to guide the development of transport improvements across the Borough for the period up to 2026. It seeks to ensure that, by 2026, the Borough has an affordable, sustainable, reliable, accessible and integrated transport network that offers travel choice for all, serves its communities, tackles air quality and climate change, enhances social inclusion, public health and supports economic growth and regeneration of the local area.



## Planning History

**2.36** In Bury, planning permission has not been granted for any significant uses within the site.

**2.37** In April 2024, National Highways submitted an application seeking a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the M60 / M62 / M66 Simister Island Interchange, on the south western corner of the JPA1.1 site. The improvement scheme seeks to reduce peak congestion and facilitate future economic growth across Greater Manchester, including supporting the delivery of proposed development sites close to the M60 and M66. The application is currently under examination. If the DCO is made, it would allow National Highways to acquire compulsory interests in and rights over land, including parcels of land within the JPA1.1 site (temporarily and permanently).

**2.38** In Rochdale, hybrid planning permission was originally granted in March 2020<sup>4</sup> for land at South Heywood, within the northeastern part of the site:

- The ‘detailed’ component of the hybrid planning permission granted full planning permission for a new link road between Junction 19 of the M62 and Pilsworth Road, which has now been completed and is open for use (known as Queen Elizabeth II Way).
- The ‘outline’ component of the hybrid planning permission granted outline planning permission (with all matters reserved except for access) for a major mixed-use development comprising up to 135,460 sqm of employment floorspace (Use Classes B2/B8), 1,000 new homes, a new local centre and primary school and associated landscaping, sports pitches, drainage, ecological enhancements, cycleway and footpath linkages and ancillary infrastructure. Following the grant of reserved matters approval, the early phases of development are now under construction.

**2.39** A further outline planning permission was granted in January 2023<sup>5</sup> for an additional 40,000 sqm of employment floorspace (Use Class B8) on land within the South Heywood Masterplan Area. As a result, the total amount of employment floorspace approved at South Heywood is 175,460 sqm.

**2.40** It is anticipated that the South Heywood Masterplan Area will continue to be brought forward through the aforementioned permissions, demonstrating compliance with the outline parameters, comprehensive planning condition requirements and approved Design Code, whilst providing infrastructure in line with the established S106 Legal Agreement.

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4. RMBC ref. 16/01399/HYBR

5. RMBC ref. 22/01569/OUT







# Vision and Strategic Objectives

Atom Valley and Northern Gateway represents a once in a generation opportunity for Greater Manchester



# 03

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## 03. Vision and Strategic Objectives

Atom Valley and Northern Gateway represents a once in a generation opportunity for Greater Manchester in the form of a nationally significant development capable of supporting the rebalancing of the national economy and providing transformative change to local communities and the wider region with regard to investment, jobs and skills.

### Atom Valley Ambition

- **Goal:** Covering sites across Bury, Oldham and Rochdale, this vast employment opportunity will play a pivotal role in making Greater Manchester one of the best places in the world to grow up, get on and grow old.
- **Scope:** Spanning 1.6 million sqm of employment land and creating 7,000 low carbon homes, Atom Valley prioritises sustainable development and the creation of a lasting legacy of high-quality employment sites that will benefit local communities for years to come.
- **Impact:** Generating 20,000 high-quality jobs, fostering a skilled workforce to drive economic growth and innovation in advanced sustainable materials and providing flexible employment opportunity for a wide variety of other sectors and industries. Beyond sites, it transforms the fabric of the region, enhancing liveability and prosperity.
- **Objective:** Establish a nationally significant industry hub for levelling up, prioritising sustainability, innovation, and collaboration between manufacturing and logistics, with an Advanced Sustainable Materials Translational Research facility and Advanced Manufacturing Park.
- **Approach:** To develop a strong private-public partnership that will provide the necessary infrastructure to accommodate a diverse range of employment uses.
- **Outcome:** Atom Valley pioneers large-scale employment investment, fostering innovation and prosperity across the north of the Greater Manchester conurbation and beyond. As a nationally significant industry hub, Atom Valley accelerates national prosperity and champions the levelling up agenda, securing a legacy of holistic progress in economy, society, and environment.



## Northern Gateway Strategic Development Vision

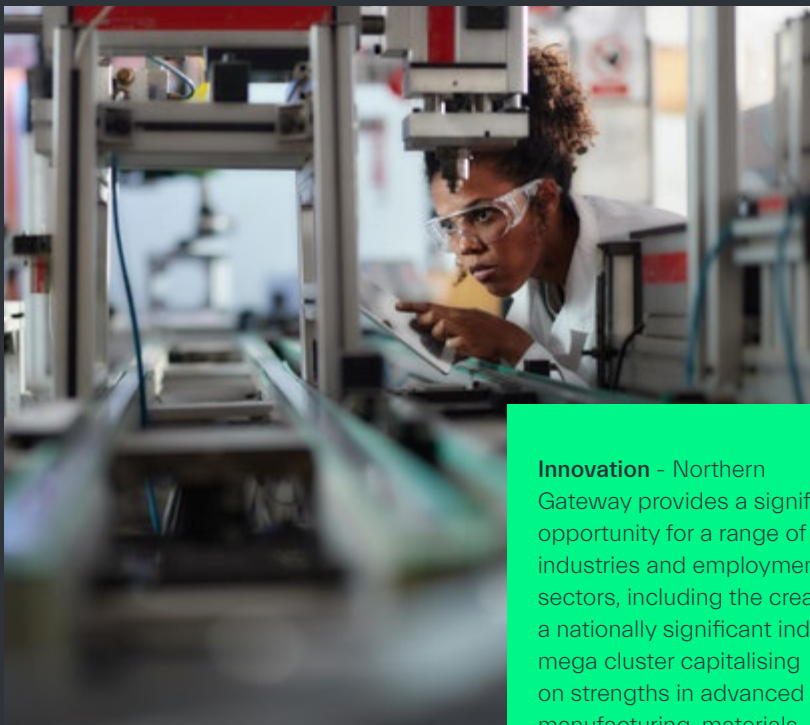
3.1 Northern Gateway will be a world-class business community that will help to drive inclusive growth and economic prosperity for Atom Valley and Greater Manchester by becoming the largest and most accessible employment opportunity in the region, delivering:

3.2 Significant investment into a range of industry sectors at both scale and pace, supporting the region's economy and resilience.

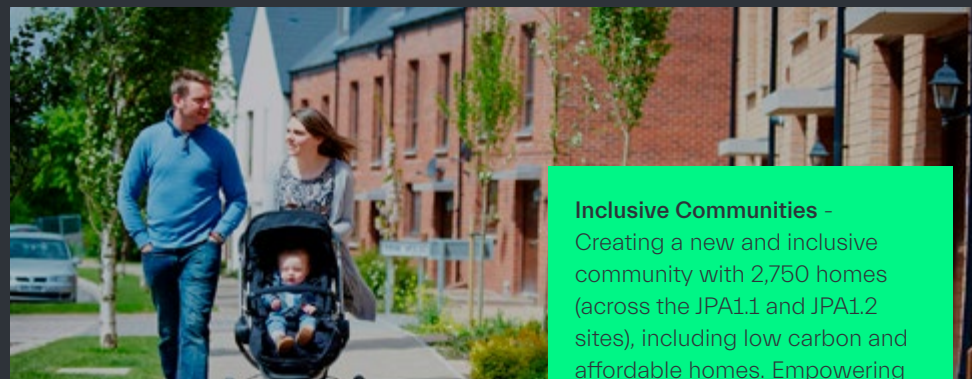
- A dynamic and thriving innovation hub for advanced materials and manufacturing, building on Greater Manchester's world leading strengths in this area.
- A vibrant and dynamic employment ecosystem where businesses and communities thrive, supported by sustainable transport connectivity and green and blue infrastructure networks.
- Flexibility and responsiveness to market demands and opportunities, and
- A truly integrated approach to partnership working with industry, universities, research partners and institutions, that will develop and harness the skills for the local workforce, establishing a legacy of excellence in training and skills, empowering existing communities as well as attracting and retaining top industry talent.



# Northern Gateway: Pillars of development



**Innovation** - Northern Gateway provides a significant opportunity for a range of industries and employment sectors, including the creation of a nationally significant industrial mega cluster capitalising on strengths in advanced manufacturing, materials, and machinery, enhancing national prosperity and delivering levelling up.



**Inclusive Communities** - Creating a new and inclusive community with 2,750 homes (across the JPA1.1 and JPA1.2 sites), including low carbon and affordable homes. Empowering local communities through skills development initiatives, fostering economic inclusivity and social mobility, helping to address national and regional inequalities.

**Sustainability** - Northern Gateway will contribute to Greater Manchester's commitment to be net zero carbon by 2038. The future of our planet needs climate change resilience at its heart, with enhanced biodiversity, green and blue infrastructure networks, sustainable resource use and minimising and repurposing waste.







#### **Business and industry -**

Northern Gateway will attract UK and international firms investing in new distribution and manufacturing premises, and SMEs scaling-up into modern premises, supply chains providing resilience to drive economic growth and spinouts and start-ups ready to move from the lab to the factory to benefit from international standard R&D and skills facilities.



**Collaboration** - Partnerships with Government, developers, industry, colleges and institutions will attract, retain and develop top talent. We will create a long-term legacy, driving skills and nurturing talent to deliver transformational change to the conurbation.



**Connected Places** - A modern, affordable and reliable public transport service, with active travel provision and enhancement, will provide a sustainable, connected network of travel routes, linking existing residential areas with new business premises and facilities, providing access to jobs and health and wellbeing benefits.

## Northern Gateway: 12 key principles

- 1 **Catalyst for Transformation:** Northern Gateway provides a significant opportunity for economic growth across various employment sectors, boosting the productivity and prosperity of the north of the city region.
- 2 **Strategic Location:** Strategically positioned as a central driver of regional progress, leveraging its connectivity to become a focal point of economic activity within Greater Manchester. Its strategic location has the ability to attract national and inward investment from a multitude of sectors including advanced manufacturing, distribution and logistics.
- 3 **Advanced Manufacturing:** Spearheading investment and innovation in advanced materials and manufacturing, building on Greater Manchester's world leading strengths in this area and creating a leading hub for innovation and sustainable industry growth.
- 4 **Scalability and Adaptability:** Over 700 hectares providing unparalleled scalability and adaptability to meet the diverse needs of a range of industries and evolving market dynamics, ensuring flexibility and responsiveness to market demand.
- 5 **Strategic Partnerships:** Collaboration between private investors, developers, funders, universities and agencies will cultivate innovation at Northern Gateway, driving inclusive growth and enhanced productivity across a multitude of sectors. Collaboration with Universities will be integral to enabling commercialisation of innovation at scale.
- 6 **Focal Point & Hub:** Fostering collaboration and innovation among businesses, creating a vibrant ecosystem that attracts and nurtures talent, enhancing Greater Manchester's competitiveness, focused on a sustainable materials catapult.
- 7 **Integrated Sustainability Approach:** Sustainability will be embedded across all aspects, from infrastructure to operations, demonstrating a commitment to environmental responsibility and BREEAM / Well / LEED-certified initiatives.
- 8 **Job Creation and Skills Development:** Focus on creating job opportunities and empowering local communities through skills development initiatives, fostering inclusive growth and building a skills legacy for businesses and communities.
- 9 **Integrated Transport Solutions:** Integrated public transport solutions will be implemented at Northern Gateway to improve accessibility and connectivity, offering efficient and sustainable transportation options for residents and workers and connecting to nearby communities.
- 10 **Promotion of Active Travel:** Northern Gateway will deliver pedestrian-friendly pathways, cycling lanes, and green and blue spaces to promote active mobility, link surrounding communities and enhance connectivity, providing health and wellbeing benefits for local residents, future residents and workers.
- 11 **Flexible Approach:** Northern Gateway will embrace a flexible approach, allowing for adaptable adjustments to meet the evolving needs and opportunities of Greater Manchester's dynamic landscape and to reflect the sheer scale of the site.
- 12 **Maximising opportunities for existing communities:** Significant opportunity to deliver new jobs and economic growth in one of the regions most deprived areas through strategic partnerships, investment in skills and training and sustainable transport and active travel connectivity.





# Local and Strategic Outcomes

The proposals will bring a range of benefits that will embrace the three pillars of sustainable development



# 04

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## 04. Local and Strategic Outcomes

The proposals will bring a range of benefits that will embrace the three pillars of sustainable development, as follows:

- **Economic:** Creating a world class employment park that attracts the very best logistics and manufacturing industries.
- **Social:** Delivering fully inclusive growth that delivers a permanent positive social legacy.
- **Environmental:** Ensuring the development will not have a detrimental impact on the environment by maximising opportunities to provide net gains for biodiversity, creating a comprehensive green infrastructure network and ensuring that the objective of net zero carbon for both the development and the Greater Manchester area is integral to the design from the outset.



**Northern Gateway will evidently create significant economic benefits, however, both councils and Greater Manchester have documented the expectation that the breadth of benefits realised through new development will extend beyond the generation of jobs and associated investment in skills and training.**



## Economic Benefits

**4.1** The preceding sections capture the scale and breadth of economic benefits that will be expected to be realised through the delivery of Atom Valley. The development of the site is expected to make a substantial contribution to the realisation of this vision and the aspiration to deliver new good quality jobs across the Atom Valley area.

**4.2** It is recognised that the scale of new employment opportunities created on the site will build upon and benefit from close proximity to existing regionally renowned employment sites at Heywood Distribution Park and Pilsworth. The development of the site will also complement other key sites in the north of the sub-region such as Logistics North in Bolton. Cumulatively these employment areas will represent a significant concentration of employment opportunities for existing and future residents of Greater Manchester.

**4.3** The strategies reviewed in Chapter 2 affirm the value of these jobs in ensuring a more positive future for the residents of Greater Manchester, and particularly those within the northern parts of the conurbation that are currently disengaged from the economy or are not realising the full extent of their potential economic contribution. This acknowledges the sustained challenges associated with inter-generational deprivation within communities near the proposed development.

**4.4** These strategies also affirm the value placed on the creation of higher-value and higher-skilled jobs in addressing long-standing economic productivity inequalities within the conurbation and at a larger spatial scale. There is an expectation that the development will serve to attract business investment that will create the jobs required to increase the retention of highly skilled graduates and attract skilled labour to Greater Manchester.

**4.5** The scale and make-up of the development floorspace to be accommodated will need to respond to market opportunities and occupier requirements and the type and number of jobs created will ultimately be dependent on the nature of the occupiers. However, it is expected, in the context of the above, that the development will provide the opportunity to create a breadth of jobs, including those in higher value sectors and those identified as Frontier or Growth Sectors through the strategies summarised in Chapter 2.

**4.6** Proposals for development will be expected to provide a quantified estimate of the scale of employment opportunities that are anticipated to be realised through both the construction phase and (where relevant) the operational phase of the proposed development. Proposals should set out how the generation of employment opportunities will be expected to have a wider economic and social benefit for local communities.

### GROSS DIRECT GVA PER ANNUM

£1,490m

### ANNUAL BUSINESS RATE INCOME

£36.9m

### ANNUAL COUNCIL TAX RECEIPTS

£2.7m

4.7 Through implementation of PfE Policy JP-J1 (Supporting Long-Term Economic Growth), the councils will support long-term job growth by seeking agreement with employers and developers to enter into local labour and training agreements through planning obligations and other mechanisms, where appropriate.

4.8 It is recognised, as described in Chapter 9 of this SPD, that the development will be progressed in phases over an extended period. The assessment of economic benefits and mechanisms for capturing these locally will need to demonstrate sufficient flexibility to respond to changing economic circumstances over time and recognise the opportunity to maintain a process of engagement with local stakeholders, including skills and education providers.

4.9 It is expected that consideration will be given as to how local stakeholders will continue to be engaged with through the development process.

## Social Benefits

4.10 The proposed development at Northern Gateway will evidently create significant economic benefits, however, both councils and Greater Manchester have documented in respective (existing and emerging) Social Value Strategies or Policies the expectation that the breadth of benefits realised through new development will extend beyond the generation of jobs and associated investment in skills and training. This recognises that surrounding communities exhibit significant levels of high deprivation; the drivers of which are complex and multi-faceted.

4.11 Proposals will be expected to consider how the proposed development, including the construction phase, will contribute to the aspiration to foster inclusive growth by providing opportunities for disadvantaged and priority groups and supporting the empowerment of local communities.

4.12 New housing provided within the site will have an important role to play in addressing existing housing needs, which include for a range of types and tenures of housing. The provision of high-quality housing has significant social benefits which recognise the value associated with providing a stable home to families and individuals as well as financial benefits associated with more energy efficient housing.

4.13 The provision of new social infrastructure, including community facilities and recreational and leisure facilities, will provide enhanced provision for the new residential areas but also surrounding existing communities to benefit from. These facilities will need to take into consideration existing facilities in proximity and identified gaps in provision.

4.14 The proposed development will provide an important opportunity to enhance existing active travel networks and create new facilities and spaces to promote healthy lifestyles and contribute towards elevated wellbeing through the creation of positive working and leisure environments.

4.15 It will also provide an opportunity through the capturing of commitments to volunteering and support existing local community groups and organisations to build positive relationships between businesses and proximate local communities.

4.16 It is expected that proposals will consider in a proportionate way how the above opportunities will be supported through individual developments and how proposals have taken account of local issues identified by stakeholders and communities.



**The provision of new social infrastructure, including community facilities and recreational and leisure facilities, will provide enhanced provision for the new residential areas but also surrounding existing communities.**

## Environmental Benefits

**4.17** The delivery of a net zero and highly sustainable employment park will support green growth within the region and help attract innovative world-class industry.

**4.18** Development of the site will support the environmental pillar of sustainability through application of the following PfE policies:

- Policy JP-S1: Sustainable Development
- Policy JP-S2: Carbon and Energy
- Policy JP-S3: Heat and Energy Networks
- Policy JP-S4: Flood Risk and the Water Environment, and
- Policy JP-S6: Resource Efficiency.

## Mitigating Climate Change – Net Zero Carbon and Circular Economy

**4.19** The site will support Greater Manchester's ambition to become a carbon neutral city-region by 2038 by seeking to achieve net zero carbon emission buildings in construction and operation, in line with the policy requirements of PfE Policies JP-S1 and JP-S2.

**4.20** Operational energy use and carbon will be reduced as far as possible through:

- High levels of fabric efficiency
- All-electric building services strategy, utilising low carbon energy generation such as heat pumps (at network or individual building level)
- Maximising renewable energy generation on site through solar photovoltaic panels and a potential for building mounted micro wind-turbines, and
- Smart energy systems including metering, and the potential for energy storage.

**4.21** Construction carbon emissions will be quantified, and minimised in accordance with the following:

- Lean design e.g. avoiding over-engineering and over-ordering
- Use of natural materials
- Lower carbon options such as steel manufactured using the 'electric arc furnace' process rather than blast furnace
- Use of local suppliers and labour where possible, and
- Reducing energy and water use on site and exploring alternatives to diesel use.

**4.22** Carbon emissions will also be reduced by implementing circular economy measures, which will complement the above measures and are expected to include:

- Material efficiency
- Use of recycled materials and materials with a high recycled content
- Use of materials which can be repurposed or recycled at end of life
- Resource (energy and water) efficiency measures during construction and operation, and
- Reduction of waste generated during construction and operation, and diversion of residual waste from landfill.

**4.23** The measures listed above will deliver a development which limits contribution to climate change and supports the transition to a net zero carbon future.

## Adapting to Climate Change – Resilience

**4.24** Greater Manchester will experience changes to climate in the future, including:

- Increased annual temperatures
- Increased winter rainfall, and
- Decreased summer rainfall.

**4.25** All development within the site will be expected to incorporate measures which demonstrate adaptability and resilience to climate change including:

- Reducing overheating risk through passive measures prior to implementing active cooling
- Reducing flood risk through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), without significantly increasing embodied carbon emissions
- Incorporating green and blue infrastructure to mitigate overheating, flood risk, and contribute to biodiversity
- Minimising water use during operation through reducing water demand and incorporating rainwater or greywater harvesting, and
- Providing an appropriate landscaping strategy which supports local biodiversity suits current and future climate scenarios.

**4.26** The measures listed above will deliver a development which is adaptable and resilient to climate change and limits environmental impacts to biodiversity, building occupants, and the local community.

## Wider Environmental Benefits

**4.27** The buildings delivered at the site will demonstrate environmental benefits through application of accreditation schemes such as BREEAM.

**4.28** BREEAM considers the full range of environmental impacts to demonstrate how sustainability has been applied holistically, including:

- Management
- Health and Wellbeing
- Energy
- Transport
- Water
- Materials
- Waste
- Land Use and Ecology, and
- Pollution.

**4.29** The environmental benefits of the site including net zero carbon, climate resilience and adaptation, and wider measures such as building accreditation will be delivered in combination with the economic and social benefits detailed above.



# Understanding of the Site and Surroundings

This chapter represents an essential step between the Strategic Policy Context, Vision and Strategic Objectives and the Local and Strategic Outcomes



# 05

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**This chapter represents an essential step between the Strategic Policy Context, Vision and Strategic Objectives and the Local and Strategic Outcomes set out in Chapters 1 - 4, and the requirements, proposals, parameters and guidance set out in Chapters 7 - 10.**

## Strategic Location

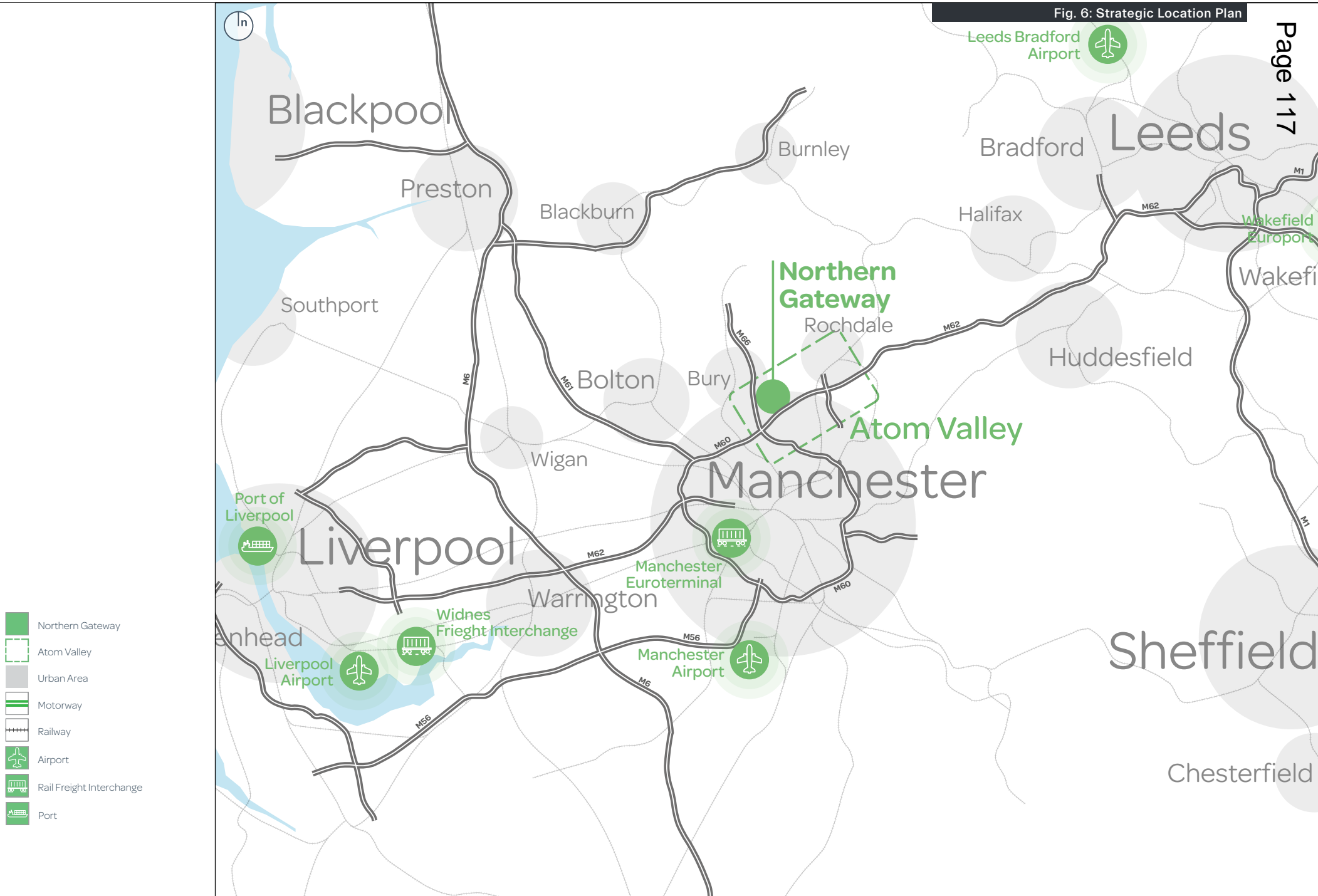
5.1 Northern Gateway sits at a crucial juncture, encompassing the convergence of the M60, M62, and M66 motorways. This strategic and highly accessible location provides the site direct access to the UK motorway network. Within an hour's drive there are three major cities with international airports, two freight ports, and the West Coast Main Line, all supported by the strategic road network. The M60 facilitates connections to the rest of the Greater Manchester conurbation, as well as facilitating access into Manchester City Centre itself, just 7 miles away. The site benefits from being in close proximity to existing regionally renowned employment sites at Heywood Distribution Park and Pilsworth Industrial Estate.

5.2 Northern Gateway, alongside Kingsway Business Park and Stakehill, are within the Atom Valley, Manchester's Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ). Atom Valley is an ambitious employment initiative set to become an extensive and well-connected innovation cluster generating 20,000 high-quality jobs. Bringing together world-class research, manufacturing, and materials, it aims to shape the future while levelling up communities.

5.3 Frequent and wide-reaching rail services are available from Rochdale Station with direct connections to Manchester, Leeds, Chester and Blackburn. For rail freight, the site is 35 minutes from Manchester Euroterminal, 50 minutes from Wakefield Europort and two hours fifteen minutes from the Ham Hall (West Midlands) railhead.



Fig. 6: Strategic Location Plan



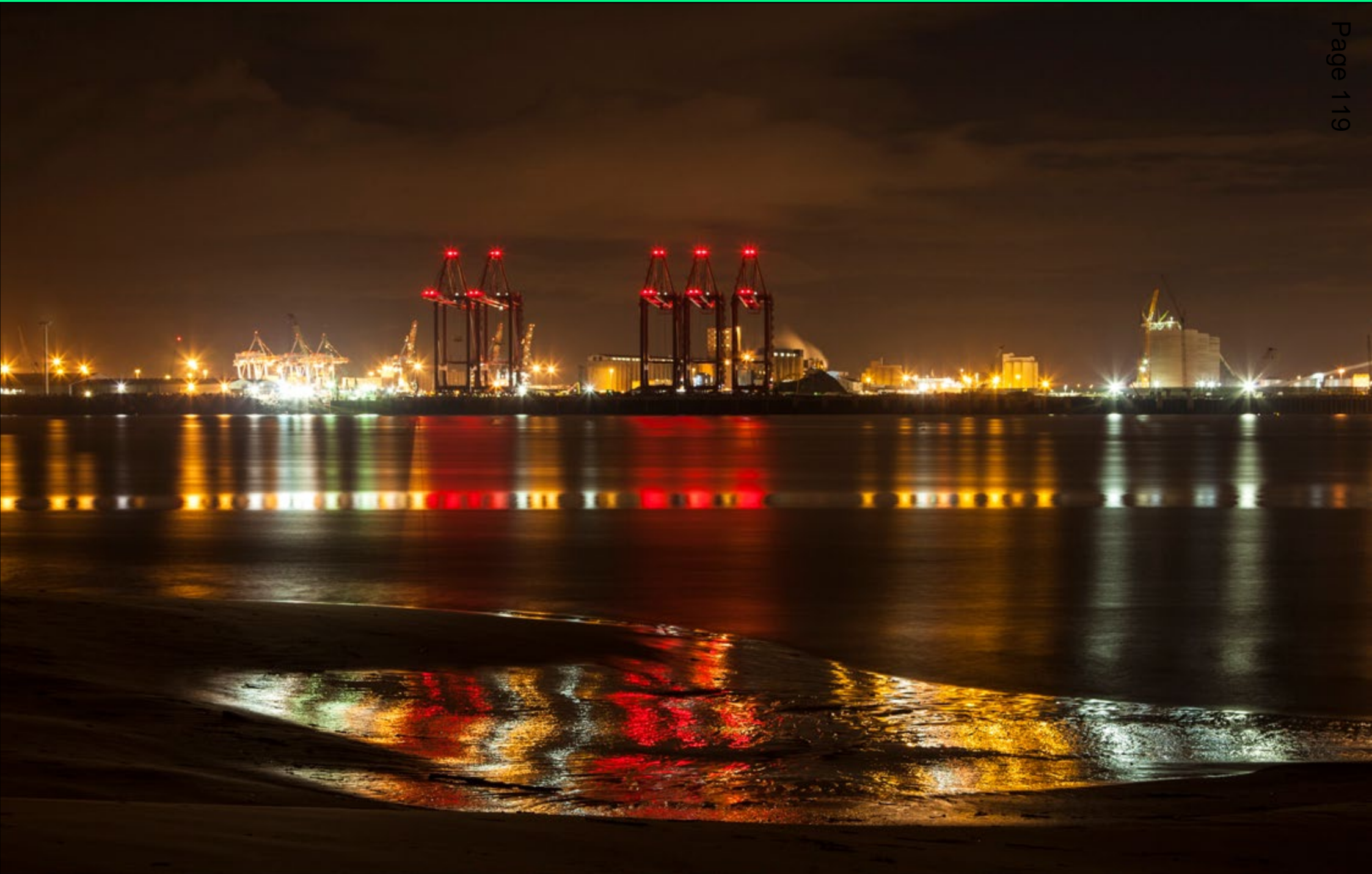
5.4 International and domestic flights and air cargo services are available from both Manchester Airport and Liverpool John Lennon Airport. As the UK's second-largest airport, Manchester currently handles around 100,000 tonnes of freight annually, connecting the North of England to c.200 destinations around the world. Manchester Airport lies approximately 23 miles away from the site, reachable within a 25-minute drive. In addition, Leeds Bradford Airport and Liverpool John Lennon Airport are both situated within an hour's drive from the site, offering further travel options.

5.5 Northern Gateway is around an hour's drive from the port of Liverpool and approximately two hours from Humberside's ports. Liverpool handles over 30 million tonnes of freight annually, although its new super port has recently opened to accommodate the world's largest container vessels, and Humberside has the main UK ports for a number of European, Scandinavian and Baltic destinations.

5.6 The Manchester Metrolink, renowned as the UK's largest light rail network, boasts several stations conveniently located within a short distance of the Northern Gateway, including Bury, Whitefield, and Rochdale Town Centre.

5.7 As part of the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040, there is potential to introduce a Metro / tram-train service linking Bury and Rochdale, contingent upon securing funding and receiving approval based on the business case. This would utilise a section of the East Lancashire Railway, a leisure route between Heywood and Rawtenstall, which lies north of Heywood Distribution Park.

5.8 Rochdale and Bury stand as the nearest main town centres to Northern Gateway. Both boast lively and diverse retail options, complemented by an array of cultural attractions such as museums, art galleries and entertainment venues. Additionally, a multitude of dining and drinking establishments, and an indoor and outdoor market at Bury, add to the vibrant atmosphere. These towns also offer ample traditional community amenities, including schools, medical facilities, and green spaces. Heywood, which lies to the north of the site, provides a similar range of services on a more local scale.



## Site Conditions

**5.9** Analysis of the site has been undertaken to identify key constraints and opportunities associated with the site and its surrounding context. These constraints and opportunities form a strong evidence base to the plans and guidance included within this NGDF.

**5.10** A diagrammatic summary of the opportunities to be maximised, and constraints to be considered arising from the technical assessments is set out in Figure SPD 5.7 at the end of this chapter.

## Transport and Highways

**5.11** The site is defined by a number of roads and highways along a majority of its boundaries as follows:

- M62 Motorway to the South
- M66 Motorway to the West
- Pilsworth Road to the North, and
- Queen Elizabeth II Way to the East.

**5.12** In addition, the junction of the M62 and M66 with the M60 Motorway ('Simister Island') abuts the site to the South West and provides connections across Greater Manchester.

**5.13** Access into the site is gained off Pilsworth Road along the site's northern boundary which provides direct access to Junction 3 of the M66 Motorway to those traveling north/south, and off Queen Elizabeth II Way along the site's eastern boundary which provides direct access to Junction 19 of the M62 Motorway to those travelling east/west.

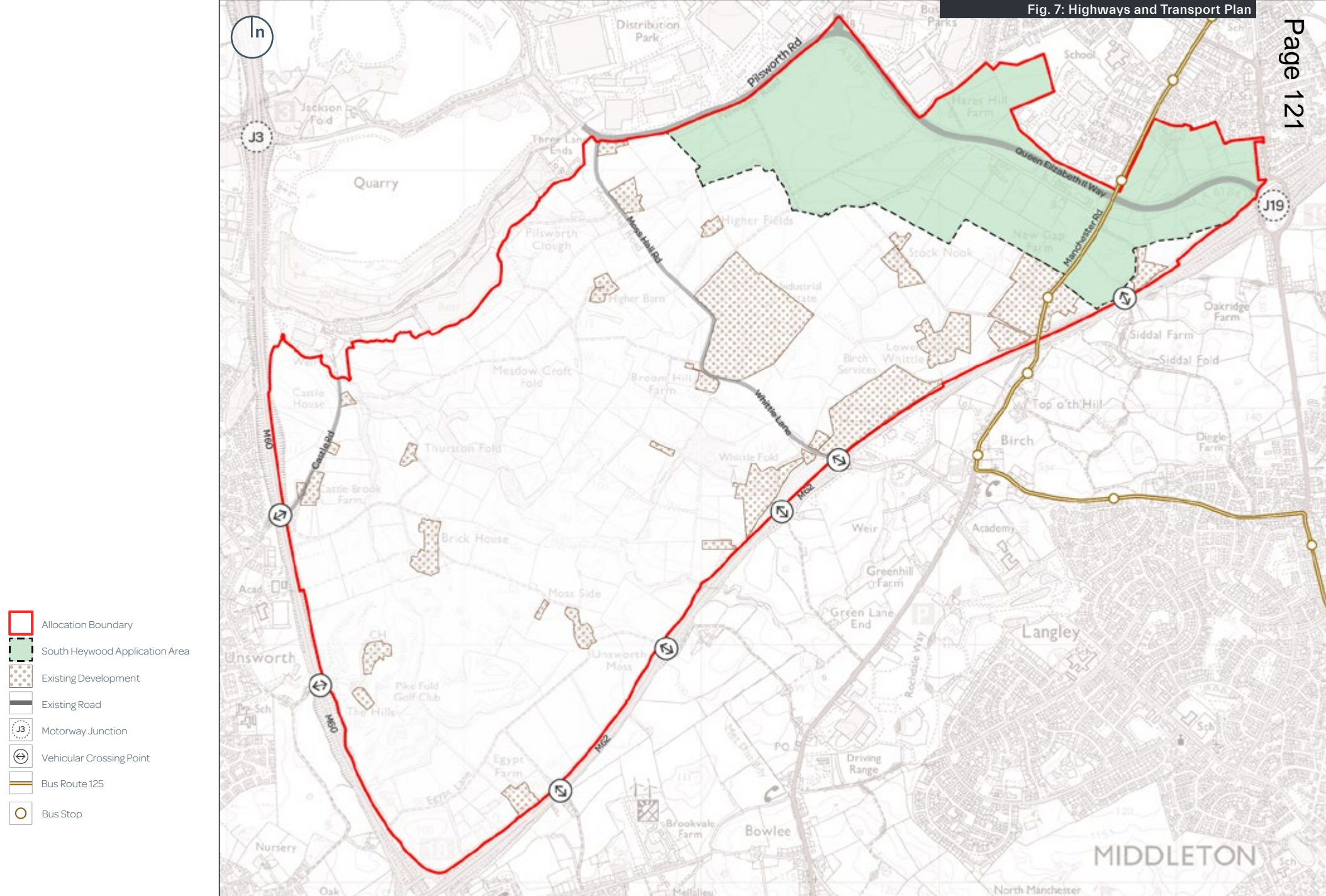
**5.14** Access into the site is also possible via Whittle Lane/ Moss Hall Road which runs north/south through the middle of the site, as well as Castle Road which crosses part of the site in the west and Manchester Road which crosses the eastern part of the site. Vehicle access into the site across the M62 Motorway is provided by Whittle Lane, Manchester Road and Queen Elizabeth II Way to the south, whilst Castle Road is the only vehicle access into the site over the M66 Motorway to the west.

**5.15** There are a number of other existing vehicle crossing points which cross both the M62 and M66 Motorways into the site, but these are not designed for general traffic and provide 'access only' to a number of individual farms, dwellings and Pike Fold Golf Course. These crossing points are not deemed suitable for providing vehicular access for future proposals but will be retained for the purpose of providing pedestrian and cycle access across the motorways.

**5.16** The 125 Bus Service which connects Heywood and Middleton is the only bus route which currently serves the site offering 1x hourly services in each direction. Other bus services are accessible in Heywood to the east and Unsworth to the west.



Fig. 7: Highways and Transport Plan



**5.17** The approved South Heywood Masterplan currently being implemented in the easternmost part of the site includes provision for a number of new bus stops to accommodate new/extended bus routes in order to serve the development. This will likely significantly increase accessibility to the eastern part of the site in the next few years.

**5.18** A number of proposals are currently being developed that have the potential to increase capacity on surrounding road and transport infrastructure. They include the following interventions:

- M66 Junction 3 / Pilsworth Road junction improvements
- M62 Junction 19 / A6046 Heywood junction improvements
- M66 Junction 2 / A58 localised junction improvements
- M66 Link Road, also known as the Western Links package and spans several road links and junction improvements east and west of M66 Junction 3
- Castle Road junction improvements, and
- Highway improvements on the local network.

**5.19** In addition to the above, proposals to extend Junction 19 of the M62 are also in the early stages of development. Whilst the scale and form of such proposals are yet to be agreed, they have the potential to provide a new point of access into the southern part of the site providing direct access on to the M62.

**5.20** Future proposals for the site will need to be developed in accordance with emerging highway infrastructure works and will therefore need to be drafted in consultation with key stakeholders including Highways England, Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) and local highways authorities. In accordance with the vision for Northern Gateway and wider strategic goals, proposals should also prioritise the promotion of more sustainable forms of transport and a model shift away from private road transport through the utilisation of high-quality public transport and active travel connections.

## Public Footpaths

**5.21** There are several Public Rights of Way (PRoW) crossing the site with many extending beyond the boundaries, forming good connectivity with the wider countryside, however the site is currently inadequately accessible for the local community as many of these routes are not readily identifiable on the ground, difficult to maintain, and provide reduced access for those with mobility issues, and are therefore infrequently used.






**5.22** In the western extent of the site, the majority of the PRoW run along macadam surfaced farm access tracks. In the central extent of the site there is a good PRoW network, however in places these footpaths are unclear. Footpath 3WHI is a key link running across the centre of the site, connecting Castle Road to Moss Hall Road.

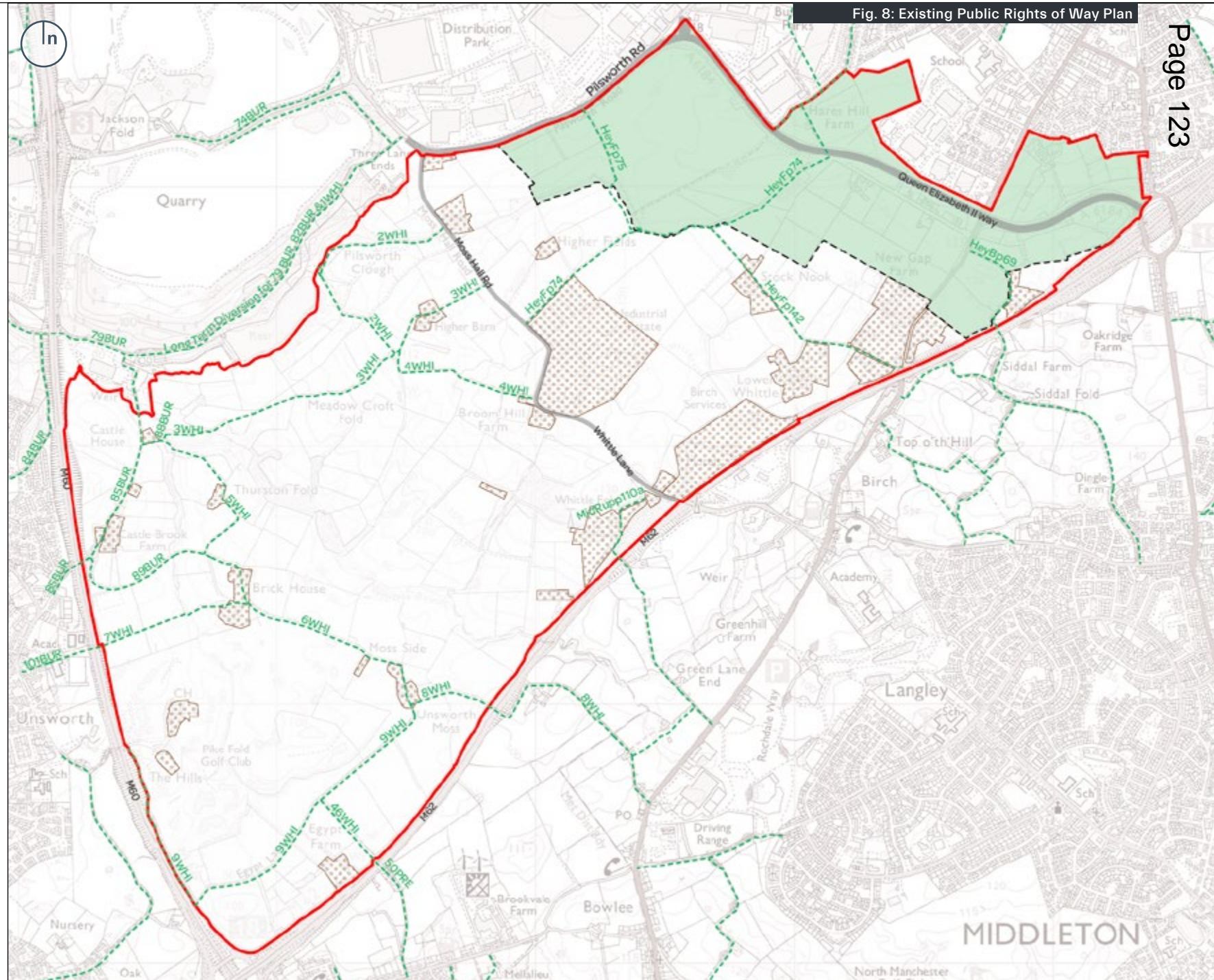
**5.23** There are four PRoW footpaths which cross the M62 via single lane bridges, from east to west these are: MidFp114a, MidFp110 on Whittle Fold, 8WHI on Simon Lane and 46WHI on Egypt Lane linking the settlement of Simister to the site. Footpath 85BUR passes over the M66 on Castle Road whereas 7WHI passes underneath through Unsworth Academy grounds.

**5.24** The aspiration at Northern Gateway is to create a permeable development, accessible to all, through the implementation of a well-maintained and high-quality footpath and cycleway network with retained and new links to the surrounding area. Where feasible, the existing PRoW should be retained in-situ, however it is expected that some footpaths may need to be diverted to facilitate development and take the opportunity to create a coherent and attractive footpath network.



Fig. 8: Existing Public Rights of Way Plan

-  Allocation Boundary
-  South Heywood Application Area
-  Existing Development
-  Existing Road
-  Public Rights of Way



## Landscape and Visual Character

### *Landscape Designations*

**5.25** There are no World Heritage Sites, National Parks or National Landscapes (previously known as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) located within close proximity of the site. Part of the site is currently located within a Special Landscape Area, as designated in the Bury Unitary Development Plan.

**5.26** The site is located within National Character Area (NCA) 54 Manchester Pennine Fringe, with NCA 55 Manchester Conurbation located to the south.

**5.27** The Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Report (2018) identifies the site as being located within three Landscape Character Types (LCTs); predominantly 'Mosslands and Lowland Farmland' and 'Urban Fringe Farmland', with the area around Brightley Brook to the north of the Site falling within 'Incised Urban Fringe Valleys'.

**5.28** There are also three Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) within the site, namely LCA 25: River Roch, LCA 26: Prettywood, Pilsworth and Unsworth Moss, and LCA 27: Simister, Slattocks and Healds Green. The Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Report identifies LCA 25, associated with the River Roch, as having 'moderate to high' sensitivity to commercial development and 'moderate' sensitivity to residential development. It should be noted that only a small part of the site at the northern boundary around Brightley Brook falls within this LCA. LCA 26 and 27, which cover the majority of the site, are assessed as having 'moderate' sensitivity to both commercial and residential development.

### *Visual Baseline Summary*

**5.29** The surrounding views are an important aspect of the visual amenity of the site, with long distance views available to the north being a key characteristic. Local receptors within the site and outside the boundaries consist mainly of farms and associated residences, as well as users of the public footpath network through the site. Within the north eastern part of the site industrial units dominate views, giving an overall more industrial feel to this part of the site. The Pilsworth landfill site also forms a prominent feature on the skyline to the north.

**5.30** The M62 forms a dominant feature in the view to the east/south-east along with its associated infrastructure and lighting. The vertical elements of pylons, telegraph poles and lighting columns are a continuing theme throughout the site.

**5.31** Development at Northern Gateway should be incorporated successfully into the local landscape setting. This should be achieved through the provision of accessible and high quality green and blue infrastructure; and where possible, the retention, replacement and enhancement of the brooks and their u-shaped valleys, mature trees, hedgerows and woodland blocks.

**5.32** Long distance views are available out of the site and across the site from the M62. Retention of such views should be considered where feasible to maintain the connection of the site to the wider landscape.





### Topography

**5.33** The topography of the site is situated within a transitional zone between elevated, open moorlands and densely populated urban areas on lower ground.

**5.34** The southern extent of the site comprises mainly flat fields at a similar level to the adjacent M62 motorway allowing direct views between the site and motorway. A small area of localised mounding is present in the south-western extent of the site adjacent to the M62/M66/M60 junction. Pike Fold Golf Course is an undulating site with a parkland character.

**5.35** The western extent of the site, between the M66 and Whittle Brook (with the exception of Pike Fold Golf Course mentioned above) comprises gently undulating fields dissected by Castle Brook heading south from Whittle Brook. Whittle Brook follows a wooded u-shaped valley as it dissects the site.

**5.36** The mid-section of the site between Whittle Brook and Whittle Lane/Moss Hall Road comprises more undulating landform than the west, which rises above the adjacent motorway. The area has a more heavily vegetated feel and the change in landform enhances this characteristic. U-shaped valleys of the brooks add character to the site and create distinguishable features. Although the brook valleys are dry in some areas, the landform clearly shows their former presence.

**5.37** The eastern extent of the site lies to the east of Whittle Lane/Moss Hall Road. Farm properties at Stock Nook and Lower Whittle accessed from Dr Fold Lane are located within undulating pastureland with outgrown hedge field boundaries creating a similar character to the midsection of the site. There are also linear groups of woodland. The landform begins to fall away to the north before rising again in this area, allowing long views in a northerly direction. The far eastern extent of the site comprises mainly flat fields which are currently under development as part of the approved South Heywood Masterplan.

**5.38** The design of the site will be seeking to regrade topography and create development plateaus. A cut and fill balance should ensure to minimise the impact on the existing setting. The plateaus should provide scale and flexibility to unit sizes to attract a variety of occupiers whilst the distinguishable u-shaped valleys of the brooks should be retained to maintain these landscape features.

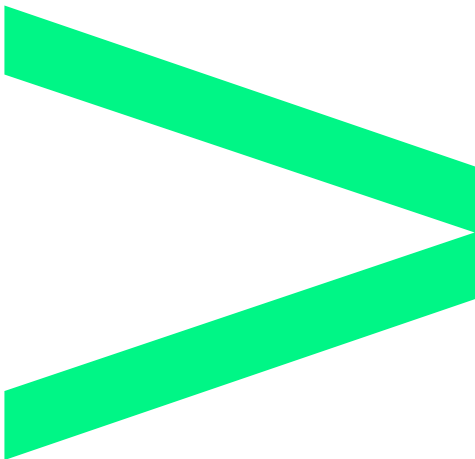





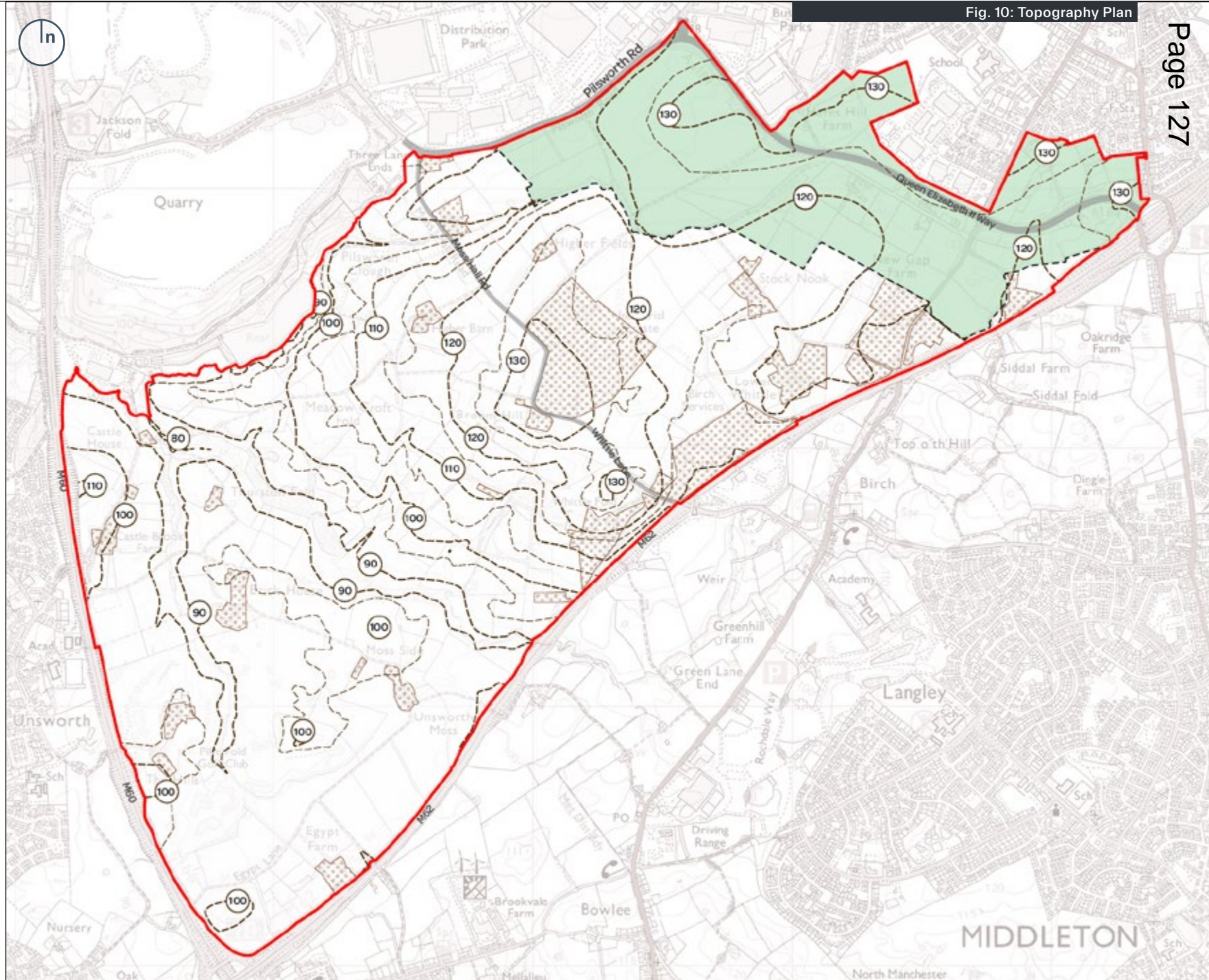




Fig. 10: Topography Plan

-  Allocation Boundary
-  South Heywood Application Area
-  Existing Development
-  Existing Road
-  Topography







### Arboriculture

**5.39** The site's existing tree stock comprises a mix of individual trees, collective groups of trees and pocket areas of woodland of largely good to moderate quality spread throughout the site. The majority of tree cover is situated within established field boundary hedgerows, with the addition of sporadic, incidental pockets of tree cover within the field parcels.

**5.40** The most notable tree stock comprises areas of mature woodland that is situated on the banks and within influence of Whittle Brook as well as several mature individual specimen trees. The woodland provides a notable contribution to the site's landscape, whilst providing a natural habitat corridor through the western part of the site. Additionally, there are a number of spurs that veer off from the woodland to the east, all of which are of moderate to high quality.

**5.41** Other notable tree covered areas are those that align the eastbound carriageway of the M62, and those that align the southbound carriage way of the M66. These trees provide a good buffer from the adjacent carriageways, in addition to contributing to the local landscape. Trees situated within the bounds of Pike Fold Golf Course broadly comprise linear strips of structural tree planting and sporadic crescents of trees aligning the fairways and greens respectively.

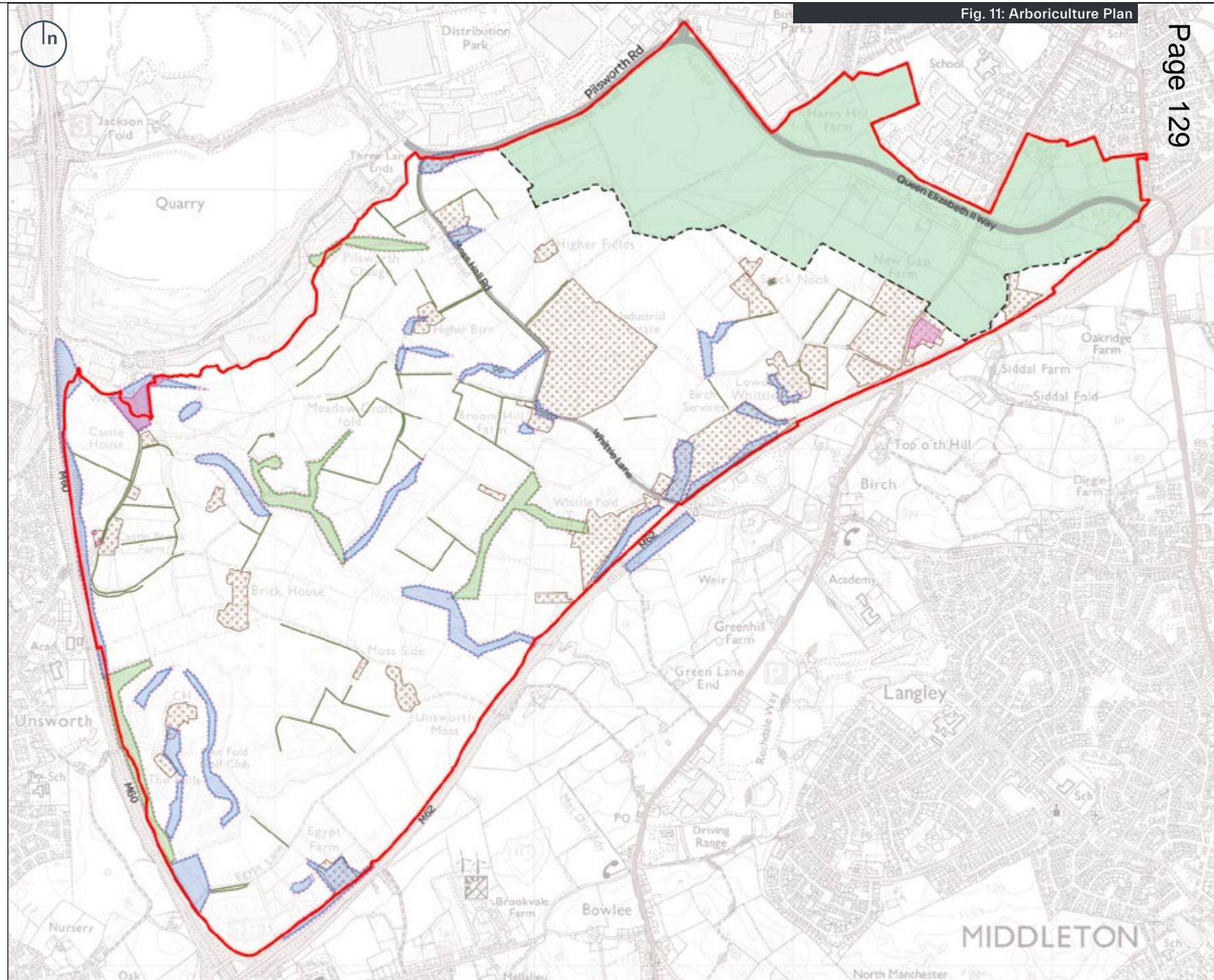
**5.42** There is a vast network of hedgerows that span across the entire site, situated almost exclusively at the field parcel boundaries, or aligning the internal private access roads. These are of moderate quality in terms of their arboricultural merits, species diversity and contribution to habitat connectivity across the site.

**5.43** A landscape-led approach should be applied to ensure the retention and enhancement of natural assets, where feasible, and their integration into the development. The existing mature tree cover and trees with notable amenity value should be used to inform the green infrastructure network within and across the site. Where natural assets can be retained, suitable development buffers should be applied.

**5.44** Any tree and hedgerow losses should be mitigated on-site through the creation of new tree planting, woodland enhancement and hedgerow connections. Given the widespread nature of the site, there is an opportunity to increase and strengthen tree canopy and hedgerow cover across the site with new native planting set within a connected green infrastructure network.

Fig. 11: Arboriculture Plan

- Allocation Boundary
- South Heywood Application Area
- Existing Development
- Existing Road
- High Retention Value Trees and Hedgerow (CAT A) and associated Development Offset
- Moderate Retention Value Trees and Hedgerow (CAT B) and associated Development Offset
- Tree Preservation Order (TPO)
- Indicative Location of Established Hedgerow (CAT B - Moderate Retention Value)



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## Ecology

**5.45** There are no European or Nationally designated sites within the site. The only European or Nationally designated site within 2km of the site is the Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which is located c. 1.8km to the east of the allocation boundary. There are two Local Nature Reserves (LNR) within a 2km radius of the site – Hopwood Woodlands LNR approximately 1.7km to the east and Hollins Vale LNR approximately 100m to the west on the other side of the M66. There are ten Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) within a 2km radius of the site. Pilsworth SBI lies to the immediate north of the site.

**5.46** The site predominantly comprises improved grassland and occasional fields/areas of poor semi-improved grassland, both of which are of low ecological value. There are occasional fields/areas of semi-improved neutral grassland and areas of marshy grassland within parts of the site which had poor drainage, both of which are considered of good ecological value.

**5.47** The most ecologically valuable habitats (in terms of intrinsic value and wider value to wildlife) are situated along the Whittle Brook and tributaries corridors supporting a mixture of woodland, scrub and riparian grassland habitat. Four broadleaved semi-natural woodlands, identified as Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI), are located along the site boundaries; two are mature woodlands associated with Pilsworth SBI located along the northern site boundary. The site also contains a number of open water ponds and a number of field ditches which provide good ecological value.

**5.48** The scrub/grassland across the Whittle Brook and tributaries corridors have been demonstrated to support birds of conservation concern including Barn Owl and Grasshopper Warbler. The agricultural grassland has

also been shown to support ground-nesting birds of conservation concern such as Lapwing and Skylark. A number of the ponds have been shown to support or have potential to support Great Crested Newts. The site also is known to support a range of other protected and notable wildlife including farmland and wintering birds, roosting bats, badgers, brown hare and riparian mammals.

**5.49** The ecological strategy for the site will target benefits for the above species and apply best practice principles of the mitigation hierarchy outlined in the GMCA's guidance for biodiversity net gain and also BS:42020: avoidance, minimisation, restoration, offsetting. The hierarchy should be applied at the earliest design stages.

**5.50** It will be necessary for future development at Northern Gateway to compensate for habitat losses where avoidance and mitigation measures are not possible. Compensation should be provided on-site and only where it is robustly evidenced that this is not possible, off-site measures could be considered to ensure priority habitats expected for loss are compensated for on a like-for-like basis and development overall achieves a net gain in biodiversity in line with national and local policy requirements. Where any off-site compensation is demonstrated as being necessary, this should be secured in the local area wherever feasible.



**5.51** Ecological improvements should include the retention and enhancement of the Whittle Brook and tributaries corridors and associated riparian habitats as well as areas of woodland in the site and alongside the motorway edges. Additional green infrastructure corridors should be created throughout the site which enhance habitat connectivity on site and to neighbouring habitats off-site. Future development should have regard to the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the potential opportunities to improve and join up wildlife sites which contribute to Greater Manchester's Nature Network. Development should be directed to lower value habitat areas whilst retaining those areas of most value wherever possible such as the ponds, watercourses and woodland. There must be an overall improvement in habitat value which should be supported with a management plan for the site to promote wildlife.

## Flood Risk and Drainage

**5.52** There are four watercourses within the site that are classified as Main Rivers. Whittle Brook flows from south east to north west across the site. Castle Brook flows south to north and converges with Whittle Brook and is renamed to Hollins Brook. Brightley Brook flows from east to west through the northern area of the site and also converges with Hollins Brook, a tributary of the River Roch.

**5.53** Environment Agency mapping identifies that the majority of the site is located within Flood Zone 1 (i.e. land assessed as having a 0.1% or lower annual probability of river flooding). There are areas along the banks of both Whittle Brook and Brightley Brook that have been identified as areas of Flood Zone 3 (i.e. land with a 1% or higher annual probability of river flooding).

**5.54** Analysis of the site concludes that flood risk to the development from existing fluvial (rivers and watercourses) sources is low. For mitigation, the watercourses should be retained and an 8m easement free from development should be applied to either side of the watercourses. The easements provide green/blue corridors along these channels providing an opportunity for SuDS features, biodiversity enhancements and recreational areas as well as flood risk mitigation.

**5.55** Surface water flooding within the site is considered low risk. There is an intricate network of overland flows and ponding throughout the site (at various levels of risk) which drain overland into existing watercourses. The Development Framework should maintain the natural overland flow routes and design out the areas of ponding which would present a flood risk to structures in that area.

**5.56** A surface water drainage strategy should promote the widescale use of sustainable drainage features in accordance with the CIRIA SuDS Manual. To ensure that flood risk is not increased at the site or elsewhere as a result of the development, surface water runoff from the development should be restricted to the existing greenfield runoff rate. Flood risk from the development should be mitigated through these features and water quality should be improved by following the recommendation for pollution prevention for large scale commercial/industrial schemes.

**5.57** No public surface water sewers have been identified within the site. Surface water run-off will be discharged into the ground through multiple infiltration structures or to the watercourses within the site at the limiting discharge rates.

**5.58** No public foul sewers were identified within the development boundary, therefore foul water will be pumped to a new or existing point of discharge specified by United Utilities, outside of the boundary of the site.

**5.59** In line with PfE Policy JP-D1, engagement with United Utilities to develop an acceptable surface water and foul water drainage strategy for any future proposal will be required and is likely to include upgrades of the existing public sewer network and nearby Bury Wastewater Treatment Works.



## Built Heritage

**5.60** There are no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Battlefields or Protected Wrecks within the site or in close proximity. There are six Listed Buildings, one Registered Park and Garden and one Conservation Area immediately surrounding the site. The Listed Buildings are all Grade II, and date from the postmedieval to the modern period, of which the below two are within the site:

- Brick Farmhouse (1067266) is a Grade II Listed Building. It is a presumed 17th century brick 2-storey building, with front rendering and 20th century renovation. It has a dated tablet inscribed 'Adam/Gafell/Octob 21/1981' and is thought to be the oldest brick-built farmhouse in the area. This lies on Griffe Lane in the west of the site.
- Lower Whittle Farmhouse (1068502) is a Grade II Listed Building and dates from the 17th century and is a timber-framed structure with substantial 18th century rebuilding of parts and 19th century renovations. This lies off Doctor Fold Lane in the east of the site.







**5.61** The Registered Park and Garden, Heaton Park (1000854), is Grade II registered and dates from the post-medieval period. The Conservation Area of Birch Village (DGM4496) is comprised of a characteristic combination of early 19th century industrial architecture and late 19th century high-quality Arts and Crafts style residences. Both designations are outside the site but within the 1km study area.

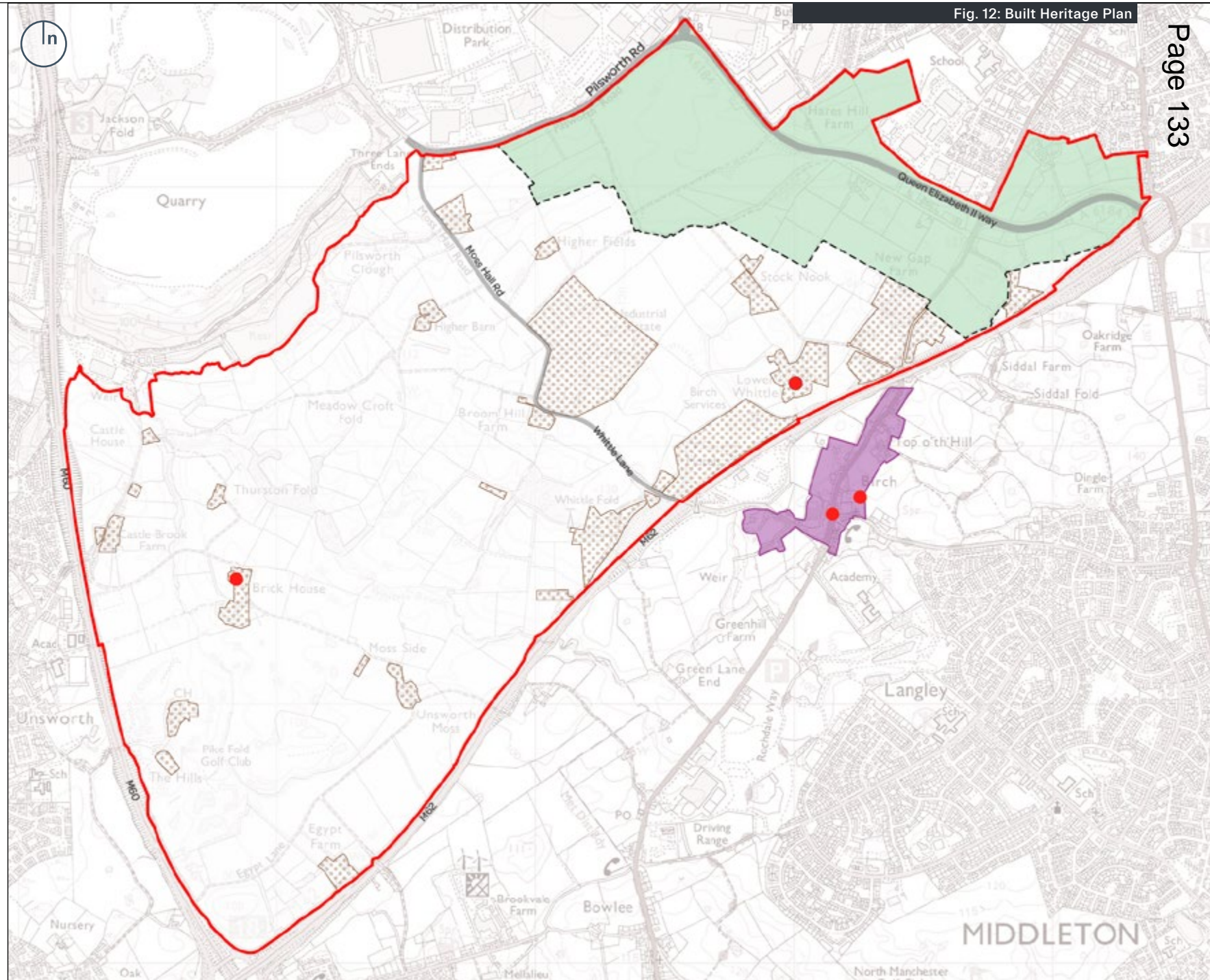
**5.62** In addition, there are 13 Locally Listed Buildings (non-designated heritage assets) within the site and also 13 Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (HER) entries with further entries sited just outside of the boundary to the site. Towards the centre of the site, one of the most significant Locally Listed Buildings within the site is Meadow Croft Fold, which includes a derelict two-storey Georgian farmhouse, with two brick-built threshing barns to the north. The farmhouse itself is currently in a poor condition after extensive fire damage.

**5.63** Listed Buildings, and their setting, within the site should be incorporated into the Development Framework to preserve the heritage of the area. The potential impact of any development on designated assets within the 1km study area and surrounding landscape should be considered.



Fig. 12: Built Heritage Plan

-  Allocation Boundary
-  South Heywood Application Area
-  Existing Development
-  Existing Road
- Designated Heritage Assets**
-  Conservation Area
-  Grade II Listed Building



## Archaeology

**5.64** There are no archaeological constraints that would preclude development of the site however, there are several areas of potential archaeological interest within the site.

- Meadow Croft Fold - Archaeological assessment of Meadow Croft Fold to date, including a programme of trial trenching and shovel Test Pitting, has confirmed this area as the site of a Medieval iron smelting works and small-scale settlement. Further mitigation in the form of a strip, map and record programme of works is recommended before development.
- Whittle Brook - Whittle Brook is a suggested iron smelting site based on the results of archaeological investigations in 1984. Whilst these investigations are not conclusive in proving that a bloomery (a type of furnace for smelting iron) existed here, it is a possibility.
- Unsworth Moss and Siddal Moor - Preserved organic palaeo environmental remains may be present at Unsworth Moss and Siddal Moor, due to the areas of peat and previously recorded deposits within the locality.
- Castle Brook - The earthwork remains at Castle Brook Farm may be indicative of a prehistoric settlement/camp, with the feature situated on a well-drained spur above Castle Brook.

**5.65** In advance of development within the site further geophysical surveys, archaeological evaluation and palaeo environmental sampling would be undertaken as required and archaeological mitigation strategies may subsequently be required in agreement with GMAAS. Future development at the site will subsequently be informed by the results of this programme of archaeological works.

## Utilities

**5.66** The ability to provide key services for the site is a fundamental aspect of delivery and has been considered from the outset. The following summary sets out how the development can be served by sufficient electricity, gas, water and telecommunications, as well as identifying any existing services across the site that have informed the Development Framework.

- Electricity – Through discussions with Electricity North West it is anticipated that a new primary 33kV substation will be required to serve the proposed development, and a Point of Connection has been identified by Electricity North West. From the new primary substation a further network of 11kV substations will be distributed throughout the site.
- Gas – There are localised high pressure gas mains within the site. The Warthfold – Middleton pipeline runs through the northern part of the site and is subject to an easement of 6 metres along with a building proximity distance restriction of 8 metres extending either side of the pipeline from the centre point. The Whitefield – Castleton pipeline runs from north west to south east across the site south of Whittle Brook to the M62. The pipeline is subject to a 12 metre easement along with a building proximity restriction of 15.5 metres extending either side of the pipeline. The Phillips Park intermediate pressure pipeline lies underneath Castle Road and is subject to an easement of 9 metres and

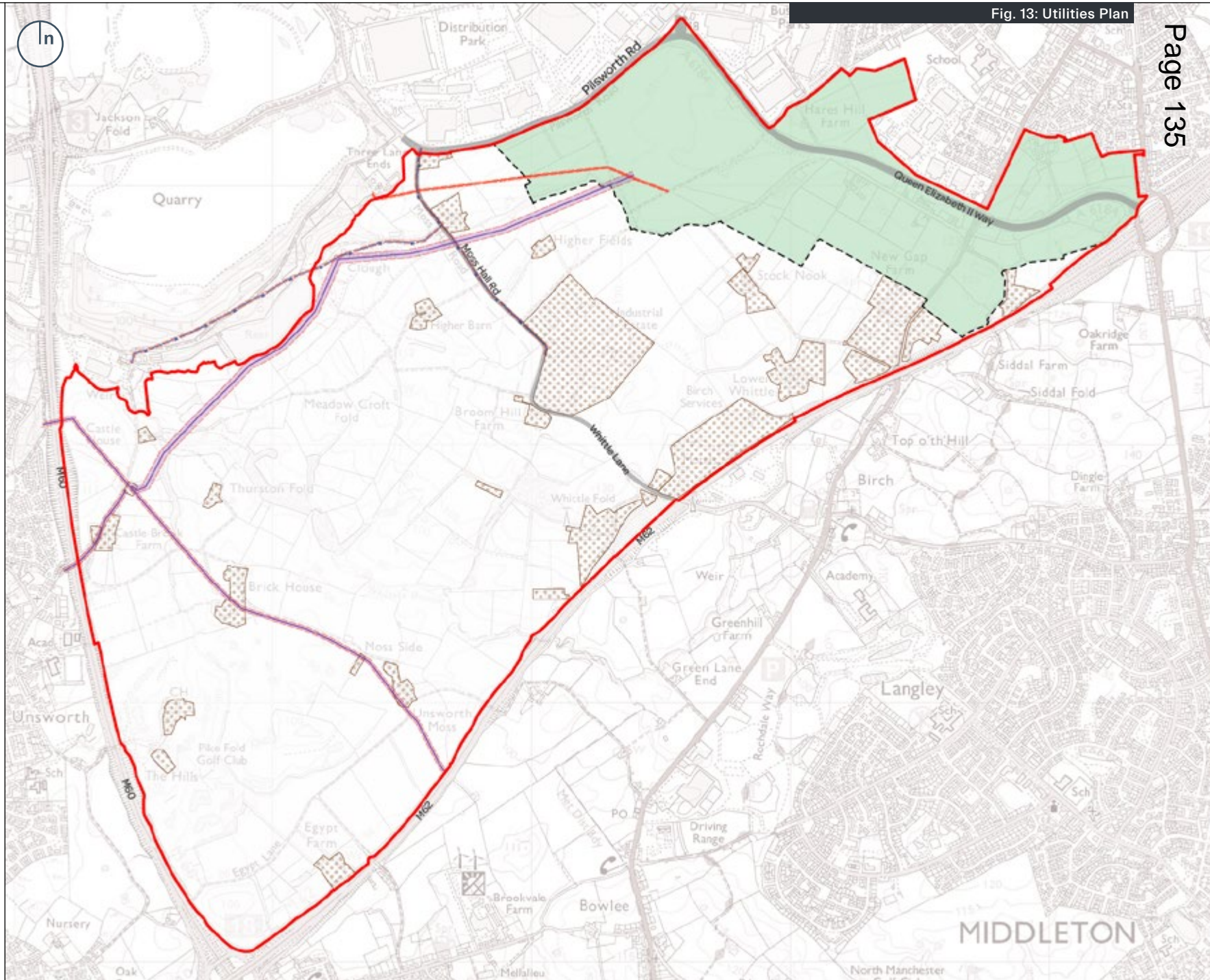
a building proximity restriction of 6 metre extending either side of the pipeline from the centre point. Cadent Gas have confirmed that the current mains have sufficient capacity to support the load required for the development without any reinforcement works. These are key constraints which have been accommodated within the Development Framework as Green Infrastructure and active travel corridors and should be incorporated in all future development at Northern Gateway.

- Water – There are two water mains running through the northern part of the site. There may be the potential to divert these to accommodate development and re-modelling works should be undertaken to provide a water supply within United Utilities standards of service which is suitable for the end use of the development.
- Telecommunications – Telecommunications are already being implemented through the South Heywood Development to provide BT Openreach and Virgin Media communication network coverage. The operators will extend their coverage to provide high speed data and fibre networks throughout the development. Further engagement with telecommunications groups will inform any potential new and upgraded infrastructure for mobile telecommunications to provide the new businesses, population and workforce, with reliable and high-speed connectivity.



Fig. 13: Utilities Plan

- Allocation Boundary
- South Heywood Application Area
- Existing Development
- Existing Road
- LHP Gas Line & Easement
- Water Trunk Mainline & Easement
- Water Dist. Mainline & Easement



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## Noise

**5.67** Parts of the site are dominated by road traffic noise sources from the M62 to the south of the site and M66 to the west. Noise from farming, commercial and industrial uses are also present in parts, within isolated areas within and adjacent to the site. Generally, there are a limited number of noise sensitive receptors within and around the site however these include private residential premises.

**5.68** The incorporation of key design measures will mitigate against any adverse noise impacts at Northern Gateway. Appropriate mitigation measures for the development may include adequate separation distances between 'noisy' employment uses and residential properties; or orientating service yards/access routes away from residential properties where possible, and the use of localised screening in the form of bunds or fences as well as restriction of deliveries / servicing times within areas closest to residents. Such mitigation should be considered at the outset of a design concept, and where proposed development is close to sensitive noise receptors (such as housing) then applicants should clearly demonstrate how noise mitigation has been carefully considered to protect the amenity of existing and future housing.

**5.69** In addition to the relationship between the residential uses and the proposed employment uses, measures should be incorporated into the design of the new residential areas to provide mitigation to existing sources of noise, which is predominantly dominated by road traffic. Mitigation should include incorporation of a minimum stand-off distance of 50 metres from the nearest motorway carriageway, orientation of buildings towards noise sources (with gardens positioned to the rear to screen private external amenity areas) and the use of boundary treatments, such as bunds or barriers, between residential areas and motorway boundaries to provide additional screening from sources of transportation noise.



## Air Quality

**5.70** Motorway emissions associated with the M66 and M62 are considered the greatest source of emissions surrounding the site. Greater Manchester have declared an Air Quality Management Area for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) attributed to the motorway network. Future development traffic has the potential to increase pollutant levels in the area and affect levels within the Air Quality Management Area. However, with the implementation of best practice air mitigation measures, in the form of sustainable transport options, it is not expected that there will be adverse effects in terms of air quality as a result of the development.

**5.71** Any stand-off from the motorways required due to the noise constraints for residential elements of the scheme is likely to be sufficient as a form of mitigation for Air Quality for any future occupiers of dwellings. It is not considered that there are likely to be any air quality risks associated with the commercial aspect of the development. However, where possible, mitigation should be considered.

**5.72** Opportunities exist to improve the environment with respect to air quality through the design of the scheme. This should include positioning sources of emissions (e.g. spine roads) away from sensitive receptors where feasible, the provision of green and blue infrastructure networks to provide health benefits to workers and residents and provision of Electric Vehicle “fast charge” points across the development. Additional measures should encourage sustainable means of transport, including cycling and walking, through the delivery of improved public transport infrastructure and layouts with good accessibility as well as a comprehensive Travel Plan to educate occupiers and encourage use of these measures.

## Geo-Environmental

**5.73** No geotechnical or geo-environmental constraints have been identified which would prevent future development of the site.

**5.74** The site predominantly comprises agricultural land which is not expected to be significantly contaminated. The following potential geo-environmental contamination risks have been identified along with potential mitigation below:

- Pilsworth Landfill - Ground gas protection measures may be required for any new build residential properties.
- Historic area of bleach works in the north east of the site - Remediation of contamination and where possible reuse of the end material.
- Backfilled quarries/pits - Assessment of material and remediation and, where possible, re-use of material.
- Ground gas migration from mineworkings and generation from the peat - Grouting of mineworkings. Ground gas protection measures may be required in new build residential properties.
- Lignite in peat in the south west - Placement of lignite at depth if it is present near surface or removal off site.
- Potential for contamination of shallow groundwater - Consideration of contamination if shallow groundwater present in contaminated parts of the site

**5.75** Intrusive ground investigation, assessment and detailed remediation to mitigate these risks should be undertaken before future development comes forward.

**5.76** The British Geological Survey (BGS) geological map shows an area of peat deposits within the far south west corner of the site, as shown on Figure 15. However, two site investigations of this area have been undertaken which confirm that there are no peat deposits in the vast majority of this area. Peat deposits are limited to the east of the southbound slip road of the M66 and west of Egypt Lane. Within this area, peat is present in isolated locations to depths which are no greater than 0.75m below ground level (bgl) and in most cases far less. The limited presence of peat within the site will not provide a constraint in terms of geo-technical design and is unlikely to be significant in terms of loss of a soil resource.

### Geo-Technical Summary

**5.77** Geotechnical aspects to consider at the site include mining, compressible peat deposits, backfilled quarries and pits and groundwater presence. Intrusive investigation should be undertaken before future development comes forward to assess these aspects further and identify standard mitigation measures as required. The ground should be characterised for cut and fill works and for foundation design.

## Site Constraints and Opportunities








**5.78** As set out in previous sections, there are no known technical constraints which would preclude the proposed development of the site. The following constraints and opportunities have been important considerations in the design of the Development Framework Plan and should be considered in future development at the site.

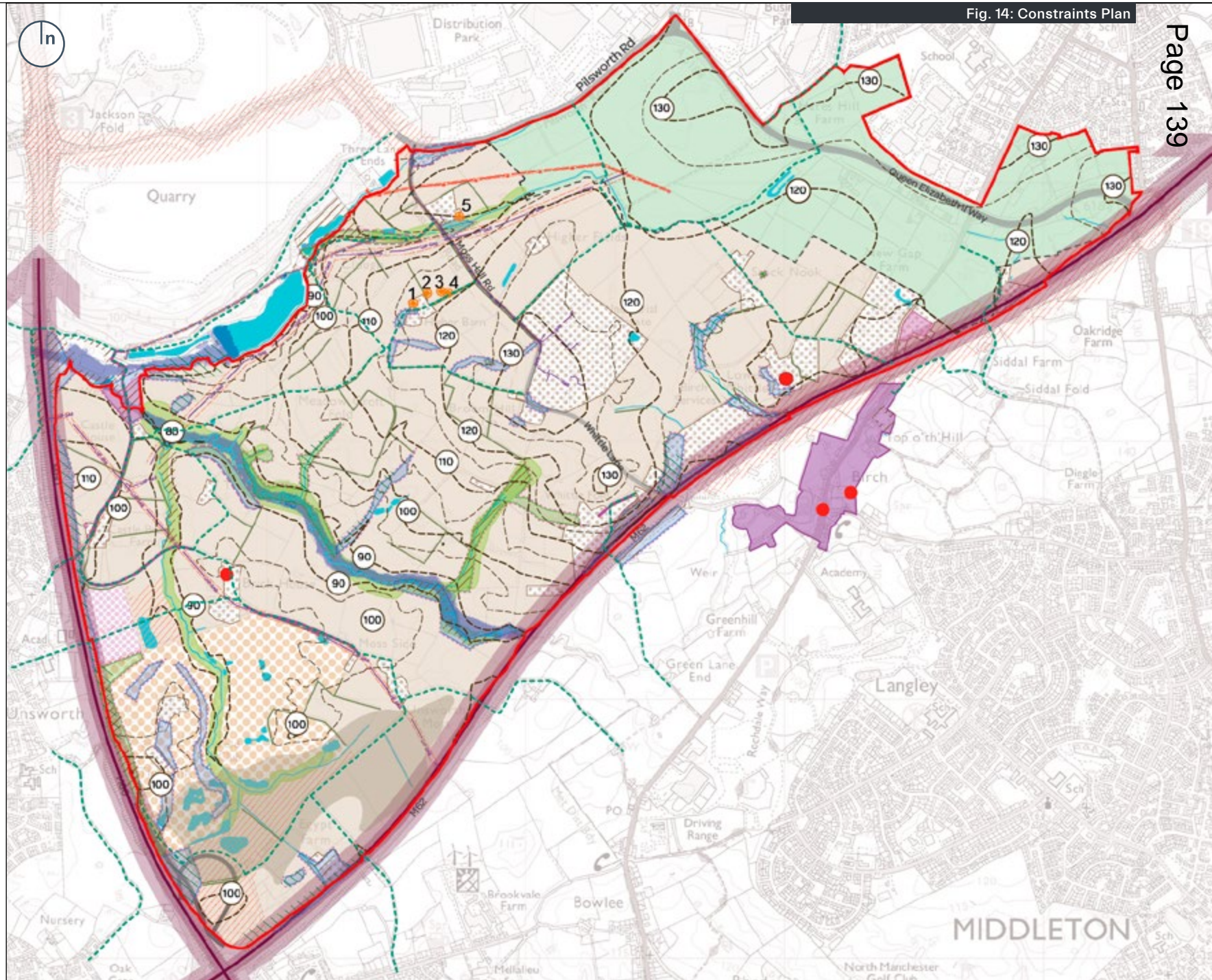
### Constraints

- Current capacity of the existing two main access points from the M62 J19 and Pilsworth Road.
- Mineshafts, probable shallow coal mine workings, within the northern area of the site.
- Watercourses across the site - Whittle Brook, Castle Brook and Brightley Brook with areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 along their banks. Buffer zones should be applied.
- Mature trees, hedgerows and woodland blocks are present throughout the site. Where possible these should be retained and enhanced. Where retention is not possible, adequate compensation for any losses should be provided.
- Ecological habitats including ponds, trees, grasslands and buildings with bat potential. Mitigation required for the loss of great crested newt ponds/habitat (either on-site or through District Level Licensing), replacement roosts for bats (either through bespoke features or integrated within new built form) and greenspace for wildlife in general.
- Services across the site including localised high pressure gas mains in the northern and western parts of the site and water mains in the north.
- Existing Public Rights of Way across the site.
- Two Grade II Listed buildings - Lower Whittle Farmhouse and Brick Farmhouse.
- Long views available to Scout Moor and Holcombe Hill. Retention of such views should be considered where feasible to maintain the connection of the site to the wider landscape.
- Noise and air quality considerations from the proximity of the M62 and M66 motorways.
- The relationship with surrounding existing uses on the site and adjacent to the site.
- Minimise the effects of the development on residential properties situated within the site and the surrounding area considering their setting and views.



Fig. 14: Constraints Plan

-  Allocation Boundary
-  South Heywood Application Area
-  Existing Development
-  Indicative Highway Improvement Area
-  Peat (Indicative Location)
-  Golf Course
-  Agricultural Land
-  Playing Fields
-  Noise constraint Associated with Motorway Traffic
-  Existing Road
-  Public Rights of Way
-  Topography
-  High Retention Value Trees and Hedgerow (CAT A) and Associated Development Offset
-  Moderate Retention Value Trees and Hedgerow (CAT B) and Associated Development Offset
-  Tree Preservation Order (TPO)
-  Indicative Location of Established Hedgerow (CATB - Moderate Retention Value)
-  LHP Gas Line & Easement
-  Water Trunk Mainline & Easement
-  Water Distribution Mainline & Easement
-  Mine Shaft
-  Woodland Habitat Area
-  Woodland Riparian Corridor
-  Priority Habitats
-  Surface Water
-  Floodzone 2 & 3
- Designated Heritage Assets**
-  Conservation Area
-  Grade II Listed Building



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## Opportunities

- Creation of a new brand and identity for the area/region.
- Employment led development with a strong sense of place to attract a wide range of business sectors and employment opportunities for all. The development will create a range of socio-economic benefits and add social value.
- High-quality market and affordable housing range.
- Sustainable design and construction through low carbon, resource efficient building design and the use of innovative energy technology to ensure the development is resilient to climate change now and in the future.
- New Community Infrastructure in the form of a new school and sports pitches at South Heywood and new areas of retail and other ancillary facilities.
- Creation of additional green infrastructure corridors throughout the site which enhance habitat connectivity on site and to neighbouring habitats off-site.
- Blue/green infrastructure opportunities along Whittle Brook and Brightley Brook for movement, recreation and enhanced biodiversity as well as sustainable drainage.
- Extend tree planting along the motorway corridors to serve a double purpose of enhancing landscape and visual amenity and promoting wildlife corridors.
- Areas of public recreation along Whittle Brook and Brightley Brook with connections to Pilsworth fisheries.
- Improved highways infrastructure at nearby local and strategic junctions.
- Improved transport infrastructure through a range of modes including potential introduction of Bus Rapid

Transit linking to local communities and travel hubs and circular bus routes around Northern Gateway based on quality bus corridor principles. Links to proposed key regional transport schemes such as Metrolink extension to Middleton, Rochdale - Heywood - Bury Tram/Train and Bus Rapid Transit connections to/from Manchester city centre.

- Improved Public Right of Way network with additional high-quality walking and cycling routes links throughout the Site to maximise site permeability and off-site connections to surrounding neighbourhoods.
- Develop a management plan for the site to promote green and blue infrastructure, nature conservation assets, habitats and wildlife which provides health benefits to workers and residents as well as creating a visually attractive environment.







# Key Development Principles

This chapter illustrates how an understanding of the site, its constraints and opportunities, has informed a design approach which has result in the illustrative Development Framework Plan contained within this NGDF.



# 06

Atom  
Vallée

## 06. Key Development Principles

This Chapter illustrates how an understanding of the site, its constraints and opportunities, has informed a design approach which has result in the illustrative Development Framework Plan contained within this NGDF.

**6.1** The Design Approach and Development Framework Plan integrate the key influences and objectives identified within the strategic context and local planning policy framework (Chapter 2) and analysis of key issues and opportunities (Chapter 6). They expand upon and provide clarity on how our Vision and Strategic Objectives (Chapter 3) should be applied spatially as part of a joined-up and comprehensive Development Framework.

**6.2** Development at the site will need to be delivered across a range of different land ownerships and through multiple planning applications. The NGDF and supporting Development Framework Plan is therefore intended to help to promote the delivery of a cohesive development across the entire site and avoid fragmented or piecemeal development and should be seen as a positive tool to help facilitate and expedite the planning and development process. Developers and their design teams should consider the design approach when bringing forward proposals for the site.



**The NGDF and supporting Development Framework Plan is therefore intended to help to promote the delivery of a cohesive development across the entire site and avoid fragmented or piecemeal development and should be seen as a positive tool to help facilitate and expedite the planning and development process.**

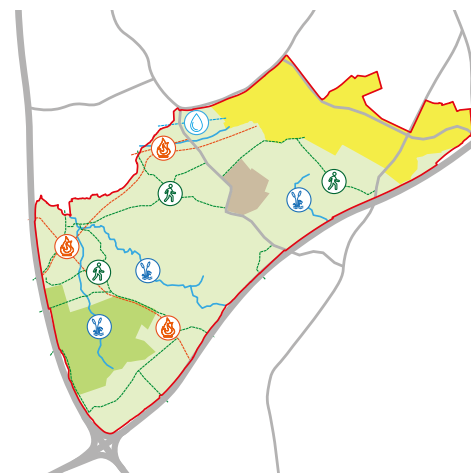


## Design Approach



### Step 1: Comprehensive Approach

**6.3** A comprehensive approach to the site considers the entire area within the allocation boundary as a single comprehensive entity. This approach has allowed for an illustrative Development Framework Plan to be developed in order to fully utilise and maximise the site's development potential.

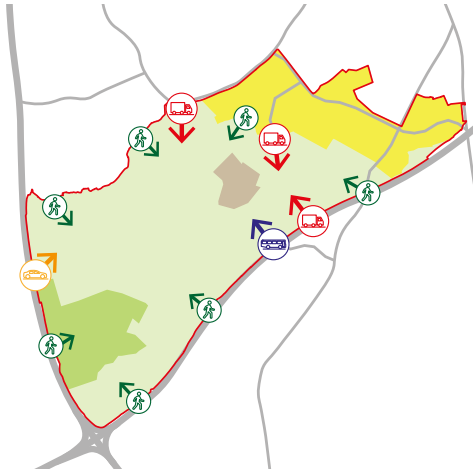


### Step 2: Spatial Constraints

**6.4** A thorough analysis and plotting of the site's known physical constraints has been undertaken in order to recognise the spatial impact they have on the Development Framework Plan. This ensures that the design response is both site specific and responds to the site's constraints, ensuring a more sensitive and efficient approach towards addressing site characteristics and attributes.

**6.5** Site characteristics and known physical constraints, outlined in the previous chapters, include utilities, green and blue infrastructure, heritage assets and ground and mine-workings as well as surrounding land uses.





### Step 3: Access

**6.6** Appraising the existing points of access into the site and identifying potential additional points of access ensures opportunities to maximise levels of permeability and integration into the surrounding urban context are fully utilised. Current and potential future access points into the site have been identified and categorised as follows:

- Points of access suitable for all vehicular traffic.
- Points of access suitable for road-based traffic but with limitations on some types of traffic to limit impacts on surrounding communities, and
- Points of access suitable for pedestrian and/or cycle traffic, free of road-based traffic and prioritising safe pedestrian and cycle access in the site.

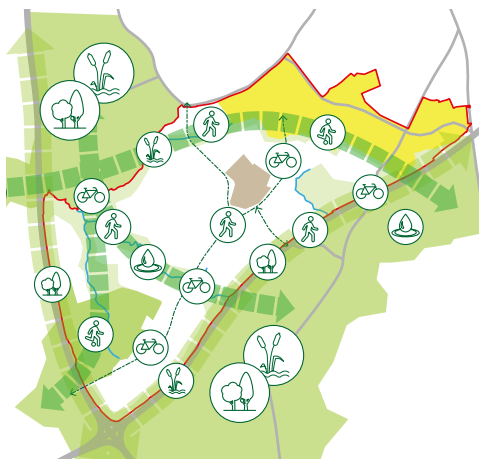


### Step 4: Consolidation and Movement

**6.7** Maximising the development potential of the site is achieved by consolidating - where possible - constraints and any proposed mitigation into a number of corridors through and around the site. This should help free up the type of large and flexible development plots required for large-scale employment uses associated with a site like Northern Gateway.

**6.8** Access to these plots is then provided via a comprehensive and legible hierarchy of routes throughout the site to ensure vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists are directed conveniently, efficiently and safely to their destinations. The movement network should accord to the following principles:

- Prioritising the movement of pedestrians and cyclists over that of road-based traffic to ensure the delivery of an accessible, safe, enjoyable and healthy environment for those who use the Northern Gateway site.
- Ensuring development can be delivered in a phased approach and utilises as many points of access as possible in order to connect into surrounding transport corridors.
- Maximising permeability for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists to integrate the site into the surrounding movement networks and minimising “dead-end” development.

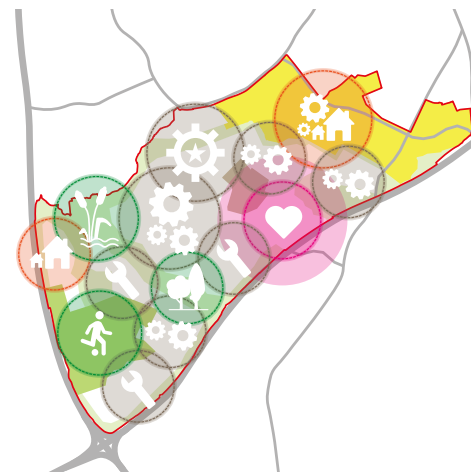


### Step 5: Landscape

**6.9** Adopting a 'landscape-led' approach at the site should ensure that development maximises its potential to deliver meaningful and significant benefits to surrounding communities and the wider region whilst also ensuring that negative impacts are mitigated wherever possible.

**6.10** Implementing a site-wide network of connected green spaces and corridors will help to achieve the following:

- The creation of significant levels of high quality, meaningful and accessible recreation land for proposed and existing employees and residents.
- Retention of existing green assets where possible and integration within a series of structural green and blue landscaped corridors. Connected corridors can support local habitats and a cohesive wildlife movement network.
- A variety and extent of open spaces across the site allows for increased biodiversity and natural landscape value, meaningful sport and recreation benefit to local communities, promote health and well-being of residents and employees.
- The delivery of naturalised mitigation measures as a priority including drainage, noise and visual mitigation, and ecological mitigation and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).



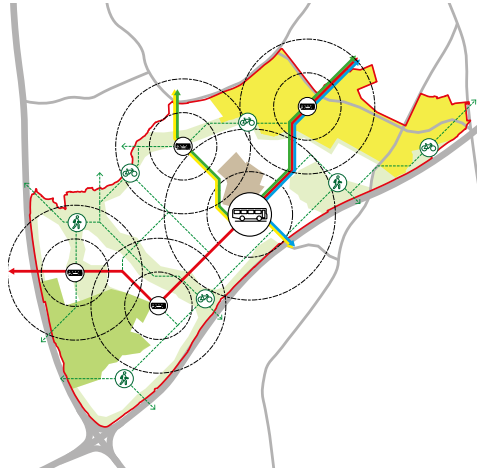
### Step 6: Use and Gateways

**6.11** Proposals at the site should fulfil the site's role as a nationally significant and strategically important employment-led development. Opportunities should therefore be explored to ensure development at the site is vibrant, safe, sustainable and enjoyable through the introduction of supporting and complementary uses to ensure the site creates its own clear identity. These include:

- Maximising the potential associated with a development of this scale and critical mass, namely around the potential re-provision of the Birch Motorway Service Area (MSA) as part of a wider Mixed-Use Gateway to include other uses which

should support employment uses and act as a focal hub to the wider development.

- Provision of complementary housing provision, local centre, and other ancillary facilities.
- Ensuring a diverse range of different employment uses are catered for - such as Advanced Manufacturing - and are clustered in appropriate areas.
- Ensuring all uses are in a location and setting which is appropriate for that use whilst not negatively impacting on the delivery of surrounding development.
- Ensuring development is compliant with Policy JP Allocation 1.1 of Places for Everyone (2024).

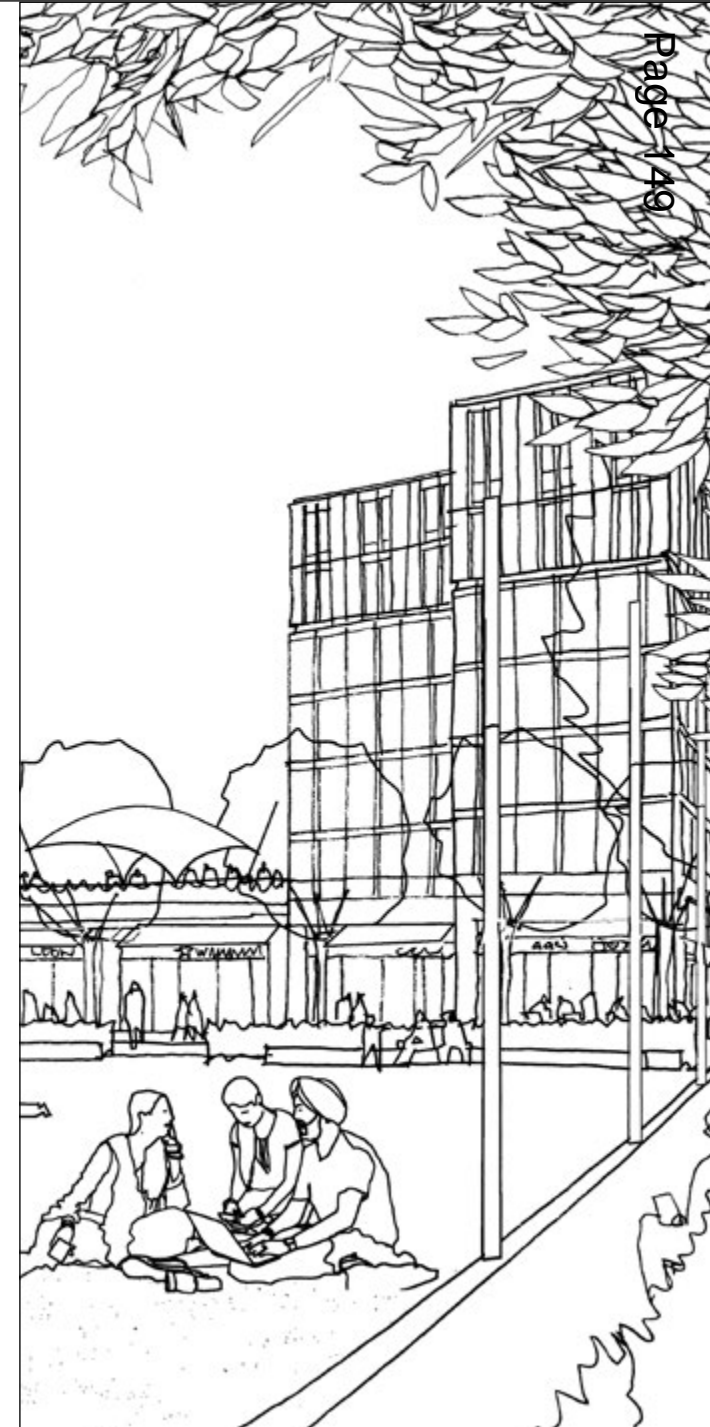


### Step 7: Active Travel

**6.12** Promoting a modal shift towards more sustainable forms of transport and promoting healthier transport options including walking and cycling is a central element in the delivery of sustainable development. Ensuring development prioritises Active Travel is therefore key.

**6.13** A site-wide Active Travel Strategy should be adopted across the Northern Gateway site which prioritises the following:

- A permeable network of routes across the site able to accommodate a range of different bus routes allowing for the diversion of existing routes into the site as well as accommodating the needs of new bus routes in the future.
- The identification of a network of integrated 'Transport Hubs' and 'Transport Nodes' across the site enabling safe, easy and secure interchange between bus, cycle, scooter and walking, with a hub being accessible within a 10-minute walk of all parts of the site where possible in order to create a human scale and walkable development.
- Delivery of a comprehensive, site-wide Active Travel network providing accessible, safe and enjoyable routes for all.



## Development Framework Plan

**6.14** The Development Framework Plan is a culmination of the above Design Principles and is an indicative interpretation of how these design principles can be realised spatially across the Northern Gateway site.

**6.15** It establishes the principal spatial components of development at Northern Gateway, including the extent of indicative development areas, land uses, areas of strategic open space, key access points and primary movement routes, and demonstrates how a high-quality, sensitive and site-specific response based around urban design best-practise can be delivered on the site.

**6.16** The key elements of the Development Framework Plan are as follows:

- Delivery of around 1,200,000 sqm of high-quality employment space suitable for a range of employment uses including advanced manufacturing, industrial, storage and distribution, as well as around 1,200 new homes, consisting of around 1,000 new homes at South Heywood and around 200 new homes off Castle Road, alongside other ancillary uses.
- Delivery of a permeable, safe and legible network of routes across the site creating a highly accessible and sustainable development which fully integrates into surrounding movement and transport infrastructure and promotes sustainable transport choices.
- Delivery of a structured network of green and blue routes and spaces helping to provide a meaningful and accessible recreation resource to proposed and surrounding communities, helping to support and enhance local habitats and biodiversity, and provide naturalised mitigation helping limit any negative impacts the development of Northern Gateway may have on its surrounding context.

**6.17** This Development Framework Plan is illustrative in nature and should be considered as such. It is intended to support the NGDF as an illustrative but realistic interpretation of how the design principles contained within this NGDF could be interpreted and delivered to help guide and inform future proposals for the site.

**6.18** The Development Framework Plan is not technically exhaustive in its approach. Consequently, there may be other acceptable ways that the PfE policy requirements and the design principles contained within the NGDF can be interpreted and implemented which are in full accordance with the SPD but which may differ spatially from this Development Framework Plan.

**6.19** The Development Framework Plan is based on a reasonable and the most up to date understanding of the site and its constraints available at the point of drafting this NGDF. Flowing from the Development Framework Plan are a series of plans relating to specific aspects of the Development Framework Plan.



- Allocation boundary
- Potential developable area
- Existing built development
- South Heywood Application area
- Green open space
- Woodland
- Woodland Riparian Corridor
- Woodland/Priority Habitat
- Watercourse
- Water body
- Listed Building (Grade II)
- Indicative Highway Improvement Area
- Proposed Access Point (all traffic)\*
- Potential Access Point (all traffic)
- Access Point (no HGV)
- Access Point (Bus Only)
- Access Point (Pedestrian / cycle access)
- Primary Road (all traffic)
- Secondary Road (all traffic)
- Residential Road (no HGV)
- Bus Road (bus only)
- Retained Footpath
- Relocated/New Footpath & Cycle Route
- Employment uses
- Residential uses
- Mixed-use
- Gateway location
- Bus enabled route

\* Proposed access point direct to Strategic Road Network

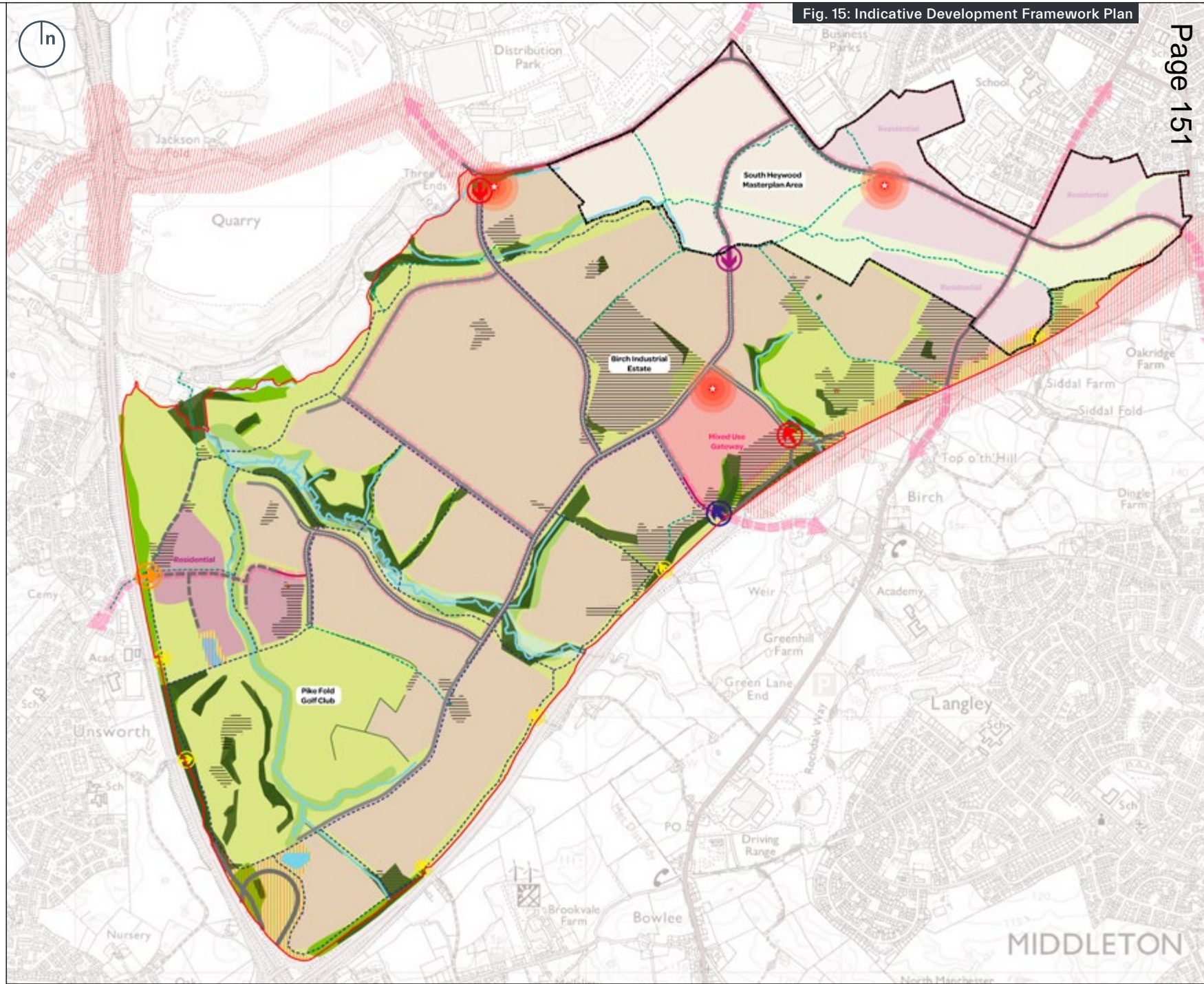


Fig. 15: Indicative Development Framework Plan



## Development Framework Principles

### Built Form and Uses

**6.20** The NGDF delivers high-quality employment space suitable for a range of employment uses as well as around 1,200 new homes alongside other complementary and supporting uses to proposed and surrounding communities. The estimated 1,200,000 sqm of employment floorspace should attract a variety of growing and emerging business sectors including (but not limited to) advanced manufacturing, logistics, industrial, data centres, storage and distribution. The delivery of around 1,200 new homes, with a range of types, sizes and tenures, including affordable housing, should be supported by community infrastructure including a primary school, sports pitches, a local retail centre and public green space. The majority of the residential component (up to 1,000 dwellings) and up to 175,460 sqm of employment space is already consented and in the process of being delivered as part of the approved South Heywood Masterplan. In addition to South Heywood, around 200 further homes should be located to the west of the site along Castle Road.

**6.21** Key to the Northern Gateway Vision is the delivery of a dynamic and thriving innovation hub for advanced materials and manufacturing, as well as the opportunity to embrace the site's scale in order to accommodate a potential 'giga-scale' employer.

**6.22** In order to create a vibrant and dynamic employment ecosystem where businesses and communities interact and thrive, advanced manufacturing uses should be clustered together. The smaller scale form of buildings associated with this use are ideally suited for areas along linear parks and near existing development where they are less likely to have a negative impact on their surrounding context. An Advanced Manufacturing Corridor to the north of Birch Industrial Estate has therefore been identified allowing opportunities for this key use to be delivered in the initial phases of the wider Northern Gateway development, as well as being located in a prominent and highly accessible part of the site.

**6.23** The Development Framework Plan has also been developed to accommodate a number of large plots which provide the flexibility required for large format industrial buildings. Plots to the west of Whittle Lane could be merged into a single plot in the event a giga-scale investment opportunity becomes available.

**6.24** The site should feature distinctive architecture influenced by the site's vernacular strategically placed at key locations including key junctions and nodes, defining the development as a striking destination with a strong identity. These architectural features should contribute to branding Northern Gateway and the wider region. Active building uses should be clustered at gateways, transport nodes and along key routes and spaces throughout the development, ensuring buildings have a positive relationship with surrounding streets and public spaces where possible, contributing to a safe environment. Imaginative architectural solutions to large format industrial buildings should be explored including materiality, boundary treatments, increased visual permeability and dynamic lighting to better respond to surrounding context.






**6.25** The Mixed-Use Gateway should act as a primary hub within the site. The Mixed-Use Gateway should contain a range of uses, potentially including a hotel and conference facilities, a gym and creche, as well as a repurposed Motorway Service Area (MSA) and other related and complementary uses which deliver a vibrant meeting place at the heart of the surrounding employment uses. This should be supplemented with a Transport Hub due to its location close to a main gateway into the site and the proposed public transport/active travel routes through the site utilising Whittle Lane. The architectural qualities and design should reflect the area's important role as both a primary hub and gateway.

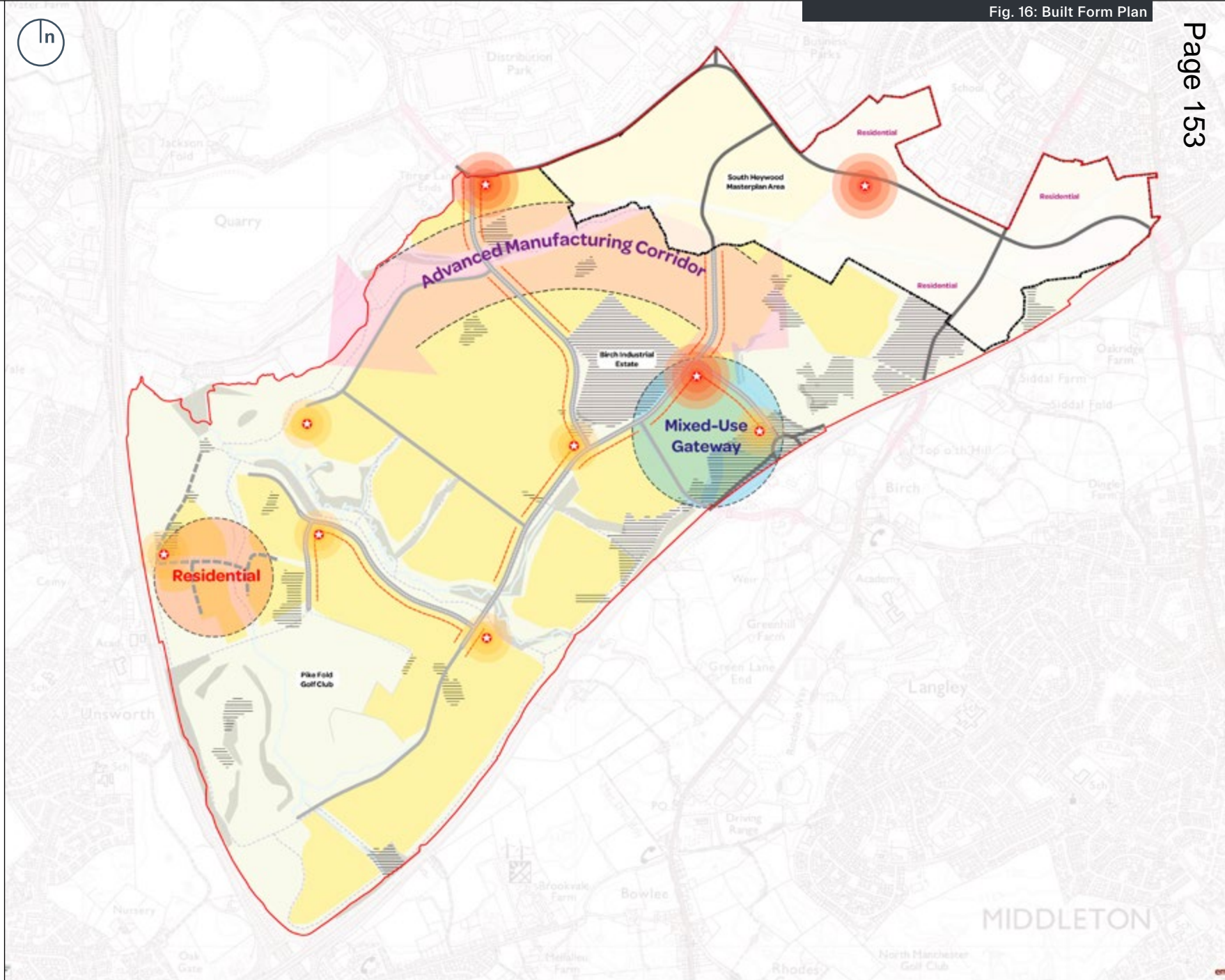
**6.26** The South Heywood Local Centre is also another important hub within the site, designed to meet the specific needs of the proposed residential community within South Heywood and the wider area. This will contain a number of community uses, including convenience retail and a primary school, and supplemented with public transport and active travel connections.

**6.27** Other gateway locations include the entrance to Castle Road residential area and Three Lanes End (the junction of Moss Hall Road and Pilsworth Road). These gateways could be defined by increases in building scale and architectural qualities to improve legibility as well as the potential for complementary uses.

**6.28** Northern Gateway aspires to be one of the most sustainable employment locations in the country. Best practice standards in sustainable design and construction should maintain the aspiration to deliver a zero-carbon development through resource efficient building design and the use of innovative energy technology.

Fig. 16: Built Form Plan

-  Allocation boundary
-  Potential developable area
-  Existing built development
-  Primary Routes
-  Secondary Routes
-  Employment uses
-  Employment uses (Advance Manufacturing Focus)
-  Mixed-uses
-  Residential uses
-  Gateway location
-  Key location/junction
-  Key route frontage



## Movement and Access

**6.29** The site's location immediately adjacent to the M62, M60 and M66 Motorways is one of Northern Gateway's greatest assets with regard to its accessibility and connections to the surrounding region. Improvements to the M62 could include upgrades to Junction 19 which could create a new point of access into the site, with further improvements seeing additional capacity added to Junction 3 of the M66 and Simister Island Interchange. Various local road network improvements are also likely to be required to improve access and traffic flows.

**6.30** The Development Framework Plan is based around a clear route hierarchy delivering a permeable, safe and legible network of routes across the site. This is based on a vision to create a highly accessible and sustainable development which fully integrates into surrounding movement and transport corridors and promotes sustainable transport choices. These routes have not yet been fixed but would be delivered in accordance with the clear route hierarchy.

**6.31** Key to this vision is prioritising the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists over that of road-based traffic whilst enabling the site to function efficiently as a high-quality employment site. Streets and public spaces should be designed to be accessible to all, with building orientation and design also being considered to maximise levels of activity and natural surveillance over streets and spaces. The design and layout of buildings should also promote Active Travel, with entrances direct and open, and cycle and car parking easily accessible and walkable.

**6.32** All streets across the site should be designed in accordance with Transport for Greater Manchester's (TfGM) Streets for All guidance as well as LTN 1/20 principles.

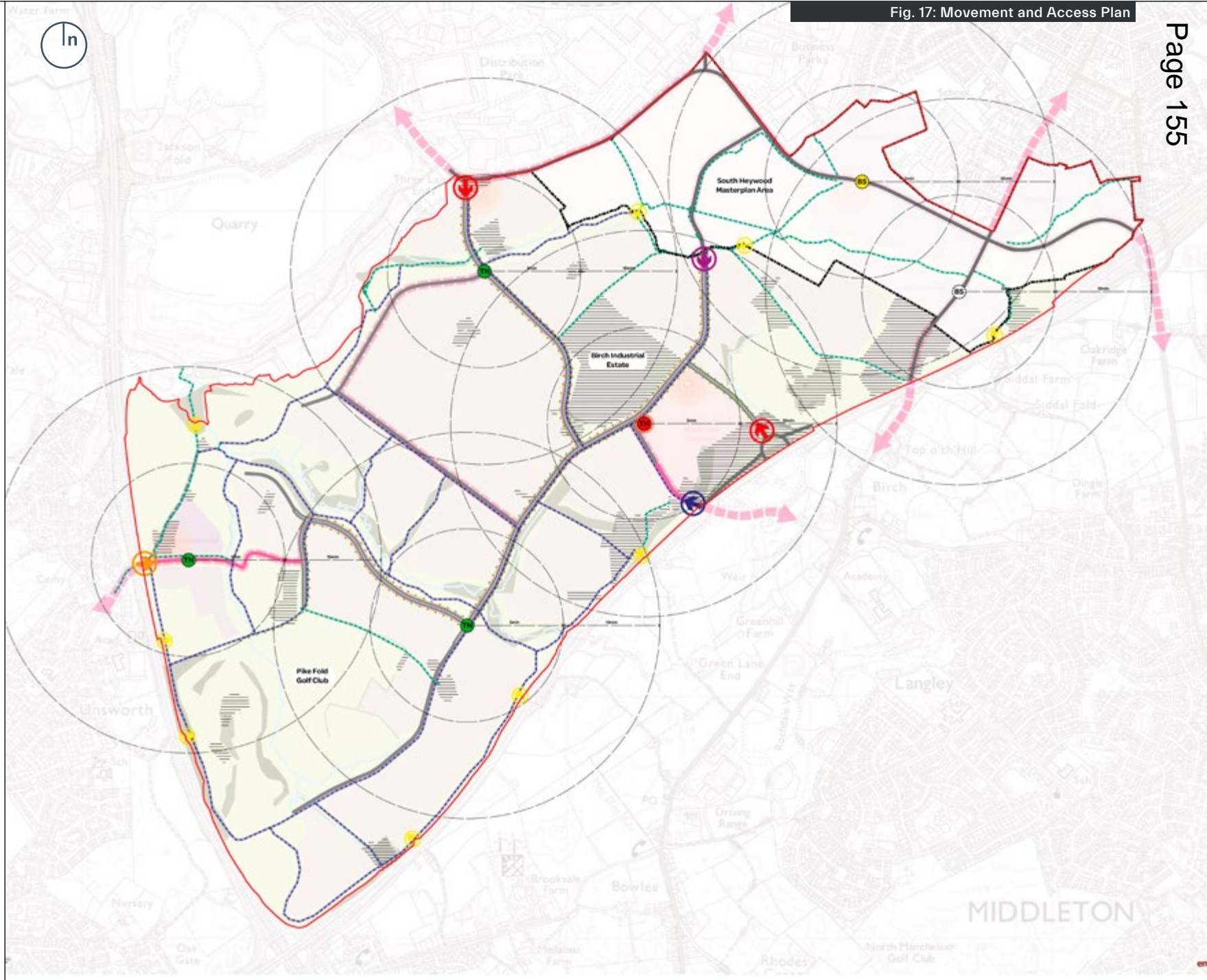
**6.33** Promotion of a modal shift towards more sustainable forms of transport and healthier travel habits should also be a priority. Key to this will be a network of 'Transport Hubs' and 'Transport Nodes' across the site connected with a range of active travel links and routes. The scale and form of such Hubs and Nodes are yet to be determined but should provide access to a range of bus connections as well as safe and secure access to bike storage and change facilities, e-bike and e-scoots rental, and opportunities for park and ride to fully utilise first-mile and last-mile connectivity principles. The distribution and location of hubs and nodes should ensure as much of the site as possible is located within a 10-minute walking distance of either facility helping to create a walkable and accessible environment for all. The primary Transport Hub should be located within the Mixed-Use Gateway and be accessible to all bus routes passing through the site to surrounding transport hubs, whilst offering regular connections into surrounding Transport Nodes via local bus, cycle and walking connections. Transport Nodes should be located at key locations including the South Heywood Local Centre and Castle Road as well key junctions and nodal points across the site.

Where feasible, existing Public Rights of Way should be retained in-situ, however it is expected that some routes may need to be diverted to facilitate future development. When new routes are proposed, opportunities should be taken to create a coherent and attractive footpath and cycle network. Where possible, footpaths and cycle routes should be located within generous landscaped corridors thus promoting local opportunities for active recreation.



Fig. 17: Movement and Access Plan

- Allocation boundary
- ⬆ Proposed Access Point (all traffic)\*
- ⬆ Potential Access Point (all traffic)
- ⬆ Access Point (no HGV)
- ⬆ Access Point (Bus Only)
- ⬆ Access Point (Pedestrian / cycle access)
- Primary Road (all traffic)
- Secondary Road (all traffic)
- Residential Road (no HGV)
- Bus Road (bus only)
- Retained Footpath
- Relocated/New Footpath & Cycle Route
- Bus enabled route
- Primary "Travel Hub"
- Secondary "Travel Node"
- (BS) Existing Bus Stop
- (BS) Proposed Bus Stop (Indicative location)
- ⌢ 5/10 min walking distance



## Landscape and Public Realm

**6.34** A landscape-led approach to the Development Framework Plan should see the site contained within a high-quality parkland setting offering multiple benefits: for biodiversity and natural landscape; for sport and recreation; for sustainable water management and the health and well-being of employees, residents and the wider community. The delivery of the site should therefore open up substantial areas of public open space for all to enjoy. These should include a range of different typologies including formal managed areas of landscaping for amenity, sport and recreation, as well as naturalised areas of landscaping to support local wildlife, biodiversity and habitat creation across the entire site.

**6.35** Green and blue infrastructure networks across the site should be formed through the retention of identified environmental features of the existing landscape. Valuable existing natural assets, such as the brooks and their u-shaped valleys, mature trees, hedgerows and woodland blocks should be retained where possible and integrated within a series of structural landscaped corridors. Formal and naturalised landscaped corridors should connect to public open space within the approved South Heywood Masterplan, Pilsworth Reservoir to the north and green spaces within the surrounding local area to ensure development at the site is incorporated successfully into the local landscape setting.

**6.36** Connected structural landscaped corridors should protect the areas of highest ecological value and form a cohesive wildlife movement network which enhances habitat connectivity on site and to neighbouring habitats off-site. Ecological improvements should include the retention and enhancement of the Whittle Brook and tributaries corridors and associated riparian habitats as well as ponds, areas of woodland in the site and alongside the motorway edges. Ecological improvements should also see the installation of new attenuation basin wildlife ponds, extensive tree, hedgerow and scrub planting and enhancement of existing grassland. The Development Framework Plan allows for the delivery of ecological mitigation measures to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and deliver these in a phased manner as development comes forward.

**6.37** The NGDF promotes and prioritises the delivery of naturalised and habitat friendly mitigation measures for drainage, land re-profiling, noise and visual matters over standard engineered solutions. Where possible, underground water drainage and storage should be avoided with the use of consolidated naturalised attenuation basins and open swales being encouraged. Engineered acoustic fences and built retaining features should also be discouraged over tree planting, earth bunds and landscaped reprofiling for site mitigation. This approach should help maximise opportunities to deliver areas of habitat and recreational value whilst also reducing ongoing maintenance burdens.





**6.38** Areas of landscaping, habitat creation and recreation should not be limited purely to areas of open space. Opportunities should also be explored to utilise streets, pedestrian and cycle routes for the creation of green, blue and ecological corridors. Verges, planted boundary treatments and screening should also be utilised to contribute towards the sites wider Green Infrastructure. Features such as street running swales, rain beds and native habitat friendly shrub planting should be encouraged within the design of streets. Seating and rest areas should also be integrated into the design of streets to help promote active travel and support those with limited mobility.

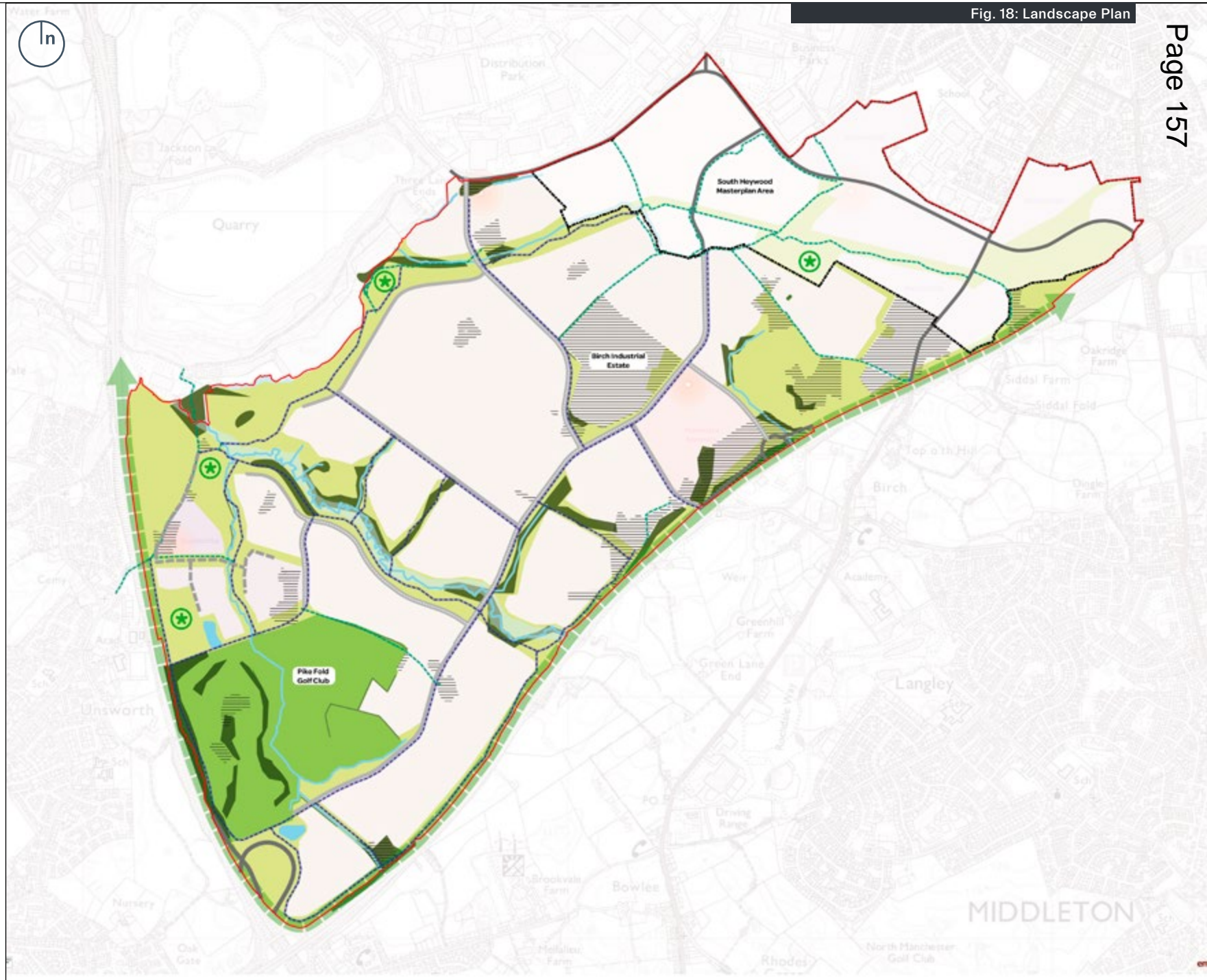
**6.39** The amalgamation of the built form within this ecologically rich, biodiverse setting should create a high quality and distinctive parkland destination focused on community interaction and sustainable movement. New areas of public open space embedded throughout the site could feature sports facilities, recreation hubs, walking and running trails, cycling routes, and event spaces, enriching the surrounding environment with diverse opportunities for leisure and activity.

**6.40** The site should prioritise the provision of high-quality public realm providing safe, accessible and attractive streets and public spaces with a strong identity, character and a sense of place. The public realm should be activated through a range of uses to promote interaction and recreation. Measures to deter anti-social behaviour should be integrated into the design, employing both active and passive solutions such as activity, surveillance, lighting, strategic planting and appropriate materials.



Fig. 18: Landscape Plan

-  Allocation boundary
-  Potential developable area
-  Existing built development
-  Green open space
-  Woodland
-  Mitigation corridor
-  Existing Golf Course
-  Watercourse
-  Water body
-  Retained Footpath
-  Relocated/New Footpath & Cycle Route
-  Community open space
-  South Heywood open space



# Design Principles and Character Areas

The Development Framework Plan demonstrates how Northern Gateway can be delivered, operate, and function



# 07

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Vallée

## 07. Design Principles and Character Areas

The Development Framework Plan demonstrates how Northern Gateway can be delivered, operate, and function in a spatial form that is policy compliant and technically sound. However, when implementing the vision for the site as a comprehensive, enjoyable and safe place which is unique to the site's attributes, it is key to explore the character and appearance of a place as well as how it functions.

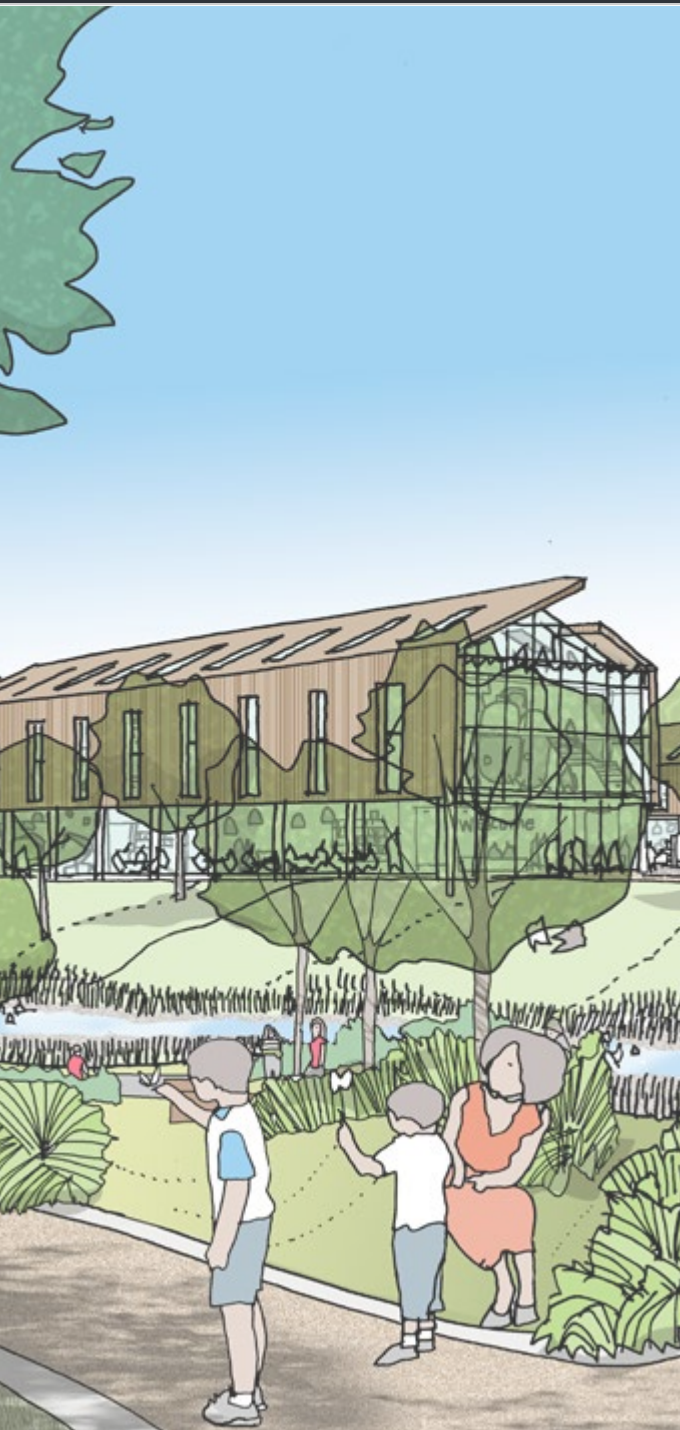
7.1 With a site as large and complex as Northern Gateway, it is necessary to consider design principles in both a site-wide context as well as principles which are specific to only certain part(s) of the site. Future proposals for the Northern Gateway site need to be specific to both the wider Northern Gateway site as well as the specific design considerations relevant to individual parts of the site. When taking into consideration the number of constraints which need to be considered and the number of varying uses which will be accommodated on the site, some parts of the site will likely have completely different characteristics and functions compared to other parts of the site. This may be in response to key site attributes, constraints or proposed uses. These different areas are referred to as Character Areas.

7.2 The following chapter will discuss a range of design principles in both a site-wide and Character Area context.









**7.3** The following site-wide design principles should be applied to all future development proposals within the Northern Gateway site regardless of their location with any given Character Area.<sup>6</sup>

### Built form and Use

- Striking building forms, design and materiality should help create a distinctive destination with a clear identity and contribute to branding Northern Gateway and the wider region.
- Large format industrial buildings in key prominent locations should embrace innovative elevation design solutions in a way which breaks up their visual form and reduces their impact on the surroundings.
- Ensure building design and form provides a positive interface with proposed adjacent uses and spaces, as well as responding to existing constraints and characteristics.
- Ensure building typologies create a human scaled and comfortable environment with positive relationships with public spaces.
- Office elements, primary entrances and other active uses within buildings should face primary routes and public realm where possible for improved legibility and to maximise levels of natural surveillance and perceived safety and security.
- Build forms, scale, use and appearance should positively respond to gateway locations, key junctions and nodes where possible.

6. These design principles do not apply to the South Heywood Masterplan Area which is subject to its own Design Code.

## Streets and Movement

- Primary Routes running through site should take the form of a boulevard incorporating segregated foot and cycleways as well as tree planted verges to ensure routes provide safe and enjoyable Active Travel Corridors which prioritises the movement of pedestrians and cyclists as well as fulfilling their function to serve surrounding proposed uses.
- Secondary Routes running through the site should take the form of green streets incorporating segregated foot and cycleways as well as suitable landscaping to ensure routes provide safe and enjoyable Active Travel Corridors which prioritises the movement of pedestrians and cyclists as well as fulfilling their function to serve surrounding proposed uses.
- Vehicle carriageways should be reduced in width at pedestrian and cyclist crossing points and along long stretches of road to help reduce traffic speeds and create a safe and attractive crossing point and prioritise the movement of pedestrians and cyclists. These should be marked with changes in surface materials and increased levels of tree/shrub planting.
- Where feasible, consolidation of parking should be explored to ensure efficient use of land and maximise space given to other features. Large areas of car parking should be located away from streets wherever possible, or include high levels of formal landscaping and suitable boundary treatments to break up large areas of hardstanding and create a positive interface and allow for natural surveillance with and over adjacent pedestrian/cycle routes.
- Service and good yards should be located away from streets wherever possible or be screened from public view through provision of suitable levels of landscape planting so not to have a negative impact on surrounding streets.
- All pedestrian and cycle routes throughout the site should be design to be accessible to all and well-lit to provide safe and easy movement for all throughout daytime and evening hours.

## Landscape

- Ensure provision of a high-quality public realm providing safe, accessible and attractive public spaces with a strong identity, character and a sense of place.
- Maximise levels of natural surveillance over areas of public open space.
- Green and blue infrastructure networks across the site should be formed through the retention of identified environmental features of the existing landscape. Valuable existing natural assets should be retained where possible and integrated within a series of structural landscaped corridors.
- Retention of existing vegetation of value and considered within the parcel layout where possible.
- Tree and hedgerow planting to be included in all car parks to break up the visual mass of vehicles and create an overall consistency of urban greening within the development.
- Carriageway structure to include sufficiently sized landscaped verges for tree lined streets and naturalised linear swales or raingardens to manage rainwater run-off.
- Delivery of naturalised and habitat friendly mitigation measures for drainage, land re-profiling, noise and visual matters to be prioritised over standard engineered solutions.

## Character Areas

7.4 Each Character Area responds to its unique physical setting and reflects key attributes from the surrounding area. This helps to create distinct and memorable places within the proposed development with its own clear identity whilst helping to improve legibility and improve navigation around such a large development. Whilst they may look, feel and operate differently from each other, it is important they tie-in together in other ways to ensure the Northern Gateway development as a whole appears as a single comprehensive development.

7.5 The Development Framework Plan for Northern Gateway can be divided into six Character Areas as follows:

- Mixed Use Gateway
- The Boulevard
- Core Development
- Urban Valley
- Boundary Corridors
- Castle Road

7.6 Each Character Area narrative below introduces the roles and high-level design aspirations for each Character Area and sets out key design principles which will help to guide future proposals for the site.

7.7 The objective behind this approach is to provide a coherent and cohesive design language across the entire site which is specific to the area and its existing character, and which allows the scheme to read as a single entity, whilst allowing future proposals to respond to key opportunities within the site, including gateways, improving legibility, providing suitable uses.

7.8 Character Areas do not have defined boundaries and commonly overlap. Larger development plots within the Development Framework Plan may include two or more Character Areas. In such situations, proposals should consider how the different Character Areas vary and ensure future proposals respond accordingly, especially along the boundaries of plots and their relationship with surrounding routes and open space.

7.9 The following section clearly set out how this should be achieved through a range of design principles, precedent images and indicative sketches to help inform future proposals. These are not designed to be exhaustive and are intended as high-level design principles on which future applications should be based.

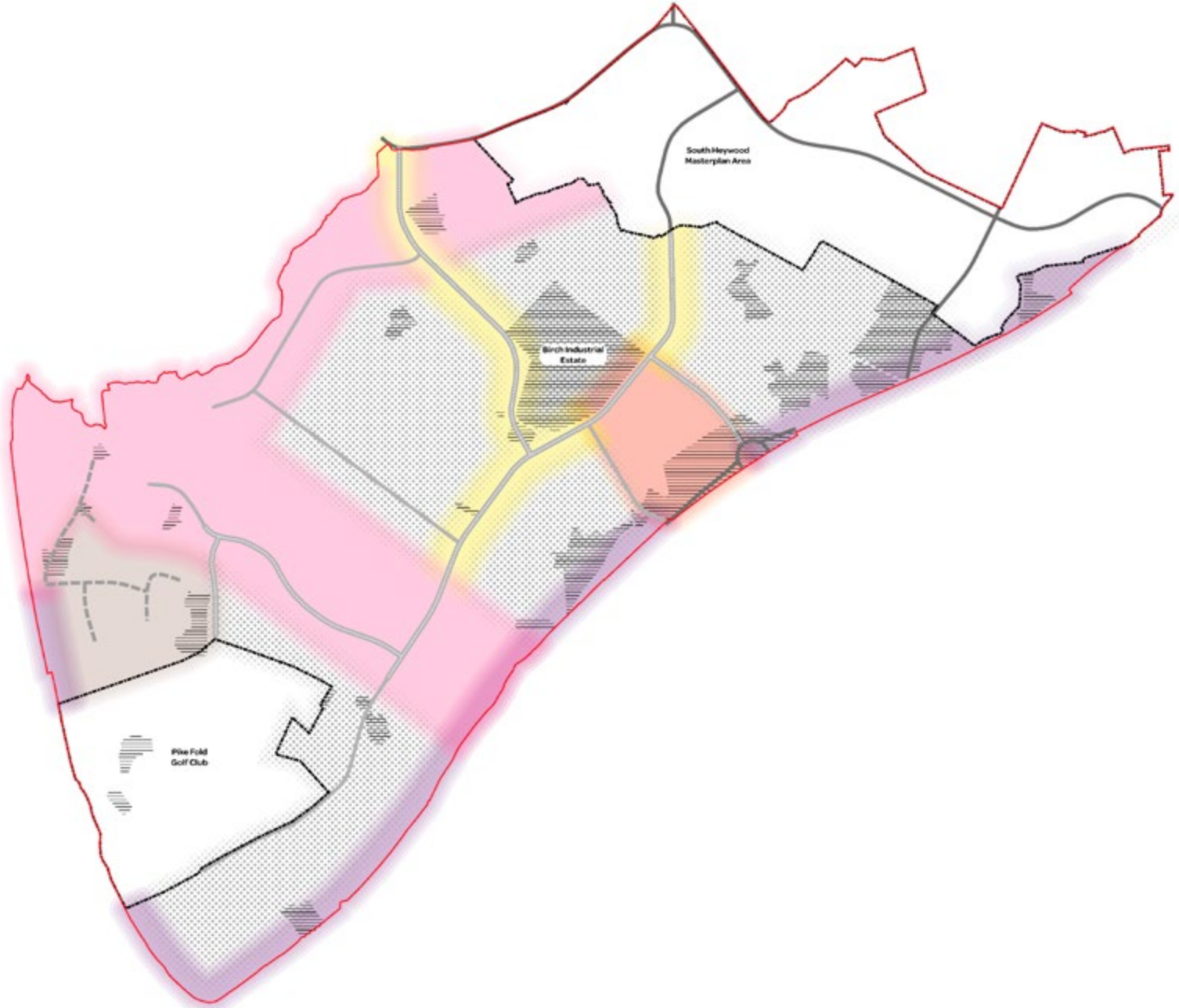
7.10 Further detail supplementing these principles should be provided in the form of a detailed Design Code(s) which will need to accompany any future planning applications for development on the site. Such Design Codes should be drafted alongside consultation with officers and key stakeholders and demonstrate compliance with the design principles contained within this NGDF SPD and any other national and local planning and design policies and guidance relevant to that proposal.

7.11 Figure 19 shows the spatial distribution of the Character Areas across the site.

Fig. 19: Character Area Plan



- Allocation boundary
- Mixed-Use Gateway
- The Boulevard
- Core Development
- Urban Valley
- Boundary Corridors
- Castle Road
- Existing built development



## Character Area 1 – Mixed Use Gateway



**The Mixed-Use Gateway  
Character Area serves  
as a primary point of  
arrival and a central  
focal point and meeting  
place for Northern  
Gateway.**

7.12 The Mixed-Use Gateway Character Area is located in a prominent and highly accessible part of the site near a potential new point of access from the M62. Its boundaries are defined by the M62 to the south and Birch Business Park to the north, a re-aligned Whittle Lane and Birch Farm marking the eastern and western edges, respectively.

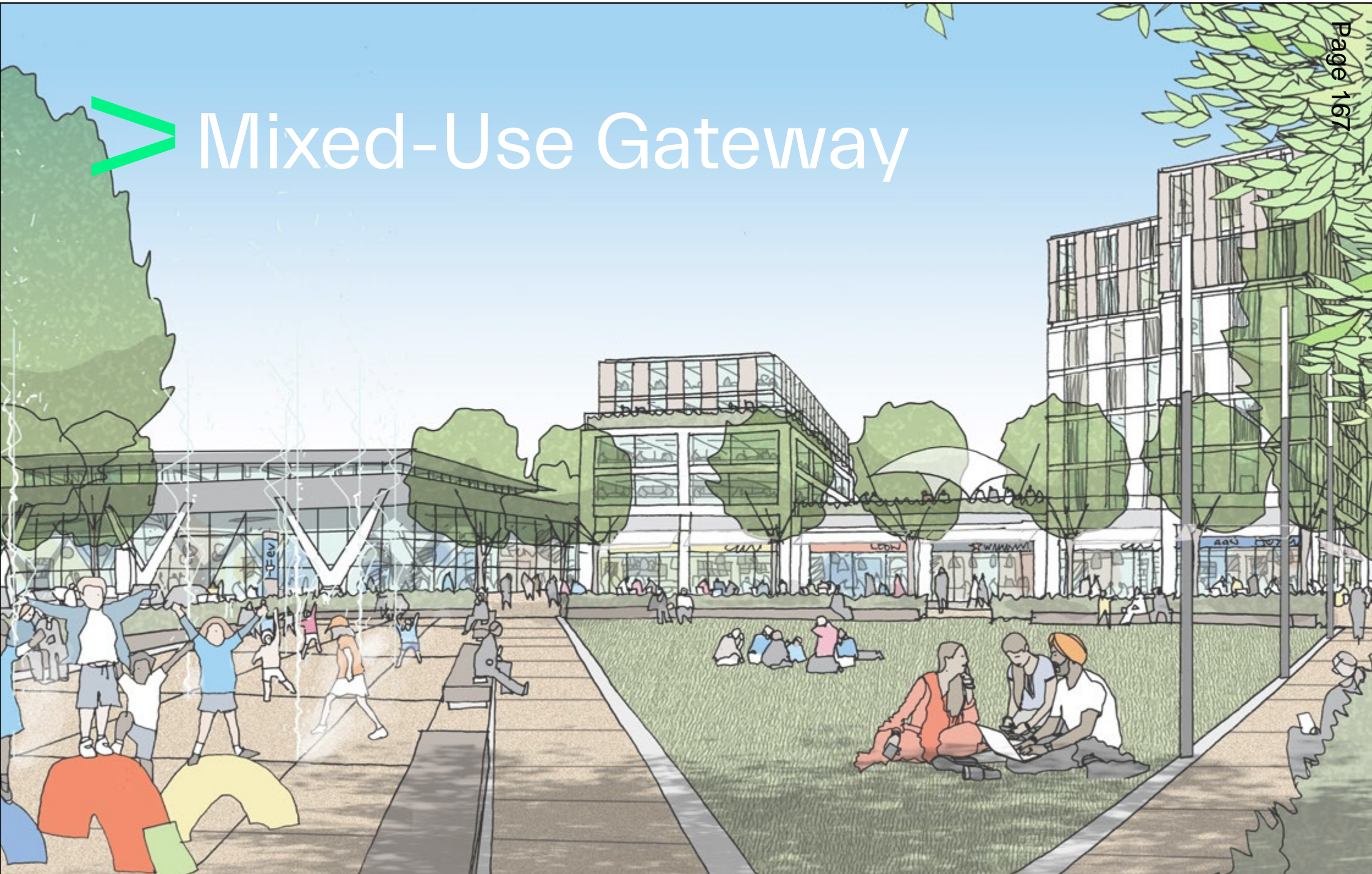
7.13 The Mixed-Use Gateway Character Area serves as a primary point of arrival and a central focal point and meeting place for Northern Gateway. Highway improvements to the M62 should see upgrades to Junction 19 to establish a new point of access for motorway traffic. This area will include a Transport Hub which will provide both regular connections to wider Greater Manchester transport interchanges and regular shuttle bus connections to secondary travel nodes within Northern Gateway. The Transport Hub will also connect to active travel routes through the site utilising Whittle Lane.

7.14 The Mixed-Use Gateway will be the primary hub of the site, supporting the surrounding uses and complimenting the South Heywood Local Centre. It should contain a range of ancillary uses which could include a hotel and conference facilities, retail and commercial, a gym and creche, as well as a repurposed and innovative MSA and other related active uses to contribute to the delivery of a vibrant meeting place at the heart of surrounding employment uses.

7.15 Both the architectural and public realm design should create a high-quality, distinctive destination with a clear identity and branding to reflect the character area's role as the primary centre of Northern Gateway. Highly prominent plots are to be utilised by key uses with increased building scale and activity to create a striking gateway entrance into Northern Gateway. The Mixed-Use Gateway should also promote human scaled features, have a high-quality and active public realm and benefit from green and blue infrastructure. An emphasis on comfort, relaxation, wellbeing and human need should have commercial benefits with visitors wanting to spend longer here.

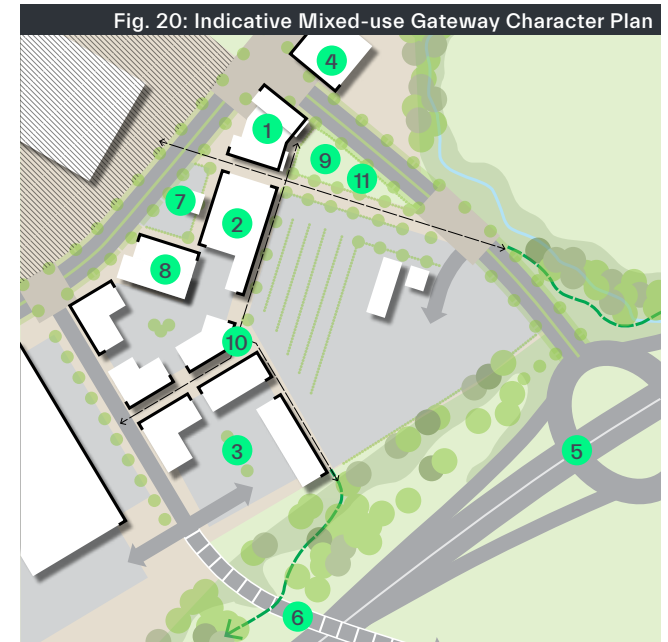


# > Mixed-Use Gateway



## Mixed-use Gateway Key Design Principles

1. Maximise opportunities for distinctive architecture to reflect Mixed Use Gateway's role as the primary centre of the development and gateway for the wider development.
2. Mixed-Use Gateway should include provision for a range of potential complimentary and ancillary uses to the wider Northern Gateway development including provisions a new Motorway Service Area (MSA) a hotel and conference facilities, a gym and creche and other supporting retail/commercial uses.
3. Additional uses to be considered within the Mixed-Use Gateway could include smaller format and higher density employment uses and other complementary uses such as office, research, start-up, co-working and educational uses which can help complement the vibrant character of the Mixed-Use Gateway and utilise the areas high quality public transport links and accessibility.
4. Increase building scales to improve local legibility and have visual presence on the M62.
5. Potential highway improvements to M62 Junction 19 to establish a new primary point of entry into the site from the M62 Motorway.
6. Highway improvements to Whittle Lane to establish a new Active Travel route into the site connecting on to Heywood Old Road.
7. Allow for the provision of Primary Transport Hub accessible to all bus routes passing through Northern Gateway and regular connections to wider transport hubs within Greater Manchester.
8. Primary Transport Hub should provide regular shuttle bus connections to Secondary Travel Nodes within Northern Gateway as well as alternative Active Travel transport options such as e-scooters and e-bike rental and potential opportunities for an integrated parking facility/multi-storey car park to support potential park and ride services.
9. Include provision for the delivery of a formal recreation space or square including potential for seating, picnic space, play, water feature and relaxation which can act as a focal point to the Mixed-Use Gateway and for use by and accessible to all.
10. Routes and spaces through and around the Mixed-Use Gateway should be design to be safe and well-lit throughout daytime and evening hours, allow suitable areas for shelter from wind and whilst also allowing for outdoor seating/dining from surrounding F&B uses.
11. Areas of formal open spaces should be designed to be adaptable and suitable for a range of small-scale temporary uses including pop-up events and retailers.

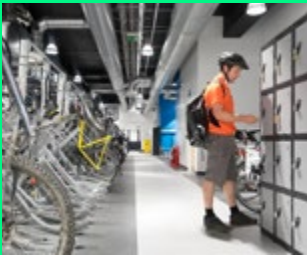




Built Form and Use



Streets and Movement



Landscape



## Character Area 2 – The Boulevard



7.16 The linear configuration of The Boulevard Character Area aligns along the Primary Routes throughout Northern Gateway and is primarily focused on land to the east of Whittle Brook.

7.17 The Boulevard Character Area creates a highly prominent and accessible corridor that acts as the primary axis through the development and will form a spine for those moving through and within Northern Gateway. The Boulevard Character Area accommodates all vehicular traffic, supports sustainable public transport, and promotes active travel modes while establishing a high-quality public realm. Primary Routes running through The Boulevard incorporate Active Travel Corridors with segregated footpaths and cycleways and tree planted verges, ensuring these routes are safe and enjoyable and prioritise pedestrian and cyclist movement.

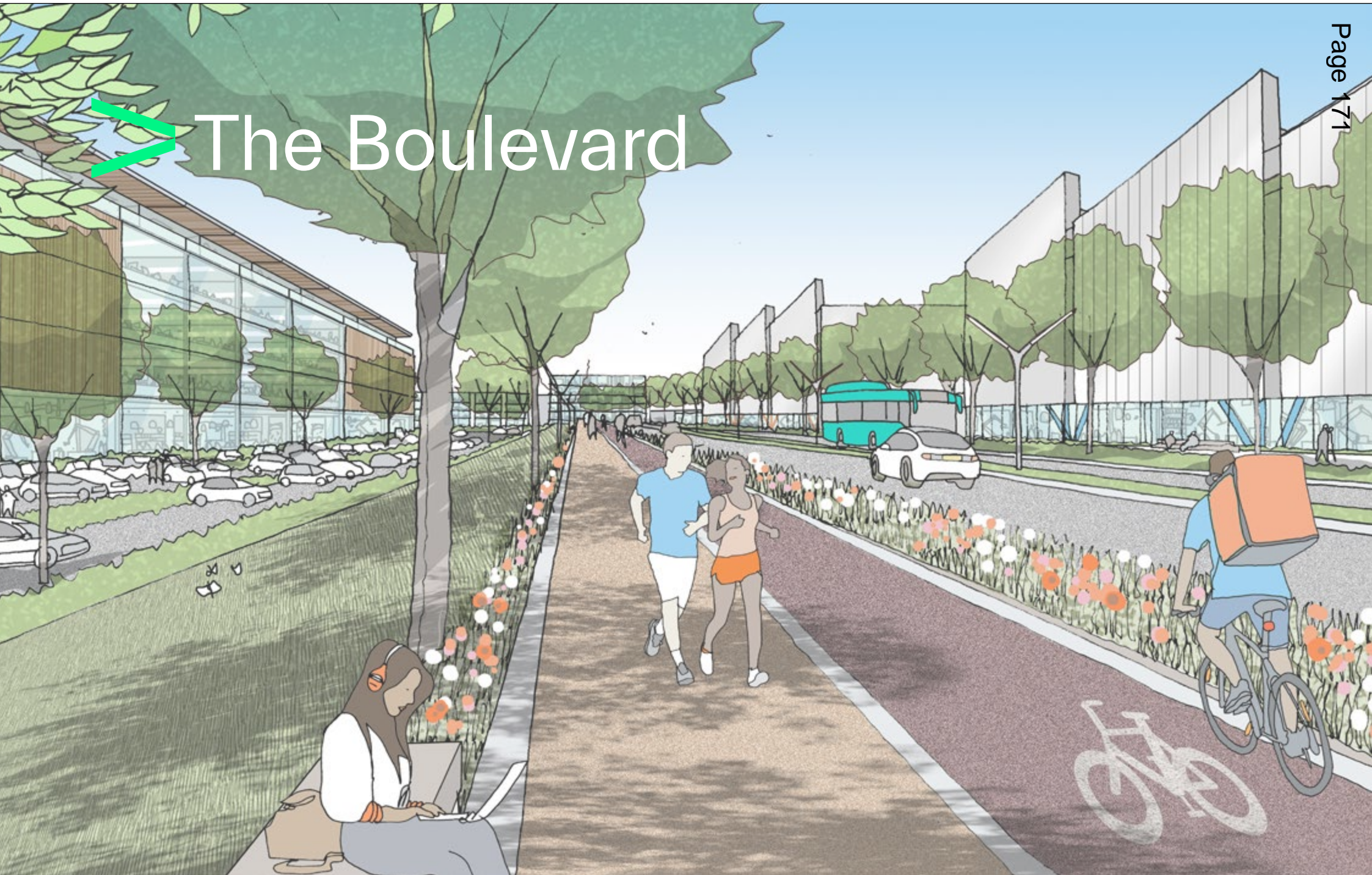
7.18 Along the Primary Route, a series of secondary gateways, key junctions and nodes introduce variation to the streetscape. Highly visible building facades in prominent locations to include innovative elevational solutions where possible, varying their forms, scales, uses, and appearances to aid orientation. The Boulevard Character Area includes the frontages of employment buildings situated along the Primary Route. Office elements, primary entrances, and other active uses within these buildings are designed to interact positively with the Primary Route and the surrounding public realm.



**The Boulevard Character Area creates a highly prominent and accessible corridor that acts as the primary axis through the development.**



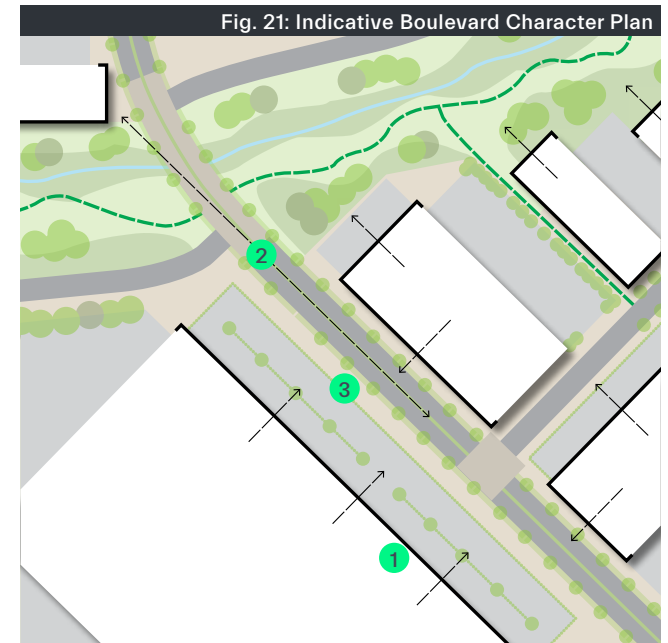
# > The Boulevard





### The Boulevard Key Design Principles

1. Ensure building design and form responds to the role of The Boulevard as the primary movement corridor through the site and will therefore be highly visible to those moving through and within the wider development.
2. Secondary Travel Nodes should provide regular shuttle bus connections around the wider Northern Gateway site as well as provision for alternative Active Travel transport options such as e-scooters and e-bike rental and potential opportunities for park and ride.
3. Boundary treatments along primary streets should be formal, low level and include high quality landscaping to ensure opportunities to maximise level of natural surveillance between surrounding uses and the street frontage. High level and visually impermeable boundary treatments along primary streets will only be permitted when screening service yards and should be screened by landscaping features.



Built Form and Use



Streets and Movement



Landscape



## Character Area 3 – Core Development



7.19 The Core Development Character Area spans the entire site, encompassing all available land outside the other four other Character Areas. Consequently, this Character Area is divided into a series of smaller areas.

7.20 The Core Development Character Area serves as the functional employment element of Northern Gateway and provides the greatest flexibility for delivering development for a variety of growing and emerging business sectors. The Core Development Character Area aids the delivery of a dynamic and thriving innovation hub for advanced manufacturing, as well as the opportunity to embrace the sites scale in order to accommodate a potential ‘Giga-Scale Plus’ employer alongside logistics, industrial, storage and distribution sectors.

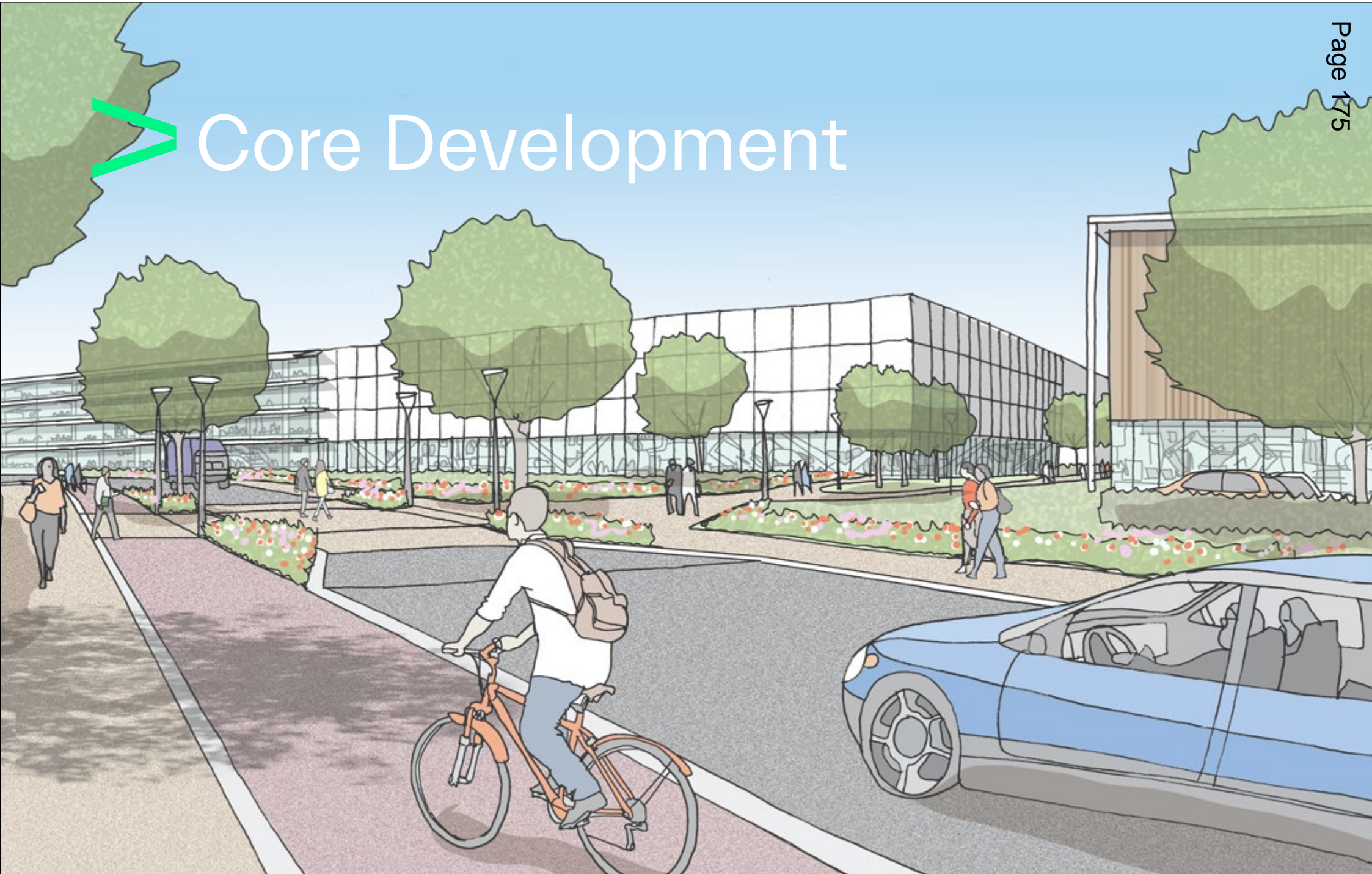
7.21 Secondary Routes running through the Core Development Character Area take the form of green streets incorporating segregated foot and cycleways as well as suitable landscaping to ensure routes are safe and enjoyable Active Travel Corridors. Additional footpaths and cycle routes run between development plots with suitable levels of natural surveillance to deliver a permeable and legible network of routes across the site.



**The Core Development Character Area aids the delivery of a dynamic and thriving innovation hub for advanced manufacturing, as well as the opportunity to embrace the sites scale in order to accommodate a potential ‘Giga-Scale Plus’ employer.**

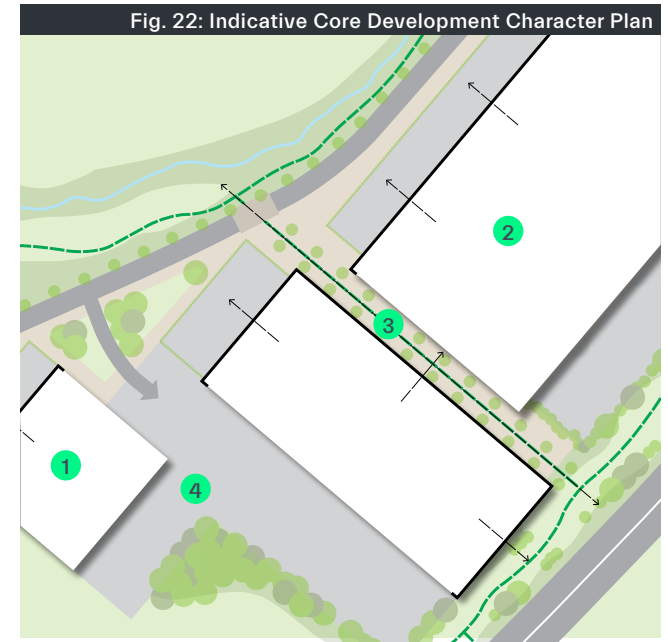


# Core Development



## Core Development Key Design Principles

1. The design of smaller format Advanced Manufacturing uses should be designed to promote dynamic and thriving innovation hubs for advanced materials and manufacturing. These should include premises of different sizes to attract varied scales of business and allow for the retention of business on-site as they grow. Development should also include a range of communal and co-working facilities to promote sharing, communication and innovation.
2. The design of larger format 'Giga-Scale Plus' should be designed to lessen their impact on the surrounding development where possible. It is possible that the site will attract large occupiers, where self-containment and security is likely to be important. In these instances, careful consideration should be given to ensure wider permeability with the rest of the site. This should utilise opportunities to integrate in with surrounding complementary uses, enable pedestrian and cycle permeability, and where possible, allow provide/enable shared facilities.
3. Due to the large format nature of employment-led developments such as Northern Gateway, where development allows, opportunities should be utilised to further improve permeability through the site with the introduction of additional pedestrian/cycle routes between development plots. These should be designed to include suitable levels of natural surveillance, landscape and be accessible to all users.
4. Where possible opportunities should be explored to consolidate parking and introduce shared/communal parking for smaller employment uses/buildings to reduce levels of hardstanding.





## Built Form and Use



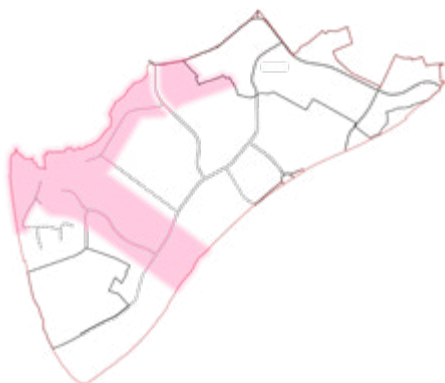
## Streets and Movement



## Landscape



## Character Area 4 – Urban Valley



7.22 The Urban Valley Character Area aligns along the watercourses of Whittle Brook and Brightley Brook and captures development within the western extent of the northern boundary and a central region of Northern Gateway on a north-west to south-east axis.

7.23 The Urban Valley Character Area forms a high-quality parkland setting to enable new areas of meaningful and accessible public open space with diverse opportunities for sport and recreation to bring about health and well-being benefits for employees, residents and the wider community. Development here is set within the landscape setting with building form, design and appearance having a positive impact on the area's role. Walking and running trails will meander throughout the Character Area with integrated community spaces and sport provision where compatible with ecological considerations. In connection with the Boundary Corridors Character Area, Whittle Valley protects areas of the highest ecological value and forms a cohesive wildlife movement and habitat network within Northern Gateway as well as connecting to green spaces within the surrounding local area to integrate with the wider landscape setting.

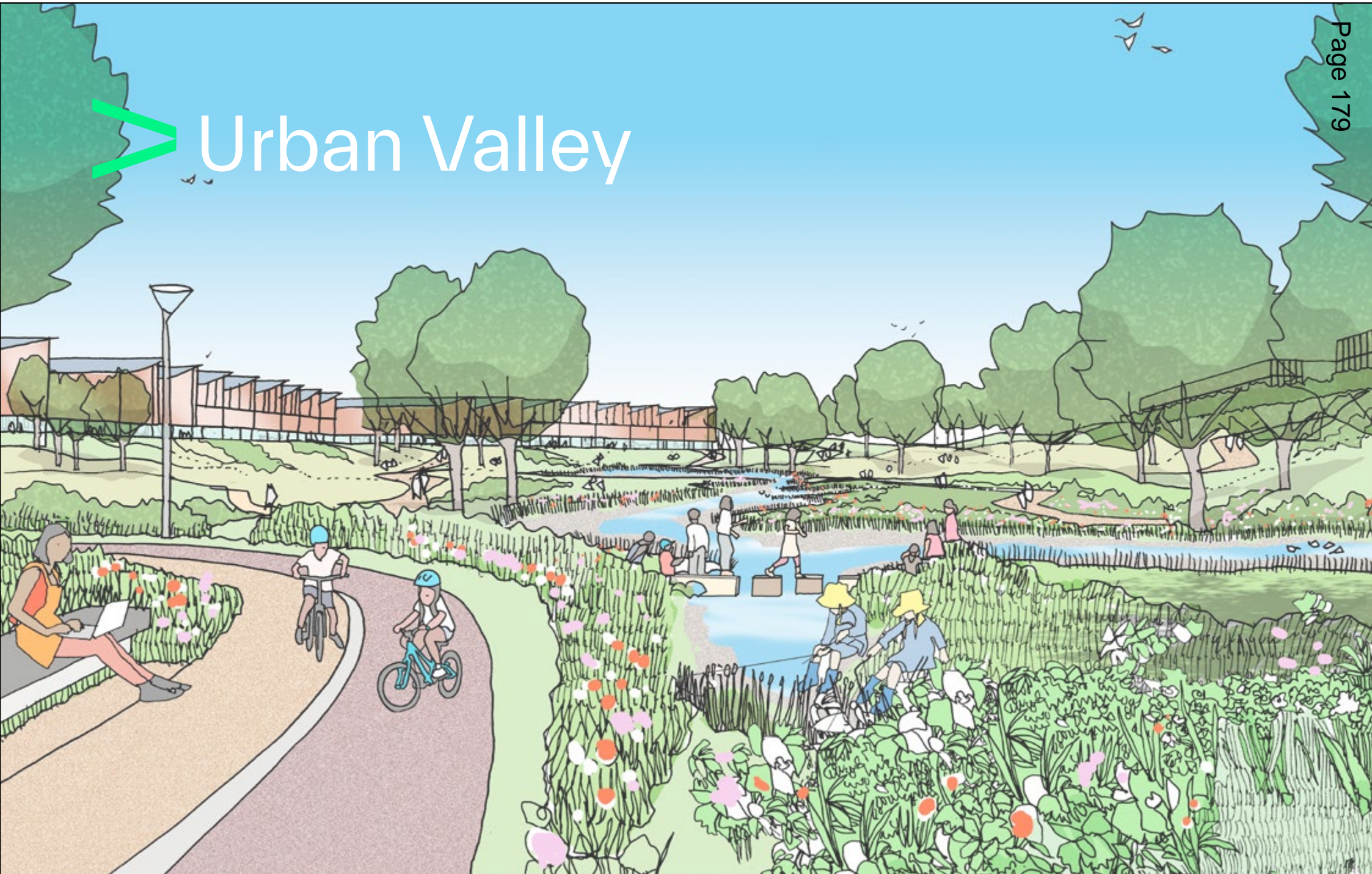
7.24 The existing brooks, their tributaries and u-shaped valleys alongside woodland blocks and riparian habitat are retained as far as possible and highlighted as distinguishing and mature landscape features. Supplementary landscape features to include naturalised and habitat friendly sustainable water management, land reprofiling solutions and further soft landscaping.



**The Urban Valley Character Area forms a high-quality parkland setting to enable new areas of meaningful and accessible public open space.**

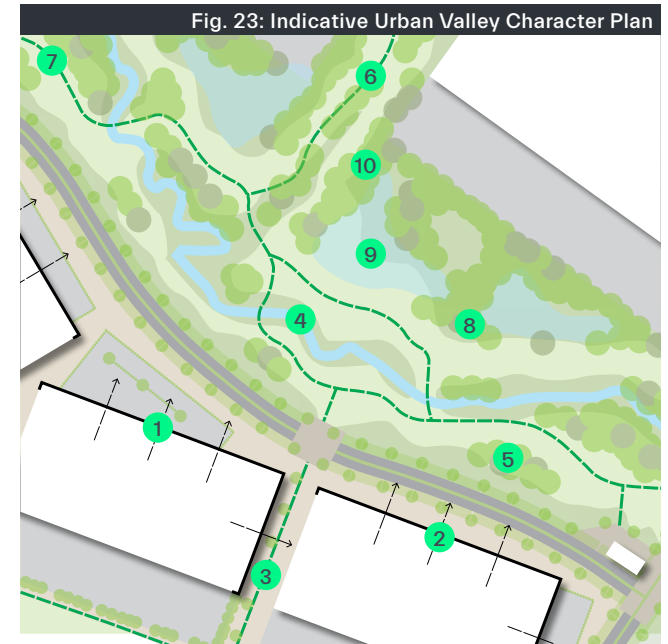


# > Urban Valley



## Urban Valley Key Design Principles

1. Ensure building design and form responds to the role of the Urban Valley Character Area as containing some of the primary area of public open space across the site, as buildings will be highly visible to pedestrians and cyclists moving through and within the wider development.
2. Building elevations which front on to areas of public open space should embrace innovative design solutions in a way which breaks up their visual form, reduces their impacts on surrounding public spaces and maximises levels of natural surveillance.
3. Due to the large format nature of employment-led developments such as Northern Gateway, where development allows, opportunities should be utilised to further improve permeability through the site linking large areas of public open space with surrounding streets with the introduction of additional pedestrian/cycle routes between development plots. These should be designed to include suitable levels of natural surveillance, landscape and be and accessible to all users.
4. Provision of green and blue infrastructure network formed through retention of existing natural assets, in particular Whittle Brook, Castle Brook and Brightley Brook, and integration within a series of structural green and blue landscaped corridors.
5. Including landscaped corridors to form a high-quality parkland setting for Northern Gateway offering multiple benefits: for biodiversity and natural landscape; for sport and recreation; for sustainable water management and the health and well-being of employees, residents and the wider community.
6. Parkland setting should enable new areas of high quality, meaningful and accessible public open spaces with diverse opportunities for sport and recreation
7. Landscaped corridors should connect to public open space within the South Heywood Masterplan, Pilsworth Reservoir to the north and green spaces within the surrounding local area to integrate with the wider landscape setting.
8. Landscaped corridors should protect the areas of highest ecological value, increase habitat value with various landscape enhancements and form a cohesive wildlife movement network.
9. Inclusion of naturalised and habitat friendly sustainable drainage systems to manage rainwater run-off from hard paved spaces and buildings.
10. Deliver naturalised mitigation solutions to land reprofiling and retaining features and other site-wide infrastructure requirements.





Built Form and Use



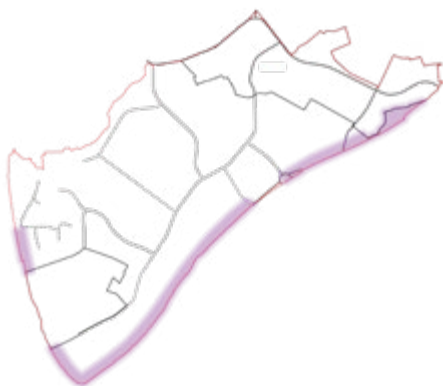
Streets and Movement



Landscape



## Character Area 5 – Boundary Corridors



7.25 The Boundary Corridor Character Area bounds the M62 and M66 motorways. Its linear configuration extends along the majority of the southern and western boundary, excluding Pike Fold Golf Course, the existing playing fields and Castle Road proposed residential area.

7.26 The Boundary Corridor Character Area recognises the opportunity to create a high-quality, safe and enjoyable peripheral linear public open space that offers numerous benefits. The corridor will connect number currently unlinked and poor-quality pedestrian and cycle routes which currently cross the motorways into the site to create a safe, attractive and legible network of routes. Existing tree belts should be reinforced with additional structural landscape planting, mitigating the impacts of the nearby M62 and M66. For cohesive habitat connection and wildlife movement benefits, the existing and proposed landscaping, combined with naturalised sustainable drainage systems, will strengthen and diversify the current habitats, thereby enhancing the ecological value of the site. For sport and recreational benefits, a perimeter pedestrian and cycle active travel network provides car-free travel routes, direct connections to existing links across the M62 and M66 and attractive running and walking trails.

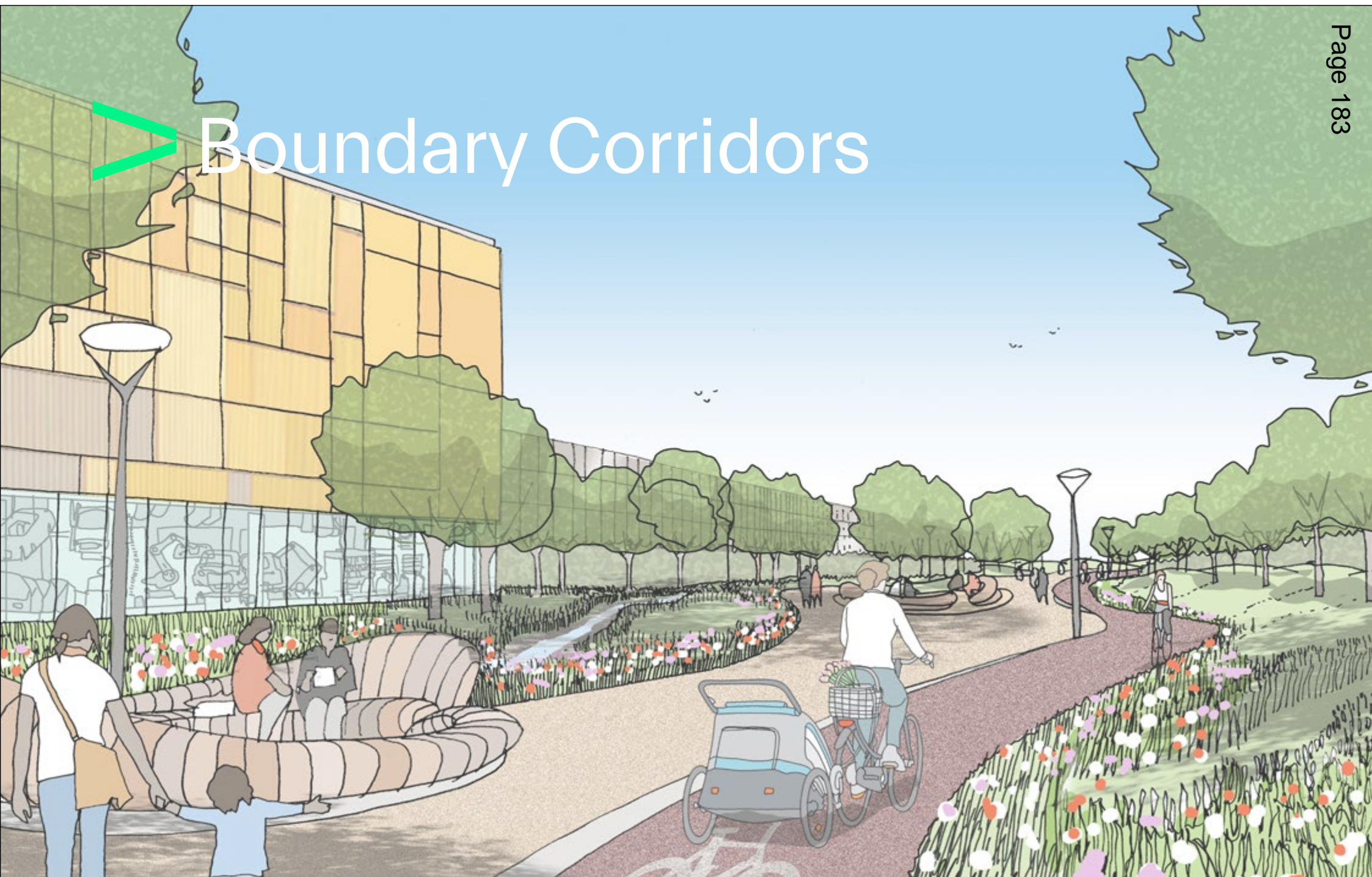
7.27 The well-established and mature tree belts alongside the M62 and M66 are distinctive landscape features of the Character Area to be enhanced and extended with further structural landscape planting to cover the entirety of the motorway boundaries.



**The Boundary Corridor Character Area recognises the opportunity to create a high-quality, safe and enjoyable peripheral linear public open space that offers numerous benefits.**

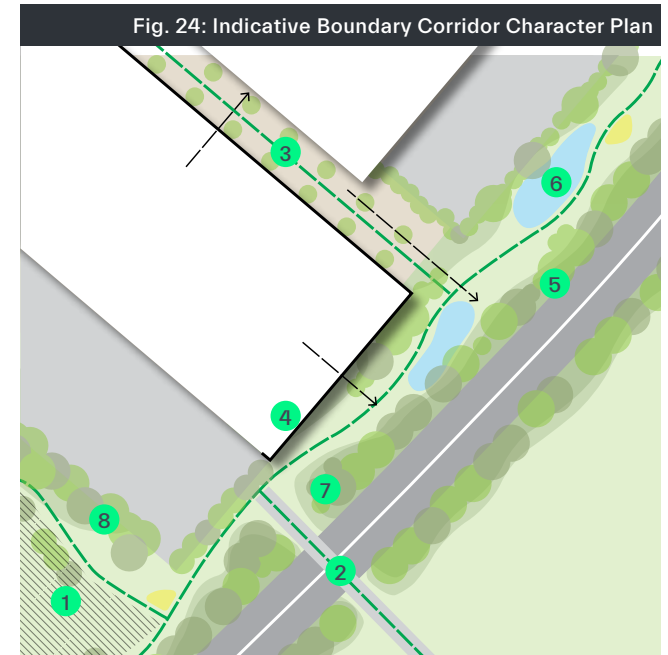


# > Boundary Corridors



### Boundary Corridors Key Design Principles

1. Building scale, use and form should be carefully considered where buildings sit in close proximity to adjacent proposed/existing residential uses in order to protect the amenity of residents.
2. Boundary Corridor will be largely free from road-based traffic and primarily take the form of pedestrian, cycle and Active Travel routes which connect into existing pedestrians/cycle routes across the M62 and M66 Motorways.
3. Due to the large format nature of employment-led developments such as Northern Gateway, where development allows, opportunities should be utilised to further improve permeability through the site with the introduction of additional pedestrian/cycle routes between development plots. These should offer direct routes and be designed to include suitable levels of natural surveillance, landscape and be accessible to all users.
4. Built form to be set back from the M62 and M66 motorways to retain the existing mature boundary vegetation. Additional native tree belt planting to strengthen and diversify the existing tree belts where there has been weakening of the landscape structure.
5. Strengthened Boundary Corridor vegetation provides multiple noise, air quality and visual amenity mitigation benefits from the proximity of the M62 and M66 motorways.
6. Inclusion of naturalised and habitat friendly sustainable drainage systems to manage rainwater run-off from hard paved spaces and buildings.
7. The delivery of naturalised mitigation measures within Boundary Corridors also enhances the site's ecological habitats, connected wildlife movement corridors and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) contribution.
8. Boundary Corridors, within Northern Gateway, of linear green spaces with vegetation screening form separation distances transitioning between employment development and residential development.





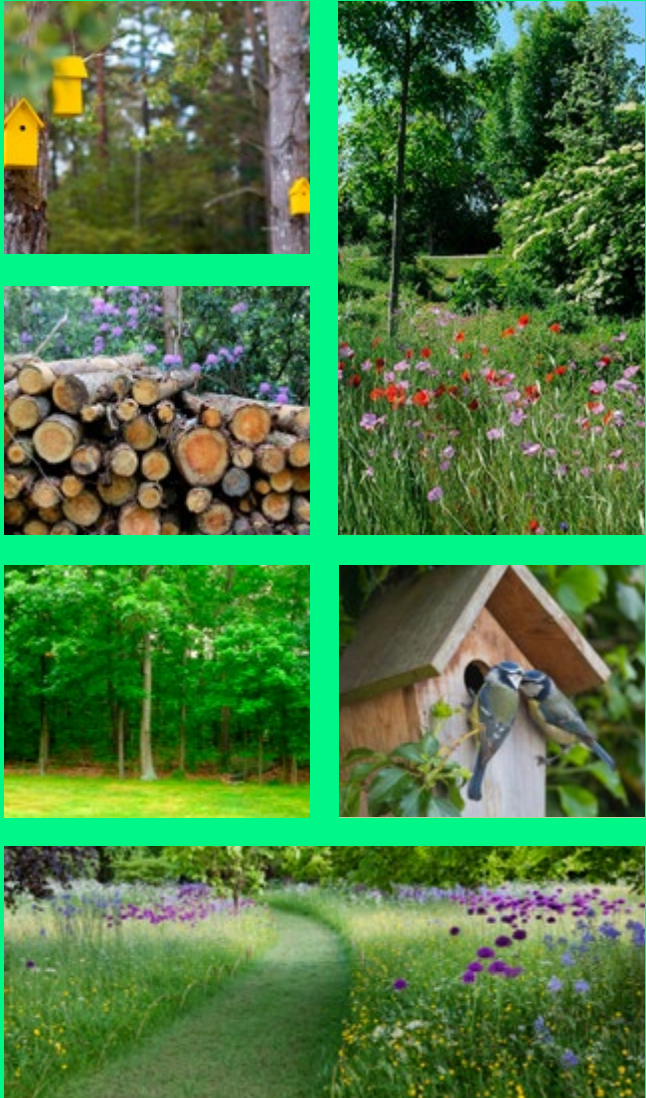
Built Form and Use



Streets and Movement



Landscape



## Character Area 6 – Castle Road

7.28 Land to the west of the site, off Castle Road, provides the opportunity to bring forward new high quality residential development within the site and set a high benchmark for future residential development within the wider Atom Valley. A new active travel route running east-west through this character area will provide the key connection point for new and existing communities to access the employment opportunities provided within the site and also the high-quality parkland provided within the Urban Valley. Existing recreation facilities will be retained and enhanced and contributions toward education provision made.



**Castle Road provides the opportunity to bring forward new high quality residential development within the site and set a high benchmark for future residential development.**

### Castle Road Key Design Principles

- Around 200 new homes, with the exact figure to be determined subject to infrastructure requirements.
- Provision of a range of house types, sizes and custom and self-build plots to create a vibrant and varied community. This should include affordable housing in line with the Councils' adopted policies and NPPF requirements and the density of development should be in line with PfE Policy JP-H4.
- Marker buildings should provide a gateway feature at the junction with Castle Road.
- Development blocks within the area should be orientated to promote east-west connectivity and ensure that streets and open spaces are active, overlooked and safe.
- Homes along the active travel route should create a strong frontage.
- Primary vehicular access to serve all residential parcels within this Character Area will be taken from Castle Road which will require a significant upgrade.
- Links to the existing Unsworth communities and into the wider employment site will be provided through the creation of a new active travel corridor through this Character Area. This route will be restricted to local bus services and will not provide connection for other vehicles between the employment and residential parts of the site.
- The movement network should encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling ahead of the private car by providing direct linkages and improvements to the existing network
- Pedestrian and cycle routes through the site must offer logical and convenient connections to and between key destinations beyond the site boundary.
- Access to recreation provision must be considered when designing the street network.
- Existing road accessing Garlic must remain.
- The public realm throughout this character area should be high quality and help to foster a distinct identity which will also aid legibility.
- A variety of green spaces should be provided across the area ranging from private gardens, semi-private courtyard, pocket parks, informal areas of play to public open spaces. The incorporation of small-scale community orchards and allotments to aid health and well-being and enhance biodiversity will be encouraged.
- The design and integration of SuDs will be a key component in managing water across the area. Development should look to incorporate both soft and hard engineered features, which respond at various scales and include controls such as small-scale rain garden, swales, mini wetland and underground storage in addition to green roofs.

**Character  
Precedents** 



Built Form and Use



Streets and Movement



Landscape



# Sustainability

Greater Manchester's ambition is to become a carbon neutral city region by 2038.



08



Atom  
Vallée

## 08. Sustainability

Greater Manchester's ambition is to become a carbon neutral city region by 2038. This ambition is supported by Bury and Rochdale Councils through respective declarations of climate emergencies. Achieving this goal will reduce the need for buildings and homes to be retrofitted in the future to achieve carbon neutral goals set by Greater Manchester and the UK.

8.1 Strategic Objective 7 of PfE "playing our part in ensuring that Greater Manchester is a more resilient and carbon neutral city region" includes two specific themes of relevance to this chapter which are to:

- Promote carbon neutrality of new development by 2028, and
- Improve energy efficiency and the generation of renewable and low carbon energy.

8.2 The scale and location of the site provides an opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to net zero through the implementation of the policies within PfE and the ambitions of Bury and Rochdale Councils. The delivery of a net zero and highly sustainable employment park will support green growth within the region and help attract innovative world-class industry.

8.3 This chapter focusses on the expectations and likely benefits from the site with respect to net zero, carbon, energy, resource efficiency and climate resilience which, collectively, would make a significant contribution to climate change mitigation and address the impacts of climate change<sup>6</sup>. The specific policies within PfE that are relevant to this section are:

- Policy JP-S1: Sustainable Development
- Policy JP-S2: Carbon and Energy
- Policy JP-S3: Heat and Energy Networks
- Policy JP-S4: Flood Risk and the Water Environment, and
- Policy JP-S6: Resource Efficiency.



**The scale and location of the site provides an opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to net zero through the implementation of the policies within PfE and the ambitions of Bury and Rochdale Councils.**

6. The policy expectations set out in this section do not apply to the South Heywood Masterplan Area which is subject to sustainability standards set out in the conditions of the outline planning permission(s).

## Carbon and Energy

**8.4** Development at the site must adhere to Policy JP-S2 to demonstrate how net zero has been achieved where practical and viable. The policy requires the following:

- From adoption (2024) – regulated operational carbon emissions: When the amount of carbon emissions associated with the building's operational energy on an annual basis is zero or negative. A net zero carbon building is highly energy efficient and powered from on-site and / or off-site renewable energy sources, with any remaining carbon balance offset.
- From 2028 – the above plus all emissions 'in construction': When the amount of carbon emissions associated with a building's product and construction stages up to practical completion is zero or negative, through the use of offsets. For clarity, construction carbon is defined as life stages A1-A5.

**8.5** The above definitions are adapted from the UKGBC Net Zero Carbon Buildings Framework.<sup>7</sup> The UKGBC Framework is due to be superseded during 2024 by the emerging UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standard<sup>8</sup> (UKNZCBS). Implications of this change will need to be addressed once the UKNZCBS is launched. However, initial recommendations of how the UKNZCBS can be addressed are set out within the relevant sections below.

<sup>7</sup> UKGBC Net Zero Carbon Buildings Framework (2019)

<sup>8</sup> UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standard

### Net Zero in Operation

**8.6** PfE Policy JP-S2 requires that regulated energy usage is minimised as far as possible on site in line with the following energy hierarchy:

- Minimise energy demand
- Maximise energy efficiency
- Use renewable energy
- Use low carbon energy, and
- Utilise other energy sources.

**8.7** Policy JP-S2 also requires that, for non-domestic buildings, BREEAM 'Excellent' standard (or equivalent) for the 'Ene 01 – reduction of energy use and carbon emissions' credit issue is achieved, rising to BREEAM 'Outstanding' equivalent from 2028. This requirement therefore forms the basis for how much energy and carbon emissions should be minimised directly on site.

**8.8** Residual emissions after reduction will then be offset where practical and viable via a fund which will be developed by GMCA, Bury and Rochdale Councils.

**8.9** From 2025, development should also calculate and minimise carbon emissions from unregulated emissions alongside regulated emissions. It is not expected that emissions associated with unregulated energy will be offset.

**8.10** It is expected that the energy strategy for the site will seek to be all-electric to ensure that energy demand is met through the increasingly decarbonising electricity grid. It is expected that heat pumps will be used to deliver the space heating and cooling demand.





**8.11** It is expected that on-site renewable energy will be maximised as far as possible at the site, prioritising rooftop and ground mounted solar photovoltaics, and building mounted micro-wind turbines where appropriate, practical, and viable.

### Net Zero in Construction

**8.12** From 2026, Policy JP-S2 requires (where practicable and viable) all new development to achieve zero carbon in construction in line with the UKGBC Framework (as defined in Paragraph 8.5 (b)), in addition to regulated energy. Construction carbon emissions should be minimised as far as possible before residual carbon is offset.

**8.13** Offsetting should be limited to buildings only, which aligns with the methodology within the UKGBC Framework and emerging UKNZCBS.

**8.14** Reductions in construction carbon should focus on material efficiency (e.g. 'use less') in the first instance, before exploring the use of low carbon and innovative materials.

### Carbon Offsetting

**8.15** In collaboration with the GMCA, Bury and Rochdale Councils are developing a Carbon Offset Fund to enable applicants to contribute to and achieve net zero.

**8.16** The fund is expected to be in place shortly and should be available for any relevant planning applications within the JPA1.1 site.



## Heat and Energy Networks

**8.17** The site has been identified as a Heat and Energy Network Opportunity Area. As such, it will be important to explore whether installation of a site-wide heat/energy network solution is practical, financially viable, and delivers the highest carbon savings over the course of its operation.

**8.18** Opportunities for using waste heat locally should be explored.

**8.19** Opportunities for smart energy networks should also be considered, including:

- Energy demand and generation balance
- Energy storage
- Microgrid(s), and
- Electric vehicle charging strategy (HGV, public, and private vehicles).
- If an applicant can demonstrate that an alternative energy strategy will deliver greater benefits, then this will be considered.

## Resource Efficiency

**8.20** Circular economy is a key part of Greater Manchester's ambition to be a carbon neutral and leading green city region by 2038, and Northern Gateway will have a role in supporting this.

**8.21** PfE Policy JP-S6 (Resource Efficiency) requires development to use sustainable design and construction techniques to reduce carbon emissions, adapt and future proof to the impact of climate change, reduce and recycle waste and minimise water use.

**8.22** It is expected that circular economy measures implemented in the development will include, but are not limited to:

- Material efficiency, minimising the quantity of materials used in construction
- Use of recycled materials and materials with a high recycled content
- Use of materials which can be repurposed or recycled at end of life
- Resource (energy and water) efficiency measures during construction and operation, and
- Reduction of waste generated during construction and operation, and diversion of residual waste from landfill.

## Climate Resilience

**8.23** Greater Manchester will experience changes to climate in the future, including:

- Increased annual temperatures
- Increased winter rainfall, and
- Decreased summer rainfall.

**8.24** Impacts associated with the above changes to climate and measures to mitigate them are set out within PfE Policy JP-S4 and must be adhered to.

**8.25** Development must demonstrate how climate adaptability and resilience measures have been incorporated through design measures which are appropriate for the JPA 1.1 site and its proposed use. Design measures expected to be implemented on site include:

- Reducing overheating risk through passive measures in the first instance, using active cooling where necessary.
- Reducing flood risk through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), without significantly increasing embodied carbon emissions.
- Incorporating green and blue infrastructure to mitigate overheating, flood risk, and contribute to biodiversity, whilst ensuring the design of built development also reduces wherever possible impacts on the surrounding natural environment.
- Minimising water use during operation through reducing water demand and incorporating rainwater or greywater harvesting, and
- Appropriate landscaping strategy which suits current and future climate scenarios and doesn't rely on mechanical irrigation.

## Environmental Accreditation

**8.26** As set out within Paragraph 8.8, development should achieve a minimum of BREEAM 'Excellent' standard (or equivalent) for the 'Ene 01 – reduction of energy use and carbon emissions' credit issue is achieved, rising to BREEAM 'Outstanding' equivalent from 2028.

**8.27** BREEAM provides a holistic approach to demonstrating sustainability, including categories in Energy, Water, Materials, Waste, and Pollution. The assessment process provides a robust approach to carbon and energy, resource efficiency, and climate resilience.

**8.28** Applicants are therefore encouraged to achieve full certification under BREEAM, to a rating of 'Excellent' as a minimum.

**8.29** Where feasible and viable, additional accreditation is encouraged to demonstrate the sustainability credentials of the site. Accreditation could include but is not limited to ActiveScore, FitWel, and WELL.

**8.30** Applicants are expected to maintain dialogue with the councils throughout the application process to ensure that the net zero and sustainability approaches are policy compliant and compatible with the ambitions of GM and Atom Valley.

**8.31** The measures set out may need to be reviewed following industry updates including Future Building Standard, UKNZCBS, and any further updates in national legislation and guidance.



# Phasing, Infrastructure and Delivery

This requires a coherent and coordinated approach to the provision of strategic infrastructure, through the direct delivery of on-site and off-site infrastructure, and through financial contributions.



# 09



Atom  
Vallée

## 09. Phasing, Infrastructure and Delivery

The site is a large nationally significant location for new employment-led development. PfE anticipates the delivery of a total of around 1,200,000 sqm of industrial and warehousing space and around 1,200 homes. It is anticipated that the site has the potential to take approximately 20 years to be delivered, although the baseline assumption is that around 935,000 sqm of employment space will be delivered within the PfE plan period to 2039.

**9.1** This requires a coherent and coordinated approach to the provision of strategic infrastructure, through the direct delivery of on-site and off-site infrastructure, and through financial contributions. These contributions will ensure delivery of the site provides mitigation for the impacts of the development on the surrounding communities and the environment, as well as achieving the full aspirations of PfE.

**9.2** Planning permission has already been granted for up to 175,460 sqm of employment floorspace, 1,000 homes, a local centre, and a new primary school on the eastern part of the site at South Heywood, delivering an early phase of development. This chapter relates to the subsequent phasing and delivery of the remaining site.

**9.3** A comprehensive Infrastructure Phasing and Delivery Strategy (IPDS) for the site has been prepared in accordance with the PfE Policy JPA1.1 and JP-D1 and should be read alongside the NGDF SPD. The IPDS will remain a 'living document' and will be subject to regular updates and amendments outside of the NGDF SPD process in order

to be responsive to constraints and opportunities, and the availability of funding, as the site is brought forward.

**9.4** Planning applications within the site will be required to demonstrate how the proposed development would assist in the delivery of key infrastructure and not compromise or prejudice the comprehensive development of the site. The council(s) will need to be satisfied that development of individual parcels will not sterilise or frustrate delivery of other parts of the site and all parcels will need to be sufficiently coordinated with appropriate infrastructure delivered at the correct time to support comprehensive development. Planning applications will need to demonstrate alignment with the infrastructure requirements, delivery and phasing principles and programme set out in the IPDS. Piecemeal planning applications which fail to deliver or contribute towards the wider strategic infrastructure will be resisted.

**9.5** It is not considered practical to provide for the full infrastructure requirements across the site as part of its early development, particularly because of the scale of the

site, scheme viability and longevity of its expected delivery. Therefore, infrastructure delivery will be phased through the development cycle of the site, as parcels and phases are brought forward or in response to opportunities. Opportunities to secure external funding for key infrastructure will also be pursued to expedite the delivery of the opportunity.

**9.6** This includes the opportunity for the site to attract significant national and international investment, including a giga-scale opportunity. It is envisaged that the site will be promoted for such a giga opportunity and there is potential for this to be located within different parts of the site. If this opportunity does not come forward in the expected first phase of the site, then subsequent phases will still retain the potential. Implementing infrastructure throughout the site too early could constrain development parcels and investment opportunities of this scale.

**9.7** The IPDS will be kept under review and updated to respond to changing needs and circumstances over time.

## Phasing and Infrastructure

9.8 Given the scale of the opportunity, full delivery of the site is expected to take place over a 20-year period. Development is expected to come forward in a series of phases alongside necessary infrastructure provision and a flexible approach is needed to be responsive to opportunities (which is one of the 12 key principles of the Northern Gateway Investment Zone summarised in Chapter 4 of this SPD).

9.9 It is anticipated that there will be different phases across the lifespan of the development and over time the phasing may change and phases may emerge, depending upon the needs of future occupiers. The approach to phasing is not necessarily intended to be chronological, but rather reflects a natural and logical way the site will come forward given the existing infrastructure and the currently envisaged timing of delivery. This approach does not restrict the potential for latter phases to be accelerated where opportunities arise, or where infrastructure allows certain phases to be advanced earlier than currently envisaged.

9.10 The overall phasing of development, including the quantum of floorspace capable of being delivered within each phase, will be heavily influenced by the extent of available capacity within the surrounding strategic road network (SRN) and the implementation of necessary mitigation.

### Initial Phase – Employment

9.11 It is proposed that the logical and natural first phase of development (after the consented South Heywood development) will stem from the existing highway infrastructure that already exists in and around the site. The extent of the first phase and rate of delivery will be principally driven by market demand.

9.12 Local highway upgrades are required to both the northern site entrance (Pilsworth Road/Moss Hall Road Junction (south)) and the existing spine road (Whittle Lane) running south through the site to allow initial phases of development in the northern part of the site which in effect will provide an extension to the existing built development and benefit from connection to existing infrastructure to commence.

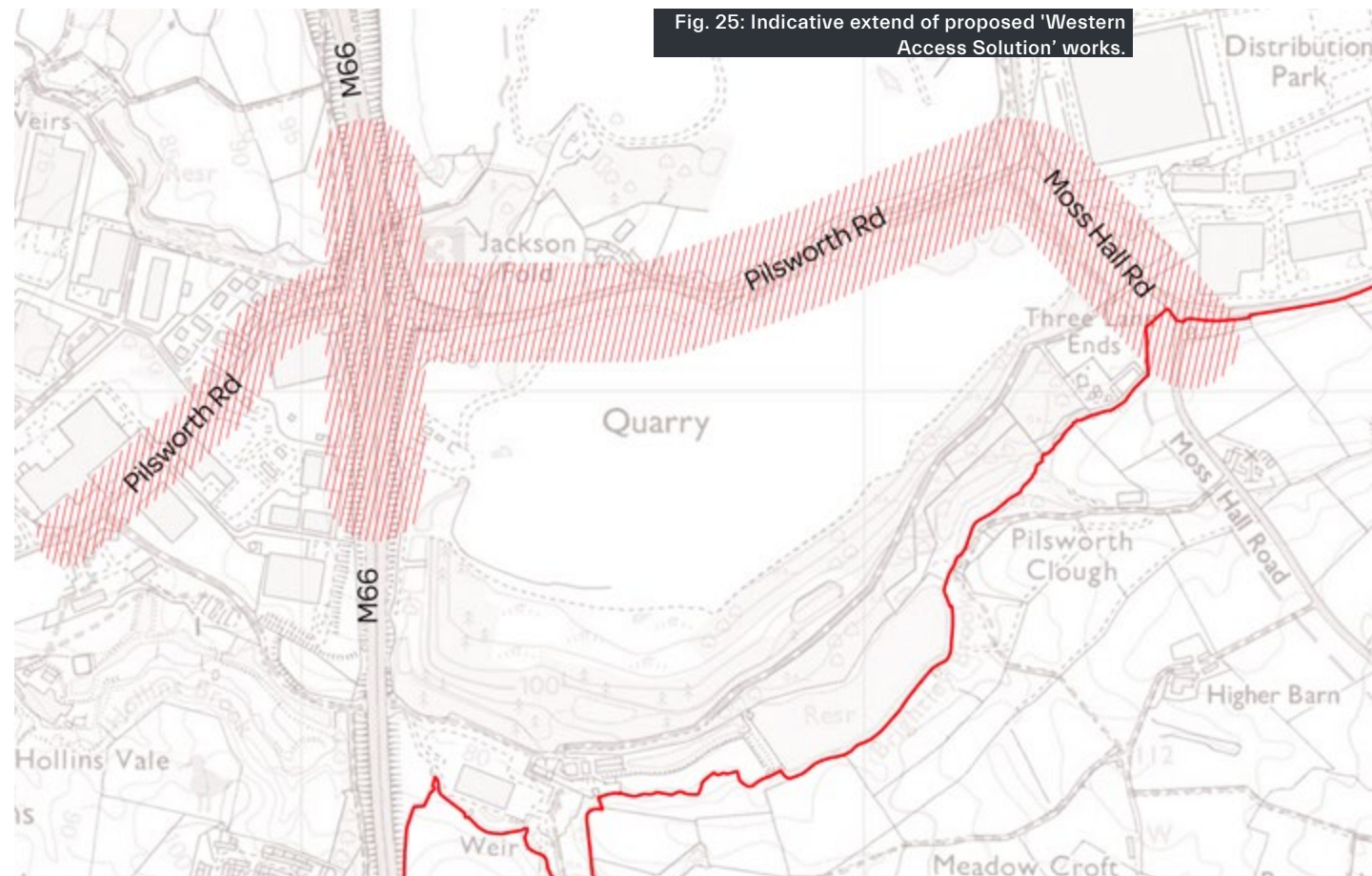


Fig. 25: Indicative extent of proposed 'Western Access Solution' works.



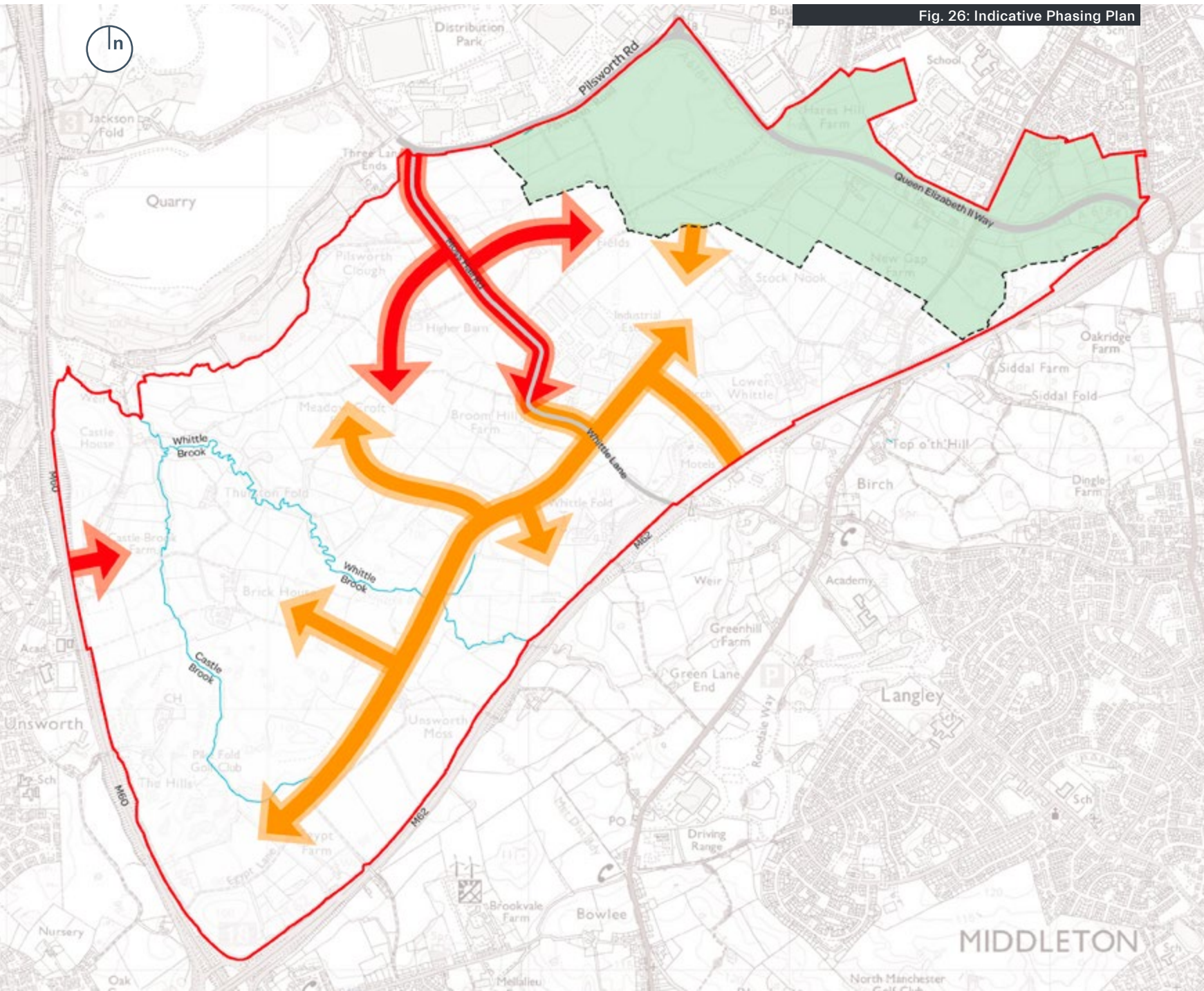


Fig. 26: Indicative Phasing Plan

- Allocation Boundary
- South Heywood Application Area
- Existing Road
- ➔ Initial Phases
- ➔ Later Phases



**9.13** A package of active travel and public transport improvements will be required to connect with nearby communities and town centres. Early planning applications within the site should deliver these interventions in a way that is proportionate and that establishes the principle of the site being accessed in line with the sustainable transport hierarchy.

**9.14** It is anticipated that the next phase of development opportunities will then be provided to the development plots to the east and west of the existing spine road, generally moving in a southerly direction from the Pilsworth Road/Moss Hall Road junction (south).

**9.15** To connect these initial phases of development with the local highway network and the strategic road network, improvements to Moss Hall Lane, Pilsworth Road (East and West of the M66) and Junction 3 of the M66 will be required. This infrastructure project is known as the 'Western Access solution' and will allow for increased highway capacity as well as early provision of public transport and active travel links.

### Initial Phase – Residential

**9.16** Residential development in the western part of the allocation is also expected to come forward in the early phases of the development. However, this will be independent of the employment part of the site, albeit with longer term requirements to link this site with the wider development as it progresses – specifically with regards to active travel and public transport.

**9.17** Primary access to serve the residential element will be taken from Castle Road and local highway upgrades at the junction between Castle Road and Pole Lane will be required to facilitate this access. A new active travel corridor from Castle Road and through the residential development will also be required as part of the residential phase, ensuring that land is safeguarded to provide connectivity to later phases of employment development outlined below.

### Later Phases

**9.18** As the employment development builds out from the north, further work will be undertaken to explore how later phases, and infrastructure, can be brought forward. Significant levels of investment in the SRN will be required and is likely to include a scheme of mitigation and improvement at Junction 3 of the M66 and Junction 19 of the M62. The exact requirements will be determined through joint working and detailed highways modelling with National Highways.

**9.19** Public transport access from Bury and Rochdale to the site will be improved and could include:

- Introduction of local bus services to/from key communities around the site, including, Bury, Heywood, Middleton, Langley, Rochdale, Radcliffe, Whitefield and Prestwich, as well as wider connections to the City Centre, Oldham and Ramsbottom/Rossendale.
- Tram-train on the Bury-Heywood-Rochdale line to the north of the site.
- A spur into the Northern Gateway site from the Bury-Heywood-Rochdale tram-train line.
- Several active travel routes linking the site to surrounding communities and beyond, utilising existing crossing points across the strategic road network and potentially new crossing infrastructure.

**9.20** Later phases will also require internal highways infrastructure, including at least one bridge over Whittle Brook to connect the parcels with the internal spine road.

**9.21** Infrastructure in all phases must enable and link active travel and public transport connections throughout the whole site, including links through the residential component of the site although general traffic movement (including cars and HGVs) will not be permitted through this route..

## Flexibility and Adaptability

**9.22** Due to the scale and nature of the proposed uses, and the timescales within which it is anticipated to be delivered, the NGDF and associated Development Framework Plan needs to be robust as well as flexible. The NDGF provides suitable controls and principles to suitably guide future proposals and to manage design qualities, whilst being able to adapt to changing market conditions, context as well as occupier requirements. This includes factoring possible large investor requirements.





























**9.23** The employment uses envisaged for the site could take the form of a larger number of smaller commercial units or a smaller number of large commercial units and will be driven by market demands and the needs of tenants. These will often require large, plateaued development plots for maximum flexibility to respond to the varied needs of occupiers and tenants.

**9.24** The scale of the site represents the largest new employment site in Greater Manchester and one of the few sites across the country with the potential to be able to accommodate a large investor 'Giga-scale Plus' opportunity. Such opportunities are significant and would need special consideration with regard to setting, impacts and form of any such development. In order to accommodate such an opportunity, the Development Framework Plan has been designed to allow a number of adjacent development plots to be merged into a single development plot whilst not having a material impact on the site-wide design principles and the wider vision.

## Longer Term Development Potential

**9.25** PfE policy JPA1.1 requires existing recreation facilities within the site (including Castlebrook High School (now Unsworth Academy) playing fields and Pike Fold Golf Course) to be retained and enhanced; or where necessary, for provision to be made for replacement facilities that are equivalent or better in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location. In this context, the Development Framework Plan presented in this NGDF assumes that Pike Fold Golf Course and the adjacent playing fields will be retained.

**9.26** Notwithstanding this, there may be an opportunity in the future for development to come forward on the Golf Course and playing fields, subject to an alternative re-provision. As such, the Development Framework Plan has been designed to ensure that development doesn't inhibit future development of the golf course and/or playing fields should that part of the site come forward for development. This includes providing suitable potential points of access and through routes to ensure that any future development of the existing recreation facilities reads as part of a single comprehensive development.

-  Allocation boundary
-  Potential developable area
-  Existing built development
-  South Heywood Application area
-  Green open space
-  Woodland
-  Woodland Riparian Corridor
-  Woodland/Priority Habitat
-  Watercourse
-  Water body
-  Listed Building (Grade II)
-  Indicative Highway Improvement Area
-  Proposed Access Point (all traffic)\*
-  Potential Access Point (all traffic)
-  Access Point (no HGV)
-  Access Point (Bus Only)
-  Access Point (Pedestrian / cycle access)
-  Primary Road (all traffic)
-  Secondary Road (all traffic)
-  Residential Road (no HGV)
-  Bus Road (bus only)
-  Retained Footpath
-  Relocated/New Footpath & Cycle Route
-  Employment uses
-  Residential uses
-  Mixed-use
-  Gateway location
-  Bus enabled route

\*Proposed access point direct to Strategic Road Network

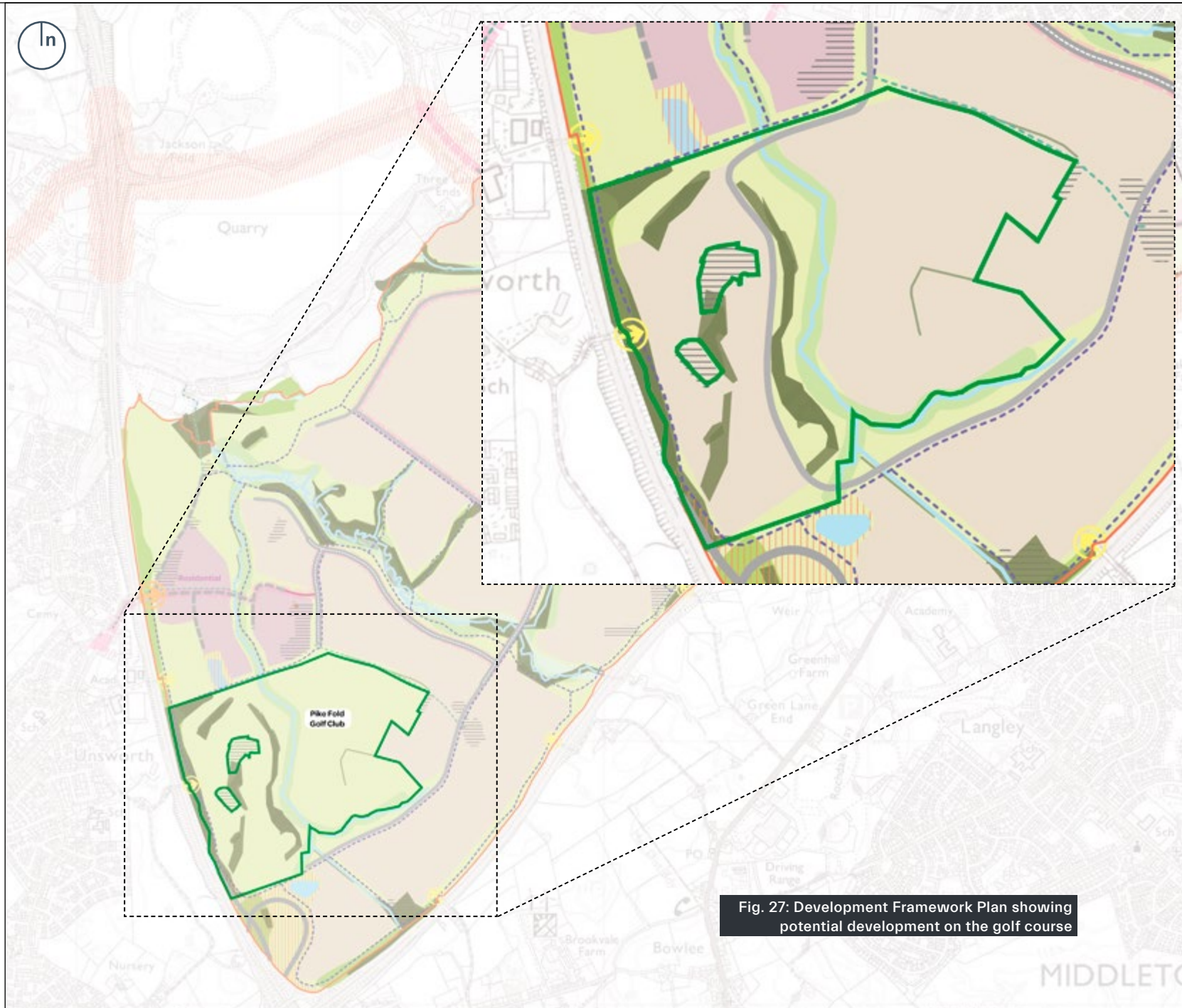


Fig. 27: Development Framework Plan showing potential development on the golf course

## Site-Wide Infrastructure

9.27 Whilst the provision of new infrastructure is important, there may be existing infrastructure which is required to be diverted or amended as part of the proposed development. A coordinated approach to these works would be required to support delivery including:

- **Accessibility**
  - Active Travel
  - Public Transport
  - Road Network
- **Drainage and utilities**
  - The provision and diversion of water and drainage infrastructure
  - The provision and/or diversion of electricity/gas infrastructure
  - The provision or diversion of digital and telecommunications infrastructure
  - On site Energy
- **Strategic green infrastructure and biodiversity**
- **Community infrastructure**
- **Compensatory improvements to the environment quality and accessibility of land remaining in the Green Belt.**

## Delivery and Funding

9.28 A range of delivery and funding mechanisms will be required, including:

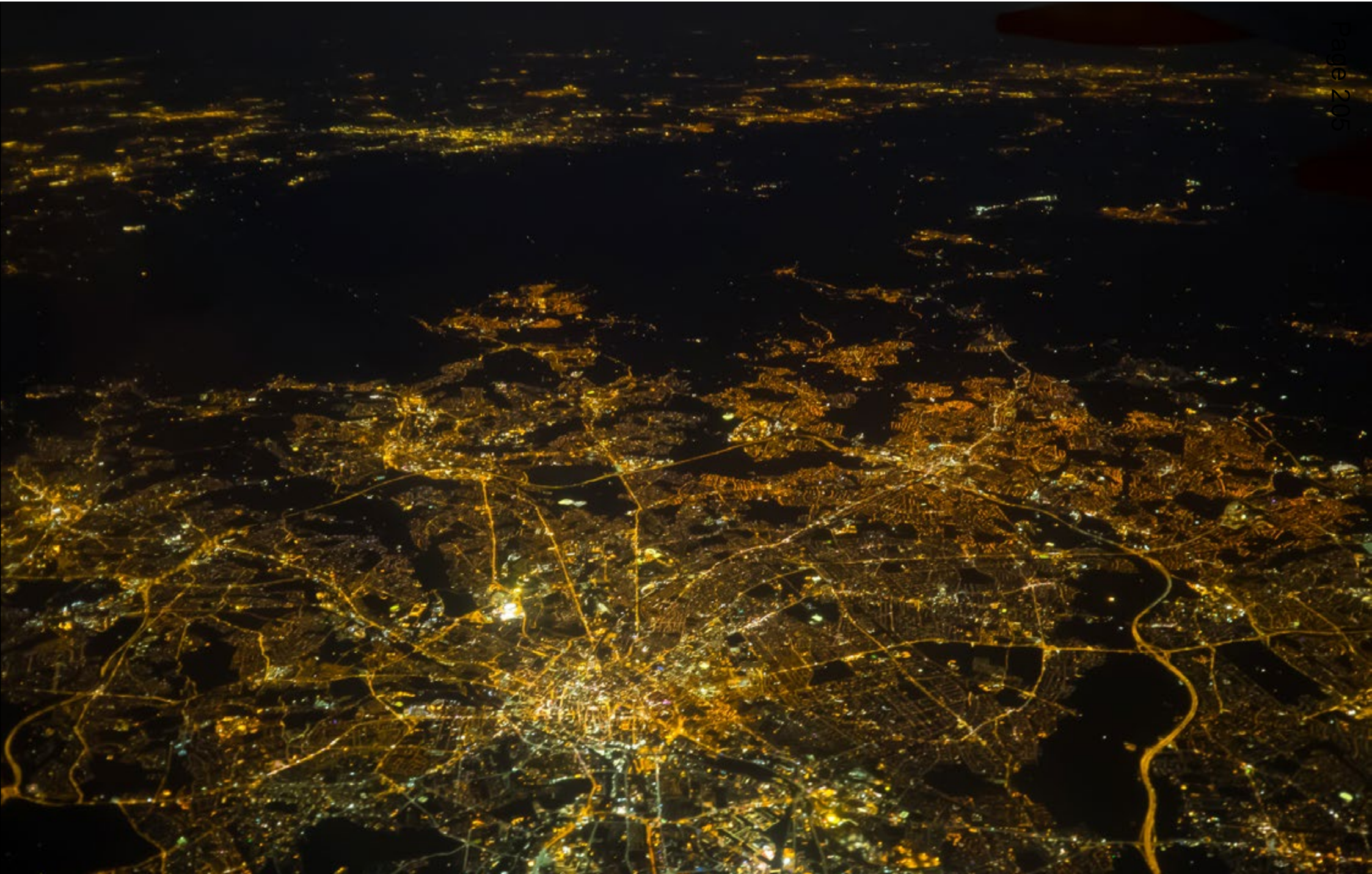
- **Developer contributions secured via Section 106 Agreements:** Developer contributions and/or delivery of infrastructure in lieu will be secured to assist in mitigating the impact of the development (or relevant phase of the development). In line with the CIL Regulations, contributions will be sought where they are necessary to make the development applied for acceptable in planning terms, and fairly and reasonably related in scale to the development.
- **Public sector funding:** The scale of infrastructure required to realise the full potential of the site will require funding from the public sector. This funding is expected to help stimulate development and support the viable delivery of some of the key infrastructure required to realise delivery of the site.

9.29 An equalisation approach will be followed to ensure that the cost of infrastructure is shared across those benefiting from it. This approach seeks to avoid the costs falling disproportionately on early phases of development or being pushed back to later phases, which would be to the detriment of the comprehensive delivery of the site. Further details on how equalised infrastructure contributions will be calculated can be found in the IPDS.

9.30 There will also be infrastructure components that are specific to the parcels that make up the site. Pre-application discussions with the council(s) will identify parcel-specific infrastructure needs, which will be additional to those site-wide strategic infrastructure components that all development should contribute to.

9.31 Bury and Rochdale Councils, as the Local Planning Authorities, have statutory powers that can enable and facilitate the delivery of major and comprehensive development opportunities. In order to ensure that the public benefits afforded by a comprehensive approach to development are fully realised, where necessary the councils will consider the use of their statutory powers (including compulsory purchase powers (CPO) and the over-riding of third-party rights) to deliver the allocated development on a comprehensive basis.





# Review

This NGDF SPD provides a clear vision and expectations for development and supporting infrastructure within the Northern Gateway JPA1.1 site.



# 10

Atom  
Vallée

## 10. Review

This NGDF SPD provides a clear vision and expectations for development and supporting infrastructure within the Northern Gateway JPA1.1 site. However, if circumstances change and have implications for the guidance provided in the NGDF SPD, a review will be appropriate.

10.1 The scope and content of any review would be agreed between the councils and the updated NGDF SPD would be subject to a proportionate statutory and/or public/stakeholder consultation before being finalised. Thereafter, the updated Development Framework would be reported to a meeting of both Rochdale Borough Council and Bury Council Cabinets to seek approval.





## For further information contact

### Bury Council

Strategic Planning and Infrastructure  
Department for Business Growth and Infrastructure  
3 Knowsley Place  
Duke Street  
Bury BL9 0EJ

[planning.policy@bury.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@bury.gov.uk)

### Rochdale Borough Council

Strategic Planning  
Number One Riverside  
Smith Street  
Rochdale OL16 1XU

[strategic.planning@rochdale.gov.uk](mailto:strategic.planning@rochdale.gov.uk)

# Turley



## Equality Impact Analysis

This equality impact analysis establishes the likely effects both positive and negative and potential unintended consequences that decisions, policies, projects and practices can have on people at risk of discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The analysis considers documentary evidence, data and information from stakeholder engagement/consultation to manage risk and to understand the actual or potential effect of activity, including both positive and adverse impacts, on those affected by the activity being considered.

To support completion of this analysis tool, please refer to the equality impact analysis guidance.

### Section 1 – Analysis Details (Page 5 of the guidance document)

<b>Name of Policy/Project/Decision</b>	Draft Northern Gateway Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document
<b>Lead Officer (SRO or Assistant Director/Director)</b>	Cris Logue
<b>Department/Team</b>	Business, Growth and Infrastructure
<b>Proposed Implementation Date</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
<b>Author of the EqlA</b>	Fran Smith
<b>Date of the EqlA</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2024

#### 1.1 What is the main purpose of the proposed policy/project/decision and intended outcomes?

Draft Northern Gateway Development Framework (NGDF) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) supports Policy JPA1.1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Plan (PfE) which was adopted in March 2024.

The draft NGDF establishes the key principles for the development of the site and establishes a framework against which future planning applications on the site will be considered, sets out high level design principles and an approach to the delivery and phasing of infrastructure. In order to give the Framework additional planning weight in decision making, it is proposed that it is adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

It is proposed that the draft SPD is subject to a seven-week period of consultation in order to establish stakeholder views on its content.

## Section 2 – Impact Assessment (Pages 6 to 10 of the guidance document)

### 2.1 Who could the proposed policy/project/decision likely have an impact on?

Employees: **No**

Community/Residents: **Yes**

Third parties such as suppliers, providers and voluntary organisations: **Yes** – site developers, businesses

If the answer to all three questions is 'no' there is no need to continue with this analysis.

### 2.2 Evidence to support the analysis. Include documentary evidence, data and stakeholder information/consultation

#### Documentary Evidence:

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and supporting evidence

#### Data:

[Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and supporting evidence](#)



**Stakeholder information/consultation:**

Places for Everyone has been subject to consultation at various stages and has been subject to an examination by Government-appointed Inspectors.

**2.3 Consider the following questions in terms of who the policy/project/decision could potentially have an impact on. Detail these in the impact assessment table (2.4) and the potential impact this could have.**

- Could the proposal prevent the promotion of equality of opportunity or good relations between different equality groups?
- Could the proposal create barriers to accessing a service or obtaining employment because of a protected characteristic?
- Could the proposal affect the usage or experience of a service because of a protected characteristic?
- Could a protected characteristic be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by the proposal?
- Could the proposal make it more or less likely that a protected characteristic will be at risk of harassment or victimisation?
- Could the proposal affect public attitudes towards a protected characteristic (e.g. by increasing or reducing their presence in the community)?
- Could the proposal prevent or limit a protected characteristic contributing to the democratic running of the council?

2.4 Characteristic	Potential Impacts	Evidence (from 2.2) to demonstrate this impact	Mitigations to reduce negative impact	Impact level with mitigations Positive, Neutral, Negative
Age	Positive	PfE has been subject to an Integrated Appraisal and part of this has involved an Equality Impact Assessment which has considered in its scope, the likely effects on discriminatory practices; the potential to alter the opportunities of certain groups of people; and/or effect on relationships between different groups of people. The		

		Integrated Appraisal is available at <a href="https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-housing/places-for-everyone/pfe-adoption/">https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-housing/places-for-everyone/pfe-adoption/</a>		
<b>Disability</b>	Positive	See above		
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	Neutral	See above		
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	Neutral	See above		
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	Neutral	See above		
<b>Race</b>	Neutral	See above		
<b>Religion and Belief</b>	Neutral	See above		
<b>Sex</b>	Neutral	See above		
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	Neutral	See above		
<b>Carers</b>	Neutral	See above		
<b>Looked After Children and Care Leavers</b>	Neutral	See above		
<b>Socio-economically vulnerable</b>	Positive	See above		
<b>Veterans</b>	Neutral	See above		

#### Actions required to mitigate/reduce/eliminate negative impacts or to complete the analysis

2.5 Characteristics	Action	Action Owner	Completion Date


### Section 3 - Impact Risk

Establish the level of risk to people and organisations arising from identified impacts, with additional actions completed to mitigate/reduce/eliminate negative impacts.

#### 3.1 Identifying risk level (Pages 10 - 12 of the guidance document)

Impact x Likelihood = Score			Likelihood			
			1	2	3	4
			Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Very likely
Impact	4	Very High	4	8	12	16
	3	High	3	6	9	12
	2	Medium	2	4	6	8
	1	Low	1	2	3	4
	0	Positive / No impact	0	0	0	0

<b>Risk Level</b>	<b>No Risk = 0</b>	<b>Low Risk = 1 - 4</b>	<b>Medium Risk = 5 – 7</b>	<b>High Risk = 8 - 16</b>
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<b>3.2 Level of risk identified</b>	0
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<b>3.3 Reasons for risk level calculation</b>	The impacts considered under section 2.4 show that the activity will have either positive or neutral impacts on the various groups identified.
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**Section 4 - Analysis Decision** (Page 11 of the guidance document)

<b>4.1 Analysis Decision</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Reasons for This Decision</b>
There is no negative impact therefore the activity will proceed	X	
There are low impacts or risks identified which can be mitigated or managed to reduce the risks and activity will proceed		
There are medium to high risks identified which cannot be mitigated following careful and thorough consideration. The activity will proceed with caution and this risk recorded on the risk register, ensuring continual review		

**Section 5 – Sign Off and Revisions** (Page 11 of the guidance document)

<b>5.1 Sign Off</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Lead Officer/SRO/Project Manager</b>	Fran Smith	09/10/24	
<b>Responsible Asst. Director/Director</b>	Cris Logue	09/10//24	
<b>EDI</b>			

**EqIA Revision Log**

<b>5.2 Revision Date</b>	<b>Revision By</b>	<b>Revision Details</b>




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<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Decision Type:</b> Key
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<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b> 06 November 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Northern Gateway (Investment Zone / Atom Valley Strategic Outline Business Case) – PART A	
<b>Report of</b>	Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth	

### Summary

1. To provide an update on the status of Investment Zone funding.
2. To provide an update on the Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ), namely the Atom Valley Strategic Case.
3. To seek Cabinet approval of the recommendations as identified in this report.

### Recommendation(s)

4. It is recommended that Cabinet:
  - a. Accept receipt of Investment Zone funding, following approval in September for Northern Gateway to be part of Greater Manchester's Investment Zone.
  - b. Delegates authority to the Executive Director (Place - Business Growth and Infrastructure) in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance to finalise the terms of the Investment Zone funding (Appendix A – Part B).
  - c. Delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer to execute any associated agreements including receipt of grant funding.
  - d. Delegates authority to the Executive Director (Place - Business Growth and Infrastructure) in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Portfolio Holder, to authorise outputs and end of stage approvals in relation to any Investment Zone funding.
  - e. Endorses the Strategic Outline Business Case for Atom Valley MDZ (Appendix B – Part B).
  - f. Notes that a similar report will be presented to Rochdale Council's Cabinet on 26 November 2024.

### Reasons for recommendation(s)

5. Significant progress is now being made to progress the delivery of the Northern Gateway, the largest development site in the Atom Valley MDZ. This includes the recent adoption of Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan in March 2024 and the designation of Northern Gateway as part of the Greater Manchester IZ. The Atom Valley Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) sets out the Atom Valley vision and opportunity in the context of Greater Manchester and identifies the potential scale of public sector intervention required to support delivery; the associated socio-economic benefits this site will unlock; and supports delivery partners with positioning the opportunity with sub-regional and national funders and stakeholders.
6. The IZ funding has been allocated from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, with a year-one spend deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, along with other revenue funding, there is a need to move projects forward swiftly and flexibly to respond to these funding opportunities. As such, the report seeks delegations to the Executive Director (Place - Business Growth and Infrastructure), Leader of the Council and relevant Portfolio holder(s) to facilitate these processes and implement the respective Delivery and Procurement Strategies.

### **Alternative options considered and rejected**

7. That the recommendations are not approved, and we do not utilise the funding, with this reallocated elsewhere in Greater Manchester. This presents a risk to delivery of the Places for Everyone joint development plan and specifically, the delivery of Northern Gateway.
8. That the collaboration and delegations are not approved, and further reports are brought to Cabinet to authorise spending in relation to funding at a later date. This introduces risk that monies will not be deployed or spent on time both within this financial year 2024/25 and future years, with funding reallocated to other projects elsewhere in Greater Manchester.

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### **Report Author and Contact Details:**

*Name: Hollie Good*  
*Position: Major Project Manager (Northern Gateway)*  
*Department: Business, Growth and Infrastructure*  
*E-mail: h.good@bury.gov.uk*

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### **Background**

#### Greater Manchester Investment Zone:

9. The refocused Investment Zones (IZ) programme was launched by Government at Spring Budget 2023 and provides IZ areas with a £80 million envelope over five years to catalyse local growth and investment. These interventions will include new research and innovation, sector-focussed skills



programmes, local infrastructure enhancements, and targeted business support.

10. The IZ for Greater Manchester is now one of six confirmed Investment Zones to date in England. Government set out details of how Investment Zones will use the funding envelope available, which includes offering tax reliefs to attract businesses to these Zones, and initial investments in a range of interventions including on skills, research and innovation, and infrastructure.
11. The Greater Manchester IZ will drive growth and innovation in the advanced manufacturing and materials sector. Funding will be used to accelerate Atom Valley, the Innovation District Manchester and Salford Crescent with support for research and innovation to grow the knowledge economy and infrastructure funding to unlock laboratory and manufacturing space.
12. Additional funding will be provided for opportunities across the city region to strengthen the wider innovation ecosystem, including a multi-million-pound revolving investment fund to provide debt and equity finance to local advanced manufacturing and materials businesses across the whole of Greater Manchester, and £5 million to support skills development.
13. It is anticipated that the Great Manchester IZ will create 32,000 jobs and leverage £1.1 billion investment over the next 10 years.
14. Following discussions with Leaders, Chief Executives and GMCA, and in consultation with Government, Greater Manchester identified two geographical areas totalling 600 hectares to be allocated within the IZ to receive enhanced status through new business rates initiatives, with a 25-year business rate retention scheme without a reset.
15. The two proposed Investment Zone Enhanced Business Rates Areas are:
  - i. **Northern Gateway**: Boundary covers sites in Bury and Rochdale, total hectares: 388.27ha.
  - ii. **Manchester “Smile”**: Boundary covers sites in Manchester and Salford, total hectares: 209ha. It includes Mayfield, ID Manchester and Salford University.
16. An initial allocation of £80 million of IZ Flexible Spend, which includes revenue and capital, to be spent over five years from 2024/25 has been determined, based on a spend profile set out for each year. Beyond the first five years, the spend profile is subject to a forthcoming timetable to be set by Government.
17. Northern Gateway has been allocated £10m over a 5-year period from 2024/25 to advance the delivery of the Western Access project - a local highway scheme spanning the Districts of Bury and Rochdale, which will

create additional capacity and improved flow on the local and strategic highway and see the introduction of active travel and public transport measures. The Western Access project has a critical interface with M66 J3 and work is ongoing with National Highways in respect of this.

18. Bury Council is the accountable body for the IZ funding for both Bury and Rochdale and will procure and deliver and required works and services on behalf of both Bury and Rochdale Councils.
19. In September 2024, Cabinet approved the following items:
  - a. Approval of Northern Gateway as part of Greater Manchester's Investment Zone;
  - b. Noted in principle the award of Investment Zone funding from the Investment Zone Flexible Spend fund for the purposes of delivery of the Western Access highway project.
20. Following on from these approvals, a Grant Funding Agreement has now been drafted and collaborative discussion between Bury Council Legal department and GMCA Legal is taking place to agree the final terms. Delegated authority to the Executive Director (Place - Business Growth and Infrastructure) in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance has been requested to finalise the terms of the Investment Zone funding.
21. The Grant Funding Agreements sets the terms by which Investment Zone funding must be spent and sets out governance arrangements to ensure robust monitoring of and accountability for spend.
22. Subject to Cabinet approval to accept the receipt of Investment Zone funding and delegated authorities, as detailed above, to authorise expenditure in relation to any Investment Zone funding, external appointments required to facilitate the delivery project can be progressed.
23. Allocation of future years spend profile will be agreed with GMCA as the project progresses. Due to the terms of the IZ funding, monies will be spent up front and subsequently drawn down from GMCA, with year one funding being sought in January 2025.
24. The development of a Funding Strategy will seek to address the funding gap between the high-level cost estimates of the Western Access and will facilitate the award of the Investment Zone monies. Amongst others, this is likely to include developing mechanisms for securing developer contributions, as well as any wider local and national funding opportunities.

Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone:

25. Atom Valley MDZ was designated in 2022 and spans the local authority areas of Rochdale, Bury and Oldham. It aims to deliver a nationally significant area of economic activity along the M62 corridor from junction 18 (Simister Island) to junction 21 (Milnrow) through parts of Bury, Rochdale and Oldham and supported by a significant increase in new homes.
26. The MDZ is the single largest economic opportunity within Greater Manchester. It provides a critical opportunity for inclusive growth to rebalance and enhance productivity within the Greater Manchester city-region, contributing to national economic growth and Levelling Up.
27. One of the key purposes of the MDZ is to develop an international mega-cluster of advanced manufacturing research, innovation, manufacturing and logistics activity, with the potential to deliver 1.3 million square metres (sqm) of additional employment space with 3,400 new homes by 2040, in addition to existing consented developments.
28. The focus of the MDZ is on three strategic growth sites now allocated for development the PfE joint development plan adopted in March 2024. These sites are:
- Northern Gateway (within Rochdale and Bury);
  - Stakehill (within Rochdale and Oldham); and
  - Kingsway (Rochdale).
29. Of the three growth sites above, Northern Gateway is the largest and includes two sites: Heywood/Pilsworth (allocation JPA 1.1 of PfE) and Simister/Bowlee (JPA 1.2). Heywood/Pilsworth allocation JPA1.1 includes the South Heywood consented mixed use development at M62 J19 and the link road, Queen Elizabeth Way located within the Borough of Rochdale. Two residential phases of the consented development are under construction and a third is due to commence shortly.
30. To identify and explore the potential opportunity of the MDZ, a Strategic Outline Business Case was commissioned to identify the potential benefits.
31. The table below shows the economic potential across the MDZ and specifically, Northern Gateway:

<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Atom Valley</b>	<b>Northern Gateway</b>
Commercial floorspace	1.3 million sqm	1.06 million sqm
New gross direct FTE jobs	23,900	18,900
Gross direct GVA per annum	£1.7 billion	£1.3 billion
Net additional GVA	£1.3 billion	£1 billion
Annual business rates income	£40 million	£32.5 million
Annual council tax receipts	£7.6 million	£3.8 million

\*Figures based on an indicative split between Advanced Manufacturing, which is the focus of the IZ, and other sectors - subject to market demand therefore may vary

\*\*Figures based on JPA 1.1 and JPA 1.2, excluding consented South Heywood

32. Northern Gateway is the largest employment allocation within PfE, and will be a key driver in delivering growth ambitions, to make Bury stand out as a place that is achieving faster economic growth than the national average, with lower than average levels of deprivation.

33. The wider benefits and outcomes of the MDZ include:

- Innovation and enterprise
- Wage uplifts
- Health and wellbeing
- Attracting inward investment
- Skills and training
- Clustering and agglomeration related productivity
- Reducing socio-economic disparities and inequalities
- Placemaking and wider area impacts
- Low/net zero carbon benefits
- Systems benefits from addressing health and worklessness.

34. The Northern Gateway site straddles the Districts of Bury and Rochdale and the project should be designed without the constraints of the district boundaries. Working collaboratively with Rochdale Council and GMCA will ensure that the site is not built out in a fragmented way and the economic opportunities and attraction of the site for investment can be maximised.

35. Whilst the figures presented above are indicative and predate the existence of the GM Investment Zone and its greater focus on creating jobs and growth in emerging industries, advanced manufacturing and materials, they do indicate the scale of the economic opportunity for the Borough's residents and businesses through the comprehensive delivery of the Northern Gateway site.

36. The development of the Atom Valley SOBC was requested by the Atom Valley MDZ Board and it is recommended that cabinet endorses the SOBC for the Atom Valley MDZ (Appendix B – Part B). Further work is taking place to refine and develop the above metrics and to broaden out the wider economic outputs and benefits across Districts to create a compelling case to Government for investment.

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### **Links with the Corporate Priorities:**

*Please summarise how this links to the Let's Do It Strategy.*

1. A key part of the Places for Everyone Plan is to rebalance the Greater Manchester economy by significantly boosting the economic output from the north through the delivery of new housing and employment that will benefit both Bury and its residents. The plan sets out strategic site allocations that will guide future growth and development in the Borough. The 'Let's Do It' strategy specifically refers to Places for Everyone as having a key role to play in the delivery of its objectives and



priorities, in addition to the Corporate Plan 2024/25 seeks to deliver the Vision for 2030 which is for the Council to Achieve Economic Growth.

2. As Bury's largest employment allocation within the Places for Everyone plan, Northern Gateway supports delivery of the Vision 2030 and 'Let's Do It!' to stand out as a place that is achieving faster economic growth than the national average, with lower than national average levels of deprivation through the development of employment space to enable job creation and upskilling of residents, leading to economic growth:

**Local** – The project will generate jobs for local people, enhance economic regeneration and provide links with existing and new communities.

**Enterprise** - the project will drive economic growth and inclusion by creating more employment space for existing businesses to expand into and to encourage more local, national and international businesses to open in the Borough; helping to ensure residents have the best chance to access good jobs.

**Together** – Ensuring sustainable access into the site to maximise inclusivity and access to opportunities for members of the local community and working with partners to maximise social value opportunities to shape outcomes.

**Strength** - the project will provide space for new and expanding local business within a site that is well connected to local communities. This will provide opportunities for community wealth building through new business start-ups, increased local spend and the adoption of new skills whilst providing opportunity for all through provision of sustainable transport modes.

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### Equality Impact and Considerations:

*Please provide an explanation of the outcome(s) of an initial or full EIA and make **specific reference regarding the protected characteristic of Looked After Children**. Intranet link to EIA documents is [here](#).*

3. The attached Equality Impact Assessment concludes that impacts are positive and will continue to be assessed as the project progresses.

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### Environmental Impact and Considerations:

*Please provide an explanation of the Environmental impact of this decision. Please include the impact on both **Carbon emissions** (contact [climate@bury.gov.uk](mailto:climate@bury.gov.uk) for advice) and **Biodiversity** (contact [c.m.wilkinson@bury.gov.uk](mailto:c.m.wilkinson@bury.gov.uk) for advice)*

4. Environmental impacts and concerns will be assessed and monitored as project delivery commences and will be in-line with existing Council policies. The Northern Gateway Development Framework will seek to meet policy

requirements, including physical, social and environmental impacts including biodiversity net gain.

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### Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Inability to deliver IZ funding due to reduced timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet endorsement of interim governance arrangements for Northern Gateway</li> <li>• Delegated authority to the Executive Director (Place - Business Growth and Infrastructure) in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Portfolio Holder, to authorise expenditure in relation to any funding and authorise associated contractual arrangements, agreements and documents, including receipt of grant funding.</li> <li>• Increased delivery resources</li> <li>• Necessary Legal and Procurement support</li> </ul>

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### Legal Implications:

*To be completed by the Council's Monitoring Officer.*

- 5.1 The Investment Zone Funding from the GMCA requires the finalisation of a Grant Funding Agreement (GFA). The GFA will require the funding to be spent in the current financial year and will contain other restrictions with which the Council must comply to avoid being required to replay the funds. The Council must also ensure that the Purpose for which the funds are given is correctly specified to ensure that the parties' prior understanding of its extent is captured correctly in the detail, or the Council will not be able to use the funding as planned for.
- 5.2 The funding is a subsidy within the meaning of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and the Council must comply with the act by registering the subsidy and ensuring that its use of the subsidy does not contravene the Act.

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### Financial Implications:

*To be completed by the Council's Section 151 Officer.*

6. The CA will only sign the GFA if they have comfort that the Western Access project is delivered in full. This creates a risk as the full cost of the project is not yet known and the Investment Zone monies are needed to fund the work necessary for the Outline Business Case to be brought.

This risk is considered minimal and only short term until the funding strategy has been worked up and approved and, in the unlikely event that this did not happen, all

contracts placed with the contractor and multi-disciplinary consultant will contain break clauses to minimise any potentially abortive costs.

The worst case financially would be repayment of the initial £800k instalment.

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**Appendices:**

*Please list any appended documents.*

Appendix A – Western Access Investment Zone Grant Funding Agreement (Part B)

Appendix B – Atom Valley Strategic Outline Business Case (Part B)

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**Background papers:**

*Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.*

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**

Term	Meaning
MDZ	Mayoral Development Zone
PfE	Places for Everyone
IZ	Investment Zone
SOBC	Strategic Outline Business Case

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<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Decision Type:</b> Non-Key
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<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b> 06 November 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Adoption of a Bury Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2028.	
<b>Report of</b>	Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion	

### Summary

The Council last set equality objectives in a joint four-year Inclusion Strategy with Bury CCG in 2020. This aimed to set the foundations for building an effective Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) function and governance structures in both organisations and a review of these objectives has shown that these aims have been met.

With the dissolution of the CCG, the proposed 2024-2028 strategy and objectives are Council only. These build on the strengths of the successes from the previous strategy and proposes a set of priorities for 2024-28. The proposed 2024-2028 EDI strategy is presented for approval.

### Recommendation(s)

Cabinet is asked to note the successes of the 2020-2024 inclusion strategy and approve the proposed 2024-2028 strategy for adoption by the Council.

### Reasons for recommendation(s)

To support continued focus on equality, diversity and inclusion across the borough and support the strategic delivery of LET'S Do It through the prism of protected characteristics.

Adoption of this strategy will ensure continued compliance with the council's legal obligations set out within the Equality Act 2010.

### Alternative options considered and rejected

None.

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## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The 2020-2024 Inclusion Strategy was developed jointly by the Bury Council and CCG partnership following a 2020 internal review into inclusive practice. The strategy was co-produced by staff groups, community leaders and senior champions. The internal review and the strategy formed part of the commitment from the partnership to improve equalities and inclusion practice as an employer, service provider and commissioner.
- 1.2 The proposed 2024-2028 EDI strategy is a Council only strategy given the dissolution of the CCG in July 2022 which has once again been co-produced with community leaders, senior champions and staff groups. The strategy supports the principles and aims of LET'S Do It through the prism of protected characteristics
- 1.3 The setting of objectives and publishing an EDI strategy fulfils the Council's legal duty to set, publish and review equality objectives as set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 1.4 As the current joint strategy has come to a conclusion, the council has a legal obligation to review progress against these objectives and set a new set of four-year objectives. A review has been undertaken with the new proposed objectives and strategy for 2024-2028 building on the strengths and achievements of its predecessor.

## **2. Review of the 2020-2024 Inclusion Strategy and Objectives**

- 2.1 The 2020-2024 Inclusion Strategy included seven objectives, six of which related to the Council. These were framed around building an effective EDI function and governance structure which included collecting good equalities data and information to use as a benchmark and evidence base for equalities and inclusion work across the borough. The objectives were:
  - **Performance and Scrutiny**
  - **Equalities Data and Information**
  - **Community Engagement**
  - **Representative Workforce**
  - **Training and Learning**
  - **Framework Delivery**
- 2.2 A full review of these objectives has identified that five of the objectives have been partially met and one objective, that of delivering a framework to work towards, has been superseded by Greater Manchester level developments which the Council is fully engaged with.
- 2.3 The achievements in five of the objectives have seen:

- Specific roles and responsibilities allocated to EDI at Director and senior management level
- Regular reporting on the council's EDI achievements, activity and governance
- The adoption of an Equality Impact Assessment tool and process
- The delivery of a large-scale race conversations community exercise
- Established strong links with community groups and VCSE organisations
- Delivery of tutor led learning for Council managers and non desk based front line colleagues
- Access to EDI e-learning module for desk-based colleagues.

A full analysis of the 2020-2024 inclusion strategy is included in appendix A of this report.

2.4 Through increased focus and a strong commitment to inclusion, there have been a range of broader benefits arising from the successes of the 2020-2024 strategy. These demonstrate the reach and scale of the council's inclusion work extending beyond the specific inclusion objectives and strategies, these include:

- A new accessible and easy to navigate council website informed by feedback from the race conversations exercise
- Adopting the Armed Forces Covenant and achieving gold employer status in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme
- Achieving Disability Confident Leader status, recognising the council as a leading disabled friendly employer and recruiter
- Supporting the socio-economically vulnerable with cost of living through the Let's Manage Tough Times Together campaign
- Appointing an ethnic minority liaison officer in licensing to support engagement with ethnic minority licensees
- Increased engagement through the neighbourhood teams with hard-to-reach communities
- Strong support and co-design work with the Bury LGBTQI forum, Bury Faith Forum and Bury Older People's Network
- A significant increase in meaningful inclusion communications and conversation internally and externally

2.5 The 2020-2024 inclusion strategy has been delivered against the backdrop of the covid-19 pandemic which presented significant challenges to residents and the council as an employer and service provider in terms of building and maintaining inclusive practice.

2.6 The overarching aims of the strategy were to solidify the council's EDI function, assign accountability and governance and lay strong foundations to build effective community engagement and activity all of which have been achieved. The strategy outcomes can therefore be regarded as being successful. Those areas not fully delivered against and learning from the detailed review of the Strategy's achievements have been used to inform the new 2024-2028 Strategy.

### **3. Development of the Council's EDI Strategy & Objectives for 2024-2028**

- 3.1 The proposed 2024-2028 EDI strategy and objectives have built on the strength and achievements from the 2020-2024 strategy, using these achievements as a foundation to have a larger focus on EDI in practice and support inclusion within the borough's communities to ensure that all Bury people share in the success of the delivery of the LET'S ambition, whatever their background.
- 3.2 Key focus areas were identified to include within the new EDI strategy, considering the LET'S Do It! Objectives, residents feedback through community engagement, pulse engagement surveys with staff and the Council's own workforce equalities monitoring.
- 3.3 Additionally consultation took place with all internal Council directorates, colleague groups, Bury VCFA organisations, Persona and at community inclusion events Bury Pride in June 2024 and Collabor8 in July 2024. Appendix B of this report gives further details of this consultation.
- 3.4 Feedback from this consultation suggested that the Council's new objectives and strategy should have a focus on:
- A greater understanding of intersectionality when commissioning or planning, developing and delivering services
  - Ensuring safe spaces for intersectional identities
  - Providing self support for people with protected characteristics
  - Greater collaboration on delivering EDI in communities
  - Increased engagement from council workforce with communities of interest and identity
- 3.5 Based on this consultation the proposed 2024-2028 EDI strategy is appended in Appendix C and has six objectives:
- 3.5.1 **Skills and employment**  
This objective aims to reduce the barriers and disadvantages people with protected characteristics may face when accessing skills and employment.
- 3.5.2 **Health inequalities**  
This objective focuses on identifying and reducing health inequalities experienced by people due to having protected characteristics.
- 3.5.3 **Housing and accommodation**  
This objective supports having a focus on the housing and accommodation needs of our residents with protected characteristics and intersectional disadvantages and responding to equalities requirements in housing legislation.
- 3.5.4 **Community engagement**



This objective focuses on taking a multi organisation approach with VCSE organisations and Team Bury to support community cohesion and strong two-way engagement with communities of identity and interest in Bury.

#### **3.5.5 Data collation, analysis and governance**

This objective supports collecting good demographics data from residents and our workforce and using this well to tailor our services to the needs of people who use them.

#### **3.5.6 Workforce representation**

This objective supports the council's ambition to have a workforce that closer reflects the demographic make-up of the borough of Bury and ensures our workforce inclusion work is reflective of the GM People Inclusion Standards framework. A full four-year workforce representation plan is appended in appendix D

### **4. Governance & Reporting**

- 4.1 A quarterly report detailing progress against the strategy will be produced by the EDI Manager and shared with senior officers as well as the Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion. A formal annual progress report will also be produced and shared publicly.
- 4.2 To drive delivery of the Council Strategy as well as the wider Team Bury inclusion commitment the current Inclusion Working Group will be replaced with two new groups:
  - A new council inclusion group at officer level to provide strategic oversight of the strategy and to ensure consistency in applying the strategy across all council departments
  - A partnership group of Team Bury inclusion leads which will be an evolution of the current Inclusion Working Group and report to the Health & Wellbeing Board.
- 4.3 The proposed council inclusion group will include representatives from management teams in each council directorate, key stakeholder teams and the employee equality group leads this committee will provide oversight and direction in the delivery of the council's EDI strategy and EDI activities.
- 4.4 There is a strong link between inclusion and community cohesion and community safety. To ensure actions in this strategy reflect this strong link, the EDI manager will report on strategy action and progress to the Bury Community Cohesion group chaired by Bury VCFA.
- 4.5 The Strategic Partnerships manager will sit on the council inclusion group, enabling a cross reference between inclusion actions, community safety planning and social cohesion activities in the borough

- 4.6 The proposed Team Bury inclusion leads group will support strategic and multi-disciplinary partnership working on inclusion across the borough.

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### **Links with the Corporate Priorities:**

*Please summarise how this links to the Let's Do It Strategy.*

The EDI strategy has clear demonstrable links to the Let's Do It Strategy. Each objective in the EDI strategy supports a focus of inclusion through the prism of protected characteristics, enabling people with protected characteristics to realise the benefits of the Let's Do It outcome measures.

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### **Equality Impact and Considerations:**

A full equality impact assessment has been carried out and is included in appendix E. The assessment has concluded that the EDI strategy, if implemented would have only positive impacts.

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### **Environmental Impact and Considerations:**

No negative impacts identified.

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### **Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:**

<b>Risk / opportunity</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
The lack of EDI strategy and objectives poses a risk of excluding people with protected characteristics, potentially causing discrimination and harassment	Strategy approval, communication and continuous monitoring and review
Lack of compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty legal obligations	Strategy approval and implementation will meet these legal obligations
Lack of clear governance and priorities EDI	Agreement of this report, strategy approval and close and continuous joint working internal and external stakeholders

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### **Legal Implications:**

Adoption of the strategy will ensure continual compliance with the Council's obligations under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty.

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### **Financial Implications:**

There are no financial implications directly arising from the report.

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**Appendices:**

*Please list any appended documents.*

Appendix A Review and Analysis of the 2020-2024 Inclusion Strategy

Appendix B 2024-2028 EDI Strategy Consultation

Appendix C Bury Council EDI Strategy 2024-2028

Appendix D Bury Council Workforce Representation Plan 2024-2028

Appendix E Equality Impact Assessment

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**Background papers:**

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**

Term	Meaning
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
VCFA	Voluntary, Community and Faith Alliance
VCSE	Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises

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# Bury Council 2020-2024 Inclusion Strategy Review

Jun 2024

## Background

The 2020-2024 Inclusion Strategy was developed jointly by the Bury Council and CCG partnership following a 2020 internal review into inclusive practice. The strategy was co-produced by staff groups, community leaders and senior champions. The internal review and the strategy formed part of the commitment from the partnership to improve equalities and inclusion practice as an employer, service provider and commissioner.

## Aims

The 2020-2024 Strategy aimed to support the development of a strong foundation with equality diversity and inclusion which focused on getting the basics right .

Seven objectives were identified to improve inclusive practice across the partnership and in the borough, with each objective having specific actions to deliver the objective. Some objectives and actions were specific to either the council or CCG, with some being shared objectives and actions.

In 2022 the Bury Council and CCG partnership was dissolved with the creation of NHS GM and the Integrated Care Board, as such this report focuses on the conclusion and outcomes of the objectives and actions specific to Bury Council.

## Objectives, actions and Outcomes

<b>Objective 1: Performance and Scrutiny</b>
(a) ensure that there is a robust performance/scrutiny function in place for current and future Inclusion work (b) Establish effective governance arrangements (c) resource through internal staff expertise at a senior level and drive forward the implementation of the Inclusion Strategy
<b>Action 1: Establish an Inclusion Implementation Group, with an Executive Lead, membership to be determined by the Council, in order to implement the Inclusion Strategy and actions monitored across the organisation</b>
<b>Outcome: Action met</b> An Inclusion Working Group has been formed which continues to oversee inclusion activity in the Council. Inclusion is now part of a dedicated cabinet portfolio with the cabinet member with responsibility for inclusion and the Director of People and Inclusion members of the Inclusion Working Group. The group's remit expanded to include activity from Team Bury organisations with representatives from VCFA, Persona and Bury GMP. Over time the group has become focused solely on council activity with varied attendance levels from council colleagues and external partner organisations. There is a need to review governance and engagement of this group as part of the new EDI strategy
<b>Action 2: Identify and establish reporting arrangements for the Inclusion Implementation Group</b>
<b>Outcome: Action partially met</b> The Inclusion Working Group reports into the Council's health and wellbeing board however this link is not formalised the new EDI strategy gives an opportunity to develop a more formal reporting arrangement.

<b>Action 3: Establish an annual review process of the equality objectives and implementation plans actions and set appropriate objectives and actions for subsequent year</b>
<b>Outcome: Action not met</b> Implementation plans are reviewed by the Inclusion Working Group as and when required however the link back to the strategy's objectives could be strengthened as could the process for reviewing EDI objectives and actions .
<b>Action 4: Produce an annual report on progress made against objectives and actions</b>
<b>Outcome: Action partially met</b> The council publishes an Employment Equality Report annually which is an analysis of colleague demographics and workplace activities relating to work/life balance and development opportunities. The EDI manager produces a quarterly progress report on strategy objectives however this is not annualised.
<b>Action 5: Identify a named senior leader who will act as a Champion for the Equality Employee Groups</b>
<b>Outcome: Action met</b> The council's Director of People and Inclusion which is responsible for championing and advancing inclusion across the organisation.
<b>Action 6: Establish a Head of Equality post</b>
<b>Outcome: Action met</b> An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager post has been created with a manager in post.
<b>Overall Outcome: Objective partially met</b>
<p>The aims of this objective were in three parts, to create an inclusion implementation group, develop review and reporting structures and to assign specific responsibilities for inclusion through senior leadership and an EDI manager post.</p> <p>The first part has been achieved with the formation of the Inclusion Working Group, which focuses on Council inclusion activity. The group expanded to include Team Bury however attendance is inconsistent and there is a need to review the remit and governance of this group.</p> <p>The second part of creating a review and reporting structure is partially being met with progress reports being produced each quarter, however there are no formal reporting structures and no annual reporting taking place.</p> <p>Finally, the third part of this objective has been fully achieved with an EDI manager post created and filled alongside inclusion coming under the remit of the Director of People and Inclusion providing senior leadership responsibility and championing of inclusion</p>
<b>Recommendations for future:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess whether the model of the Inclusion Working Group is effective and fit for purpose as a multi organisation model</li> <li>• Include the need for an effective 'Team Bury' approach to inclusion into the next strategy</li> <li>• Deliver a formal reporting structure as part of the new EDI strategy.</li> <li>• An annual EDI report is developed and published combining the Employment Equality Report, update on strategy actions and EDI activities throughout the year</li> </ul>

- Consider an executive sponsorship model for employee networks to champion the networks and support EDI development for senior leaders

**Objective 2: Equality Data and Information**

- (a) improve data collection with regard to the protected characteristics of employees and service users
- (b) ensure that the Council is meeting its legal obligations to have due regard to the general equality duty and to be able to demonstrate compliance

**Action 1: Carry out a full data cleanse of the iTrent (HR system) in order to take the initial step of improving data collection on the protected characteristics of employees**

**Outcome: Action met**

Up to April 2023 there was no automatic transfer of equalities data from Greater Jobs to iTrent this had to be transferred manually and was only done when resources allowed meaning a continual exercise of data update and cleansing was required to preserve the integrity of the data. A data cleanse has been carried out and the process is now automated.

**Action 2: Introduce consistent data collection requirements across the protected characteristics for all departments and service areas**

**Outcome: Action partially met**

Colleagues are able to update and change their equalities information at any time on iTrent and regular reminders are put out to encourage colleagues do this. Monitoring is added to council surveys both internal and external. There is a set of standard monitoring questions however there is work to do to ensure these are being used consistently across Council services

**Action 3: Design and implement a robust system across each department to confirm, QA & record EA screening of policies takes place**

**Outcome: Action met**

Records of QA and EqIA review are kept by the EDI manager through a tracker that tracks receipt, QA status and sign off of all EqIAs

**Action 4: Insert an EA section into formal reports in order to provide a written explanation of the outcome(s) of either conducting an initial or full EA**

**Outcome: Action met**

EqIA section included with formal reports highlighting information about completed EqIA

**Action 5: Implement a robust system whereby approval of a formal report is paused when the 'Equality/Diversity implications' section is left blank and approval will only be given when this section is completed**

**Outcome: Action met**

All EqIA should be reviewed and signed by EDI Manager. Checks are carried out on cabinet reports where these are submitted on time. A further check is carried out at the cabinet agenda setting meeting, where EqIA can be requested or the report progress is paused. - Other formal reports do not have this check in place

**Action 6: Identify all staff who are required to undertake EAs and implement a robust system to ensure these staff attend tutor-led EA training**

**Outcome: Action met**

Briefing sessions on the EqIA process and tools have been delivered with all Senior Leadership Teams as well as open briefing sessions for all colleagues.



Strong guidance to support completion is available with the EqIA tool. Additional support is provided from the EDI manager on an ad hoc basis
<b>Action 7: Establish a reporting mechanism of EA work conducted departmentally to the future Inclusion Implementation Group in order to monitor progress made and to establish an accountability and assurance function</b>
<p><b>Outcome: Action partially met</b></p> <p>The EDI manager retains a tracker to record and track EqIAs which go through review and QA by the EDI manager. EqIA activity is reported in the quarterly report but is not broken down by department or progress analysed by the Inclusion Working Group. Directorate representatives also report on local activity into the Inclusion Working Group.</p>
<b>Action 8: Update current EA Template and Guidance</b>
<p><b>Outcome: Action met</b></p> <p>The council's EqIA template, guidance and process has been reviewed, updated and rolled out to the whole council through management briefing sessions. Additional training and support is provided by the EDI manager on an ad hoc basis</p>
<b>Overall outcome: Objective partially met</b>
<p>The overall aims of this objective were to ensure robust collection and storage of accurate equalities data and develop an Equality Impact Assessment tool, process and reporting structure.</p> <p>In terms of data collection, there is a system available which keeps confidential data which can be updated by colleagues at any time. Regular communications go out to colleagues to remind them and show how they can update their data.</p> <p>Monitoring forms for collecting data from service users are available but are used inconsistently across services with services lacking systems to record this data confidentially and in a way that meaningful analysis can be undertaken.</p> <p>The council has reviewed its EqIA tool, guidance and process which has been rolled out and is managed by the EDI manager who is responsible for the QA of each EqIA. The EDI manager also keeps copies of all EqIAs that are signed off and maintains a tracker to track EqIA progress.</p>
<b>Recommendations:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a campaign to encourage colleagues to self declare equalities information in the iTrent system</li> <li>• Support managers of front line staff to find a solution to inputting their equalities data confidentially</li> <li>• Monitoring questions are reviewed annually to ensure these use current acceptable terminology</li> <li>• Monitoring questions are used consistently across Council services with service user data collated and analysed at least annually by services</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 3: Community Engagement</b>
<p>(a) improve community engagement</p> <p>(b) Ensure members of local BAME* Communities, through the 'Listening Exercise', to have been genuinely heard</p> <p>*The acronym BAME has been discontinued by Bury Council, the term ethnic minority is used to refer to this group of people however it should be recognised this is an umbrella term for different ethnicities, nationalities and races rather than a term to describe a homogenous group.</p>

<b>Action 1: Produce a Community Engagement Strategy co-designed with communities across the protected characteristics with a clear implementation plan</b>
<b>Outcome: Action partially met</b> The Council's LET'S Do It! vision for 2030 is a community inclusion strategy which has set out principles for community engagement. These principles do not directly address engagement with specific protected characteristics.
<b>Action 2: Introduce Regular Listening Events &amp; reports back with members of communities with protected characteristics/community leaders/voluntary and community sector representatives</b>
<b>Outcome: Action partially met</b> Listening events have taken place around race conversations which have been reported back. Other characteristics have been covered in ad hoc conversations and engagement through VCFA groups, charities and community networks.
<b>Action 3: Ensure the full findings of this exercise is shared with relevant key staff across departments</b>
<b>Outcome: Action met</b> A full report from the race conversations in 2021 has been produced and shared
<b>Action 4: Report on progress made against these actions to the Inclusion Implementation Group and to the people who participated in the Listening Exercise</b>
<b>Outcome: Action partially met</b> A full report from the race conversations in 2021 has been produced and shared however follow up on progress on actions has not been consistently reported.
<b>Overall Outcome: Objective partially met</b>
<p>This objective focused on positive engagement with communities of identity and interest around the protected characteristics. The action to produce a community engagement strategy to be applied to all protected characteristics was not met with no formal strategy in place. Communication routes do exist with some protected characteristics such as Bury LGBTQI Forum, Bury Faith Forum and Bury Older People's network and the Bury VCFA provide support here. However such groups do not exist for other characteristics that experience the most disadvantage and discrimination.</p> <p>The council commissioned a Race Conversations exercise in 2021, creating forums for residents and community groups to give their views from lived experiences of being from an ethnic minority in Bury. From this, a full report with recommended actions was produced in 2022. The report has been shared with key stakeholders. However, whilst a number of actions were progressed there is a need to strengthen feedback here and coordinate response work.</p>
<b>Recommendations:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a strong engagement approach with protected characteristic and intersectional groups to encourage and strengthen community voices</li> <li>• Maintain the two way conversations with the current groups that engage with the council on their specific protected characteristics</li> <li>• Incorporate the findings of the Race conversations into the 2024-2028 EDI strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 4: Representative Workforce</b>
(a) Progress development of a Council workforce that is representative of Bury's population

(d) make real progress against the current WRES action plan
<b>Action 1: Open up vacancies for external recruitment</b>
<p><b>Outcome: Action met</b></p> <p>All vacancies will be made open as a redeployment opportunity for council staff to reduce colleague attrition and redundancies where roles become obsolete. Where vacancies are unable to be filled internally, these are posted externally on Greater Jobs</p>
<b>Action 2: Where there is an under-representation of staff at all levels compared to the local population across the protected characteristics, identify positive action measures and take action to progress these, with a particular focus on Race in 2021 and a particular focus on Disability in 2022</b>
<p><b>Outcome: Action partially met</b></p> <p>Some positive action measures have been put in place in conjunction with other actions plans i.e. Disability Confident and guaranteed interview schemes. Bury has led on developing an Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit with the council championing some of the positive actions this encourages which includes application by CV as standard which is a more accessible method of applying for roles and some teams are now offering working interviews which combine an interview, onboarding and training into a 3-4 day work trial which has increased success in filling some front line roles, increased retention and reduced the overall recruitment timeframe.</p>
<b>Action 3: Adopt the NHS Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) and produce a WRES Action Plan</b>
<p><b>Outcome: Action partially met</b></p> <p>The WRES was conducted in 2022 and 2023 but was not published. The WRES was designed to be used NHS trust wide with a very large colleague headcount and in line with data from the NHS ESR system. The calculations also rely on accurate data which the council's unknown data levels would likely affect the integrity of WRES results. These standards are set to be superseded by a GMCA led People Inclusion Standards framework from October 2024</p>
<b>Action 4: Set workforce targets/aspirations, which are monitored across each department's performance against these targets</b>
<p><b>Outcome: Action partially met</b></p> <p>The council has not set targets or aspirations at department level although the council does have an aspiration to have workforce that is representative of the residents we serve.</p> <p>Setting specific targets could mean falling beneath the Equality Act 2010 and lead to bias taking place in recruitment processes. Additionally, the volatility of the labour market could make such targets unachievable.</p>
<b>Action 5: Adopt the NHS Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) as part of their future objectives setting for 2022</b>
<p><b>Outcome: Action not met</b></p> <p>The standard has not been adopted council wide. The WDES was designed to be used NHS trust wide with a very large colleague headcount and in line with data from the NHS ESR system. The calculations also rely on accurate data which the council's unknown data levels would likely affect the integrity of WDES results. These standards are set to be superseded by a GMCA led People Inclusion Standards framework from October 2024</p>
<b>Overall outcome: Objective partially met</b>
<p>This objective sought to increase workforce representation in terms of underrepresented groups, specifically around race and disability. It focused on adopting positive actions towards increasing representation with race and</p>

disability. There are positive action measures which have been adopted which have helped to contribute to a small rise year on year in the percentage of ethnic minority and disabled colleagues at the council.

The second part of this objective focused on adopting the NHS WRES and WDES standards as a performance measurement. Whilst these standards were calculated in 2022 and 2023, no actions were taken in respect of the respect of these results.

**Recommendations:**

- Adoption of the GM People Inclusion Standards from October 2024
- A specific workforce representation plan to be included as part of the new 2024-2028 strategy

**Objective 5: Learning and Development**

(a) Upskill council staff and elected members and to enable them to effectively raise awareness and contribute to the implementation of the Inclusion Strategy

**Action 1: Provide tutor-led bespoke equality and diversity training and other learning opportunities to different cohorts within the Council. Take action to ensure compliance**

**Action outcome: Action partially met**

Tutor led and bespoke EDI training has been delivered to managers as part of the Management Development Programme and to senior leaders through an EDI Masterclass both sessions are led by the EDI manager. Annual EDI training is also offered to all Members.

It has not been practical to provide tutor led EDI training for all colleagues given the size and complexity of the workforce at the council. All colleagues are required to complete a mandatory EDI e-learning module every three years. This has been converted to a webinar for front line staff and can be tutor led on request. Other ad hoc EDI training can be delivered by the EDI manager with specific groups of colleagues on request.

**Action 2: Replace the mandatory e-learning EDHR module with tutor-led bespoke EDHR training**

**Action outcome: Action not met**

It has not been feasible given time and resources available to deliver the e-learning module as a tutor led module due to the size and complexity of the workforce. The module has been recoded as a webinar and is available on paper formats to enable greater access to this module for colleagues who are not desk based.

**Action 3: Design and implement a Diversity-Based Reverse Mentoring Programme**

**Action outcome: Action met**

Senior leaders and colleagues who identify as ethnic minority or disabled have access to a mutual mentoring scheme through the Inclusive Public Services project

**Overall outcome: Objective partially met**

This objective aimed to provide tutor led EDI learning to all colleagues in the council. Tutor led programmes and learning allow learners to explore the topic of EDI with a subject matter expert who can answer questions and guide learning of this subjective and emotive subject in a safe environment which maximises the

learning experience. It has not been practically possible to provide mandatory tutor led training to all colleagues.

The second part of this objective has been met fully with Bury leading on the development of a mutual mentoring programme which is available to all colleagues who are from an ethnic minority background or are disabled. Participants are paired with a senior leader.

**Recommendations:**

- Include a 30 minute EDI workshop led in person by the EDI manager as part of the corporate induction process
- Refresh the corporate mandatory e-learning to ensure this is current and reflects the Council's values and inclusion objectives

**Objective 6: Improve user access and experience**

This objective was solely aimed at CCG practices and therefore there were no actions for the council under this objective

**Objective 7: Framework Delivery**

(a) continually improve the Council's work on equality

**Action 1: Determine which EFLG criteria/sub criterion is prioritised on a yearly basis**

**Action outcome: Action not met**

The council has not adopted a specific EDI framework or criterion to work towards. This is due to a changing landscape in the GMCA space with framework development activity taking place through the GM Equality Panels and Inclusive Public Services project

**Overall outcome: Objective not met**

**Recommendations:**

- The development and adoption of a GM wide framework is to be included in the 2024-2028 strategy

**Conclusion**

The 2020-2024 inclusion strategy has been delivered against the backdrop of the covid-19 pandemic which presented significant challenges to our residents and the council as an employer and service provider in terms of building and maintaining inclusive practice.

None of the objectives set out in the strategy have been fully met, mainly due to a fast moving and changing landscape as the council, town and region emerged from the pandemic and into pandemic recovery phase. In addition, the dissolution of the CCG and formation of the Integrated Care Partnership has changed the nature of the council's working relationship with primary health care and social care over this period.

The overarching aims of the strategy were to solidify the council's EDI function, assign accountability and governance and lay strong foundations to build effective community engagement and activity all of which have been achieved. The strategy outcomes can therefore be regarded as being successful. These successes provide a strong base for the 2024-2028 EDI strategy to build on and focus council inclusion activity on workplace culture, workforce and resident representation and taking a lead on collaborative approaches to inclusion locally and regionally.





## **Bury Council EDI Strategy 2024-2028 Consultation**

As part of the development of the Council's 2024-2028 development, a consultation exercise was carried out between April 2024 and July 2024. The consultation included an invite to contribute to all Council directorates, Bury VCFA and Persona as members of the Inclusion Working Group. Additionally, a consultation was carried out at public inclusion events, inviting residents to contribute to the consultation.

Appendix A of this document details a consultation document that was sent as part of the consultation invite.

For the public events, a 'graffiti wall' was set up for residents to provide comments and ideas of what they would like to see in the new Council Strategy.

## **Council Directorates and Teams**

### **Community Partnerships Team**

The EDI manager attended a team meeting to discuss the strategy development. The team felt the objectives were the right objectives and had suggestions of how these could be met. These included:

- Having a housing officer who had a specific responsibility for working with care leavers as part of their role
- Including people affected by domestic violence under the socio-economically vulnerable characteristic
- Using intersectional and demographic data at a neighbourhood level to be used by neighbourhood teams, GMP and community safety teams
- Capturing 'soft' intelligence about protected characteristics and intersections not captured by data collation

### **Public Health Team**

The public health team met to consider the consultation document in appendix A and returned a response to the EDI manager. This included:

- Including a focus on how protected characteristics and intersections impact mental health and suicide to inform support and prevention work
- Including health inequalities as a part of the equality impact assessment process so opportunities for wider promotion of health inequalities strategies and work are captured
- Including a peer led promotion of the health benefits of working

### **Adults Social Care Team**

The EDI manager attended an SLT to discuss the strategy development. The SLT agreed that the objectives set out would support the inclusion work within their teams and support the equalities requirements of CQC inspections. Additionally, the team had further suggestions to support the objectives which included:

- Gathering intersectional data and qualitative information to inform approaches to supporting people with protected characteristics
- Creating a directory of co-design partners in relation to lived experience expertise and experience
- Creating work experience placement and traineeships for young people with protected characteristics
- Reviewing housing policies for people with learning difficulties and
- Ensuring systems are fit for purpose and can record demographics correctly

### **Staff Benefits Day**

The EDI Manager attended a staff benefits day on 16<sup>th</sup> April where a graffiti wall was available for colleagues attending to comment on what they would like to see in a new Council EDI strategy. Suggestions included:

- More visibility of colleague equality groups
- Accessible and visible equalities awareness events
- Training and education around specific protected characteristics and equalities topics

### **Bury VCFA Leaders Forum**

The Director of People and Inclusion and the EDI Manager attended a forum of Bury VCFA member organisations' leaders. They felt the objectives were broadly right and had suggestions for how the objectives could be met. These included:

- A desire to see council workforce out in the community more in the neighbourhoods and through volunteering
- Helping people with protected characteristics support their own health and wellbeing needs
- Promotion of initiatives and celebrating successes across organisations
- Digital exclusion, recognising not everyone can use digital
- Inclusive comms in buildings, ensuring public buildings have gender neutral and inclusive facilities such as facilities for mixed gender parent/child groups
- Collaborative approach to inclusion across the borough

### **Persona**

The EDI Manager attended a Persona management meeting to discuss the strategy development. The managers felt the objectives were correct and had some suggestions to ensure that the objectives had positive outcomes. These included:

- Sharing best practice between organisations on data collation, storage and use
- Training and awareness on specific protected characteristics and intersections from a lived experience perspective and shared across organisations
- Organisations working together to deliver and take part in community events
- Sharing and celebrating successes

**Bury Pride**

The Council had a stall at Bury Pride, attended by over 2000 people which included a 'graffiti wall' for residents to comment on what they would like to see in a new EDI strategy. These included:

- More events based on lived experiences and intersections
- A focus on social care for older LGBTQ+ people
- Safe spaces for people with LGBTQ+ intersections
- Greater support for LGBTQ+ identities in schools
- Visible LGBTQ+ leadership and role models

**Collabor8**

The Council had a stall at Collabor8, a community inclusion event organised through Team Bury and attended by over 700 people. A 'graffiti wall' was available for residents to comment on what they would like to see in a new EDI strategy. These included:

- Meaningful and visible leadership on equalities across the borough
- More outreach work with communities of identity
- Support for ethnic minority groups to work together across the borough

**Overall Consultation Picture**

The consultation gave a clear view that the objectives suggested were broadly right. Consideration of the suggestions led to the Skills and Employment objective being split in to two different objectives in the final proposal, Workforce Representation and Skills and Employment. This was to recognise internal EDI actions for the Council as an employer and the EDI actions to support residents as the local authority.

Overall the consultation suggested a focus on the following within the objectives:

- A greater understanding of intersectionality when commissioning or planning, developing and delivering our services
- The importance of collating and using good data and information
- Ensuring safe spaces for intersectional identities
- Providing self support for people with protected characteristics
- Greater collaboration on delivering EDI in communities
- Increased engagement from council workforce with communities of interest and identity

## Appendix A

### Bury Council Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy 2024-2028 Development

The council will be launching a new four year EDI strategy and objectives in 2024 as the current four year EDI strategy developed in 2020 concludes this year.

The 2020-2024 strategy has been successful in building a robust internal EDI function within the council which included:

- Appointing officers with specific responsibility for EDI
- Setting out processes for developing, scrutinising and evaluating our EDI work
- Creating a reporting structure to report internally and externally on EDI work
- Identifying areas to improve data collection and use to inform our EDI work
- Developing an Equality Impact Assessment process
- Development and strengthening engagement with our local communities
- Ensuring council colleagues have access to EDI related learning and development that will support EDI focus within their work

Alongside these building blocks, we've taken practical steps in response to feedback to strengthen our approach to inclusion. For example:

- We have a new Council website which is more accessible to all. – Something we heard from Bury people during our race conversations in 2022
- We've been awarded the MoD Defence Employer Recognition Gold Award for our work to support Bury's veterans community, which has included free sport and leisure access
- Our Disability Confident Leader status has been reviewed and we've delivered a more flexible approach to recruitment, through working interviews, to increase disability representation in our workforce.

Additionally, we've been able to apply a strong EDI focus to our 2030 vision for Bury through the LET'S Do It! Strategy which has inclusion at its heart with a commitment to ensuring residents can fully participate in co-designing our borough's future.

### Looking Ahead

The previous EDI strategy has laid the foundations for our next EDI strategy to have a larger focus on EDI in our practices and supporting inclusion within our communities to ensure that all Bury people share in the success of the delivery of our LET'S ambition, whatever their background.

Responses from community engagement such as the Race Conversations and Big Disability Survey has given insight into some potential priority areas for focus in the new strategy. These are:

### Skills and Employment

This relates to reducing and removing the challenges and barriers people face in learning, skills and career development by virtue of personal characteristics and achieving a council workforce that is representative of the communities that it serves.

### Data (Workforce and Service Users)

Building on the progress made in the 2020-2024 EDI strategy, this is about building a robust system to collect good data about our residents and workforce so we know who our service users are and what our workforce looks like so we can tailor our services to the needs of people who use them.



**Health Inequalities**

This relates to supporting the work of reducing health inequalities for people who have protected characteristics through engagement, awareness and co-designing our health inequalities work.

**Housing**

This relates to applying an EDI focus to the transfer of housing into the council and the provision of social housing to our residents.

**Community Engagement**

This builds on and continues the work from the 2020-2024 EDI strategy and will look at building strong two-way engagement processes between the council and communities of identity in our borough.

**Consultation Questions**

1. What work would support your community of identity as part of the new EDI strategy in terms of these areas of focus?
  - A. Skills and Employment
  - B. Data (Workforce and Service Users)
  - C. Health Inequalities
  - D. Housing
  - E. Community Engagement
2. Are there other areas of focus you would like to see as part of the new EDI strategy?
3. Are there any needs or aspirations from your community of identity that the new EDI strategy could support?
4. How would you like to be kept informed about the development of the EDI strategy and progress in future years?

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Bury Council  
Equality, Diversity &  
Inclusion Strategy

2024-2028

## **Bury Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2028**

### **1. Introduction**

Bury Council is committed to equitable and inclusive practice as a service provider, commissioner, community leader and employer. This commitment is made as a core part of the delivery of the LET'S Do It! Bury 2030 vision and a key element of the organisation's transformation journey.

A key tenet of LET'S Do It! is the co-design of our services and the future of our borough. With this in mind, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy has been co-produced with community leaders, staff groups and senior champions. It sets out:

- The part the Council will play in enabling residents and colleagues with protected characteristics to realise the aims of the Bury 2030 vision
- How the Council will meet its obligations in accordance with the general legal equalities duties
- Organisation-specific objectives and an action plan to be delivered between 2024 and 2028.

We have deliberately used the words equality, diversity and inclusion for this strategy as these words underpin the focus of this strategy:

**Equality** – Where everyone is treated fairly, with dignity and respect and recognising we may need to treat people differently to achieve this

**Diversity** – Understanding our differences and valuing these as a strength that we all benefit from

**Inclusion** – Providing equal access and opportunity to participate in our workplaces, our communities and in the use of services regardless of personal characteristics or circumstances.

This strategy builds on the success of our previous 2020-2024 Joint Inclusion Strategy, with NHS Bury, which laid the foundations of inclusive practice throughout the council and in our communities. This 2024-2028 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy is a Council only strategy and aims to build on the successes of the previous strategy to ensure that consideration of protected characteristics and intersectionality are threaded through our workplace and community activities. The Council is committed to working in partnership with NHS Greater Manchester with objectives in this strategy closely aligned to the equality objectives of the Integrated Care Board, particularly around race and workforce.

## 2. Context

This strategy has been developed recognising the diverse demography of the borough and the aspirations for the borough of our residents, business community, VCFE community, visitors and workforce. It supports improving lived experiences and outcomes for people with protected characteristics so that they can live and work in, or visit, a borough where they feel they belong and are valued.

### 2.1 Demography

Bury is a vibrant, diverse and cohesive Borough. It is home to over 190,000 people, every one of which should be enabled and empowered to maximise their life chances, play a full and active role in society and enjoy a high quality of life.

Bury's diversity includes (Census 2021):

- 51% Women and 49% Men
- Our age ranges are in line with the national demographic but we are an older borough regionally
- 20.16% of our population are people from an ethnic minority
- 18.51% of our population consider themselves to be disabled
- Our population follow a range of different religions and belief systems with significant Christian, Muslim and Jewish populations
- 3.27% of our population identify as LGBTQIA+
- 8.71% of our population are unpaid carers
- 90.26% of our population speak English as a first language
- 2.60% of our population are veterans

### 2.2 LET'S Do It! Bury 2030 vision

The Bury 2030 strategy makes a strategic commitment to tackle inequalities with a clear pledge to drive inclusion, as one of five outcome measures which are:

- **Inclusive** communities
- **Healthy**, connected people
- A strong **economy**
- Be on the way to **carbon neutrality**
- A **digital**-first approach

The inclusion vision for Bury 2030 is to enable every person in the Borough to fully participate in and shape the collective, by supporting people to be themselves; to speak out about ideas and concerns and to be heard.

It describes commitments to develop relationships; create new and developed fora to hear every voice and co-design services with the people



who use them, as well as ongoing community safety activity which drives cohesion through a culture of trust, tolerance and understanding.

Four key principles underpin this vision, for a “people powered” Bury where everyone demonstrates common behaviours which support inclusion.

<b>Local</b>	<b>Enterprise</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging with people about how they live and work</li> <li>• Hearing all voices and learning from them</li> <li>• Trusting and helping each other, always working together</li> <li>• Listening when others talk, helping and enabling</li> <li>• Supporting development and growth and removing barriers to collaboration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrating pride in our collective and individual achievements and in the place where we live</li> <li>• Ensuring everyone has an equal voice and equal life chances by harnessing and nurturing all talents</li> <li>• Championing innovation, always looking for ways to improve quality of life for all</li> <li>• Being courageous and stepping out of our comfort zone to help ourselves and others</li> <li>• Opening doors at every opportunity</li> </ul>
<b>Together</b>	<b>Strength</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committing to making a positive, practical difference in addressing and tackling our challenges</li> <li>• Valuing and developing the role and voices of people and communities to shape and deliver, wherever we can</li> <li>• Empowering residents and groups to take decisions and harness resources</li> <li>• Strength through cultural diversity</li> <li>• Growing relationships and new connections across boundaries</li> <li>• Demonstrating dignity, kindness and respect in everything we do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Really listening to understand each other and our shared potential</li> <li>• Being flexible and putting our energies into where we can make the most positive difference; asking 'what matters to you?'</li> <li>• Being open to trying new things and doing things differently</li> <li>• Valuing the skills, strengths and successes of individuals and communities</li> </ul>

### 2.3 EDI Strategy Consultation

In the spirit of LET’S Do It, this strategy has been developed through engagement with council service teams, colleague networks, Bury VCFA member organisations, Persona and at community events such as Bury Pride.

Feedback from the consultation suggested the strategy should have a focus on:

- A greater understanding of intersectionality when commissioning or planning, developing and delivering our services
- The importance of collating and using good data and information
- Ensuring safe spaces for intersectional identities
- Providing self support for people with protected characteristics
- Greater collaboration on delivering EDI in communities
- Increased engagement from council workforce with communities of interest and identity

### **3. Compliance with legislative requirements**

As public services the Council operates within the context of the following legislation:

**The Equality Act 2010** (The Act) brings together all the legal requirements on equality that the public, private and voluntary sectors need to follow. It protects people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the basis of their 'protected characteristics', namely:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion and Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Since 2020, the council has committed to recognising four additional characteristics which will continue to be viewed as 'protected characteristics' and given the same attention as those set out in the Equality Act 2010:

- Carers
- Care experienced children and care leavers
- Military veterans
- The socio-economically vulnerable

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, 'the Public Sector Equality Duty', Bury Council are required to have 'due regard' for protected characteristics in everything we do to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
2. Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people'

3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristics and those who do not.

This involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages people experience due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging persons who share a relevant protected characteristics to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

In addition, as public sector bodies, the council is required to meet some specific public sector equality duties. These are to:

- Publish objectives that will advance equality every four years.
- Publish equality information annually to show how we are complying with the general equality duty, in relation to its workforce and its services and progress against our equality objectives

**The Health and Safety Act 1974** requires employers to have 'due regard' for the health, safety and security of employees in the workplace

**The Human Rights Act 1998** requires all public bodies, including the Council, and those acting on behalf of public bodies to act in a way that respects and protects an individual's human rights.

**The Health and Social Care Act 2012** introduced legal duties for local authorities to take steps reduce health inequalities and improve the health of people living in their area.

**The Care Act 2014** sets out when the local authority has a responsibility to meet someone's care and support needs. It also provides recognition and a definition of a carer and a cared for person.

**The Accessible Information Standard (AIS)** requires all organisations that provide health services (including GP practices or adult social care) to identify, record, share and meet the communication needs of patients/recipients of care who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss.

**The Armed Forces Act 2021** enshrines the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant in law requiring local authorities to reduce and eliminate disadvantages experienced by military veterans and serving military personnel in terms of housing, employment, healthcare and education by virtue of their military service.

**The Carers Leave Act 2024** requires employers to offer employees up to one week of unpaid leave per year. Employees are eligible to take this leave if they look after a dependent who has a 'long term care need'.

#### **4. Bury Council Inclusion Objectives 2024-28**

Each objective has been designed to support people with protected characteristics in achieving one or more of the seven LET'S Do It outcome measures.

##### **Objective 1: Skills and Employment**

Supporting the reduction of disadvantages experienced in skills and employment opportunities by people with protected characteristics and championing innovative recruitment techniques across the borough. With this objective we want to eliminate the disadvantages people with protected characteristics often experience when accessing learning, skills development and employment. We recognise that for people with intersectional characteristics, the disadvantages are even higher. To support this objective, we will bring together the collective strengths and expertise of our teams and partner organisations to provide multi-agency support into employment.

We commit to championing and role modelling inclusive recruitment practices across the borough retain membership of the Good Employment Charter to improve employment and skills opportunities for people with protected characteristics

##### **Actions to be taken to achieve this objective**

- 1.** Diversifying where we advertise council vacancies
- 2.** Promoting multi-agency support into employment
- 3.** Furthering our supported employment scheme for care experienced young people
- 4.** Maintain membership of the GM Good Employment Charter
- 5.** Champion the GM Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit across the borough

##### **Links to LET'S Do It**

Improved quality of life  
Improved educational attainment  
Increased adult skill levels and employability  
Inclusive economic growth  
Improved digital connectivity

##### **Objective 2: Health Inequalities**

Supporting strategies to reduce health inequalities for people who have protected characteristics such as the GM Ageing Well strategy, through engagement, awareness and co-designing our health inequalities work. Being able to access information is a crucial first step in disrupting a negative cycle and removing disadvantage in terms of health and wellbeing, developing a sensory impairment communication strategy will improve the access to health and wellbeing information and resources for people with sensory impairments.

We recognise that some personal characteristics and circumstances can create barriers to achieving a healthy lifestyle and in turn, these impact directly on physical and mental wellbeing creating a negative cycle that is difficult to disrupt, this is especially true when there are intersectional characteristics creating multiple disadvantages. By including health inequalities as part of our Equality Impact Assessments and using JSNA data, we can identify where inequalities exist based on protected characteristics and work towards removing disadvantages, additionally this provides an opportunity to support health inequalities work across council directorates and services.

### **Actions to be taken to achieve this objective**

1. Developing a sensory impairment communication strategy
2. Working with partner organisations to tackle food poverty
3. Including health inequalities as part of our EIA process
4. Using the JSNA to apply intersectional focus to service design
5. Providing access to cost-of-living advice and support
6. Responding to the Veterans Health Needs Assessment

### **Links to LET'S Do It**

Improved quality of life  
Improved early years development  
Improved educational attainment  
Inclusive economic growth

### **Objective 3: Housing and Accommodation**

Applying an EDI focus to the transfer of housing into the council, the provision of social housing to our residents and accommodation for communities of identity and interest.

This objective supports a focus on protected characteristics and intersectionality in terms of housing and accommodation. It is recognised that some characteristics and intersections increase the need for support in finding a suitable home or accommodation and this is a key foundation for our LET'S Do it ambitions for all of our residents. The need for support is particularly acute for care leavers, disabled people and cared for people.



We will ensure that there is a focus on the need for housing support arising from all protected characteristics and intersections which will be built into our housing strategy and allocation decision making.

### **Actions to be taken to achieve this objective**

1. Developing an accommodation strategy for care leavers
2. Delivering our housing vision for Adult Social Care
3. Specific focus on protected characteristics in the Bury Housing Strategy
4. Ensuring intersectional impacts are included in housing decisions
5. Ensuring protected characteristics are considered as part of the social housing regulatory standards

### **Links to LET'S Do It**

Improved quality of life  
Inclusive economic growth

### **Objective 4: Community Engagement**

Building EDI focused engagement with our VCSE organisations and Team Bury to foster effective community cohesion and strong two-way communication processes between the council and communities of identity and interest in our borough.

Through this objective we will harness a collaborative and collective approach to inclusion for the benefit of everyone in the borough. Working alongside and supporting civic leaders, community groups and partner organisations to deliver inclusion throughout Bury.

With a strong focus on people and place, this will support the development of inclusion leadership across the town, celebrating our cultural diversity and recognising the need for intersectional supportive spaces.

1. Supporting civic champions and leaders through the civic leadership programme
2. Increased cultural offering across the borough
3. Engagement and support for GM Equality Panel members
4. Promoting a 'Team Bury' collaboration approach to inclusion
5. Supporting and promoting intersectional community groups
6. Promote EDI specific volunteering with council colleagues
7. Establishing a women's community network
8. A review of accessibility and inclusion for blind and visually impaired people

### **Links to LET'S Do It**

Improved quality of life  
Improved educational attainment  
Increased adult skill levels and employability

Inclusive economic growth  
Improved digital connectivity

### **Objective 5: Data Collation, Analysis & Governance**

Collecting good demographics data about our residents and workforce and using this as an evidence base to tailor our services to the needs of people who use them. Developing strong governance and reporting structures so we can understand our performance by protected characteristics.

To build and drive inclusion in our workplaces and services, we need to understand our workforce and service users. This allows us to harness the diversity of the people we work with and for and tailor our activities so everyone can participate regardless of their personal characteristics or circumstances.

We recognise that characteristics and circumstances are often intersected, raising the impacts, barriers and challenges some people face. Analysis of demographics on an intersectional basis is therefore crucial to being able to understand these impacts and how we can eliminate them. Additionally we need to embed equality analysis in our processes and share how we conduct analysis with partner organisations so that best practice is shared and a consistent approach is taken to building and driving inclusion across our borough.

### **Actions to be taken to achieve this objective**

1. Standardise monitoring across council services in line with the census
2. Annual review of monitoring questions to keep these current
3. Continual promotion of purposeful data gathering and analysis from service users and colleagues
4. Establish an EDI steering group to oversee strategy delivery
5. Embedding EIA in checklists and project management processes
6. Sharing EIA practice with partner organisations

### **Links to LET'S Do It**

Improved quality of life  
Improved educational attainment  
Increased adult skill levels and employability  
Inclusive economic growth

### **Objective 6: Workforce Representation**

Achieving a council workforce that is representative of the communities that it serves through reducing and removing the challenges and barriers colleagues experience during recruitment, and accessing learning, skills and career development by virtue of personal characteristics.

With this objective we want to eliminate the disadvantages people with protected characteristics often experience during recruitment and when

accessing learning, skills and career development. Together with this we commit to broadening the knowledge and awareness of all colleagues of how lived experiences can impact how people experience and engage in the workplace.

We commit to delivering inclusive recruitment and delivering workforce inclusion through the GM workforce inclusion framework as well as revalidating our accreditations as a Disability Confident Leader and Armed Forces Covenant Gold Employer to inform our progress and evolve our inclusive recruitment and workplace practices.

## People Inclusion Standards

### Celebrating diversity and championing inclusivity

Greater Manchester is setting the standard for what inclusive workplaces look like.

1. Data informed
2. Equitable policies
3. Valued voice
4. Awareness and education
5. Fair recruitment
6. Development and progression for all
7. Embrace diversity
8. Retain, recognise and celebrate
9. Ask questions; be curious



### Actions to be taken to achieve this objective

1. Developing and actioning a council wide workforce representation plan
2. Access to characteristic specific leadership development and learning
3. Delivering characteristic specific training and awareness
4. Contribute to and adopt a GM Workforce Inclusion Framework
5. Revalidate EDI related workplace accreditations

**6. Lead and role model the GM Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit**

**Links to LET'S Do It**

Improved quality of life  
Improved educational attainment  
Increased adult skill levels and employability  
Inclusive economic growth  
Improved digital connectivity

**5. Governance**

The strategy has been agreed by the council's cabinet, with responsibility for strategy implementation resting with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion.

Oversight of the strategy delivery will be provided by the council's Director of People & Inclusion and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager who will lead on co-ordinating actions and working collaboratively to deliver actions with key stakeholders.

As per the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty, an annual progress report will be published to update on progress.

A quarterly update by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager will be shared with key stakeholders.





	Age	Disability	Gender reassignment	Marriage & civil partnership	Pregnancy & maternity	Race	Religion & belief	Sex	Sexual orientation	Carers	Care experienced children & care leavers	Socio-economic vulnerable	Veterans
<b>Objective 4: Community Engagement</b>													
Supporting community champions and leaders through the civic leadership programme		•				•							
Increased cultural offering across the borough	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Engagement and support for GM Equality Panel Members	•	•	•			•	•	•	•				
Promoting a 'Team Bury' approach to inclusion	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Supporting and promoting intersectional community groups	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Promote EDI specific volunteering with council colleagues	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Establishing a women's community network								•					
A review of accessibility and inclusion for blind and visually impaired people		•											
<b>Objective 5: Data Collation, Analysis &amp; Governance</b>													
Standardise monitoring across council services in line with the census	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Annual review of monitoring questions to keep these current	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Continual promotion of data gathering of service users and colleagues	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Establish an EDI steering group to oversee strategy delivery	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Embedding EIA in checklists and project management processes	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Sharing EIA practice with partner organisations	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

<b>Objective 6: Workforce Representation</b>													
Developing and actioning a council wide workforce representation plan	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•		•
Access to characteristic specific leadership development and learning	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Delivering characteristic specific training and awareness	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Contribute to and adopt a GM Inclusive Workforce framework	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Revalidate EDI related workplace accreditations	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•		•
Lead and role model the GM Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit		•				•	•						



# Bury Council Workforce Representation Plan

2024 - 2028

# Our Workforce Representation Plan at a Glance

**We aim to increase our workforce representation at all levels so that the demographics of our workforce are reflective of the demographics of the Borough of Bury**

We know we have some distance to travel to achieve this and our approach has been informed by data, an understanding of best practice from elsewhere as well as the views of our workforce and communities.

## **Our LET'S Principles underpin the approach we'll take**

**LOCAL** - We'll recognise the diversity of Bury to build this plan, understanding that a different approach will be needed to reach different people and communities

**ENTERPRISE** - We'll innovate, we'll think outside the box and challenge our norms

**TOGETHER** - We'll deliver the plan collaboratively in our teams, with partners across Greater Manchester, through our networks and in the community to develop and deliver the plan

**STRENGTHS** - We're already doing some great work in this space. We'll take this and build on it

**We know that to build a truly representative and inclusive workforce this is more than about just 'recruitment'. We're committed to practical actions across four themes linked to the employee lifecycle.**

**Attract**

**Retain**

**Recruit**

**Develop**

**Bury**  
Council



**Attract** – We'll change the way we advertise and promote Bury as a place to work putting inclusion at its heart and **celebrate the achievements of our diverse workforce as brand ambassadors**. Our **workplace adjustments approach** will be best in class and we'll offer **job carving** as a USP to attract disabled candidates and make use of their talents. Our **adverts will be truly inclusive** and **Greater.Jobs** will showcase the amazing opportunities and benefits of working for Bury. We'll utilise images and videos and promote Bury jobs in the places and spaces our diverse communities go including through **links with local education providers** and **community partnerships** in the VCSE sector.

**Recruit** – We'll **review our recruitment and selection policy and practices**, learn and respond to the **views of our communities** and **best practice** elsewhere. **All recruiting managers will be trained in inclusive recruitment** and **recruitment panels will be diversified**, with the support of our staff groups. Our **approach to assessment will be meaningful and flexible** to allow candidates to show their authentic and best selves and we'll ensure our **guaranteed interview schemes** are fully applied and their impact tracked

**Develop** -There's more we can do to **shout about our commitment to learning and development in all areas** and **celebrate the development and achievements of our diverse workforce**. Through a focus on **Succession Planning**, we will proactively target those in underrepresented groups to join us and develop, with a particular focus on our care experienced young people. We'll introduce or access **specific development schemes** which give those from under represented groups (specifically race and disability) access to learning and a guaranteed interview for more senior roles and significantly **strengthen our employee networks** as a critical partner and source of development and support.

**Retain** – Shouting about our commitment to inclusion and supporting workplace adjustments and job carving will be just as important to retention. Our **induction and exit and stay interview** processes will be revised to put inclusion at their core so we set out our stall early and understand if there's more we can do to retain staff. We'll respond to the Pulse Survey and build **a culture that champions inclusion** and promote **career pathways** which demonstrate a commitment to developing our own workforce recognising we are more diverse at junior levels. We'll review **our flexible and agile working** policies as key elements of our retention strategy.

# People Inclusion Standards

**Celebrating diversity and  
championing inclusivity**

Greater Manchester is setting the standard for what inclusive workplaces look like.

1. Data informed
2. Equitable policies
3. Valued voice
4. Awareness and education
5. Fair recruitment
6. Development and progression for all
7. Embrace diversity
8. Retain, recognise and celebrate
9. Ask questions; be curious



Our Workforce Representation Plan responds to the commitment made through the Greater Manchester People Inclusion Standards.

It represents Bury's action plan to deliver against the nine standards agreed collectively across Greater Manchester to describe what truly inclusive Workplaces look like.

**These Standards have been co-designed and adopted by:**

Bolton | Bury | Manchester | Oldham | Rochdale | Salford | Stockport | Tameside | Trafford  
Wigan | Greater Manchester Combined Authority | Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service  
Transport for Greater Manchester | Growth Company

# Workforce Representation Plan

Our borough has a richly diverse population, demonstrated by our thriving towns, neighbourhoods and communities which bring together many different life experiences, skills, knowledge and cultures to make Bury a vibrant and welcoming place to live and work in.

Our LET'S Do It! Vision and strategy for Bury has inclusion at its core and through this we recognise that to be at our very best as a key service provider and support system for our residents, our workforce must be representative of the people that we serve in terms of diversity.

Having representative diversity in our workforce brings many benefits including:

- Broadening skills and knowledge in the workforce
- A better understanding of the communities we serve
- Increased innovation and creativity in service design and delivery
- Higher employee retention
- Greater access to talent and widening talent pools

All of the above contribute to being a great employer to our colleagues and providing high quality services and support systems for our residents across the borough that are accessible and inclusive to all.

This plan sets out how the council will increase workforce representation over the next three years.

# Workforce Representation Data

These tables show our workforce demographics as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 compared with residents' data from the Borough of Bury Census in 2021

	Disabled	Ethnic Minority	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual	Transgender
<b>Workforce</b>	<b>7.43%</b>	<b>8.51%</b>	<b>1.64%</b>	<b>0.22%</b>
<b>Bury Residents</b>	<b>19.10%</b>	<b>20.09%</b>	<b>2.81%</b>	<b>0.47%</b>

	Christian	No Religion	Islam	Judaism	Hindu	Buddhism	Sikh
<b>Workforce</b>	<b>41.31%</b>	<b>19.78%</b>	<b>3.66%</b>	<b>0.19%</b>	<b>0.19%</b>	<b>0.15%</b>	<b>0.04%</b>
<b>Bury Residents</b>	<b>48.80%</b>	<b>29.40%</b>	<b>9.90%</b>	<b>5.50%</b>	<b>0.50%</b>	<b>0.30%</b>	<b>0.30%</b>

The council's workforce is not representative of the disabled and ethnic minority population in Bury by a significant amount, this is also true for Muslim and Jewish populations. Additionally, our workforce underrepresents LGBTQ+ communities in Bury, although our workforce representation gap is less. It should be noted that the Census questions about LGBTQ+ identities was optional, therefore the census data is widely regarded to be lower than the actual LGBTQ+ population in Bury.

# Workforce Representation Data

These tables show our workforce demographics as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, detailing whole workforce, senior management roles and the unknown workforce demographic data

	Disabled	Ethnic Minority	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual	Transgender
<b>Workforce</b>	<b>7.43%</b>	<b>8.51%</b>	<b>1.64%</b>	<b>0.22%</b>
<b>Senior Managers</b>	<b>6.00%</b>	<b>6.00%</b>	<b>9.00%</b>	<b>1.00%</b>
<b>Unknown Data</b>	<b>32.01%</b>	<b>27.69%</b>	<b>30.56%</b>	<b>78.06%</b>

	Christian	No Religion	Islam	Judaism	Hindu	Buddhism	Sikh
<b>Workforce</b>	<b>41.31%</b>	<b>19.78%</b>	<b>3.66%</b>	<b>0.19%</b>	<b>0.19%</b>	<b>0.15%</b>	<b>0.04%</b>
<b>Senior Managers</b>	<b>40.00%</b>	<b>21.00%</b>	<b>2.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.30%</b>
<b>Unknown Data</b>	<b>30.11%</b>						

This shows a further underrepresentation of disabled and ethnic minority colleagues in senior management roles compared to the whole workforce and the population of the borough. This is also true for Muslim and Jewish colleagues.

Also highlighted here is the high rate of unknown demographic data in each demographic category which prevents comprehensive and accurate data analysis.



# Workforce Representation Data

These tables show our workforce and senior managers demographics as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, 2023 & 2024

	Disabled	Ethnic Minority	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual	Transgender
<b>Workforce 2022</b>	<b>7.19%</b>	<b>6.74%</b>	<b>1.87%</b>	<b>0.38%</b>
<b>Workforce 2023</b>	<b>7.30%</b>	<b>8.77%</b>	<b>1.85%</b>	<b>0.27%</b>
<b>Workforce 2024</b>	<b>7.43%</b>	<b>8.51%</b>	<b>1.64%</b>	<b>0.22%</b>
<b>SM 2022</b>	<b>8.75%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>7.50%</b>	<b>1.25%</b>
<b>SM 2023</b>	<b>5.93%</b>	<b>5.09%</b>	<b>9.32%</b>	<b>0.85%</b>
<b>SM 2024</b>	<b>6.00%</b>	<b>6.00%</b>	<b>9.00%</b>	<b>1.00%</b>

This data shows there is some slow momentum in increasing workforce representation within our whole workforce for disabled and a small reduction in ethnic minority colleagues. For senior roles SM1 and above, there is a slow momentum which this plan can build upon

# Workforce Representation Data

These tables show our workforce and senior managers demographics as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, 2023 & 2024

	Christian	No Religion	Islam	Judaism	Hindu	Buddhism	Sikh
<b>Workforce 2022</b>	<b>47.20%</b>	<b>20.49%</b>	<b>3.52%</b>	<b>0.31%</b>	<b>0.21%</b>	<b>0.21%</b>	<b>0.14%</b>
<b>Workforce 2023</b>	<b>44.12%</b>	<b>18.91%</b>	<b>3.39%</b>	<b>0.24%</b>	<b>0.17%</b>	<b>0.21%</b>	<b>0.14%</b>
<b>Workforce 2024</b>	<b>41.31%</b>	<b>19.78%</b>	<b>3.66%</b>	<b>0.19%</b>	<b>0.19%</b>	<b>0.15%</b>	<b>0.04%</b>
<b>SM 2022</b>	<b>50.00%</b>	<b>28.75%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>
<b>SM 2023</b>	<b>44.92%</b>	<b>21.86%</b>	<b>1.69%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.30%</b>
<b>SM 2024</b>	<b>40.00%</b>	<b>21.00%</b>	<b>2.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>

This data shows there is some swings in data in across the range of religions and beliefs year on year.

The proportion of Christian senior managers and senior managers who follow no religion are broadly proportionate with the whole workforce.

The percentage of Muslim senior managers is increasing year on year but is not yet proportional to the whole workforce.

There is no declared representation for senior managers who are Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh, which is not proportional to the whole workforce or the population of the borough of Bury.

# Workforce Representation Feedback from Communities

In developing this plan, we haven't only looked at quantitative census and workforce data we have used qualitative information taken from community feedback, surveys and studies.

## **2021 Race Conversations and Listening Exercises**

In 2021 a series of race conversations and listening events took place with ethnic minority communities across Bury. A key theme coming from these was barriers and challenges in accessing employment and career development. This included the need to diversify application routes and recruitment exercises to make these more accessible to communities, advertising our roles in spaces these communities regularly use and removing bias from our recruitment and selection processes.

## **Greater Manchester Race Equality Strategy**

Consultation undertaken as part of the development of this strategy highlighted recruitment, retention and progression as a key concern for people from ethnic minority backgrounds with feedback noting that roles should have clearly defined expectations and simple, easy to understand adverts and job descriptions. Assessments need to be meaningful and free from bias. More needs to be done to understand why ethnic minority employees leave organisations and that this information should be monitored closely to identify specific trends to be addressed.

# Workforce Representation Feedback from Communities

## **The Greater Manchester Big Disability Survey 2022**

In 2022 the GM Disability People's Panel ran the UK's biggest ever survey of disabled people. The survey revealed some shocking but very common experiences disabled people face in recruitment and employment. People told the survey they had been advised to hide their disability to help them gain employment, stay in employment and progress in their careers. For people who didn't hide their disability, many said they found it exhausting having to ask repeatedly for adjustments so they could engage in recruitment exercises or within their workplaces.

## **Foundations for Change Report 2023**

This report was commissioned around designing a disability workforce equality scheme across Greater Manchester. Research for this report found that Bury had the highest percentage of disabled colleagues of all local authorities in Greater Manchester. The report however found that 24% of unemployed people seeking work in Greater Manchester were disabled and 27% of disabled people taking part in the research had left jobs due to disabling barriers they encountered. The report recommended replacing the term 'reasonable adjustments' with 'workplace adjustments' which we have already adopted at Bury. The report also recommended having strong colleague networks, co designing workplace policies practices, procedures and physical spaces and specific career development programmes to support disabled people into management and leadership roles.

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# Workforce Representation Feedback from Communities

## **Disability Confident Action Plan**

In summer 2023 we revalidated our Disability Confident Leader status through a peer audit by a disabled people's user led organisation. Bury was commended for the work that we already do which was reflected in our revalidation. The audit did give us notes on areas where we could further improve and build on the good work we already do. This included reviewing our policies and guidance around recruitment to ensure they are fully accessible, role modelling disabled colleagues in our recruitments and workplace activities, greater promotion of the guaranteed interview scheme and being proactive with adjustments. All of which would support attraction, recruitment, retention and development of disabled colleagues.

## **Inclusive Public Service Recruitment Project**

The Inclusive Public Services project led by Bury Council has identified 6 barriers to recruitment for our disabled and ethnic minority communities through research conducted with public sector and third sector organisations and community groups. These are:

- Poor perceptions of public services within underrepresented communities
- Limited and exclusive advertising of local authority vacancies
- Application processes that are difficult and inaccessible
- Interviewing and assessment processes that are inflexible and inaccessible
- Poor awareness of workplace adjustments
- Lack of positive action in terms of retention and career development



# Workforce Representation Feedback from Communities

## **Bury Council Pulse Survey April 2024**

These surveys of council colleagues focused on inclusion with specific questions relating to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) at Bury. Responses from the surveys were mostly positive with over 90% of colleagues believing the council champions and celebrates EDI well over both surveys. Despite this, the results showed back-office teams were more positive about their understanding and experiences of inclusion than their front-line colleagues.

In terms of demographics, results over both surveys showed that colleagues from ethnic minorities (86% compared to 90%), disabled colleagues (80% compared to 90%) and LGBTQ+ colleagues (76% compared to 92%) all found it harder to be themselves in the workplace than their colleagues who did not have these identities.

Additionally, whilst there were several positive free text comments about inclusion on the survey, some comments noted instances where colleagues had experienced inappropriate 'jokes', comments and attitudes relating to some protected characteristics.

# Workforce Representation: Data Summary

In summary, the quantitative and qualitative data tell us the following:

- The council's workforce is under representative of the disabled, ethnic minority, LGBTQ+, Muslim and Jewish populations in Bury. For disabled, ethnic minority, Muslim and Jewish colleagues, this is significant. There is further under representation of these four groups at senior management level.
- There is some momentum with disabled colleague representation year on year however at senior management level this is only the case for ethnic minority and Muslim colleagues with the proportion of disabled senior managers decreasing.
- There is a significant amount of colleague demographic data missing which will require attention to support the workforce representation plan.
- Qualitative information and feedback show that roles are not advertised in spaces where disabled and ethnic minority people are likely to look for work and where they do have access to adverts, the application process can often be complex and inaccessible
- Recruitment processes have been highlighted as inflexible and inaccessible with adjustments not readily offered for people who might need these.
- Retention and development of disabled and ethnic minority people has been highlighted with a high percentage of disabled people facing disabling barriers in work and people from ethnic minority groups unable to strike the right work-life balance.
- There is a lack of knowledge, skills and career development for disabled and ethnic minority colleagues

# LET'S Improve our Workforce Representation

Our LET'S values form a basis for developing and delivering this workforce representation plan:

## **LOCAL**

We'll recognise the diversity of Bury to build this plan, understanding that a different approach will be needed to reach different people and communities

## **ENTERPRISE**

We'll innovate, we'll think outside the box and challenge our norms

## **TOGETHER**

We'll deliver the plan collaboratively in our teams, with partners across Greater Manchester, through our networks and in the community to develop and deliver the plan

## **STRENGTHS**

We're already doing some great work in this space. We'll take this and build on it



**Bury**  
Council

# Workforce Representation Plan

## **Evidence Based Development**

This plan has been developed using quantitative and qualitative. We will continue to monitor and collate evidence to support the continued development of the initiatives within the plan and evaluate their effectiveness and successes.

## **Plan Timetable**

The plan will be delivered over a four-year period in line with the council's EDI strategy from November 2024 to October 2028 as elements require structural, cultural and practical changes to how we approach aspects of the employee lifecycle. These changes will need time to be implemented and embedded.

## **Plan Themes**

The evidence suggests that recruitment alone will not increase workforce representation. We know there are challenges in reaching underrepresented communities. Once employed, it's clear that retention and career progression are also areas requiring focus to avoid a 'revolving door' effect where we are losing colleagues from underrepresented groups at the same rate, or faster, than we are recruiting them. The plan therefore focuses on four themes taken from the employee lifecycle, Attract, Recruit, Develop and Retain all of which will contribute to bringing talent into the council and having a workplace where they belong, thrive and want to stay at.

# Workforce Representation Plan

## Plan Aims

The overall aim of the plan is to:

**Increase our workforce representation at all levels so that the demographics of our workforce are reflective of the demographics of the Borough of Bury**

Each theme has aims that will support us to develop a more inclusive workforce and form the basis for the specific initiatives set out.

Whilst focus will be given to race and disability within this plan, inclusive practices very often benefit everyone including those who have specific protected characteristics and those who do not. This plan will therefore support the council to become more inclusive generally in our recruitment practices, in our workplace culture and in the career development of our colleagues.

It is recognised that current labour market conditions are volatile which present challenges to the council in recruiting and retaining colleagues. This plan will support the council in reducing these challenges by contributing to increasing applications for roles and increasing colleague retention across the council.



# Workforce Representation Plan

## Governance

The plan will form a part of a newly developed Bury Council EDI Strategy to be published in late 2024. Progress will be reported in an annual EDI Strategy report to be presented to Members before being published externally. Progress updates will be given regularly to senior leaders, The Cabinet Member for HR, colleague networks and all staff. Plan progress will also be included within reporting against other key strategies such as our LET'S Do it! Strategy and the Greater Manchester Race Equality strategy.

## Plan Delivery

Delivery of the plan will require a 'one team' approach with delivery led by our EDI, HR, OD teams and management teams across the council working together with colleague groups, residents and communities and external partners in Bury and Greater Manchester.

The plan's distinct themes of attract, recruit, retain and develop will not be delivered as siloed themes as we recognise that some actions in one theme will support the aims of another theme. For example, it is very likely that what attracts candidates to Bury Council, will be what helps us retain successful candidates and that having colleagues and managers effective in supporting our recruitment can support their own personal and career development.

# Workforce Representation Plan

## **Building on Existing Inclusive Practice**

The plan is a continuation and celebration of the innovative and inclusive practices already adopted by the council. These include:

- Being a Disability Confident Leader
- Achieving Gold Standard Employer status in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme
- Developing a wide range of apprenticeship opportunities to support colleague development
- A guaranteed interview scheme for carers, disabled people, care leavers and military veterans and reservists
- A mutual mentoring scheme for senior leaders and colleagues to learn from each other
- Attending paths to employment events and career fairs dedicated to underrepresented communities
- Applications through CV instead of application forms
- Offering 'working interview' work trials where candidates complete the role for a few days instead of a regular interview

These initiatives have contributed to the upward trend we are already seeing with workforce representation. The workforce representation plan will celebrate the success of these initiatives ensuring these are complimented, promoted and built upon within the plan to support the overall aim of having a representative workforce.

# Workforce Representation Plan

## How We Will Measure Success

Successes will be measured through monitoring of the following:

- Monitoring the demographics of candidates for our roles
- Monitoring demographic disclosure rates for council colleagues
- Comparing our workforce demographic data against the Census 2021 benchmark
- Monitoring retention rates
- Monitoring senior management and leadership demographics
- Monitoring colleague responses in Pulse Surveys
- Listening to candidates and colleagues throughout the delivery of the plan

# Workforce Representation: Themes

## Attract

- Selling Bury as an attractive employer**
- Reaching communities to expand talent pools**
- Diversifying our application processes**
- Removing barriers and doubts**

## Recruit

- Meaningful assessments**
- Making the process accessible for all**
- Removing bias**
- Enabling candidates to be their best**

## Develop

- Providing access to skills and knowledge development**
- Spotting and nurturing potential and talent**
- Supporting career ambitions**

## Retain

- Showing colleagues they belong**
- Demonstrate rewards**
- Recognising good work**

# Workforce Representation: Plan on a Page

	Attract	Recruit	Develop	Retain
Year 1	Workplace Adjustments Smarter Adverting	Recruitment & Selection Training Diverse Panels	L & D Awareness Policy Review	Workplace Adjustments Workplace Culture
Year 2	EVP Job Carving Brand Ambassadors	Review R&S practice Accessible Recruitment	Communications Job Carving Development Programmes	Induction Exit/Stay Interviews EVP Job Carving
Year 3	Education Links Greater Jobs Website	Meaningful Assessments	Workforce Planning	Career Pathways
Year 4	Community Partnerships	Working across GM	Thriving Networks	Review flexible and agile working



# Attract

Selling Bury as an attractive employer  
Reaching communities to expand talent pools  
Diversifying our application processes  
Removing barriers and doubts

# Workforce Representation: Attract Years 1 & 2

In years 1 and 2 of the plan, we will focus on the following activities:

## **Workplace Adjustments**

We are committed to ensuring all our colleagues are equipped and supported to thrive and reach their full potential. To do this we recognise some colleagues may need adjustments to be at their best. Our commitment will be underpinned by a specific Workplace Adjustments process that will explain what adjustments are, encourage colleagues to request adjustments and support managers to work with colleagues to implement adjustments. - We will celebrate being a Disability Confident Leader and use this as a benchmark to improve and drive a disability and neurodiversity friendly workplace.

## **Smarter Advertising**

We will review our vacancy adverts to make these simpler and easier to read and understand, that give the details people need about the vacancy and who would be suited to the vacancy. Where we can, we will package together different but similar roles so that our adverts for these roles are consistent.

We'll diversify where and how we advertise our vacancies using our current greater jobs platform but also using social media, advertising in our neighbourhoods and communities, through charities and voluntary groups, jobs and career fairs, working with the DWP, Job Centre Plus and in schools and colleges to get a wider reach when we advertise our roles.

# Workforce Representation: Attract Years 1 & 2

In years 1 and 2 of the plan, we will focus on the following activities:

## **Employee Value Proposition**

This will bring together the benefits and all that is great about working at Bury. From our generous terms and conditions, to our commitment to a healthy work/life balance, to the diversity of the roles and careers we offer, to our friendly and supportive colleagues and workspaces and the schemes and discounts available to colleagues at Bury.

We'll promote this through our website, where we advertise our vacancies, through our partner organisations and we will demonstrate this at in person careers fairs and recruitment events.

## **Job Carving**

Linked to workplace adjustments, we will develop a job carving process enabling us to create and evolve roles where work tasks match the skills, knowledge and talents of candidates and colleagues enabling them to reach their full potential and succeed in the workplace. We will be a visible champion of job carving, demonstrating the benefits to attract talented candidates for our roles.

## **Brand Ambassadors**

We will demonstrate how great it is to work at Bury Council through supporting and encouraging our colleagues to be brand ambassadors in the community. We'll celebrate them and their achievements at the council to showcase the benefits of working at Bury Council



## Workforce Representation: Attract Years 3 & 4

In years 3 and 4 of the plan, we will focus on the following activities:

### **Education Links**

As a large local employer, we'll develop strong links with our local schools, colleges and university centres to support educational attainment, offer workplace experience and placements and provide vocational and careers guidance, advice and options to people who are leaving education, including our Supported Employment offer which we will promote through this work.

### **Greater Jobs Website**

We'll use the full potential of the Greater Jobs website to develop an externally facing employment microsite to list our vacancies, give people all the details and insight they need to understand the benefits and opportunities of working at Bury Council. Ensuring that this website is accessible through the main council website and promoting Greater Jobs with partner organisations to maximise visibility.

### **Community Partnerships**

We will develop partnerships with voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations to offer underrepresented communities who are not currently in education, work placement opportunities, vocational and career guidance, advice and options including our Supported Employment offer

# Recruit

Meaningful assessments

Making the process accessible for all

Removing bias

Enabling candidates to be their best



# Workforce Representation: Recruit Years 1 & 2

In years 1 & 2 of the plan, we will focus on the following activities:

## **Recruitment & Selection Training**

We will refresh our recruitment and selection training, incorporating learning from the Inclusive Public Services project, the review into our recruitment and selection practices, race conversations and our Disability Confident submission. The training will be delivered to all our recruiting managers and colleagues involved in our recruiting practices.

## **Diverse Panels**

To challenge unconscious bias, we will strengthen our approach to diversity within our shortlisting and recruitment panels so these better reflect our workforce and the diverse pool of candidates we seek to attract to our roles.

## **Review of Recruitment & Selection Practices**

Using the feedback from the Race Conversations exercise, our disability confident leader validation, GM Race Equality panel and recommendations from the Inclusive Public Services project, we will review the way we do recruitment and selection to reduce and remove the challenges and barriers people face.

## **Accessible Recruitment**

As part of the year 1 review into our practices we will revise our practices, removing the barriers identified through the review and through other exercises such as the Race Conversations and our Disability Confident action plan. This will make our recruitment practices accessible to people who have previously found gaining employment with us challenging.

## Workforce Representation: Recruit Years 3 & 4

In years 3 and 4 of the plan, we will focus on the following activities:

### **Meaningful Assessments**

Our assessment methods will be reviewed to ensure they are the right method of assessment for our roles to allow candidates to show their authentic and best selves in our recruitments. By having meaningful assessments, we are more likely to match the right candidates with the right roles, helping new starters to succeed in their new roles with us.

### **Working across Greater Manchester**

We'll work with other local authorities and public service organisations around inclusive recruitment. As a champion and role model for the Inclusive Public Services project and inclusive recruitment to share ideas, resources and successes across Greater Manchester for the benefit of all public service organisations and all communities in Greater Manchester.

# Develop

Providing access to skills and knowledge development  
Spotting and nurturing potential and talent  
Supporting career ambitions

# Workforce Representation: Develop Years 1 & 2

In year 1 of the plan, we will focus on the following activities:

## **Learning and Development Awareness**

We will ensure the full range of learning and development opportunities are regularly communicated and accessible to all colleagues to support their learning and development, continual professional development and their career aspirations.

## **Policy Review**

We will commit to regularly reviewing our people focused workplace policies to ensure these continue to be relevant and provide the correct support, systems and culture to support colleague's learning and development.

## **Communications**

We will communicate regularly to promote inclusive learning and development opportunities. This will include celebrating successes and role modelling the lived experiences of effective learning and development and career progression of colleagues from under represented groups. In doing this we will demonstrate the benefits of colleague development and encourage colleagues to take up opportunities that are available.

# Workforce Representation: Develop Years 1 & 2

In years 1 and 2 of the plan, we will focus on the following activities

## **Job Carving**

Linked to workplace adjustments, we will develop a job carving process enabling us to create and evolve roles where work tasks to match the skills, knowledge and talents of our colleagues enabling them to reach their full potential, nurture their talents and support their career development.

## **Development Programmes**

Taking note of the feedback from The GM Race Equality Panel and the Foundations for Change Report, we will work with partners in Bury and Greater Manchester to promote, create or source development programmes aimed at underrepresented groups within the council. These development programmes will focus on giving participants opportunities to work on projects to develop their skills and give them experience which can support their career development.



## Workforce Representation: Develop Years 3 & 4

In years 3 and 4 of the plan, we will focus on the following activities:

### **Workforce Planning**

We will develop effective succession programmes which will identify and nurture talent and rising stars. By providing development through specific succession programmes our rising stars will be developed to be ready to make the next move in their career journey at the council. Where succession positions aren't available, we will encourage our managers to spot talented colleagues and offer them stretch opportunities to nurture their skills, knowledge and talent.

### **Thriving Networks**

We will celebrate our colleague networks, ensuring they are visible and have a voice so they can contribute fully towards building and maintaining inclusive workspaces and cultures. Having colleague networks that are thriving in the workplace gives a source of encouragement and confidence to colleagues from underrepresented groups. Networks share skills and knowledge as well as being role models and providing a collective authentic lived experience voice in helping the council remain an inclusive and progressive workplace where all colleagues are valued and have equity in the workplace, regardless of characteristics or background.

# Retain

Showing colleagues they belong  
Demonstrate rewards  
Recognising good work

# Workforce Representation: Retain Years 1 & 2

In years 1 & 2 of the plan, we will focus on the following activities:

## **Workplace Adjustments**

We are committed to ensuring all our colleagues are equipped and supported to thrive and reach their full potential. To do this we recognise some colleagues may need adjustments to be at their best. Our commitment will be underpinned by a specific Workplace Adjustments process that will explain what adjustments are, encourage colleagues to request adjustments and support managers to work with colleagues to implement adjustments. - We will celebrate being a Disability Confident Leader and use this as a benchmark to improve and drive a disability and neurodiversity friendly workplace.

## **Workplace Culture**

Building on the friendly and supportive workplace culture that already exists at Bury, we will engender a workplace culture where difference is understood, valued and encouraged. A culture where people are not afraid to be their authentic selves, where colleagues can ask for adjustments and managers are confident in applying adjustments. We'll do this through continual education and conversations in our teams, service areas and all colleague comms.

# Workforce Representation: Retain Year 1

In years 1 & 2 of the plan, we will focus on the following activities:

## **Induction**

We will review and build on our current structured induction programme for all new colleagues, ensuring the delivery of this is flexible and adaptable for front line colleagues. Alongside learning about key policies and procedures, the induction will include going through the staff handbook, an opportunity to take part in the LET'S challenge and knowledge of the learning, development and career opportunities available to Bury Council colleagues.

## **Exit/Stay Interviews**

We will develop an effective exit interview system so that we can understand why colleagues leave us.

Quantitative leaver data helps us to identify trends and/or areas for concern, however good qualitative data is needed to really understand the reasons people choose to move on from the council.

Added to exit interviews we will periodically ask colleagues what makes them want to stay with us in a specific stay interview. Using data from both exercises we will be able to do more of what we are good at doing and improve or eliminate any practices that our leavers tell us we could do better.

# Workforce Representation: Retain Years 1 & 2

In years 1 and 2 of the plan, we will focus on the following activities:

## **Employee Value Proposition**

This will bring together the benefits and all that is great about working at Bury. From our generous terms and conditions, to our commitment to a healthy work/life balance, to the diversity of the roles and careers we offer, to our friendly and supportive colleagues and workspaces and the schemes and discounts available to colleagues at Bury. We'll ensure this information is readily available and regularly communicated so our colleagues know and understand how valued they are and what the additional benefits of being a Bury Council colleague brings.

## **Job Carving**

Linked to workplace adjustments, we will develop a job carving process enabling us to create and evolve roles where work tasks match the skills, knowledge and talents of our colleagues enabling them to reach their full potential, nurture their talents and succeed in the workplace.



## Workforce Representation: Retain Years 3 & 4

In years 3 and 4 of the plan, we will focus on the following activities:

### **Career Pathways**

We will develop career pathways for the many careers that are available at Bury Council. These will include entry level, supervisor level, management level and leadership level so that colleagues at all levels on the career pathway can easily see a clear path to support their career aspirations.

### **Review of Flexible and Agile Working**

As a significant benefit to colleagues, we will review our flexible and agile working practices to establish if these continue to be fit for purpose to support colleagues in achieving the correct work-life balance as individuals in a contemporary workplace and society. As part of the review, we will analyse flexible working requests, research current good practices with other complex employers and consult with colleagues on what would work for them.

## Equality Impact Analysis

This equality impact analysis establishes the likely effects both positive and negative and potential unintended consequences that decisions, policies, projects and practices can have on people at risk of discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The analysis considers documentary evidence, data and information from stakeholder engagement/consultation to manage risk and to understand the actual or potential effect of activity, including both positive and adverse impacts, on those affected by the activity being considered.

To support completion of this analysis tool, please refer to the equality impact analysis guidance.

### Section 1 – Analysis Details (Page 5 of the guidance document)

<b>Name of Policy/Project/Decision</b>	EDI Strategy 2024-2028
<b>Lead Officer (SRO or Assistant Director/Director)</b>	Sam McVaigh
<b>Department/Team</b>	People & Inclusion
<b>Proposed Implementation Date</b>	November 2024
<b>Author of the EqIA</b>	Lee Cawley
<b>Date of the EqIA</b>	September 2024

<p><b>1.1 What is the main purpose of the proposed policy/project/decision and intended outcomes?</b></p> <p>In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and to meet requirements set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty within the act, local authorities are required to set, publish and review equality objectives to be refreshed every four years. It is common practice for public sector bodies to set out their equality objectives in a strategy document.</p> <p>The Council last set equality objectives in a joint four year Inclusion Strategy with Bury CCG in 2020. This aimed to set the foundations for building an effective EDI function and governance structures in both organisations and a review of these objectives has shown that these aims have been met.</p> <p>With the dissolution of the CCG, the proposed 2024-2028 strategy and objectives are Council only. These build on the successes of the previous strategy and proposes a set of priorities for 2024-28 to ensure that consideration of protected characteristics and intersectionality are threaded through our workplace and community activities.</p>
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The EDI strategy has clear demonstrable links to the Let's Do It Strategy. Each objective in the EDI strategy supports a focus of inclusion through the prism of protected characteristics, enabling people with protected characteristics to realise the benefits of the Let's Do it outcome measures.

## Section 2 – Impact Assessment (Pages 6 to 10 of the guidance document)

### 2.1 Who could the proposed policy/project/decision likely have an impact on?

Employees: **Yes**

Community/Residents: **Yes**

Third parties such as suppliers, providers and voluntary organisations: **Yes**

If the answer to all three questions is 'no' there is no need to continue with this analysis.

### 2.2 Evidence to support the analysis. Include documentary evidence, data and stakeholder information/consultation

#### Documentary Evidence:

**Data:** Our [Employment Equality Report](#) illustrates the demographics of the staff and resident across the borough this strategy relates to.

#### Stakeholder information/consultation:



Appendix B EDI  
Strategy Consultation

### 2.3 Consider the following questions in terms of who the policy/project/decision could potentially have an impact on.

**Detail these in the impact assessment table (2.4) and the potential impact this could have.**

- Could the proposal prevent the promotion of equality of opportunity or good relations between different equality groups? **No**
- Could the proposal create barriers to accessing a service or obtaining employment because of a protected characteristic? **No**
- Could the proposal affect the usage or experience of a service because of a protected characteristic? **No**
- Could a protected characteristic be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by the proposal? **No**

- Could the proposal make it more or less likely that a protected characteristic will be at risk of harassment or victimisation? **Less**
- Could the proposal affect public attitudes towards a protected characteristic (e.g. by increasing or reducing their presence in the community)? **No**
- Could the proposal prevent or limit a protected characteristic contributing to the democratic running of the council? **No**

2.4 Characteristic	Potential Impacts	Evidence (from 2.2) to demonstrate this impact	Mitigations to reduce negative impact	Impact level with mitigations Positive, Neutral, Negative
All Characteristics	Greater access and delivery of training and awareness improves knowledge, service design, service provision and community cohesion	Employment Equality Report		Positive
All Characteristics	Adopting a people inclusion framework ensures consistent best practice approach to delivering EDI work as an employer	Employment Equality Report		Positive
All Characteristics	Collating, analysing and using good quantitative and qualitative data supports tailored service design, service provision and community cohesion initiatives	Employment Equality Report		Positive

<b>All Characteristics</b>	Understanding needs from a protected characteristic and intersectional focus will allow a greater understanding of housing needs in terms of social housing allocation	Employment Equality Report		Positive
<b>All Characteristics</b>	Multi organisation approach to EDI will support tailored and intersectional focus on service design, service provision and community cohesion	Employment Equality Report		Positive
<b>Age</b>	Links to, and promotes the Staying Well strategy for older people	Employment Equality Report		Positive
<b>Age</b>	Inclusive recruitment practices supporting access to employment for younger people	Employment Equality Report		Positive
<b>Age</b>	Diversifying vacancy advertising and where we advertise increases access to employment routes and opportunities for	Employment Equality Report		Positive



	younger and older people			
<b>Disability</b>	Inclusive recruitment practices supporting access to employment for disabled people	Employment Equality Report		Positive
<b>Disability</b>	Diversifying vacancy advertising and where we advertise increases access to employment routes and opportunities for disabled people	Employment Equality Report		Positive
<b>Disability</b>	Sensory impairment communication strategy will support reducing health inequalities and greater inclusion in community and workplace activities	Employment Equality Report		Positive
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>				
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>				
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>				
<b>Race</b>	Inclusive recruitment practices supporting access to employment for	Employment Equality Report		Positive

	people from ethnic minorities			
<b>Race</b>	Diversifying vacancy advertising and where we advertise increases access to employment routes and opportunities for people from ethnic minorities	Employment Equality Report		Positive
<b>Religion and Belief</b>	Inclusive recruitment practices supporting access to employment for people following minority religions	Employment Equality Report		Positive
<b>Religion and Belief</b>	Diversifying vacancy advertising and where we advertise increases access to employment routes and opportunities for people following minority religions	Employment Equality Report		Positive
<b>Sex</b>	Formation of a Women's Forum will provide lived experience voice and need to service design, service	Employment Equality Report		Positive

	provision and support services			
<b>Sexual Orientation Carers</b>	Inclusive recruitment practices supporting access to employment for carers	Employment Equality Report		Positive
<b>Carers</b>	Diversifying vacancy advertising and where we advertise increases access to employment routes and opportunities for people who are carers	Employment Equality Report		Positive
<b>Care experienced children and care leavers</b>	Inclusive recruitment practices supporting access to employment for care experienced younger people	Employment Equality Report		Positive
<b>Care experienced children and care leavers</b>	Diversifying vacancy advertising and where we advertise increases access to employment routes and opportunities for care leavers	Employment Equality Report		Positive

<b>Care experienced children and care leavers</b>	Accommodation strategy for care leavers to provide a solid base as they enter adulthood	Employment Equality Report		Positive
<b>Socio-economically vulnerable</b>	Cross organisational work will support reducing food poverty across the borough	Employment Equality Report		Positive
<b>Veterans</b>	Inclusive recruitment practices supporting access to employment for veterans and their families	Employment Equality Report		Positive
<b>Veterans</b>	Diversifying vacancy advertising and where we advertise increases access to employment routes and opportunities for veterans and their families	Employment Equality Report		Positive

### **Actions required to mitigate/reduce/eliminate negative impacts or to complete the analysis**

<b>2.5 Characteristics</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Action Owner</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>

### **Section 3 - Impact Risk**

Establish the level of risk to people and organisations arising from identified impacts, with additional actions completed to mitigate/reduce/eliminate negative impacts.

### 3.1 Identifying risk level (Pages 10 - 12 of the guidance document)

Impact x Likelihood = Score			Likelihood			
			1	2	3	4
			Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Very likely
Impact	4	Very High	4	8	12	16
	3	High	3	6	9	12
	2	Medium	2	4	6	8
	1	Low	1	2	3	4
	0	Positive / No impact	0	0	0	0

<b>Risk Level</b>	<b>No Risk = 0</b>	<b>Low Risk = 1 - 4</b>	<b>Medium Risk = 5 – 7</b>	<b>High Risk = 8 - 16</b>
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<b>3.2 Level of risk identified</b>	0
<b>3.3 Reasons for risk level calculation</b>	All impacts are positive

### Section 4 - Analysis Decision (Page 11 of the guidance document)

<b>4.1 Analysis Decision</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Reasons for This Decision</b>
There is no negative impact therefore the activity will proceed	X	
There are low impacts or risks identified which can be mitigated or managed to reduce the risks and activity will proceed		
There are medium to high risks identified which cannot be mitigated following careful and thorough consideration. The activity will proceed		



with caution and this risk recorded on the risk register, ensuring continual review		
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## Section 5 – Sign Off and Revisions (Page 11 of the guidance document)

5.1 Sign Off	Name	Date	Comments
Lead Officer/SRO/Project Manager	Sam McVaigh		
Responsible Asst. Director/Director	Sam McVaigh		
EDI	Lee Cawley		

## EqlA Revision Log

5.2 Revision Date	Revision By	Revision Details



<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Decision Type:</b> Key
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<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b> 6 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Acquisition of properties for Children's Homes Operations	
<b>Report of</b>	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	
	Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth	

### Summary

1. The report seeks approval to purchase residential properties within the locality of Bury to accommodate children who are cared for by the local authority. The report seeks approval of £1.5m for the purchase and refurbishment of up to two properties, in order to make them fit for purpose as new children's homes.
2. Each of these two homes will provide places for up to 3 children per property, with live in staff and on-site managerial support. Together the new houses will provide up to 6 additional places for children within a home style environment within the locality of Bury. The new provision has the potential to avoid the cost of private sector placements by c£475k per annum assuming full occupancy.
3. A strategy for how the two properties will be repaired and managed will be developed in due course and in line with the Future Assets Plan (FAP) and broader estates management plans.
4. This report sets out the rationale and risks related to increasing number of Care Experienced Children (CEC), the cost, inefficiency and suitability of privately run accommodation and provides an alternative in-house delivery model offering improved quality and better value for money. The report will also set out how the council proposes to run the children's homes and the benefits this model will bring to the social, education and economic prospects of children in care by being placed in their local communities, as well as the associated workforce efficiencies.

### Recommendation(s)

5. Approve the proposal to enter into negotiations for the in-principle purchase of two 5/6-bedroomed homes to be converted as required to residential children's homes for residential placements for up to 6 children and associated staffing sleeping and office quarters.
6. Approve capital expenditure of up to £1.5m (assuming no external grant funding becomes available) for the purchase and refurbishment of the homes in (2.0) alongside associated operational management and transformation

activity within Children and Young People's Services to implement the proposed improvements and new management model.

7. Should grant monies be identified, prior to implementation, provide delegation to Executive Director of Children and Young People's Services and Director of Finance to accept any grant funding for the acquisitions should it become available following this approval.
8. To provide delegated authority to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Executive Director of Children and Young People's Services and Director of Finance, alongside the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People to oversee selection of property for new children's homes and associated legal agreements.
9. Note that the Council will undertake a procurement in respect of necessary refurbishment works at the purchased properties to appoint contractors and enter into legal agreements for the refurbishment of the premises. The value of these works is such that they may be awarded in accordance with the officers' scheme of delegation.
10. Note the introduction of proposed operational service changes which will require authorisation through standard HR processes alongside the implementation of the overall project. This will include creating the proposed staffing structure (subject to Job Evaluation) and resources alongside prevention-based transformation activity.

**3. Reasons for recommendation(s)**

11. The purchase of a maximum of 2 new homes within the locality of Bury to accommodate placements up to 6 Care Experienced Children and enable the Council to play an active role in the lives of its cared for children and meet its duty as Corporate Parents.
12. Deliver Bury's Children's and Young People's plan Outcome 3 to allow Children, young people and families to get the support they need locally to where they live.
13. The approach will improve quality of provision by giving more effective control to Bury Council over all aspects of service delivery, whilst also reducing the unit cost of the operation substantially.
14. Reduce the dependence of Bury Council on Private Sector residential provision, whilst establishing greater competitive tension in the market more generally. It is hoped that provision of this additional capacity will influence Private Sector providers to adjust unit costs to more realistic levels and will build on activity ongoing in neighbouring Authorities and the Region.
15. Support the Council's duty to find the most appropriate care setting for each child, by diversifying the current residential offer in the market-place.
16. Enable the Council to take a proactive approach to supporting Care Experienced Children as recommended by Bury's Corporate Parenting Board and the Children in Care Council (CICC), enabling children in its care to reach their potential.
17. To align Bury's 'LAC Sufficiency' approach to the GM Children's Sufficiency Strategy launched in 2020 - to find the right placement for a child or young person at the right time.
18. To increase placements in the locality and reduce the need to place children outside of Bury leading to better social, education and economic outcomes and improving workforce efficiency.
19. Enable further improvement in the quality of plans and planning for children, and greater choice of placements for children when they come into care as recommended in the 2021 Ofsted inspection.
20. Reduce dependency on Private Sector delivery of residential care recognising significant price rises in the private sector; and allow Bury to secure a stronger foothold in the market with a local solution which offers better value for money.
21. Local provision will ensure a balance in securing the right placement mix for children in care with associated cost savings as recognised in the council Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

22. The Capital Board have approved £1.5m (assuming no grant funding becomes available) to acquire and renovate up to two properties, subject to cabinet approval.
23. To allow up to two properties for the intended use to be purchased via delegated powers and immediately secure suitable properties when they come to market.

### **Alternative options considered and rejected**

24. **Do nothing** – continue to be reliant on external privately run children's homes including out of borough placements. This option was rejected as the Council is currently dependent on and susceptible to inflated placement costs, which offer poor value for money.
25. **Public/Private Partnership Vehicle** – Would require setting up a Joint Venture and jointly holding responsibility for purchasing / renovating suitable properties. The Council's control would be diluted, and a JV arrangement would require complex legal agreements and greater operational oversight and management arrangements. For these reasons the option was rejected.
26. **VCSE** – This would require significant market shaping and thus discounted due to the time needed identify suitable providers and undertake the necessary due diligence to ensure quality in practice standards.

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### **Background**

27. As with similar activity in the Adult Social Care operation; a significant percentage of children social care residential provision is delivered by private



providers. Currently the Council works closely with the 23 private providers of residential care within the borough and across the NW region to provide a home for some of its care experienced children.

28. Nationally there are significant challenges with the availability of suitable placements for children in care, as documented in both the recent care review, "Stable Homes, Built on Love", and in a Competition and Market Authority (CMA) review of the residential care sector which stated:-

*'a shortage of appropriate places in children's homes and with foster carers, meaning that some children are not getting the right care from their placement. Some children are also being placed too far away from where they previously lived or in placements that require them to be separated from their siblings. This shortage also means that high prices are often being paid by local authorities, who are responsible for placing children in appropriate settings.'*

29. Like many Local Authorities, Bury is also affected by a shortfall in the availability of placements and there has been an increase in the number of children placed in high-cost external placements, some of which are based outside of the borough. The average cost per week of a child's residential placement in the North-West stands at £5,832 at the end of Quarter 1 2024/25, having been £4,155 four years previously: a 40% increase.
30. Children's Services is working with its partners to reduce the number of children coming to care. It is on a journey of improvement and is making positive progress, as recently recognised by Ofsted. For example; Bury was the first authority in Greater Manchester to implement the 'Family Safeguarding' model of practice and have established one support constellation using the Mockingbird approach to foster care (where an experienced foster carer acts a hub of experience supporting a number of linked less-experienced carers).
31. The ongoing enhancement of Early Help and Social Care services will better support children to stay with their family wherever it is safe to do so. Work is also ongoing to increase the number of foster carers locally with an active recruitment campaign, which has resulted in a net increase of 7 fostering households (14 new recruited, 7 retiring/ceasing) during 2023/24. It is however a challenging time to recruit foster carers as all families are affected by the longer-term effects of the cost of living crisis and the availability of spare bedrooms has declined. Guided by its Children and Young People's plan, the Council is now looking to advance innovative practice in its approach to Care Experienced Children, play a greater active role in the lives of its children thereby fulfilling its duty as Corporate Parents.
32. Bury's Children and Young people plan 2021-2024 aims to improve the lives of children, young people and families in the borough and sets out a call for action to ensure children and young people live happy, healthy lives in their families and communities. The plan is explicit in setting out a clear priority around Bury's children and young people getting the support they need local

to where they live. The Bury 2030 Strategy around neighbourhood team working and the development of the new Neighbourhood Delivery model, including further development of a preventative approach “at place” means that the proposed locally led residential provision will be supported by neighbourhood-based services. Therefore, children in these placements will benefit from accessing help and support when they need it locally.

33. The Greater Manchester GM Children’s Sufficiency Strategy, supported by the Local Government Association (LGA) and Children’s Homes Association (CHA) recognises that local authorities have become increasingly dependent on private sector provision to respond to rising numbers of children in care and increasing complexity of need. The lack of diversity in the market and growing reliance on the private sector is both costly and unsustainable, as it places a significant burden on children’s social care budgets with local authorities having little choice to accept inflated placement costs.
34. For the Council to fulfil its role as a corporate parent, Care Experienced Children require suitable safe accommodation locally in communities they know, where this is appropriate.
35. With growing demand for residential places for children in care and children with increasing complexity of need, the Council has proactively developed a business case for change to both provide good support to its children and young people and to provide value for money to the local tax-payer. The business case explored different delivery options; culminating in a preferred delivery vehicle of the Council acquiring and operating its own residential homes.
36. The in-house provision would be staffed by a new Bury based workforce and guided by local quality of practice standards and links into other local agencies and services. It is envisaged such provision would sit alongside long-term prevention-based services, with the priority for children to continue to reside with families where it is safe to do so.

### **Rationale for Children’s Homes - Better Outcomes**

37. The number of children in care nationally has been rising every year for the past 15 years, increasing by 41% across that period; and by 11% in the past 5 years. The rise in Bury has been less – up by 22% since 2009 and 7% since 2018, but it is still significant. Much national and local activity is seeking to address this ongoing rise. Recognising the scale of the problem, both Rochdale and Stockport Councils have recently decided to diversify its children’s home market by entering this space with their own in-house provision, as have the GM local authorities collectively through Project Skyline and the plans to create 24 new residential places, spread across 10 homes.
38. Given rising demand levels, coupled with inflated placement costs from April 2024 in particular (on average across the NW this rose by 3.5% between March and June 2024), there is a significant, current and pressing need to

diversify the offer and increase the amount of placements to meet the needs of our Care Experienced Children within the locality of Bury.

39. Considerable work is taking place to prevent children from entering care via the Early Help and Children's Social Care services, which regularly reviews the continuum of need and risk levels of children entering the service. For most children and their parents this intervention is effective and prevents most children entering care. As can be seen above, Bury's rise in the number of children entering and remaining in care is lower than the national average.
40. Bury's adoption of the 'Family Safeguarding model' is intended to improve the quality of the work undertaken with families – providing holistic interventions that address adult issues through the use of multi-disciplinary teams. This model has been effective in other local authorities in England and has been endorsed by the DfE, with Bury's implementation being supported by one of the progenitors of the approach: Hertfordshire County Council. The model has been independently evaluated by academics and the DfE's Innovation unit. The evaluation indicated improved outcomes for children and parents by successfully reducing risk of harm to children and thereby reducing the number of children entering care. The cost avoidance and savings associated with reduced numbers of child protection plans and numbers of children being taken into care is significant. The long-term strategy to prevention-based services including the emerging Keeping Families Together programme (aimed at particularly vulnerable adolescents and children with disabilities) is expected to further reduce the turnover of placements. Additional capacity to offer operational oversight of this area and the proposed children's homes is being considered in tandem (see Table 1) to ensure an overarching strategy to both aspects of work.
41. For some children despite the effectiveness of early prevention-based interventions the risk of harm in their family home can-not be sufficiently mitigated and as such require removal from their parents' care. These children, with the agreement of family courts, become 'looked after' by the council as children in (public) care.
42. Once a child enters public care, the local authority must find the most appropriate alternative home for each child. Most children in the council's care are cared for in a family home – a foster home either with members of their extended family or as part of another foster carer's family household. The Mockingbird approach to supporting foster carers is designed to enable more children to be cared for in such a foster home, to support the stability of those homes, by providing foster carers with on-going expert support and advice from a skilled peer.
43. However, where there are either no suitable foster care placements available, or where the needs of a child are such that they cannot be met within a family home setting, this can lead to children being cared for in residential (children's) homes.

44. Some local authorities operate residential children's homes themselves; however the proportion of places within the public sector has contracted over the past 5 years and local authority homes in the North-West only currently make up 8% of the homes within the region (89% are privately run, with the remaining 3% provided by the voluntary/faith sector). Bury withdrew from providing residential homes for children over a decade ago and therefore all children placed in a residential home are placed in a privately run home.
45. Placing children outside of their home borough has been shown to create greater inequalities in a child's social, education and economic progress and contrary to the priority's 2 and 3 in the Children and Young People's Plan which state:
  - Children and young people live happy, healthy lives in their families and communities and;
  - Children and young people have a good education and leave school with the best education outcomes and skills to succeed as adults and make a positive contribution [with inclusive learning opportunities available to all]
46. According to the DfE Children "Looked After" dataset, in 2023 Bury had 50% of its cared for children placed in privately run children's homes within the Borough, which is lower than the 58.8% average for all Greater Manchester (GM). However, for those children placed outside of the borough (11%) such placements were **over 20 miles** away from their home borough, which is higher than the GM average of 8.3% and the second highest of all the GM Authorities after Tameside (12%).
47. Placing children within their home locality is particularly beneficial to the care outcomes of Care Experienced Children and the supporting workforce as Bury based placements would:
  - Create conditions for a greater oversight of care
  - Allows children to be closer to their friendship and kinship contacts and an element of stability if/when children transfer into and out of care.
  - Allows education outcomes for our most vulnerable children to be inclusive and improved from continuity of learning in their local schools.
  - Greater potential for Care Experienced Children to make positive choices upon leaving school, e.g education, or employment.
  - Allows social workers and other support staff to operate more efficiently and effectively, thereby improving Quality of Practice with more time for assessments and less time expended travelling to placements further afield.
  - Better enables partner agencies, particularly in Health and Education and learning to fulfil their corporate parenting responsibilities and respond flexibly to emerging and presenting needs.
  - Allows Bury's children to benefit from Local Authority staff and those of its partner agencies exhibiting Let's do it values and contribute to and benefit from resilient communities.

Conversely out of borough placements can lead to inconsistent and fragmented learning and greater difficulty in accessing support services, loss of identity, lack of stability and detachment from other important social relationships. Equally the lengthy travel time needed to visit children out of borough placements places additional pressure on the workforce supporting such children and may impede an ability to manage caseloads, planning time and assessment leading in turn to lack of job satisfaction and retention issues – all areas of improvement identified in the 2022 Practice Improvement Plan.

### **Value for Money (VfM) and unit cost advantages**

48. The average unit cost of an external children's home placement is higher than the cost of the proposed internal Council led provision. There is a compelling case in demonstrating revenue savings to delivering council run homes in house. A place at a Children's Home run by the council costs significantly less than placements purchased from the private sector.

49. Out of Borough placements have been associated with higher costs due to the increased level of social worker activity needed to visit the placement. A Local Government Association (LGA) report on high-cost children's social care placements surveyed 124 Local Councils. 30% of them listed out of area placements as a factor in the high-costs of some of these placements (the mean of the highest costing placements surveyed was £21,050 a week).

50. At present, the weekly unit cost of private placements, per child, per week is £5,897 with a total per annum cost of over £1.8m for 6 children.

50. Via the proposed Council run children's home offer, the Council is proposing to place 6 children in the in-house provision with an estimated average weekly unit cost saving of £1,520 per child and a potential maximum annual saving of nearly £4.8m assuming full occupancy (from year 2 onwards once the homes are fully registered).

However, to take into consideration void periods, occupancy of the homes is unlikely to be sustained at 100% for a myriad of reasons but most notably the ability to consistently 'match' children within the setting, savings have been calculated at **94%** occupancy compared to the current average cost of private sector placements, which will facilitate the estimated delivery of the MTFS revenue saving of £400,000 in 2026/27. The actual weekly savings will vary depending on the actual private sector placement costs of the children entering the new provision. Consideration of the cohorts of children suitable for the placements and cohesion of such groupings will be made by social worker staff to minimise potential for placement breakdown.

51. It should be noted assumed savings in high placement costs have already been built into the council's MTFS, as has growth in the spend on this area, given the recent growth in use of residential homes and their unit cost.

52. Given the growth in the number of children entering care and into residential homes over recent years, locally, regionally, and nationally, there is a strong



financial case to avoid further cost of external placements as part of a Cost Mitigation Strategy for children's social care budgeting.

53. Whilst the Council is participating in the GM Skyline project and has identified a property in borough for use as a GM Children's Home, this provision will be available to children in care across all of GM, not just Bury children. The in-house provision will differ by providing a home for Bury children in care in need of a residential placement.
54. This recognises that the cost to the Council would be more if it continues to rely exclusively on private sector placements, given the expected increase in demand and unit cost; and despite the effectiveness of prevention-based services.
55. Given the pressure of steadily increasing demand pressure on care home places, it is imperative that quality places are delivered at the lowest possible unit cost, releasing resources to cope with additional demand elsewhere in the system, especially in timely preventative work.

### **Key information**

56. Bury's Children and Young People Plan 2021-2024, which was co-produced with local stakeholder groups and children and young people aims to ensure children and young people live happy, healthy lives in their families and communities with support they need local to where they live.
57. The proposed new children's homes delivered will enable more children to grow up surrounded by their support networks, in communities they know, be educated in a fair and equal manner and have the skills and knowledge required to make well informed choices upon leaving school. If this model is successful, it is anticipated that it could be scaled up to provide more placements, improved outcomes and greater economies of scale with cost savings, subject to separate approval with a particular focus on children in care with disabilities.
58. The current budget pressures on children's social care are significant and related predominantly to the rise in the number of children in residential placements and the rise in unit costs for those placements - compounded by a reduction in foster care placements nationally and regionally over recent years.
59. The creation of a maximum of 2 new children's homes will provide 6 residential places, with social care provided through council services and delivered in accordance with Let's Do It! vision for our communities. It will deliver both value for money, improve workforce efficiency, while providing good homes for some of our most vulnerable children and young people with better wraparound care available from local agencies.

60. It should be noted that the Council's Future Asset Plan (FAP) has been reviewed and no such suitable properties exist that could be repurposed for this use; however should existing land/property within the council's estate become surplus, an assessment of suitability will be made and may preclude the need to acquire properties in.

61. Working together with planning policy, development management and land and property colleagues, properties will be identified using a defined and pre-agreed property and location criteria to ensure:

- effective resettlement and cohesion within existing communities
- accessibility and proximity to services
- access to public transport.
- Avoiding proximity to other potential negative influences
- Avoiding locations/proximity to existing private children's homes\*

*\*A mapping exercise has been undertaken in order to refine potential suitable locations thereby avoiding the possibility of overstimulating communities with the same/similar type of provision.*

62. Expertise in children's services will look to ensure children identified for the in-house provision is appropriately matched, taking into account age, needs, complexity and other circumstances, to create a family-feel living environment for each of the children and, maximise potential for a stable and successful placement over the long term.

63. Upon suitable properties being identified, planning requirements will be discussed with the council's planning team.

64. The above criteria is not exhaustive and will be agreed locally and consulted upon with local partners such as GMP and the approach to identification of properties is expected to emulate the GM Skyline, which Children's Services have already committed to.

65. Given that local authorities in GM and wider are bringing forward their own in-house provision coupled with growth in private sector residential sector, it is anticipated that recruiting the requisite workforce of 21FTE will be challenging as the demand is high for fully trained staff operating in this field, with the number of job opportunities exceeding the number of candidates available to fill such positions. With this in mind, the council has factored in a recruitment and retention budget to compete and stimulate interest amongst an already crowded market. Should the council not be able to attract the right level of staffing contingent with the required skills and experience, the properties will be returned to market.

66. Moreover, prior to becoming fully operational, both residential homes will require full registration with Ofsted and will be inspected prior to opening. Achieving the necessary quality standard of provision with the correct staffing and operational management arrangements is a rigorous process and Ofsted will need to be fully satisfied via a dedicated inspection that the homes are

safe to operate. Furthermore, the ongoing inspection framework for children's homes once they are established and operational is detailed and exacting and requires considerable ongoing diligence and focus. Children's homes are inspected at least annually (more frequently if the home is not judged to be good or outstanding) and all inspections are unannounced.

67. Capital funding of £1.5m for acquiring the homes will be accessed via Prudential Borrowing (PWLB) and has been approved as capital expenditure by Capital Board.

### Unit Cost Operational Savings

Table 1 below summarises the annual revenue costs of operating two children's homes by Bury Council, supporting 6 children. It also includes assumed capital expenditure for the purchase and fit-out of the homes (inclusive of internal capital fees (e.g. project management/legal/surveyor costs). This total cost of acquisitions including refurbishment costs has been budgeted at £1.5m.

67. It is assumed that a Prudential Borrowing facility will be utilised to fund the development via the Public Works Loan Board. Annual revenue financing costs associated with PWLB capital have been estimated based on current interest rates.

Table 1: Estimated Costs of internal operations

68. Having evaluated the staffing structure, to ensure effective and safe operational oversight and management of the provision, 21 FTE is required. This has been benchmarked with comparable provision in neighbouring boroughs and private sector providers.

\*It should be noted that the creation of the Head of Residential Services will also assume management responsibilities over a wider portfolio of work including short stays, short term respite breaks and edge of care work to provide additional capacity in these areas. Should the model be scaled up, greater economies of scale will be made as the Head of Residential Services will assume this broader portfolio of properties with the below unit cost further reducing.

\*The below posts are subject to Job Evaluation.

Resource	Capital Cost Total £'s	Revenue Cost (£pa)	Notes
<b>Direct Costs:</b>  <b>Care home staff (2 homes):</b>  Head of Residential Services* Registered Manager x2 FTE* Assistant Manager x 2 FTE* Residential Childcare Worker* x 17 FTE (8.5 FTE per home)		£90,647 £151,533 £121,065 £749,148	[Based on 6 children]   Chief Officer: A Grade: SM1 Grade: G13 Grade: 9

Recruitment/retention incentives		£50,000 <b>(£1,162,394)</b>	
<b>Overhead:</b>			
PWLB Borrowing	£1.5m	£85k <sup>1</sup>	Based on £1.5m capex. £1.5m assumes schedule of works inc. £150k to refurbish homes with furniture/white goods/fittings.
Non-staffing costs		£122,000	Operating costs, sundries and expenses, utility bills, replacement furniture, Includes annual emergency repairs & planned works.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1.5m</b>	<b>£1,369,394</b>	
<b>Total cost per child, per week</b>		<b>£4,377</b>	Assumes 100% occupancy
<b>Occupancy Rate to break-even point (break-even including delivery of budgeted MTFS revenue saving of £400,000)</b>		<b>94%</b>	Assumes Sept 24 average unit cost of private sector alternative (see table 2)

<sup>1</sup> Based on £1.5m Capex borrowed over 50 years.

69. Table 2 below illustrates the cost of external placements sourced from the Private Sector market at current rates. It identifies the estimated cost profile established in Table 1 as a comparison and summarises annual savings based on unit cost differential.

Table 2: Annualised and Unit Cost Comparison (Bury Council Vs External Placement)

Cost item	Unit Cost (£'s per child, per week)	Annualised Cost (£'s per annum)
Average <u>external</u> (Private Sector) price per bed, per week	£5,897	£1,839,864
Est. Unit Cost of Council Operated Facility (See Table 1)	£4,377	£1,369,394
Cost saving (Bury Council vs average external placement)	£1,520	£475,517

*Average 'High-Cost Placement' can be as high as £21k per child per week, £404k per annum, however this table focuses on like for like comparison and estimated net savings.*

70. Note: unit cost of external unit placements is variable and an upward trajectory. Current estimate is 10% upward pressure per year (Placements NW benchmarking data October 24)

For the purposes of occupancy, to break even (with costs expended in private sector placements), 94% occupancy level or above is required. Given year 1 will require set up and Ofsted registration, 94% occupancy can only be assumed from year 2 (once the properties are fully registered and operationally compliant). It also recognises there will be times when the Council will be carrying voids.

71. Annual staffing for an estimated 2 new homes is given above. Costs include both staffing costs and costs associated with maintenance and servicing of the homes (Non-staffing).

In the data above unit costs calculated on forecasted costs of the proposed new homes compared to current external residential placements. There is, however, a large spread in the costs of external placements and the cost savings could be much bigger where very costly external placements can be brought back into new Council managed homes.

72. With this in mind, a cashable revenue saving of £400k per annum has been reflected in the updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
73. The proposed two new children's homes and locations will be carefully identified using set criteria and operated by the Council in accordance with its practice standards, consideration of existing communities and Let's Do It! values. The proposal has been widely consulted upon within Children's Social Care, Fostering Service, Land and Property and Planning, as well as with practitioners operating in the children's home field to gain insight and support and ensure Bury can deliver a best in class in house residential model for its Care Experienced Children.
74. Like other local authorities, Bury has seen an increase in the number of children that are cared for. This is due to increasing complexity of children and family needs, and the impact on families of increasing child poverty, coupled with a reduction in foster care placements. It is now important that the Council acts to provide residential care within the locality of Bury. An in-house offer will provide equality of opportunity for Care Experienced Children, improve social and education outcomes whilst avoiding costly placements and workforce inefficiencies arising from out of borough placements. Finally, the proposal if approved, will give Bury a greater foothold and influence in the residential market and diversify the wider market offer.
75. The proposed funding strategy for the operation of two children's home facilities in-house demonstrates a significant unit cost saving against the costs available within the Private Sector. Outturn cost will need to be verified upon completion of the project, however it is clear there are significant financial benefits to adopting this approach at scale.

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### Links with the Corporate Priorities:

*Please summarise how this links to the Let's Do It Strategy.*

1. **LET'S** Look after our children in or close to their home borough, through provision of residential care services within Bury by:

#### **LOCAL:**

2. **Providing fit for purpose, safe and attractive residential care accommodation at the heart of our communities – where it is most needed.**



3. According to the DfE Children “Looked After” dataset, in 2023 Bury had 50% of its cared for children placed in the locality of Bury.
4. Positively, this is lower than the 58.8% average for all Greater Manchester (GM) Authorities. However, Bury also had 11% of its cared for children in placements outside of the Borough (20 miles or more) which is higher than the GM average of 8.3% and the second highest of all the GM Authorities after Tameside (12%).
5. Out of Borough placements have been associated with higher costs due to the increased Level of Social Worker activity and time needed to visit the placement. An LGA report on high-cost children’s social care placements surveyed 124 Local Councils. 30% of them listed out of area placements as a factor in the high-costs of some of these placements (the mean of the highest costing placements surveyed was £21,050 a week).
6. In addition to the cost of out of borough placements, the creation of new children’s homes will provide additional residential places (3 placements per property), with social care provided through council services, will deliver both value for money and better wraparound care for some of the most vulnerable children in Bury.
7. Importantly being placed locally in or near to Bury will enable such children and young people will benefit from the neighbourhood hub model and support services. It will also facilitate educational and social outcomes with learning to take place at local schools and contact with friends and family to be sustained. Local provision will reduce travel time and costs of family contact visits as well as reducing operational cost and time of social workers travelling outside of borough.
8. Together the new houses will provide up to 6 additional places for cared for children within a home style environment, meaning Bury children can continue to live locally in the communities they know supporting their identity and local connection to the friends and kinship groups.
9. Children transitioning into adulthood will be better integrated into their local work places as a result of local education pathways.
10. **ENTERPRISING:**
  - Reducing unit costs and improve productivity in service delivery for residential care placements within the Care Experienced Children (CEC) cohorts.
  - Acquiring our own residential care delivery assets and reducing reliance on the Private Sector.

- Improving commissioning leverage in care placements.
- Insulating Bury Council from excessive profit margins by Private Sector entities.

#### TOGETHER:

- Involving our children in the heart of the service design process.
- Recruiting the best care delivery and management staffing resources in the UK, trained in Bury's Let's do it values.
- Providing sufficient capacity to provide sustainable internal residential service delivery for CEC user cohorts over the short to medium run timescale.

#### STRENGTHS:

- Integrating Bury Council's multi-disciplinary directorate functions to deliver high quality cross functional continuous service improvement.
- Building on best practice from across the UK and refining lessons to a bespoke Bury model of residential care best practice.

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#### Equality Impact and Considerations:

*Please provide an explanation of the outcome(s) of an initial or full EIA and make **specific reference regarding the protected characteristic of Looked After Children.***

A full EIA has been completed. One positive and one negative impact identified with the negative impact mitigated to neutral.

A summary of the SDG is set out below.

#### **SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities**

What is the impact of this proposal for different groups? Consider these elements:

1.Discrimination, 2. Advancing equality of opportunity and 3. Fostering good relations

11.		12.	Impact rating	13.	RAG Result	14.	Comments
15.	Age	16.	Positive	17.	G	18.	Positive outcomes from this project would be vulnerable cared for children will better supported through their important transition years, through school and into adulthood.
19.	Disability	20.	Positive	21.	G	22.	The homes to be opened will cater for cared for children and they will be

					better supported and nearer to their kinship carers.
23.	Carers	24.	Positive	25.	G
				26.	Positive outcomes from this project would be improvements in day to day living of carers and extended families supporting cared for children.
27.	Overall RAG			28.	Green

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### Environmental Impact and Considerations:

Please provide an explanation of the Environmental impact of this decision. Please include the impact on both **Carbon emissions** (contact [climate@bury.gov.uk](mailto:climate@bury.gov.uk) for advice) and **Biodiversity** (contact [c.m.wilkinson@bury.gov.uk](mailto:c.m.wilkinson@bury.gov.uk) for advice)

- An EPC certificate will be sought from the vendor of the property.
- Any modifications to the properties will comply with Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) and Building Regulations M4(2)
- Carbon Management Plan will be put in place for each of the properties to focus on energy efficiency of the buildings and ongoing operational carbon.
- Reduction in vehicular use and carbon emissions from in borough assessments and appointments of both social workers and children.
- Local supply chains utilised to minimise commercial vehicular use.

### Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Workforce recruitment and retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialist recruitment support to attract and retain talented and experienced workforce.</li> <li>• Bury's USP and staff benefits to be promoted</li> </ul>
Matching a suitable cohort of children to cohabit at the individual properties	Detailed assessment of individual children to consider suitability of placement with other children; and if so, with which characteristics
Managing the home and sustaining a good Ofsted rating and associated reputational risk of the homes not achieving the required standard.	Recruitment of experienced, qualified residential staff to develop and run the home

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### Legal Implications:

The Council will need to ensure that any necessary planning permission is in place before proceeding to acquire a property.

The procurement of refurbishment works will need to be carried out in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contract Regulations 2015

### Financial Implications:

The estimated recurrent annual saving of £400k per annum resulting from full implementation of the proposals has been included within the updated medium term financial and related budget proposals report also on the agenda. The estimated savings are necessarily based on a prudent set of assumptions, including the average weekly cost of private sector placements. Actual savings will be closely monitored and reported through the quarterly finance updates to Cabinet.

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### Appendices:

*Please list any appended documents.*

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### Background papers:

*Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.*

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**

[High-cost children's social care placements survey | Local Government Association](#)

[Children's social care cost pressures and variation in unit costs \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[Early-Help-Strategy-Final-2022-25.pdf \(bury-leaders.co.uk\)](#)

[Children-young-peoples-plan-final.pdf \(gs-microsites.net\)](#)

[Bury-Childrens-Services-Improvement-Plan.pdf \(gs-microsites.net\)](#)

Term	Meaning
Care Experienced Children (CEC)	Formerly known as Looked After Children (LAC). Children in the care of local authorities by court order.
Children's Home Association (CHA)	

Local Government Association (LGA)	
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## Equality Impact Analysis

This equality impact analysis establishes the likely effects both positive and negative and potential unintended consequences that decisions, policies, projects and practices can have on people at risk of discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The analysis considers documentary evidence, data and information from stakeholder engagement/consultation to manage risk and to understand the actual or potential effect of activity, including both positive and adverse impacts, on those affected by the activity being considered.

To support completion of this analysis tool, please refer to the equality impact analysis guidance.

### Section 1 – Analysis Details (Page 5 of the guidance document)

<b>Name of Policy/Project/Decision</b>	New Children's Home Project
<b>Lead Officer (SRO or Assistant Director/Director)</b>	Robert Summerfield/Robert Arrowsmith
<b>Department/Team</b>	BGI
<b>Proposed Implementation Date</b>	Q1/Q2 2025
<b>Author of the EqIA</b>	Roz Catlow-Patterson/Rob Arrowsmith
<b>Date of the EqIA</b>	11/9/24

<b>1.1 What is the main purpose of the proposed policy/project/decision and intended outcomes?</b>
<p>Can embed or link to existing report/document in this section</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The proposal sets out how an alternative in-house delivery model for children in care needing residential placements can provide a local setting improving the social, education and economic prospects of children in care while enabling them to retain their links to friends, family and the local community and area. This in turn will enable care experienced children and young people to live happy, healthy lives in suitable safe accommodation locally in communities they know and better support their transition into adulthood.</li> <li>2. The proposal if approved will allow Bury's social work staff and staff across the wider partnership of local agencies to impart Let's Do It! values and contribute to and benefit from council run homes in resilient communities, thereby giving improving the opportunities and outcomes for this cohort of young people.</li> </ol>

### Section 2 – Impact Assessment (Pages 6 to 10 of the guidance document)

## 2.1 Who could the proposed policy/project/decision likely have an impact on?

### Employees:

Yes – New operational staffing arrangements will be needed to oversee the management of the service, which will be subject to fair and transparent recruitment processes. Existing staff will be given opportunity to apply for such opportunities. It will have a positive impact on social work and support staff who work with the young people in these settings, as it will enable less travelling and support more effective local partnership working to support the young people in the homes.

### Community/Residents:

Yes – the new homes (if approved) will be acquired and located in existing established communities following careful identification of suitable locations and property types. It will enable the local community and all public agencies to better support some of the community's most vulnerable members: the young people in public care who would be living in the homes. Consideration will be given to neighbouring residents to the proposed homes, to achieve optimum cohesion and integration.

### Third parties such as suppliers, providers and voluntary organisations:

Yes – the proposal and the local proximity of the homes will better enable partner agencies, particularly local Health and Education providers, to fulfil their corporate parenting responsibilities and respond flexibly to emerging and presenting needs.

## 2.2 Evidence to support the analysis. Include documentary evidence, data and stakeholder information/consultation

### Documentary Evidence:

[Early-Help-Strategy-Final-2022-25.pdf \(bury-leaders.co.uk\)](#)

[Children-young-peoples-plan-final.pdf \(gs-microsites.net\)](#)

[Bury-Childrens-Services-Improvement-Plan.pdf \(gs-microsites.net\)](#)

**Data:**

- Bury's Children and Young people plan 2021-2024 aims to improve the lives of children, young people and families in the borough and sets out a call for action to ensure children and young people live happy, healthy lives in their families and communities. The plan is explicit in setting out a clear priority around Bury's children and young people getting the support they need local to where they live. The Bury 2030 Strategy around neighbourhood team working and the development of the new Neighbourhood Delivery model, including further development of a preventative approach "at place" means that the proposed locally led residential provision will be supported by neighbourhood-based services. Therefore, children in these placements will benefit from accessing help and support when they need it locally. Outcome 3 of Bury's Children's and Young People's plan stipulates allowing Children, young people and families to get the support they need locally to where they live.
- The number of children in care nationally has been rising every for the past 15 years, increasing by 41% across that period; and by 11% in the past 5 years. The rise in Bury has been less – up by 22% since 2009 and 7% since 2018, but it is still significant. Much national and local activity is seeking to address this ongoing rise, but there is a significant, current and pressing need to diversify the offer and increase the number of placements in residential homes to meet the needs of our children in care within the locality of Bury.
- At present, Bury council is dependent on the private sector to provide all its residential care needs. With the national and local shrinkage in the number of foster carer households, more children in care are living in residential homes and the consolidation of the private residential care market into a shrinking number of providers, together with increasing expectations of those homes has led to substantial increase in unit costs – rising 10-12% a year for the past 4 years. Consequently, a growing proportion of the council's overall budget is being dedicated to meet the needs of a relatively small number of children. While this is necessary, it has an impact on what other services the council can afford to provide to children and families and the wider community.

**Stakeholder information/consultation:**

- High level consultation has taken place with neighbouring authorities to understand the opportunities and risks of establishing and running children's homes.
- Discussion within Children's Services between subject matter experts concerning the proposal and the approach, including consideration of the relationship of the proposal to the GM 'Project Skyline' proposal and learning from work on that project to date.

- Review of Ofsted requirements of LA run Children's Homes has taken place

**2.3 Consider the following questions in terms of who the policy/project/decision could potentially have an impact on. Detail these in the impact assessment table (2.4) and the potential impact this could have.**

- Could the proposal prevent the promotion of equality of opportunity or good relations between different equality groups? No, it would support it.
- Could the proposal create barriers to accessing a service or obtaining employment because of a protected characteristic? No, conversely being placed in borough should enable a more seamless pathway into local learning and employment opportunities.
- Could the proposal affect the usage or experience of a service because of a protected characteristic? The proposal aims to benefit the experience of the most vulnerable cared for children, who as a group are recognised by the council as having a protected characteristic.
- Could a protected characteristic be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by the proposal? Not disproportionately. The proposal will seek to provide greater equity in providing residential placements in the locality (as opposed to out of borough) which is known to disadvantage children in care socially, educationally, economically and in health outcomes.
- Could the proposal make it more or less likely that a protected characteristic will be at risk of harassment or victimisation? The location of properties will take in to account the make-up and composition of existing communities/residents and ensure a sensitive approach is taken based on set criteria, namely to ensure the properties are located in a spacious plots in semi urban environments in order to minimise the prospect of any tensions developing.
- Could the proposal affect public attitudes towards a protected characteristic (e.g. by increasing or reducing their presence in the community)? Yes – though the proposal is limited to 3 placements per property in separate location so public attitude to the provision is likely to be tempered by the size of the provision.
- Could the proposal prevent or limit a protected characteristic contributing to the democratic running of the council? No

2.4 Characteristic	Potential Impacts	Evidence (from 2.2) to demonstrate this impact	Mitigations to reduce negative impact	Impact level with mitigations Positive, Neutral, Negative



<b>Age</b>				
<b>Disability</b>		Not applicable – the scheme is for able bodied children.		
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>				
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>				
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>				
<b>Race</b>				
<b>Religion and Belief</b>				
<b>Sex</b>				
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>				
<b>Carers</b>				
<b>Looked After Children and Care Leavers</b>	The council's proposal to acquire its own properties for Bury's CEC will ensure that more children in care living in residential homes can remain within Bury, supported by local services..	Data from Children's Homes Association (the voice of residential care) and within the GM Children's Sufficiency Strategy evidences the disadvantages to CEC of rising numbers of children placed in privately run homes or out of borough potentially weakening socio and educational links to their home borough and their wider kinship and friendship groups, which	Introducing in-house Bury based residential provision which will help anchor CEC in a community they know with social, education, economic and employment opportunities in an area they already know.	Positive

<p><b>Looked After Children and Care Leavers</b></p>	<p>Impact of potential adverse attitudes and perceptions from neighbours</p>	<p>in turn can negatively impact their long-term life chances. At recent meetings of the Corporate Parenting Board, the Children In Care Council (CICC) often report that Bury Council could do more to take a proactive approach for our looked after children.</p> <p>Objections to recent planning applications shows public concern/uneasiness towards such provision which is echoed in Bury Times and other news publications. Such concerns are also logged via member casework.</p>	<p>Relaying the role of the council as corporate parenting and duty of care to provide provision as locally as possible. In addition, the proposal is limited to 3 placements per property in separate locations so public attitude to the provision is likely to be tempered by the size of the provision. The location of properties will take in to account the composition of existing communities/residents and ensure a sensitive approach is taken based on set criteria, namely that properties are located in a spacious plots in semi urban environments in order to minimise the prospect of any tensions developing for both the existing community and</p>	<p>Neutral</p>
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			ensure effective resettlement of the children.	
<b>Socio-economically vulnerable</b>				
<b>Veterans</b>				

### Actions required to mitigate/reduce/eliminate negative impacts or to complete the analysis

2.5 Characteristics	Action	Action Owner	Completion Date
Care Experienced Children (CEC)	The property acquisition process will be supported by advice from senior leaders within Children's Services with experience of setting up and running Children's Homes, estates, planning policy and GMP colleagues to identify the most suitable properties and appropriate location for the new homes in localities with close access to services. This collaboration will help the property acquisitions team identify optimal locations in safe and inclusive communities. Such an approach will help mitigate the potential for negative impact and harm and to optimise cohesion and effective integration.	Robert Arrowsmith	Q1/Q2 2025
	Staff are recruited at the right level and expertise to manage the facility in line with Ofsted standards of care and social work practice, thereby managing the homes appropriately cognisant of the needs of existing communities.	Karen Barrick	Q1/Q2 2025
	Compliance with Ofsted standards – putting in place service plans and effective supervision to ensure compliance with Ofsted regime and rating of good as a minimum is secured.	Karen Barrick	

### Section 3 - Impact Risk

Establish the level of risk to people and organisations arising from identified impacts, with additional actions completed to mitigate/reduce/eliminate negative impacts.

### 3.1 Identifying risk level (Pages 10 - 12 of the guidance document)

Impact x Likelihood = Score			Likelihood			
			1	2	3	4
			Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Very likely
Impact	4	Very High	4	8	12	16
	3	High	3	6	9	12
	2	Medium	2	4	6	8
	1	Low	1	2	3	4
	0	Positive / No impact	0	0	0	0

Risk Level	No Risk = 0	Low Risk = 1 - 4	Medium Risk = 5 – 7	High Risk = 8 - 16
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<b>3.2 Level of risk identified</b>	Likelihood: possible 2 x impact: medium 2 = 4
<b>3.3 Reasons for risk level calculation</b>	The key risk to the children in care is mainly from the potential friction with householders in the wider community in which the homes would be based. However, as noted above, intelligent choice of location and the type of home used, together with good management of the home once it is in operation should mitigate this risk.

### Section 4 - Analysis Decision (Page 11 of the guidance document)

4.1 Analysis Decision	X	Reasons for This Decision
There is no negative impact therefore the activity will proceed		
There are low impacts or risks identified which can be mitigated or managed to reduce the risks and activity will proceed	x	
There are medium to high risks identified which cannot be mitigated following careful and thorough consideration. The activity will proceed with caution and this risk recorded on the risk register, ensuring continual review		

## Section 5 – Sign Off and Revisions (Page 11 of the guidance document)

5.1 Sign Off	Name	Date	Comments
<b>Lead Officer/SRO/Project Manager</b>	Roz Catlow-Patterson Rob Arrowsmith	15/10/24 15/10/24	EQUIA was written in partnership between officers on BGI and CYP to ensure a thorough assessment of risk, impact and mitigations of the proposal on CEC and its wider communities.
<b>Responsible Asst. Director/Director</b>	Rob Summerfield	15/10.2024	
<b>EDI</b>	Lee Cawley	15/10/2024	QA complete, one positive impact and one negative impact identified. Negative impact has been mitigated to raised this to a neutral impact

## EqlA Revision Log

5.2 Revision Date	Revision By	Revision Details







<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Decision Type:</b> Non-Key
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<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b> 06 November 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Social Value Strategy 2024-2027	
<b>Report of</b>	Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion	

## Summary

Local authorities and other public bodies are legally obligated to consider the social good in contracts, subject to public procurement legislation. The Council's current Social Value Policy was written in 2017 and has provided a solid framework to deliver a range of important outcomes. However, the current Policy is limited in its breadth, with a focus on the procurement specific components of Social Value as opposed to the wider strategic opportunities which a modern Social Value approach provides. The current arrangement is also not connected to Bury's LET'S Do It priorities and lacks a clear framework for prioritisation and measurement.

A new Social Value Strategy has been developed with input from across the Council, the wider Team Bury Partnership and experts from the voluntary sector, business and public service partners. It provides a clear definition of Social Value in the context of LET'S Do It and sets out a framework for action over the coming three years across four objectives.

**Local** - We will strengthen our relationships with local businesses to benefit Bury people and actively work to increase the proportion of our spend with local suppliers through business development as well as engagement.

**Enterprising** - We will move from our current 5-10% social value contribution to a 20% standard weighting from all contracts with a value over £25K over the next three years. This will be supported by a strengthened infrastructure to ensure direct and demonstrable contributions are made linked to an annually reviewed set of priorities and a clear approach to assuring delivery.

This is a significant shift. In moving to this new standard, we will need to develop our system, processes and culture as well as engaging with the supplier market to share our priorities and how they can contribute. We will initially focus on high-value contracts (£5M+) to deliver immediate benefits.

**Together** - We will build relationships through the current and potential supply chain and connect business to our voluntary, community and faith sector to shape and deliver a shared approach to Community Wealth Building.

**Strengths** - Following the example set by the Council, we will expect a minimum set of standards for those we work with, including payment of the Living Wage, a commitment to the principles of the GM Good Employment Charter and a

demonstrable commitment to sustainability and the principles of the Bury Climate Action Strategy.

Adoption of the Strategy will set out the Council's clear strategic intent in relation to Social Value as a key enabler to the [Bury Economic Strategy](#) and [LET'S Do It](#). Delivery of the Strategy will require significant work over the coming three years and will be driven by Officers across all Council Departments and all Cabinet Member portfolios.

### **Recommendation(s)**

Cabinet is asked to approve the proposed 2024-2027 Social Value strategy for adoption by the Council.

### **Reasons for recommendation(s)**

Social Value will provide an important vehicle to maximise the value the Council can leverage from its relationships and contracts beyond business as usual for the benefit of the borough's places and people.

### **Alternative options considered and rejected**

None.

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### **Report Author and Contact Details:**

*Name:* Sam McVaigh

*Position:* Director of People and Inclusion

*Department:* Corporate Core

*E-mail:* [s.mcvaigh@bury.gov.uk](mailto:s.mcvaigh@bury.gov.uk)

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## **1. Overview**

- 1.1 The Council's proposed Social Value Strategy for 2024-2027 is appended to this report. The Strategy reflects the legislative framework (including the Procurement Act 2023), the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Social Value Framework and the priorities of both LET'S Do It and the Corporate Plan.
- 1.2 The Strategy reflects the existing impact of Social Value leveraged by the Council and builds on this by providing a solid framework and statement of intent to go both further and to more effectively strategically align Social Value outcomes with community priorities.
- 1.3 The Strategies four objectives are aligned with the LET'S principles and a broad definition of Social Value. This includes maximising the direct impact of social value through our procurement activity but goes much further to include a focus on the engagement and development of the local business community and co-creation of a clear approach to Community Wealth Building.

- 1.4 To deliver on the Strategy's objectives significant work will be needed across the Council and with our partners. Adoption of the Strategy will not see an immediate shift in procurement practices, for example, but rather will signal our objective and intent. A detailed delivery plan is already in development with input from Officers, Members, our partners and experts in the field.
- 1.5 To maximise the impact of Social Value it will be important that the Council is clear on its practical priorities. The national Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMs) framework provides an opportunity to do this and the Strategies' appendix aligns the current year's Corporate Plan priorities to a sub-set of the national TOMs which will be used to focus and priorities activity for the rest of this financial year. Given the significance and cross-cutting nature of Social Value Cabinet will be asked to agree the Council's priorities each year aligned to the Corporate Planning process.

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### **Links with the Corporate Priorities:**

Delivery of a Social Value Strategy is a specific priority within the 2024/25 Corporate Plan.

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### **Equality Impact and Considerations:**

A full equality impact assessment has been carried out and is included in appendix B

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### **Environmental Impact and Considerations:**

Environmental action is a key Social Value theme and the Council will seek to maximise the environmental impact of social value as part of its annual priority setting and practical application of social value.

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### **Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:**

<b>Risk / opportunity</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Insufficient capacity to deliver against the Strategy's objectives and potential	A cross-departmental delivery group will be convened to drive the Strategy and capacity requirements will be considered as part of the review of the Corporate Corer structure
Social Value is not aligned to Corporate Priorities	An annual priority-setting process will be developed aligned to the Council's Corporate Planning process

Local businesses are disadvantaged at the expense of larger organisations because of new social value expectations	The Council will engage the local business community and will work to phase in any changes appropriately over the lifetime of the Strategy
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**Legal Implications:**

The proposed strategy complies with the Public Services(Social Value) Act 2012, the strategy and supporting tool kit are designed to ensure that social value benefits are obtained through the management and delivery of Council procurements.

**Financial Implications:**

These are set out in the report.

**Appendices:**

*Please list any appended documents.*

Appendix A Social Value Strategy 2024-2027

Appendix B Equality Impact Assessment

**Background papers:**

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**

Term	Meaning
TOM	Themes, Outcomes and Measures (Social Value Measurement Approach)



# Social Value Strategy 2024-2027

November 2024

## Introduction

### What is Social Value

Local authorities and other public bodies are legally obligated to consider the social good in contracts, subject to public procurement legislation.

Social Value is about maximising this 'good' and can be defined as:

*The currency for conducting responsible, sustainable business. In simple terms, it is the value an organisation contributes to society beyond business as usual.*

Currency here isn't necessarily financial. This value could be economic, community focused or environmental.

In Bury we're clear that social value extends beyond the legal requirements and procurement process. It's everyone's responsibility and about how we work together with businesses, the voluntary sector and our communities to maximise the value of everything we do to benefit Bury people.

This document sets out the Council's strategic approach to Social Value and describes how we will use this value to help deliver the objectives of our LET'S Do It! Strategy.

### The National Context

The **Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012** came into force on 31 January 2013. Under the act, local authorities and other public bodies have a legal obligation to consider the social good that could come from the procurement of services as part of the commissioning cycle. The aim of the Act is not to alter the commissioning and procurement processes. The Act is designed to ensure organisations give due consideration of the wider impact of their commissioning and procurement activities to enhance their outcomes and outputs from the services delivered.

The **National Themes Outcomes and Measures (TOM's)** is a framework for delivering excellence in measuring and reporting Social Value. The National TOMs Framework has evolved into a Social Value measurement standard across the UK. Its flexible yet robust structure can be adapted to meet the needs of individual organisations. The National TOM's also include financial 'proxy values' to help measure the value delivered and quantify the wider value created through Social Value.

The **National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS)** stresses that Local Authorities should have regard to the following outcomes in their procurement activities, alongside any additional local priorities, where it is relevant to the subject matter of the contract and proportionate to do so

- Creating resilient businesses and opportunities for quality employment and skills development
- Improving innovation, supply chain resilience and security of supply

- Tackling climate change and reducing waste

The **Procurement Act 2023** require buyers and suppliers to publish KPIs on key commitments and emphasizes the importance of social impact in tender evaluations, encouraging suppliers to contribute positively to society.

## Social Value in Greater Manchester

Greater Manchester was an early adopter of Social Value. In 2014, Greater Manchester Combined Authority published its first [Social Value Framework](#). Greater Manchester's local authorities have used this framework to formulate their own arrangements, with adjustments made to fit the locality and its unique characteristics or requirements. **The Greater Manchester Social Value priorities** which are summarised into six themes:



- Real Living Wage
- Principles of Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter
- Tackling inequality
- Local spend
- Economic diversity
- Carbon reduction

In Bury, our Strategy and Objectives are aligned with this Framework.

## The Bury Context

The [Let's Do It Strategy](#) sets out a clear ambition for Bury 2030: to stand out as a place that is achieving **faster economic growth than the national average, with lower than national average levels of deprivation**. Bury Council play a central role in driving the delivery of this ambition.



LET'S Do It! was codesigned with a wide range of stakeholders and partners, including the Bury business community who have a critical role to play here in supporting the delivery of this ambition as partners across our borough.

It is important that this focus is set in the financial and societal context in which the Council operates. This includes a 29% reduction in core spending power since 2010/11 set alongside significant and growing demand for our specialist services, particularly social care, with a 17% increase in demand in 2023/24 alone.

The backdrop of Covid recovery, rising inflation and the cost-of-living crisis pose unprecedented challenges for our communities. However, our commitment to the LET'S principles and ambition, including working **Together** to deliver with our businesses and communities remains the same.

The Council spends over £100M a year through its contracts. Maximising the social value of this spend, as well as the strategic opportunity this brings to promote wider corporate social responsibility and support community wealth building, presents an essential opportunity to support our commitment to truly inclusive economic growth.

## Social Value in Action

Social Value isn't new. The Council's previous Social Value Policy was written in 2017 and has provided a framework to deliver some important outcomes.

The Local Government Procurement Index shows that, in 2022 Bury<sup>1</sup>:

- Spent £63.8M with SMEs
- Spent £14.5M with the VCSE
- Spent £59.6M with locally based suppliers

As well as this, the Council is also benefiting from significant Social Value contributions through collaborative procurement activity at the Greater Manchester level through contracts such as the SUEZ waste contract and REED agency contract.

### Radcliffe Community Skills Centre



Delivered by VINCI as part of their Social Value contribution to the Radcliffe Hub works the skills centre offers an opportunity for young people aged 16-24 not in employment, education or training to learn new skills and gain a Level 1 Award in a construction trade with 24 trainees expected to be supported through the Centre by January 2025.

<sup>1</sup> [The Local Government Procurement Index \(tussell.com\)](https://www.tussell.com)

## Real Living Wage Accreditation



Following the Council's accreditation as a Real Living Wage employer in 2021 payment of the living wage to staff directly engaged on Council contracts has been built in as an expectation within the procurement process and has impacted rates of pay to an estimated 4,000 people in the Council supply chain, mainly in Adult Social Care roles. This, in turn, has had a positive impact on workforce stability and retention, in particular the home care market which supports over 800 residents each day and now has a 1 day average wait time for care and support to begin.

The below is feedback from one of our care providers in Bury:

*Implementing the Real Living Wage has had a transformative impact on our organization's recruitment and retention efforts. Prior to this change, the rising cost of living had left several members of our workforce struggling, contemplating a return to benefits as it seemed financially more viable. However, upon announcing our commitment to becoming a Real Living Wage employer, there was a palpable sense of relief among our employees who cherished their work in looking after vulnerable elderly individuals.*

*The implementation of the Real Living Wage not only addressed financial concerns but also significantly boosted staff morale. Employees were more willing to take on additional hours as they were now receiving fair compensation for their dedication. This increase in pay not only improved self-esteem but also played a crucial role in retaining our valuable staff, preventing the loss of talent to other industries, such as retail.*

*Since the initiation of the Real Living Wage on 25th October 2021, and with the upcoming increase to £12.00 per hour on 1st April, 2024, we have observed a positive three-year trend in hourly rate growth, rising by £3.09 per hour. For someone working 40 hours per week, this translates to an annual pay increase of £6,427.20 or an additional £535.60 in their monthly pay packet. Care staff have expressed that this financial boost has significantly alleviated the burden of essential expenses such as rent, fuel, and utility costs, leaving some surplus for personal luxuries.*

*In essence, the Real Living Wage has not only been an effective tool in mitigating poverty among our workforce but has also become a catalyst for enhanced job satisfaction, increased commitment, and improved overall well-being among our employees.*

We need to build on this and increase the number of accredited Real Living Wage employers in the borough from the current baseline of 33.



## **Creating Opportunities for our Care Experienced Young People**

The Council is keen to ensure our strategic partners share our important Corporate Parenting mission. As such, we have been working closely with large Private Sector organisations with which we have Strategic Partnerships and Joint Ventures to ensure our Looked After Children and Care Experienced young people receive direct benefits from large scale activities occurring within the Borough.

The Council has established a joint venture partnership with two large, national developers to deliver regeneration at scale in both Prestwich and Bury Town Centres.

The Council has held training and development sessions with Prestwich Joint Venture partner Muse Places LTD which introduced our Looked After Children to careers in property development, architecture, project management and town planning. Muse have provided facilities in the City Centre for the events and have organised for high profile, inspiring professionals across the built environment from within their supply chain to share their experience and the mechanics of developing a career in property/construction. Further events are being planned including tours of completed projects and construction sites. The events have focused on inspiring our children to a career in this challenging field, in addition to showcasing role models, career benefits and encouraging women into the field.

The Council has secured funding to provide an apprenticeship, ringfenced to our care experienced young people. Our Joint Venture partner on the Council's Mill Gate Shopping Centre regeneration project, Bruntwood, has agreed to host the apprentice within their national organisation. Recruitment for the post will begin shortly, and will offer one of our children a sought-after position within a nationally regarded organisation. This is a tremendous opportunity and the apprentice will be supported by both Bruntwood and the Council to succeed. In addition, they will have the opportunity to work across numerous projects, and support the Joint Venture in Bury. This will allow the apprentice to make their mark on an important Town Centre site.

Further apprentice opportunities are currently under development with the Council's contractor partner Vinci, in addition to the construction skills centre in Radcliffe.

Work by the Children and Young People's Directorate in promoting the Council's Corporate Parenting mission has placed our children at the heart of the development of large regeneration projects and construction initiatives through in-depth workshops held with project management and commissioning staff. The Regeneration team hope to bring forward further opportunities and have been working to link up the construction skills centre with vocational training opportunities available at Alternative Provision (education) currently under construction in Radcliffe. This will begin in February 2025.

Despite these notable successes, the previous Bury approach has not delivered the full potential that Social Value can bring, and this Strategy seeks to maximise that potential and ensure tangible and quantifiable outcomes for Bury people aligned to our Strategic priorities.

## Social Value at the Heart of LET'S Do It!

LET'S Do It! isn't just a strategy for service improvement, it is a radical new proposition for community power; putting relationships first and creating a borough in which every single person plays their part.



Social Value can and must play a crucial part here by:

**Supporting** a move away from purely transactional processes of procurement towards building relationships and working with locally based organisations and the wider business community.

**Building** the capacity and sustainability of local voluntary, community and faith organisations.

**Promoting** the models of ethical business and employment which the Council expects through our relationships and spending power.

Whilst **Social Value** is sometimes described as an element of the transactional procurement process this isn't the case. It's everyone's responsibility and an area where we all have a part to play.

We will only achieve the true benefits from Social Value if it forms an integrated part of our overall approach to business engagement, community development and inclusive growth. This includes three broad areas of work:

<b>Corporate Social Responsibility</b>	<p>Business commitment to social outcomes. – Promoted through our wider business relationships including Bury Business Leaders Group and led by the Council's Business and Investment Team.</p> <p>Developing relationships which benefit the Bury economy and our residents and go well beyond the transactional in recognition of a shared commitment to LET'S and our borough, including quality employment standards and a shared commitment to the environment.</p>
<b>Social Value in Procurement</b>	<p>Using the legislative framework and building on our relationships with business and the VCSE to maximise the social value add of procurement activity, match supplier commitments to Bury priorities at both the strategic and practical level and ensure we turn commitments into tangible outcomes for our people.</p>
<b>Community Wealth Building</b>	<p>A people-centred approach to local economic development, which redirects wealth back into the local economy, and places control and benefits into the hands of local people. – There are some big opportunities here but this will require a step change in how we think and act as a Team Bury partnership. Our Social Value Strategy is key to moving us in this direction.</p>

## The Pillars of Community Wealth Building<sup>2</sup>

The Centre for Local Economic Studies (CLES) has developed five pillars of Community Wealth Building:

1. Plural ownership of the economy.
2. Making financial power work for local places.
3. Fair employment and just labour markets.
4. Progressive procurement of goods and services.
5. Socially productive use of land and property



Through our Social Value Strategy we will work to develop clear approaches and actions across each of these five areas.

<sup>2</sup> [How to build community wealth | CLES](#)

## Our Social Value Objectives

In maximising the potential of Social Value this strategy has four objectives aligned to the four principles of the LET'S Do It! Strategy.



### Local

We will strengthen our relationships with local businesses to benefit Bury people and actively work to increase the proportion of our spend with local suppliers through business development as well as engagement.



### Enterprising

We will move from our current 5-10% social value contribution to a 20% standard weighting from all contracts with a value over £25K over the next three years. This will be supported by a strengthened infrastructure to ensure direct and demonstrable contributions are made linked to an annually reviewed set of priorities and a clear approach to assuring delivery.

This is a significant shift. In moving to this new standard, we will need to develop our system, processes and culture as well as engaging with the supplier market to share our priorities and how they can contribute. We will initially focus on high-value contracts (£5M+) to deliver immediate benefits.



### Together

We will build relationships through the current and potential supply chain and connect business to our voluntary, community and faith sector to shape and deliver a shared approach to Community Wealth Building.



### Strengths

Following the example set by the Council, we will expect a minimum set of standards for those we work with, including payment of the Living Wage, a commitment to the principles of the GM Good Employment Charter and a demonstrable commitment to sustainability and the principles of the Bury Climate Action Strategy.

## Measuring and Assuring Social Value Delivery

### Measuring Social Value

It's critical that we have in place:

1. An agreed mechanism for understanding and defining local needs and priorities to identify and triangulate the opportunities which Social Value can respond to
2. A clear mechanism to assess and measure the social value contributions made through the procurement process.
3. A strong contract management focus to ensure commitments are delivered upon
4. An approach to quantifying the impact of social value to assure Members and the public of the impact this is having.

To support this, we will build a partnership approach to identifying needs and priorities and make use of the national Themes Outcomes Measures (TOMs) method of social value measurement. We'll deliver training to our contract managers, so that they have the confidence and capability to manage social value delivery as part of the contract management process and engage proactively with local suppliers so they're clear on the part they can play.

### Assuring Delivery

As part of the procurement and contract management process we will ensure Social Value is considered at four key stages.

1. **Opportunity assessment:** The first stage of any commissioning and procurement process will be the undertaking of a social value 'opportunity assessment' as part of the pre-procurement activity. This will identify the appropriate, relevant and achievable elements of social value that could be delivered through the life of the contract and how this could be achieved. In addition, officers will identify any opportunities for local businesses or organisations to participate in the process and the best way to encourage and support them.
2. **Embedding outcomes in the tender process:** Following the identification of suitable social value outcomes, these will be embedded within the tender process either through specific requirements in the specification, and/ or the application of the Council's priority TOMs, where tenderers will determine what is relevant and proportionate for them to deliver through the specific contract. Tender responses will then be evaluated in accordance with the published criteria.
3. **Formal contract:** Following the conclusion of the tender process, a formal contract will be entered into incorporating the commitments made as part of the preferred bidder's response.
4. **Contract management:** Through a structured contract management process, contract managers will monitor social value commitments ensuring they are delivered in their entirety and using the Council's leverage and legal contractual clauses when appropriate to remedy poor performance. Where appropriate, contract managers will seek periodic assurance that the contract remains compliant with the real living wage.



## Governance, Reporting and Making it Real

Delivery of our Social Value Strategy will be driven by a Steering Group bringing together representatives from all Council Departments, the Bury VCFA and business community.

The Steering Group will be responsible for:

1. Owning an action plan to ensure the necessary infrastructure is in place to deliver and measure the impact of the Strategy's four objectives
2. Assuring delivery of social value commitments made at a strategic level and coordinating action to ensure the benefit of these commitments is maximised
3. Recommending an annual set of priority TOMs to be used in the procurement process, aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan priorities and LET'S DO It! (The proposed priority TOMs for year 1 are appended to this Strategy and have been agreed through an analysis against the Council's Corporate Plan priorities).
4. Considering how specific asks for support from the VCSE or wider community could be addressed through social value and matching community requests to the expertise and commitments of the business community.

Because of the strategic importance and opportunity of social value and because this opportunity cuts across all areas of the organisation, the annual priority TOMs will be formally agreed each year by Cabinet as part of the Corporate Planning process.

Cabinet will also receive an annual report on social value activity and achievements.

## Appendix: 2024/25 Corporate Plan Priorities mapped to the National Themes, Outcomes and Measures. (TOMs)

The national TOMs framework contains over 120 different potential measures of social value. 14 measures are proposed below for periodisation in the first year of the Social Value Strategy mapped to the Council's three Corporate Plan priorities. Where relevant, the TOMs will be further refined to specify priority groups or geographical areas of focus.

Corporate Plan Priority	Social Value TOM
Sustainable Inclusive Growth	No. of full time equivalent direct local employees (FTE) hired or retained for the duration of the contract (NT1)
	No. of full time equivalent employees (FTE) hired on the contract who are long term unemployed (unemployed for a year or longer) (NT3)
	Provision of expert business advice to VCSEs and MSMEs (e.g. financial advice / legal advice / HR advice/HSE) (NT15)
	Number of voluntary hours donated to support VCSEs (excludes expert business advice) (NT17)
	Equipment or resources donated to VCSEs (£ equivalent value) (NT16)
Improving Children's Lives	No. of full time equivalent 16-25 year old care leavers (FTE) hired on the contract (NT4A)
	No. of full time equivalent employees (FTE) hired on the contract who are NOT in Employment, Education, or Training (NEETs) (NT4)
	No. of weeks spent on meaningful work placements or pre-employment course; 1-6 weeks student placements (unpaid) for students from targeted areas (NT12)
	Meaningful work placements that pay Minimum or National Living wage according to eligibility - 6 weeks or more (internships) (NT13)
	No. of staff hours spent on local school and college visits supporting pupils e.g. delivering career talks, curriculum support, literacy support, safety talks (including preparation time) (NT8)
Tackling Inequalities	No. of full time equivalent armed forces veterans employees (FTE) hired on the contract who are long term unemployed (unemployed for a year or longer) and facing specific barriers to transitioning to civilian employment that do not qualify them as disabled (e.g. long term service) (NT3A)
	No. of full time equivalent armed forces veterans employees (FTE) hired on the contract who are long term unemployed (unemployed for a year or longer) and facing specific barriers to transitioning to civilian employment that do not qualify them as disabled (e.g. long term service) (NT3)
	No. of weeks of training opportunities (BTEC, City & Guilds, NVQ, HNC - Level 2,3, or 4+) on the contract that have either been completed during the year, or that will be supported by the organisation until completion in the following years - delivered for specified groups (e.g. NEETs, under-represented gender and ethnic groups, disabled, homeless, rehabilitating young offenders) (NT9A)
	No. of weeks of apprenticeships or T-Levels (Level 2,3, or 4) provided on the contract (completed or supported by the organisation) - delivered for specified groups (e.g. NEETs, under-represented gender and ethnic groups, disabled, homeless, rehabilitating young offenders) (NT10A)
	No. of full time equivalent direct local employees (FTE) hired or retained for the duration of the contract (NT1)



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## Equality Impact Analysis

This equality impact analysis establishes the likely effects both positive and negative and potential unintended consequences that decisions, policies, projects and practices can have on people at risk of discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The analysis considers documentary evidence, data and information from stakeholder engagement/consultation to manage risk and to understand the actual or potential effect of activity, including both positive and adverse impacts, on those affected by the activity being considered.

To support completion of this analysis tool, please refer to the equality impact analysis guidance.

### Section 1 – Analysis Details (Page 5 of the guidance document)

<b>Name of Policy/Project/Decision</b>	Social Value Strategy 2024-2027
<b>Lead Officer (SRO or Assistant Director/Director)</b>	Sam McVaigh
<b>Department/Team</b>	People & Inclusion
<b>Proposed Implementation Date</b>	November 2024
<b>Author of the EqIA</b>	Sam McVaigh
<b>Date of the EqIA</b>	August 2024

<p><b>1.1 What is the main purpose of the proposed policy/project/decision and intended outcomes?</b></p> <p>Local authorities and other public bodies are legally obligated to consider the social good in contracts, subject to public procurement legislation. The Council's current Social Value Policy was written in 2017 and has provided a solid framework to deliver a range of important outcomes. However, the current Policy is limited in its breadth, with a focus on the procurement specific components of Social Value as opposed to the wider strategic opportunities which a modern Social Value approach provides. The current arrangement is also not connected to Bury's LET'S Do It priorities and lacks a clear framework for prioritisation and measurement.</p> <p>A new Social Value Strategy has been developed with input from across the Council, the wider Team Bury Partnership and experts from the voluntary sector, business and public service partners. It provides a clear definition of Social Value in the context of LET'S Do It and sets out a framework for action over the coming three years.</p>
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## Section 2 – Impact Assessment (Pages 6 to 10 of the guidance document)

<b>2.1 Who could the proposed policy/project/decision likely have an impact on?</b>				
<p>Employees: <b>No</b></p> <p>Community/Residents: <b>Yes</b></p> <p>Third parties such as suppliers, providers and voluntary organisations: <b>Yes</b></p> <p>If the answer to all three questions is 'no' there is no need to continue with this analysis.</p>				
<b>2.2 Evidence to support the analysis. Include documentary evidence, data and stakeholder information/consultation</b>				
<p><b>Documentary Evidence:</b></p> <p><a href="#">Toolkit: Social value - Achieving community benefits   Local Government Association</a></p>				
<p><b>Data:</b> <a href="#">The Local Government Procurement Index (tussell.com)</a></p>				
<p><b>Stakeholder information/consultation:</b> The Strategy has been developed with input from colleagues across the Council as well as Bury VCFA the Chair of the National Social Value Taskforce and Bruntwood.</p>				
<b>2.3 Consider the following questions in terms of who the policy/project/decision could potentially have an impact on. Detail these in the impact assessment table (2.4) and the potential impact this could have.</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could the proposal prevent the promotion of equality of opportunity or good relations between different equality groups? <b>No</b></li> <li>• Could the proposal create barriers to accessing a service or obtaining employment because of a protected characteristic? <b>No</b></li> <li>• Could the proposal affect the usage or experience of a service because of a protected characteristic? <b>No</b></li> <li>• Could a protected characteristic be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by the proposal? <b>No</b></li> <li>• Could the proposal make it more or less likely that a protected characteristic will be at risk of harassment or victimisation? <b>No</b></li> <li>• Could the proposal affect public attitudes towards a protected characteristic (e.g. by increasing or reducing their presence in the community)? <b>Yes (Increasing)</b></li> <li>• Could the proposal prevent or limit a protected characteristic contributing to the democratic running of the council? <b>No</b></li> </ul>				
<b>2.4 Characteristic</b>	<b>Potential Impacts</b>	<b>Evidence (from 2.2) to demonstrate this impact</b>	<b>Mitigations to reduce negative impact</b>	<b>Impact level with mitigations Positive, Neutral, Negative</b>

<b>All Characteristics</b>	The Strategy will support inclusion in a number of ways, including its focus on Good Employment (GM Good Employment Charter) and the ability to specifically tailor priorities to specific protected characteristics through the TOM framework.	National TOMs framework and alignment in Appendix 1 of the Strategy	N/A	Positive
<b>Age</b>	Positive for younger people through alignment to the Council's 'improving children's lives' priority.	Appendix 1 of the Strategy	N/A	Positive
<b>Disability</b>	Use of specific TOMs to target impact for disabled people	Appendix 1 of the Strategy	N/A	Positive
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	N/A			
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	N/A			
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	N/A			

<b>Race</b>	Use of specific TOMs to target impact for ethnic minorities	Appendix 1 of the Strategy	N/A	Positive
<b>Religion and Belief</b>	N/A			
<b>Sex</b>	N/A			
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	N/A			
<b>Carers</b>				
<b>Care experienced children and care leavers</b>	Use of specific TOMs to target impact for care experienced young people	Appendix 1 of the Strategy	N/A	Positive
<b>Socio-economically vulnerable</b>	Use of specific TOMs to target impact for those not in education, employment or training	Appendix 1 of the Strategy	N/A	Positive
<b>Veterans</b>	Use of specific TOMs to target impact for veterans	Appendix 1 of the Strategy	N/A	Positive

### Actions required to mitigate/reduce/eliminate negative impacts or to complete the analysis

2.5 Characteristics	Action	Action Owner	Completion Date

### Section 3 - Impact Risk

Establish the level of risk to people and organisations arising from identified impacts, with additional actions completed to mitigate/reduce/eliminate negative impacts.

#### 3.1 Identifying risk level (Pages 10 - 12 of the guidance document)

Impact x Likelihood = Score			Likelihood			
			1	2	3	4
			Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Very likely
Impact	4	Very High	4	8	12	16
	3	High	3	6	9	12
	2	Medium	2	4	6	8
	1	Low	1	2	3	4
	0	Positive / No impact	0	0	0	0

Risk Level	No Risk = 0	Low Risk = 1 - 4	Medium Risk = 5 – 7	High Risk = 8 - 16
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3.2 Level of risk identified	0
3.3 Reasons for risk level calculation	All impacts are positive

#### Section 4 - Analysis Decision (Page 11 of the guidance document)

4.1 Analysis Decision	X	Reasons for This Decision
There is no negative impact therefore the activity will proceed	X	
There are low impacts or risks identified which can be mitigated or managed to reduce the risks and activity will proceed		
There are medium to high risks identified which cannot be mitigated following careful and thorough consideration. The activity will proceed with caution and this risk recorded on the risk register, ensuring continual review		

## Section 5 – Sign Off and Revisions (Page 11 of the guidance document)

5.1 Sign Off	Name	Date	Comments
Lead Officer/SRO/Project Manager	Sam McVaigh		
Responsible Asst. Director/Director	Sam McVaigh		
EDI	Lee Cawley		

## EqlA Revision Log

5.2 Revision Date	Revision By	Revision Details



<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Decision Type:</b> Key
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<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b> 07 November 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	Substance Misuse Service Contract	
<b>Report of</b>	Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing	

## Summary

1. The Council currently commissions Greater Manchester Mental Health (GMMH), an NHS provider, to deliver its substance misuse treatment service. GMMH lead a partnership model; the adult service is provided through GMMH or 'Achieve Bury' as it is branded locally. GMMH subcontract Early Break, to provide the children's and young people substance misuse service, as well as BigLife, to provide the assertive outreach and criminal justice work. The Council is also fortunate to have Intuitive Thinking Skills, who deliver recovery focused programmes and Great Places, who provide housing support, as part of the partnership.
2. The substance misuse contract previously costed £1,308,000 per annum. The contract began in September 2019 and was a three-year contract with two optional plus one years (3 +1 +1). The first three years of the contract ended on 31st August 2022, followed by the approval of two optional 12-month extensions.
3. In anticipation of the end of the contract, Cabinet approved "a direct award to the current provider, GMMH, for a period of 3 years (with the right to extend at the Council's discretion for two further years) at a total estimated cost of £4,284,000 for the initial 3 years, and £1,428,000 per annum thereafter (subject to inflation and Agenda for Change pay increases)" on 7 November 2023. In the absence of noting a start date it has been assumed that this new contract was intended to commence on 1 September 2024.
4. Following an agreed cabinet paper taken in November 2023, further discussions have taken place during 2024 with GMMH for the overall contract value for Bury's substance misuse services at £1,428,000 per annum. Prior to a contract formally being signed GMMH informed us of a shortfall in costs and revised annual costings for the new core contract, which were costed at approximately £190,000 per annum. The increase is attributed to several factors, including the rising costs of overheads, Agenda for Change (AfC) uplift and increase in workforce and management on costs.



5. The contract was in its final 12-month extension year, and as of 31st August 2024, the original contract was extended for an additional six-month period to align to the end of the 24/25 financial year with a one off £70,000 payment to uplift the value per annum to meet workforce and management on costs, agenda for change uplifts and rising overheads, this will be funded through the Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment Grant (SSMTRG) underspend (at no extra cost to the council).
6. However, following negotiations, Public Health have reduced these new proposed costs and provisionally agreed a new annual costing for the substance misuse service contract of £1,560,000 per annum for the financial year 2025/26. This equates to a total that is £132,000 per annum above the originally agreed contract fee. GMMH is currently reviewing this new annual cost and outlining the level of provision and the model they can offer within this revised budget.
7. There is now an opportunity to align the contract to financial years, national grant funding schemes, and alignment to the partnership model with GM neighbouring authorities (Bolton, Salford and Trafford) that also have GMMH as their substance misuse provider. This currently allows for economies of scale of work, shared back-office functions by entering into a revised contract from 1 April 2025. It is proposed that the period of 1 September 2024-31 March 2025 be treated as an extension of the existing arrangements, and a contract on updated terms be commenced on 1 April 2025 for 3+1+1, which is an increase in term of 6 months from the Cabinet decision in November 2023.
8. The Council has an excellent working relationship with GMMH which includes quarterly contract meetings to discuss performance and current data. In addition, it meets with both GMMH and partners outside of these contract meetings to discuss any relevant projects or issues. GMMH are also a prominent partner in the Bury Drug & Alcohol Partnership, being one of the action plan priority leads. Since the start of the contract, Council commissioners have been pleased with both the performance of the provider and the receptiveness to adapt and further develop services to meet both the local need and assure work aligns with wider plans and works including the Neighbourhood approach and 'Let's Do It' principles.

## Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- Extend Bury Council's substance misuse contract with GMMH for a further six months, from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 to align to the end of the 2045/25 financial year.
- Agree a one of £70,000 payment to uplift the substance misuse contract from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. Which will be funded through Office

for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment Grant (SSMTRG) underspend (at no extra cost to the council).

- Make a direct award to the current provider, GMMH, for a period of three years, with the option for the Council to extend for an additional two years at its discretion – starting on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2025.
- Agree the new total estimated cost for the three years commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 at £1,560,000 per annum, with the same amount allocated per annum thereafter, (subject to inflation and Agenda for Change pay increases). This will be funded through Public Health budget (including a small amount of substance misuse reserves) and there are no requests for additional funding.
- To delegate the negotiation and finalisation of contracts to the Director of Public Health in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance.

## **Alternative options considered and discarded**

Tender for new provider(s)

1. Pros:
  - Allows direct comparison to other providers.
  - Offers confirmation that the Council is getting best value for money.
  - Can ask for more for the same value, whether this takes the form of price reductions, better service, higher quality products or other added value.
2. Cons:
  - Disruption to current service users and staff. Anecdotal reports from the last tender in 2018 demonstrated that implementation of a new provider caused significant disruption to service users and triggered low staff morale.
  - Potential disruption to performance.
  - Leaving the commissioning arrangement with GMMH could result in the loss of collaborative expertise, workforce, reduced best practice sharing and diminished support for individuals.
  - Based on an understanding of the current market, there is unlikely to be a better provider for this role and we believe it is good value for money.
  - Loss of the positive, collaborative relationships already built.
  - Would interfere with current / planned projects and external funding streams (OHID grants).
  - A tender process would require extensive use of resources (particularly staff time across the organisation), which would come at a significant opportunity cost, preventing time being spent on primary prevention and current workstreams. This process would be complex and would need to consider adults, young people, and assertive outreach. This may involve tendering for more than one provider. Likely to require additional capacity to support the process.
  - May lose partnership between neighbouring authorities (Bolton, Salford and Trafford) who also have GMMH as their substance misuse provider. This

currently allows for economies of scale of work, shared back-office functions and a peer support approach across all organisations involved.

- Potential loss of the benefits of the partnership model that is in place with GMMH as lead provider. The current partnership model incorporates both NHS and third sector organisations, meaning the Council is able to benefit from both types of organisations working on our substance misuse agenda.
- If we go to retender, the council will need to procure under the new procurement Act (2023) under the new Provider Selection Regime (PSR) which is to be implemented from February 2025. This new act will change process to procure health services and adhere to new processes and legislation.

## **Reasons for recommendation**

### **Current Performance**

1. The Council is happy with the current performance of GMMH. Its substance misuse services were rated as outstanding from their most recent inspection by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in 2018.
2. In 2022 GMMH had an independent, external provider evaluate the partnership model, which overall was considered to work very effectively and reflect the aims of the contract.
3. This option would allow the Council to continue to build on already existing, positive relationships that have been built over the last four years, not just between GMMH and Bury Council but between it and numerous other external partners. Continuing with the current provider will enable current projects and funding streams to continue seamlessly. The current contract represents good value for money, compared to other organisations and localities, evidenced in supporting documents.

### **Proposed Procurement Route**

4. A competitive tender process would put extensive pressure on existing resources and staff time and would likely require additional support. In addition, stability and continuity of well performing providers is mentioned frequently as being essential to the care and wellbeing of service users and organisational staff, which is reflected in the potential future implementation of The NHS Provider Selector Regime (PSR). The PSR will aim to introduce increased flexibility and transparency to the procurement of healthcare services and will aim to support greater integration and the establishment of stable collaborations. The continuation of the current provider is in the best interest of the service users, all staff involved, taxpayers and the local population.
5. It is proposed that the Council continues with its current contract provider GMMH once the current contract comes to an end. Legal Services have advised that it is in order to make a direct award to GMMH in reliance on the *Hamburg* case exception, now codified as Regulation 12(7) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. That Regulation permits a direct contract to be awarded between the Council and an NHS or other public sector body, without

competition. It is subject to ensuring the contract is in the public interest and that the public services they each have to perform are provided to achieve common objectives.

### **Budget Provision**

6. Annual budget provision is available from Public Health funding (£1,367,360), with £192,640 of funding available from Children's which contributes to the Children's & Young People's element of the contract via Early Break.

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### **Report Author and Contact Details:**

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*Position: Public Health Practitioner*

*Department: Public Health*

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### **Links with the Corporate Priorities:**

Achieve are very client and community focused, which aligns well with our Let's do it strategy and neighbourhood approach.

The proposal will support key ambitions of the Let's do it strategy:

- A better future for the children of the borough
  - A better quality of life
  - A chance to feel more part of the borough
- 

### **Equality Impact and Considerations:**

The local data around inequalities relating to substance misuse have been analysed, as well as discussions had with relevant partners to gauge the local situation. This has been taken into account when looking at where the inequalities lie and where there are gaps within the current system / pathways to try and reduce these inequalities. This will involve continuing current workstreams and projects that are ongoing with Achieve, as well as utilising external, additional funding. We are confident that GMMH and partners take into account equality and protected characteristics in their day to day work and governance. The completed Equality Impact Assessment based on the current contract / provider can be found in the background papers section.

Please see the below links to the GMMH Advancing Equity and Inclusion Strategy and the GMMH Patient Carer Race Equality Framework.

[Advancing Equity and Inclusion Strategy](#) | [Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS FT \(gmmh.nhs.uk\)](#)

## Environmental Impact and Considerations:

GMMH have an established Green Plan running from 2022 to 2025 which has been developed through comprehensive consultation with various members of staff and external partners. The Green Plan has 114 specific targets which covers 9 keys areas of focus for the trust:

- Workforce and System Leadership
- Sustainable Models of care
- Digital Transformation
- Travel and Transport
- Estates and Facilities
- Medicines
- Supply Chain and Procurement
- Food and Nutrition
- Adaptation
- Have they made a commitment to carbon neutrality of zero carbon?

In line with the targets outlined by the NHS in the Delivering a Net Zero National Health Service Report GMMH is fully committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions to Net zero through two clear targets from the report which will be delivered the Trust Green Plan:

- Net zero by 2040 for the emissions we control directly.
- Net zero by 2045 for the emissions we can influence.

Where applicable, and within the remit of the contract, GMMH will carry out the necessary upgrades around the targets set out with in the Trust Green Plan.

GMMH is currently not a carbon literate organisation, the Energy & Sustainability Manager (recently new in post) has been looking at the options available to GMMH to either deliver a Carbon Literate accredited course or options to deliver an in-house workshop that is more specific to the NHS targets, GMMH Green Plan and dynamic workforce. GMMH are a local supplier and therefore will travel less, approximately 5 miles (depending on exact location). Where possible equipment will be reused if a new contract is agreed. If equipment is needed, careful consideration will be given to procurement routes.

## Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Provider not performing to expectations or service specification.	Quarterly contract monitoring meetings with the provider, as well as regular

	meetings to discuss various other projects and/or relevant matters.
Other providers being better value for money or providing higher quality care.	Market research completed prior to cabinet report.
The contract will be subject to future inflation costs and NHS Agenda for Change costings if it is continued and therefore, the price of the contract may increase if extended.	This will be monitored by Public Health and Finance to ensure such costs are factored in to budgeting.

### Legal Implications:

The proposed direct award to GMHH is compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and Regulation 12(7) in particular which permits such contracts to be entered into between two public sector authorities in the public interest.

### Financial Implications:

The increased cost of this contract has been taken into account as part of the budget setting process for 2024/25 as negotiations were ongoing at this time and provision is available within the public health budgets.

### Background papers:

*Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.*

1. Evaluation of Achieve and partnership model 2022 – final report with executive summary
2. Community Care, Radcliffe – feedback
3. Equality Impact Assessment – substance misuse service
4. GM market research document – available on request.
5. Quarterly substance misuse service performance reports can be provided on request.

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**

Term	Meaning
GMMH	Greater Manchester Mental Health
SSMTRG	Supplemental Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant
HMT	HM Treasury
OHID	Office for Health Improvement and Disparities
GM	Greater Manchester
PSR	Provider Selection Regime







<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Decision Type:</b> Non-Key
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<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b> 06 November 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Review of the Council's Delivery Model and Voluntary Exits Approvals	
<b>Report of</b>	Cabinet Member for HR & Corporate Affairs	

### Summary

The Council is managing a very challenging budget situation. To support the development of savings options for 2024/25, the Council's standing Voluntary Exits Policy was highlighted to staff. This report seeks approval for those applications which must be constitutionally approved by the Cabinet and/or where costs exceed £100,000 and must therefore be approved by Council.

### Recommendation(s)

Cabinet is asked to:

1. Agree the deletion of the post of Assistant Director (Operations) with effect from 31 October 2025 and the departure of the current postholder via Voluntary Early Retirement.
2. Agree the deletion of the post of Joint Head of Communications, Engagement & Marketing with effect from 1 April 2025 and the departure of the current postholder via Voluntary Severance.
3. Recommend to Council that the Voluntary Early Retirement of the Group Engineer (Street Lighting & Operations) is approved.
4. Recommend to Council that the Voluntary Early Retirement of the Head of Homelessness & Housing Options is approved.
5. Thank the Assistant Director (Operations), Joint Head of Communications, Engagement & Marketing, Group Engineer (Street Lighting & Operations) and Head of Homelessness & Housing respectively for their contribution to the Council and people of Bury over their time with the Authority.

### Reasons for recommendation(s)

The proposals in this report make a budget saving which will support the council's financial position in 2024/25.

### Alternative options considered and rejected

None.

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## 1. **Background**

- 1.1 The Council is facing a challenging budget situation with a financial deficit of circa. £30m to manage over the next three years. In support of budget savings, staff have been reminded of the Council's standing Voluntary Exits Policy, in particular senior managers, on the basis that approved organisation design principles allow for increases in spans of management control in many service areas.
- 1.2 The corporate organisation design principles were approved in 2021, as part of the corporate transformation strategy. The principles define a "6x6" organisation structure as the norm, i.e. a maximum of six tiers of staff with minimum management spans of control of six direct reports and a maximum of ten. Significant progress has been made in the implementation of this structure, including through the integration of the Finance and Corporate Core departments; restructures within the Children and Young People's department and the integration of housing services. Whilst the vast majority of the organisation is aligned with these principles in terms of tiers, overall ratios still, however, indicate the opportunity for some further efficiencies in relation to spans, particularly at management level.
- 1.3 This report seeks approval for the voluntary exits which may be supported but require Cabinet and/or Council approval to progress.

## 2. **Voluntary Exits**

- 2.1 The Council has a standing Voluntary Exits Policy which brings together the various mechanisms for employees exiting the organisation through Voluntary Early Retirement, Flexible Retirement and Voluntary Severance. The policy sets out clear financial and operational criteria for the consideration of applications.
- 2.2 In considering applications Executive Directors are asked to:  
*Take a rounded view considering, for example, the following:*
  - *Whether there is any detrimental effect on service delivery*
  - *If there is available alternative work at the lower grade (if stepping down is requested)*
  - *That the arrangement is fair and equitable to other team members*

- *If it may help to avoid redundancies and the associated strain on pension fund costs and redundancy payment costs*
- *If it enables the transfer of skills/knowledge*
- *If it would be advantageous to the employee's wellbeing and the service.*

- 2.2 The majority of exits are covered by a lump sum voluntary severance payment but, for staff age 55 or over, the Voluntary Early retirement (VER) provisions of the policy apply and pension release is also triggered contractually, as follows:

*Members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) aged 55 or over who have 2 or more year's membership can apply to draw voluntary early retirement benefits in cases of the efficiency of the service or redundancy with no added years but no actuarial reduction.*

*Applications must result in a financial saving to the Council which must be demonstrated in the Business Case. All associated costs including severance payment and capital costs must be paid back in 3 years.*

- 2.3 The cost of all severance payments must be funded directly by the Department in-year; the capital cost related to the early release of pension benefits is funded from the allocated sum held centrally with the Greater Manchester Pension Fund (GMPF). This sum is allocated annually with any underspend rolled forward for three years.
- 2.4 In the majority of cases, supported applications may be approved by the Cabinet Member for HR and Corporate Affairs. However, in line with the Council's Constitution and the Localism Act respectively, applications concerning staff at Deputy Chief Officer level or above must be approved by the Council's Cabinet and those with exit costs exceeding £100,000 must be agreed by Council. Four such applications are presented below for consideration.

2.5 Assistant Director (Operations)

- 2.5.1 This post is a Deputy Chief Officer and one of two Assistant Directors within the Operations Department (graded at Chief Officer Band E) providing leadership to the Commercial Services, Engineers & StreetScene, Waste & Transport and Wellness Services. The proposal is to agree to the postholder's VER, provisionally with effect from 31 October 2025. The extended leave date accounts for the need for a significant handover period and transition to new operating arrangements.
- 2.5.2 The intention is that the Assistant Director role is disestablished upon the postholder's departure with the existing four Heads of Service taking on the strategic responsibilities of the post amongst them and reporting directly to the Executive Director (Operations).
- 2.5.3 Agreeing the postholder's VER and deletion of the post will generate savings of £110,557 (net of required funding to reconfigure the structure at Head of

Service level). In accordance with the Voluntary Exits Policy the costs associated with release are to be 'paid back' within three years. This criterion is met through the above proposal.

2.5.4 The postholder has over 46 years' service with Bury in several roles. He began his career as an Architectural Technician and later played a central role in the regeneration and development of Bury's parks and countryside towards achieving Green Flag status and leading successful Bury in Bloom campaigns. He has also played a crucial role in the development of the wider leisure and wellness offer. Over the years, he has secured multi million pounds of external investment in outdoor spaces, play areas and sports facilities. He makes a professional point of always being available for advice to officers, elected members and residents, including managing out of hours Muslim burials and supporting the delivery of high profile and hugely successful events such as the Bury 10k, Tour of Britain and the Olympic torch relay through Bury. The postholder would always be the first to say that any success is down to the dedicated council teams and volunteers involved.

2.5.5 Members are asked to agree the deletion of the post of Assistant Director (Operations) at the point of the postholder's departure.

## 2.6 Joint Head of Communications, Marketing & Engagement

2.6.1 This post is a Deputy Chief Officer and provides leadership to the communication, engagement and marketing services for the Council and Bury Locality on behalf of NHS Greater Manchester. The post is funded equally by the Council and NHS Greater Manchester.

2.6.2 The Council is presently reviewing its communications strategy and delivery arrangements, which provides an opportunity to agree to the postholder's Voluntary Severance request with effect from 1 April 2025

2.6.3 There is a requirement through the Voluntary Exits policy that the costs associated with release are 'paid back' within three years. The minimum annual saving here will be £10,052 through a reduction in seniority of any new role reflective of changes in responsibility and accountability, including the recent transfer of community engagement away from this post. 50% of this saving relates to the Council element of the role meeting the 'pay back' requirements.

2.6.4 The postholder has managed the Council and NHS Greater Manchester communications and customer services strategy and delivery over the past five years in a challenging context, including throughout the pandemic.

2.8.5 Members are asked to agree the deletion of the post of Joint Head of Communications, Marketing & Engagement and to determine new arrangements at that point, in consultation with NHS GM.

## 2.7 Group Engineer (Street Lighting & Operations)

- 2.7.1 This post (Grade 16) provides professional leadership to the operation of street lighting in Bury. The proposal is to agree the postholder's Voluntary Early Retirement with effect from 12 February 2025.
- 2.7.2 The total budget for the post is £66,077 and the proposal is to retain an element of this budget (£26,000) to enable a revision of roles within the StreetScene function to ensure delivery is not impacted. This will also allow for an Apprentice role to be created to support continuity and workforce planning within the team.
- 2.7.3 The total costs of agreeing the release of this postholder are £103,044 (£28,093 severance and £75,044 capital cost related to the early release of pension benefits). Agreeing the postholders VER and deletion of the post will generate savings of £40,077 (net of required funding to reconfigure the structure within the Street Lighting function). There is a requirement through the Voluntary Exits Policy that the costs associated with release are 'paid back' within three years and this criterion is met through the above proposal.
- 2.7.4 The postholder has over 37 years' service with Bury and has contributed to the Council through both his work in Street Lighting and as a Trade Unionist and advocate for Disability inclusion.
- 2.7.5 Members are asked to commend the proposed VER for the Group Engineer (Street Lighting & Operations) to Council for approval.

## 2.8 Head of Homelessness & Housing Options

- 2.8.1 This post (SM2) provides professional leadership to the Council's Homelessness and Housing Allocations function. The proposal is to agree the postholders Voluntary Early Retirement with effect from 1 February 2025.
- 2.8.2 The total budget for the post is £78,445 and the proposal is to retain an element of this budget (£16,000) to enable a revised management arrangement for Homelessness and Housing Options which seeks to take the opportunity of the transfer of the Council's landlord function in-house to better integrate these functions.
- 2.8.3 The total costs of agreeing the release of this postholder are £188,756 (£10,320 severance and £178,436 capital cost related to the early release of pension benefits). Agreeing the postholders VER and deletion of the post will generate savings of £63,445 (net of required funding to reconfigure the structure within the Homelessness and Housing Options function). There is a requirement through the Voluntary Exits policy that the costs associated with release are 'paid back' within three years. This saving will realise £190,335 payback in three years.
- 2.8.4 The postholder has over 7 years service with Bury and over 30 years' experience across the local government and housing sector. He has contributed significantly to the transformation of the homelessness function in Bury during his time at the Council.



2.8.5 Members are asked to commend the proposed VER for the Head of Homelessness and Housing Options to Council for approval.

### 3. Conclusion

3.1 The above proposals support the delivery of the Council's budget strategy for 2025/26 through the generation of a total of £219k in savings. It is important to recognise that, through these changes, the Authority will lose significant skill and expertise. Clear handover and transition arrangements will therefore be critical and are factored into the leave dates proposed. Members are also asked to recognise the postholder's contributions to the borough and public service more broadly.

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#### Links with the Corporate Priorities:

These proposals seek to support the Council in ensuring it has the right structure and capacity in place to deliver against the Corporate Plan and LET'S Do It Strategy going forwards.

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#### Equality Impact and Considerations:

The proposals do not affect Council policy and are delivered within the scope of the agreed Voluntary Exits Policy which has been subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment.

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#### Environmental Impact and Considerations:

No negative impacts identified.

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#### Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
The proposed changes remove capacity and experience necessary to organisational delivery	The proposed departure dates and future structural arrangements have been designed to mitigate this risk.

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#### Legal Implications:

The Supplementary Guidance (Openness and Accountability in Local Pay) supplements the existing pay accountability guidance published in February 2012 which requires Local authorities to present details of any severance package paid to an officer where the value of the package exceeds £100,000. In accordance with the Council constitution approval of the severance package is subject to agreement by Council.

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**Financial Implications:**

The one-off costs of the proposals will be met from existing budget provision and the ongoing revenue savings have been reflected in the updated medium term financial strategy also on this agenda.

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**Appendices:**

None

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**Background papers:**

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**

Term	Meaning
VER	Voluntary Early Retirement
VS	Voluntary Severance

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED  
AUTHORITY HELD ON FRIDAY 12TH JULY 2024 AT SALFORD TOWN HALL**

**PRESENT**

Mayor of Greater Manchester	Andy Burnham (in the Chair)
Deputy Mayor (Police, Crime & Fire)	Kate Green
Bury	Councillor Eamonn O'Brien
Manchester	Councillor Bev Craig
Oldham	Councillor Arooj Shah
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Stockport	Councillor Mark Hunter
Tameside	Councillor Gerald Cooney
Wigan	Councillor David Molyneux

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Bolton	Councillor Emily Mort
Bolton	Councillor Nadim Muslim
Rochdale	Councillor Janet Emsley
Salford	Councillor Lewis Nelson
Salford	Councillor Jack Youd
GM Moving Chief Executive	Hayley Lever

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Group Chief Executive Officer, GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM	Caroline Simpson
GMCA Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
GMCA Monitoring Officer	Gillian Duckworth
GMCA Treasurer	Steve Wilson
Managing Director, TfGM	Steve Warrener
Bolton	Andrew Williamson
Bury	Lynne Ridsdale
Manchester	Joanne Roney

Oldham	Harry Catherall
Rochdale	Steve Rumbelow
Salford	Tom Stannard
Stockport	Michael Cullen
Tameside	Sandra Stewart
Trafford	Sarah Saleh
Wigan	Alison McKenzie-Folan
Office of the GM Mayor	Kevin Lee
TfGM	Danny Vaughan
TfGM	Martin Lax
TfGM	Luke Masterson
GMCA	Neil Evans
GMCA	Sylvia Welsh
GMCA	Lee Teasdale

#### **GMCA 87/24            APOLOGIES**

That apologies be received from Councillor Nicholas Peel (Bolton), City Mayor Paul Dennett (Salford), Councillor Tom Ross (Trafford), Sue Johnson (Bolton) & Sara Todd (Trafford).

#### **GMCA 88/24            CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, opened the meeting by acknowledging that this was the first full combined authority meeting following the appointment of Caroline Simpson to the role of Group Chief Executive for GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM.

It was also acknowledged that this would be the last Combined Authority meeting of Joanne Roney as Chief Executive of Manchester City Council ahead of her taking up the same role of Birmingham City Council. The Mayor acknowledged the huge contribution Joanne had made to the work of Manchester and the wider region over the past seven years.

Alison McKenzie-Folan was congratulated following her recent recognition in the King's Honours list with an OBE for services to local government, and Michael Cullen

was welcomed to his first meeting of the Combined Authority as the new Chief Executive of Stockport Borough Council.

The Mayor acknowledged the recent sad passing of Sir Howard Bernstein. Sir Howard had made a huge contribution to the building of the modern Manchester and throughout his entire career had been a devoted leader of Manchester's regeneration on a national scale. The continued growth of the city region would remain his legacy.

The sad passing of Paul Argyle, former Deputy Chief Fire Officer at Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service was acknowledged by the Combined Authority. The Mayor noted the support he had received from Paul following the tragic events at Manchester Arena in 2017.

The Mayor advised that following the election of the Labour government on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> July, he had taken part in a historic gathering of all metro mayors in the Cabinet Room at 10 Downing St with new Prime Minister Kier Starmer. It was hoped that this was a sign that the new government would be a different one to those seen previously, that focussed on growth everywhere as a national mission, with devolution at its root. GM had for many years now demonstrated that devolution could bring about significant change and growth on a regional level.

The Mayor invited Deputy Mayor Kate Green to address the Combined Authority on the plans for Part 4 of the CSE Assurance Review being commissioned through HMICFRS. Following the publication of Part 3 earlier in the year, there was an awareness of continued public concern about CSE in GM, with repeated assertions through the media that nothing had changed and that perpetrators continued to evade justice. It was agreed that Part 4 would more comprehensive and wider ranging in its scope to provide further assurance that current practice was at the expected level and that the concerns raised in the first three parts were being directly addressed. Councillor Shah stated on behalf of Oldham Borough Council that they welcomed the commissioning of Part 4 of the review, highlighting how vital it was that lessons were not only being learned, but fully embedded throughout all services.

#### **RESOLVED -/**

1. That Caroline Simpson be welcomed to her first meeting as the Group Chief Executive for GMCA, TfGM & GMFRS.



2. That the GMCA expresses its best wishes to Joanne Roney in her last meeting as the Chief Executive of Manchester City Council.
3. That the GMCA expresses its congratulations to Alison Mckenzie-Folan following her award of an OBE for services to local government.
4. That Michael Cullen be welcomed to his first meeting as the Chief Executive of Stockport Borough Council.
5. That the GMCA expresses its condolences to the family, friends and former colleagues of Sir Howard Bernstein following his sad passing.
6. That the GMCA expresses its condolences to the family, friends and former colleagues of Paul Argyle, who had served as a Deputy Chief Fire Officer for GMFRS.
7. That the Mayor's update on the gathering of metro mayors at Downing Street following the recent national election result be received.
8. That the update from the Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire & Crime on the plans for Part 4 of the CSE Assurance Review being commissioned through HMICFRS be received.
9. That it be noted that Oldham MBC welcomed the commissioning of Part 4 of the CSE Assurance Review.

**GMCA 89/24            DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the Mayor of Greater Manchester has a financial interest in Item 28 (Independent Remuneration Panel Review of GM Mayoral Remuneration) and will leave the meeting for that item.

2. That the Deputy Mayor for Policing, Crime & Fire declared an interest in Item 19 (GM Investment Zone) as a governor of Manchester Metropolitan University.

**GMCA 90/24                    MINUTES OF THE GMCA MEETING HELD ON 14 JUNE 2024**

**RESOLVED -/**

That the minutes of the GMCA meeting held on 14 June 2024 be approved as a correct record.

**GMCA 91/24                    GREATER MANCHESTER APPOINTMENTS**

**RESOLVED -/**

1. That Cllr Frankie Singleton (Stockport) be appointed as the member, and Cllr Jilly Julian (Stockport) as the substitute member, to the GM Culture and Social Impact Fund Committee.
2. That Cllr Mark Roberts (Stockport) be appointed to the Green City Region Board.
3. That Cllr Colin MacAlister (Stockport) be appointed as the member, and Cllr Frankie Singleton (Stockport) as the substitute member, to the GM Homelessness Board.
4. That the following members be appointed to the GM Children's Board:  
  
Cllr Wendy Meikle (Stockport)  
Cllr Lucy Smith (Bury)  
Cllr Julie Reid (Manchester)
5. That the appointment of Cllr Mark Roberts (Stockport) as the member, and Cllr Grace Baynham (Stockport) as the substitute member, to the GM Clean Air Charging Authorities Committee be noted.

6. That the appointment of Cllr Mark Roberts (Stockport) as the member, and Cllr Grace Baynham (Stockport) as the substitute member, to the GM Air Quality Administration Committee be noted.
7. That the appointment of Cllr Lisa Smart (Stockport) as the member, and Cllr Jeremy Meal (Stockport) as the substitute member to the GM Clean Air Scruriny Committee be noted.
8. That the appointment of Cllr Mark Hunter (Stockport) as the member, and Cllr Mark Roberts (Stockport) as the substitute member to the Integrated Care Partnership Board be noted.

**GMCA 92/24            GMCA ANNUAL CONSTITUTION REVIEW**

Gillian Duckworth, GMCA Solicitor & Monitoring Officer, was invited to present a report setting out the review of GMCA's Constitution and the recommended amendments arising from it.

**RESOLVED /-**

That the revised constitution accompanying the report be adopted as the Constitution of the GMCA.

**GMCA 93/24            GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH REVIEW:  
AFFORDABLE HOMES**

Councillor Nadim Muslim, Chair of the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee was invited to introduce a report informing of the recent task and finish exercise undertaken by the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee in relation to Affordable Living, its key recommendations and next steps. As a committee there had been a keenness for

members to look into this topic which was of great strategic importance across the whole of the region.

Councillor Lewis Nelson, who had chaired the task and finish group, was then invited to feedback. The figures in the GM region remained stark, with over 68,000 households currently on the waiting list for affordable social housing, which resulted in an overreliance on the private rented sector with properties often in poor condition. It was hoped that the change in national government would result in a reset of the approach being taken and the addressing of many of the problems highlighted within the review.

The Mayor welcomed the report, stating that it was timely, as he had asked that the Group Chief Executive establish a Housing First Unit to sit at the heart of work taking place within the GMCA that would respond to all the recommendations highlighted within the report. It was fully recognised that the aspirations for all residents of GM simply could not be achieved without access to a good secure home.

## **RESOLVED -/**

1. That the full list of recommendations within the report be endorsed.
2. That opportunities be sought where the GMCA can support the delivery of the recommendations, specifically:
  - to influence the development of the next Affordable Homes Programme through strengthened partnership arrangements within the latest devolution deal to ensure it is flexible enough to meet the needs of our residents (Recommendation 1).
  - to continue to support Local Authorities to seek out potential schemes through innovative approaches and bold actions (Recommendation 1).
  - to support Local Authorities and Housing Providers to ensure tenants have full access to welfare and other hardship funds through every interaction (Recommendation 2).
  - to co-design the next GM Housing Strategy with other key stakeholders that builds on what is already being done, but also confidently pushes the

boundaries as to what can potentially be done, setting the standard as zero carbon (Recommendation 3).

- to ensure that advice on cost-of-living support (e.g. food and fuel bill support) provided through registered providers is also available via private landlords (Recommendation 7).
  - to ensure that being an accredited member of the Good Landlord Charter is universally recognised, with its unique benefits clearly identified (Recommendation 8).
  - As a first step, GMCA to organise an event to discuss the findings of this review and actions which can be taken to remove barriers for the delivery of viable schemes (Recommendation 10).
3. That it be noted that the report will now be shared with GM Local Authority Councillors, Cabinet Members for Housing, and Scrutiny Committees, for their information and appropriate action.
  4. That the GMCA record its thanks to the Task and Finish Group for their contributions to a timely report on the housing issues impacting the region and the wider country.
  5. That the information provided on the establishment of the GM Housing First Unit and the plans for how it would contribute towards addressing the housing crisis in the region be received.

## **GMCA 94/24            GM MOVING MoU REFRESH**

Hayley Lever, Chief Executive of GM Moving, was invited to present a report that provided a strategic update on the work of GM Moving, including the MoU refresh with Sport England, Place partnerships and deepening investment with Sport England, and the GM Integrated Care Partnership plans for 2024-25 and beyond.

The success of the journey across the past seven years of GM Moving was highlighted. The MoU had focussed as much on how working together with Sport England would take place as much as what was being sought in terms of delivery. The Plans had been brought together with a range of colleagues across sectors and had considerable buy in.

The report would be taken for final approval at the next meeting of the Integrated Care Partnership, which it was hoped would be a celebration of the progress made.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the refreshed MoU with Sport England and wider GM Moving Partnership Board Members be approved.
2. That the contents of the report on Place and Health Integration be noted.
3. That the recommendations, next steps and support, strategic and collective/distributed leadership on these areas be noted:
  - Local Authority leadership and teams be supported to fully engage with this work as we move forward.
  - Place Deepening: progress, timescales and methodology be noted, including the work of the Place Partnership Network (including locality leads) contribution to develop local plans for peer review and final submission to Sport England in August 2024.
4. That the establishment of Live Well be noted.
5. That it be noted that September 2024 would mark three years since the launch of the GM Moving in Action Strategy 2021-31. This, along with the signing of the MOU would be officially marked with a presentation to the GM ICP Board on 27 September, with the Chief Executive Office of Sport England and members of GM Moving Partnership Board in attendance.



6. That the GMCA record its thanks to GM Moving for their contributions towards the refresh.

## **GMCA 95/24            THE GM GOOD LANDLORD CHARTER**

Councillor Gerald Cooney, Portfolio Lead for Housing, was invited to present a report setting out the detail of the Good Landlord Charter and how it will be delivered by an independent implementation unit.

It was planned that the Charter would recognise that there were good landlords in the region, and that these would be duly commended, however, it also served as a warning to the unscrupulous landlords in the region, that poor condition private rented housing that blighted neighbourhoods and impacted upon health would no longer be accepted, and that the GMCA would target such landlords strongly. It was hoped that a successful Charter would then go on to inspire its introduction in other areas of the country.

The Mayor advised that a pilot scheme would be running in Salford later in the year around the right for residents to request a property check. This would empower residents who currently felt trapped within their living conditions and felt unable to speak out against their landlord for fear of the consequences in terms of their living situation. GMFRS would play a key role in the undertaking of these checks.

Members queried the sanction element of the Charter's plans. Would this really convince bad landlords to become good landlords, or would they just ignore the benefits of accreditation and continue as usual? The Mayor accepted that this was a valid challenge and Housing First Unit would play a key role in working on ways to ensure that bad landlords suffered the consequences of being so. The first step would be the right for all residents to request a property check as a form of enforcement. Beyond that the GMCA would support the local authorities in the serving of improvement notices where properties were found to be deficient, and if these notices were not followed, compulsory purchase orders would not be ruled out at this stage. Work was also taking place with the new Deputy Prime Minister about the possible

return to parliament of the renters reform bill, which could provide vital additional enforcement powers.

**RESOLVED -/**

1. That the design of the Good Landlord Charter and the associated activity to implement the Charter, including the proposal not to charge a fee to landlords for participation in the Charter be approved.
2. That the utilisation of £250,000 from retained business rates in 2024/25 to procure an independent implementation unit for the charter, with future years' funding to come through the budget setting process, be approved.
3. That the Government be lobbied on the repeal of Section 21 and introduction of the Renters Reform Bill be pursued.
4. That the investment into a Good Landlord Charter pilot scheme in Salford be noted.

**GMCA 96/24            DELIVERING THE BEE NETWORK**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report updating the GMCA on progress implementing the Bee Network: a high-quality, affordable and fully integrated public transport and active travel system which can support sustainable economic growth.

It set out where GM currently stood on its delivery, and where it would be following the next steps being taken. Regulated services within tranches 1 & 2 were both now significantly exceeding the performance standards of the previous deregulated services. Patronage and revenue were both strong and above initial projections. TfGM remained on course to deliver tranche 3 from 5<sup>th</sup> January 2025. To ease the understandable difficulties in delivering so much change on a single date, it had been agreed that the integrated ticketing scheme would now go live from March 2025.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the update on delivery of the Bee Network be noted.
2. That it be noted that the fully integrated ticketing system, PayGo, is expected to go 'live' in March 2025.

**GMCA 97/24                      DRAFT RAPID TRANSIT STRATEGY**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report seeking approval of the draft Greater Manchester Rapid Transit Strategy, a sub-strategy of the 2040 Transport Strategy, and summarised its contents – including how fast and frequent mass transit will support the integrated Bee Network.

The Mayor emphasised the importance of including 8 existing rail lines within GM to be enveloped within the Bee Network plans going forward, effectively doubling the provision of local cost effective rail line services in the region.

A request was received that a full assessment should be undertaken on the possibility of expanding the Metrolink network into Leigh. It was advised that the report would be amended ahead of its submission to the Bee Network Committee to incorporate this.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the draft Greater Manchester Rapid Transit Strategy be approved, subject to any feedback from the Bee Network Committee, for wider engagement.
2. That officers would be requested to amend the report ahead of submission to the Bee Network Committee to reference commitment to a full assessment of the case for expanding Metrolink to Leigh.
3. That the proposed extension of the Bee Network to include 8 rail lines during this Mayoral term be noted.

**GMCA 98/24            BEE NETWORK FARES & TICKETING**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham, presented a report proposing a number of changes to Bee Network fares and ticketing products to increase access to public transport through affordable and simpler fares and ticketing.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the proposal to reduce Bee Network bus fares, with effect from 5<sup>th</sup> January 2025, be approved as follows:
  - a) reduce the price of 7-day Bus Travel on Bee Network Services from £21 Adult/£10.50 Child to £20 Adult/£10 Child
  - b) reduce the price of 28-day Bus Travel on Bee Network Services from £85.40 Adult/£42.70 Child to £80 Adult/£40 Child
2. That the introduction of a paper 'Hopper' single ticket for Bee Network bus users from 5<sup>th</sup> January 2025 be approved.
3. That the proposal to introduce a scheme, with local Credit Unions, from January 2025 to improve access to annual bus tickets be approved, in principle.
4. That the extension of the 'recompense scheme' to support the transition from commercial ticketing products to Bee Network products in the Tranche 3 area be noted.
5. That a further report on Bee Network fares and ticketing products be submitted to GMCA in September 2024.

**GMCA 99/24            TFGM EXECUTIVE BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report setting out proposals to amend the membership of the Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) Executive Board to ensure that TfGM's governance continued to be effective, supporting the operation and delivery of the Bee Network: a high-quality, affordable

and fully integrated public transport and active travel system which could support sustainable economic growth.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the appointment of the GM Transport Commissioner and the GM Active Travel Commissioner to the TfGM Executive Board be approved.
2. That the appointment of a GM Local Authority Chief Executive to the TfGM Executive Board, as recommended by the Group Chief Executive, be approved.
3. That the GMCA Treasurer be confirmed as an advisor to the TfGM Executive Board to ensure that membership of the Executive Board does not exceed the limit imposed by legislation.
4. That the proposal to undertake a further review of TfGM's governance and the role of its Executive Board before the end of 2024 be noted.

**GMCA 100/24      COST OF LIVING AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE**

Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Lead for Economy & Business and Councillor Arooj Shah Portfolio Lead for Equalities and Communities, provided an update on the cost of living pressures on residents and businesses in Greater Manchester, and some of the measures being put in place by the GMCA and partners to respond.

The helpful role that these reports had played over the past several years in helping the GMCA and partners to focus their priorities was acknowledged. However, it felt that now was the right time to look to refocus towards a more appropriate format for delivery, therefore this would be the last of the regular monthly cost of living updates delivered directly at the GMCA meetings.

Of course, the cost of living crisis had not gone away and would remain a key focus across the Combined Authority and the ten GM Local Authorities, and members looked forward to working with the new government on the myriad challenges that needed to be faced.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the latest assessment and emerging response, and views given on the next steps in that response be noted.

**GMCA 101/24      GMCA SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY: ANNUAL REPORT**

Caroline Simpson, Group Chief Executive Officer GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM, presented a report that provided an overview of progress in delivering the GMCA Sustainability Strategy 2022 – 2026 and outlined activity undertaken during 2023/2024 that had contributed towards current progress. The report also outlined actions set to be delivered in 2024/2025.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the progress made against the priority areas of the GMCA Sustainability Strategy 2022 – 2026 be noted.
2. That the contents of the report including actions proposed for 2024/2025 be noted.
3. That the implications of the Biodiversity Duty on GMCA and the proposed response be noted.

**GMCA 102/24      LOW CARBON SKILLS FUND OPPORTUNITY**

Caroline Simpson, Group Chief Executive Officer GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM presented a report outlining the funding opportunity to support further Greater Manchester public building retrofit activity, through the Public Sector Low Carbon Skills Fund Phase 5 (LCSF 5) via Salix Finance. The funding would support further feasibility and design studies to assess the potential retrofit of 36 public sector buildings in Greater Manchester.

**RESOLVED /-**



That it be noted that the Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF) bid was unsuccessful, but work was already underway on an alternative approach to support some of the work that would no longer be funded by LCSF.

**GMCA 103/24      CREATE GM: THE GREATER MANCHESTER STRATEGY FOR CULTURE, HERITAGE AND CREATIVITY**

Councillor Neil Emmott, Portfolio Holder for Culture, presented a report that provided an overview of CreateGM, the new Greater Manchester Strategy for Culture, Heritage and Creativity and the process taken to develop it.

A number of overarching areas were detailed within the report – these were Insight; Representation; Care; and Ethics. A number of thematic priorities sat under these such as health; wellbeing & aging; prosperity; environment; and reputation.

In terms of local cultural hubs, there had been a good news story in Oldham recently with the reopening of Oldham Coliseum, thanks were recorded to all of those who had worked tirelessly to see this through to fruition.

**RESOLVED -/**

1. That CreateGM, the Greater Manchester Strategy for Culture, Heritage, and Creativity be approved.
2. That the GMCA record its thanks to all those who had worked tirelessly to secure the reopening of Oldham Coliseum.

**GMCA 104/24      GM ARMED FORCES COVENANT ROADMAP**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report providing an update on the work that had taken place, together with information about the Greater Manchester Armed Forces Covenant Roadmap that had been developed using the expertise of the GM Armed Forces Leads across the localities and City Region partners.

**RESOLVED -/**

1. That the progress made to deliver against the Armed Forces Covenant coherently across GM be noted.
2. That the 5-year Roadmap, as a framework to enhance cohesive delivery across the City Region, be endorsed.
3. That the enduring and sustained effort to go even further and make GM the best place in the UK for members of the Armed Forces Community to live be recognised and the re-signing of the GM Armed Forces Covenant be approved.

#### **GMCA 105/24      INVESTMENT ZONE UPDATE**

Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Lead for Economy & Business, presented a report on work with government and partners across the city region to prepare proposals for the Investment Zone. This had aligned with the overall Greater Manchester Investment Plan, which would deploy the range of new tools in a strategic and integrated way to deliver agreed priorities in the Greater Manchester Strategy – such as the Growth Locations – and the Frontier Sectors in the Local Industrial Strategy. The report set out the indicative project allocations for the overall Investment Zone programme alongside the allocations for 2024-25.

#### **RESOLVED /-**

That the update on ministerial approval, confirmation of the project allocations in 2024-25 and the overall indicative allocations across the programme as a whole be noted.

#### **GMCA 106/24      STOCKPORT TOWN CENTRE WEST MAYORAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION'S STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN**

Caroline Simpson, Group Chief Executive Officer GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM, presented a report seeking approval from the GMCA for the Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation's Strategic Business Plan 2024-2029 and the Annual Action Plan which set out more detail on the commercially sensitive activities

the MDC would undertake over the course of 2024 / 2025 to deliver the objectives in the full plan.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation's Strategic Business Plan May 2024 – March 2029 (Annex A) be approved.
2. That the Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation's Action Plan May 2024 – March 2025 (Part B) be approved.

**GMCA 107/24      MAYORAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION FOR NORTHERN GATEWAY – IN PRINCIPLE DECISION**

Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Lead for Economy & Business, presented a report seeking approval in principle for the creation of a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) for the Northern Gateway project, with further details and decisions to follow as set out within the paper.

It was agreed that there was now a need to sharpen focus and to build pace into taking the Atom Valley site forward following the adoption of Places for Everyone, it now being a declared Investment Zone, and its potential around delivery of growth as sought by the incoming Labour government.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the creation of an MDC for the Northern Gateway project be approved, in principle.
2. That it be agreed that GMCA officers explore with Bury, Oldham, and Rochdale Councils, detailed options for an MDC to be created for the Northern Gateway, with these matters to be decided upon by GMCA and the Local Authorities in due course.

**GMCA 108/24      ASHTON MAYORAL DEVELOPMENT ZONE – BUSINESS PLAN**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report that sought approval from the GMCA for the Ashton Mayoral Development Zone Business Plan 2024-25.

It was stated that this would inspire further growth in the eastern side of the region and would provide an ideal strategic sit in terms of infrastructure and transport links.

**RESOLVED /-**

That the Ashton Mayoral Development Zone Business Plan 2024-25 be approved.

**GMCA 109/24      UKSPF PROPOSAL FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF POTENTIAL UNDERSPEND 2024/25**

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources, presented a report that set out the current position of UKSPF and plans for mitigation of the risk of underspend.

With 2024/25 being the last year of the programme the biggest risk was underspend and with that, the report outlined how this would be closely monitored and the principles on which risk would be mitigated.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the proposal for the mitigation of underspend risk be approved.
2. That it be agreed that the proposal was a strategic fit with the GM UKSPF Investment Plan and that it was deliverable, as set out in the report.
3. That the mitigation measures, as set out in the report, be approved.
4. That authority be delegated to the GMCA Treasurer in consultation with the Portfolio Lead for Resources and Investment to agree any alternative projects where underspend is identified.

**GMCA 110/24      REVENUE OUTTURN REPORT – QUARTER 4**

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources, presented a report that informed members of the provisional revenue outturn for 2023/24.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That it be noted that the Mayoral General Budget provisional revenue outturn position for 2023/24 was breakeven, after planned transfer to earmarked reserves.
2. That it be noted that the GMCA General Budget provisional revenue outturn position for 2023/24 is £2.1m, which will be transferred to earmarked reserves.
3. That it be noted that the Mayoral General – GM Fire & Rescue provisional outturn position for 2023/24 was breakeven, after a transfer of revenue funding to capital.
4. That it be noted that the Waste and Resourcing provisional revenue outturn position for 2023/24 was breakeven, after a transfer from reserve of £18.7m.
5. That it be noted that the GMCA Transport and TfGM provisional revenue outturn positions for 2023/24 were breakeven, after transfers between earmarked reserves.
6. That it be noted that the final position was subject to the submission of the audited accounts to be submitted to the GMCA Audit Committee.

**GMCA 111/24      CAPITAL OUTTURN REPORT – QUARTER 4**

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources, presented a report informing members of the capital outturn for 2023/24.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That it be noted that the 2023/24 actual outturn capital expenditure of £541.1m, compared to the forecast position presented to GMCA on 9 February 2024 of £579.1m.

2. That the update on property acquisitions for Project Skyline, as detailed in section 8 of the report, be noted.
3. That the additions to the capital programme in 2024/25, as listed in section 8 of the report, be approved.

**GMCA 112/24      GM HOUSING INVESTMENT LOANS FUND AND  
BROWNFIELD HOUSING FUND**

Councillor Gerald Cooney, Portfolio Lead for Housing, presented a report seeking approval to delegate authority to the Group Chief Executive, GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM, in consultation with the Portfolio Lead for Housing, to approve new projects for funding and urgent variations to existing funding from the GM Housing Investment Loans Fund and Brownfield Housing Fund.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That authority be delegated to the Group Chief Executive, GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM, in consultation with the Portfolio Lead for Housing, to approve new funding and urgent variations to existing funding from the GM Housing Investment Loans Fund and Brownfield Housing Fund, 13 July 2024 to 26 September 2024.
2. That authority be delegated to the GMCA Treasurer, in consultation with the GMCA Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, to prepare and effect the necessary legal agreements.
3. That it be noted that any recommendations approved under the delegation will be reported to the next available meeting of the GMCA.



**GMCA 113/24      GM INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK, CONDITIONAL PROJECT  
APPROVAL**

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources, presented a report seeking approval for an update on an existing loan facility to RealityMine Limited.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the changes to the terms of the RealityMine loan, in line with the update provided in the confidential part of the agenda, be approved.
2. That a £2m increase in the loan facility to Romaco Limited, from £3m to £5m be noted.
3. That the consolidation of two existing loans into a single facility with Broughton House, totalling £4.1m be noted.
4. That authority be delegated to the GMCA Treasurer and GMCA Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to review the due diligence information in respect of the above loans, and, subject to their satisfactory review and agreement of the due diligence information and the overall detailed commercial terms of the loans, to sign off any outstanding conditions, issue final approvals and complete any necessary related documentation in respect of the loans noted above.
5. That authority be delegated to the Group Chief Executive , GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM and the GMCA Treasurer, in consultation with the Portfolio Lead for investment and Resources, to approve projects for funding and agree urgent variations to the terms of funding in the period 13 July 2024 to 26 September 2024.
6. That it be noted that any recommendations approved under the delegations will be reported to the next available meeting of the GMCA.

**GMCA 114/24      INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL REVIEW OF GM  
MAYORAL REMUNERATION**

*Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester declared an interest in this item and left the chamber accordingly. The Chair for this item was taken by Councillor Bev Craig as a Deputy Mayor of the GMCA.*

Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Lead for Economy & Business presented a report detailing the recommendations of the GM Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) in relation to the remuneration of the GM Elected Mayor.

Members agreed that it was a real anomaly that Mayor Burnham did not have access to public sector pension schemes in his role, it was stated that lobbying would take place on behalf of the Mayor to ensure that Metro Mayors were given fair access to appropriate pensions schemes in line with those offered, for example, to Police & Crime Commissioners.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the recommendations of the IRP be approved:
  - a) That the remuneration of the GM Mayor remains at £118,267, subject to any indexation going forward.
  - b) That the remuneration of the GM Mayor continues to be indexed at the NJC annual percentage salary increase, specifically with reference to Spinal Column Point 43.
  - c) That the index continues to be applied to the same year that it applies to officers. This is normally from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March. Where the index is applicable to officers for more than 1 year it should also be applicable to the GM Mayor for the same period.
  - d) That the recommendations contained in the report be implemented with effect from the date of the GM Mayor taking up the new term of office in May 2024.
2. That the IRP's views be noted that the GM Mayor should have access to an appropriate pension scheme that provides for an employer's contribution equivalent to that made to the pension scheme for Police and Crimes Commissioners (it should be noted that the panel sets out the legal position at

paragraphs 37 to 40 of its report and notes that currently there are no legal powers to do so.)

3. That it be agreed that lobbying would take place on behalf of the Mayor to ensure that Metro Mayors were given fair access to appropriate pensions schemes.

#### **GMCA 115/24      EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

That, under section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business on the grounds that this involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as set out in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

#### **GMCA 116/24      STOCKPORT TOWN CENTRE WEST MAYORAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS ACTION PLAN**

**Clerk's Note:** This item was considered in support of the report considered in Part A of the agenda (GMCA 106/24)

#### **RESOLVED /-**

That the Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation's Action Plan May 2024 – March 2025 (Annex B) be approved.

#### **GMCA 117/24      GM INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK APPROVALS**

**Clerk's Note:** This item was considered in support of the report considered in Part A of the agenda (GMCA 113/24).

#### **RESOLVED /-**

That the contents of the report be noted.

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED  
AUTHORITY HELD ON FRIDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER 2024 AT LEIGH SPORTS  
VILLAGE**

**PRESENT**

Mayor of Greater Manchester	Andy Burnham (in the Chair)
Deputy Mayor (Police, Crime & Fire)	Kate Green
Bolton	Councillor Nicholas Peel
Manchester	Councillor Bev Craig
Oldham	Councillor Arooj Shah
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett
Stockport	Councillor Mark Hunter
Tameside	Councillor Jacqueline North
Trafford	Councillor Tom Ross
Wigan	Councillor David Molyneux

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Bolton	Councillor Nadim Muslim
Environment Agency	Ian Crewe
United Utilities	Jo Harrison
South Manchester Credit Union	Sheenagh Young
Unify	Owen Roberts

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Group Chief Executive Officer, GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM	Caroline Simpson
GMCA Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
GMCA Monitoring Officer	Gillian Duckworth
GMCA Treasurer	Steve Wilson
GMCA Director of Governance & Scrutiny	Julie Connor
Bolton	Sue Johnson



Bury	Lynne Ridsdale
Manchester	Paul Marshall
Oldham	Harry Catherall
Rochdale	Julie Murphy
Salford	Tom Stannard
Stockport	Michael Cullen
Trafford	Sara Todd
Wigan	James Winterbottom
Office of the GM Mayor	Kevin Lee
TfGM	Martin Lax
GMCA	Sylvia Welsh
GMCA	Lee Teasdale

**GMCA 118/24      APOLOGIES**

That apologies be received from Councillor Eamonn O'Brien (Bury), Councillor Gerald Cooney (Tameside), Steve Rumbelow (Rochdale) & Alison McKenzie-Folan (Wigan).

**GMCA 119/24      CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, opened the meeting by welcoming all to Leigh Sports Village and invited City Mayor Paul Dennett and Deputy Mayor Kate Green to provide an update on work taking place in Greater Manchester following the recent publication of the Grenfell Tower Report.

Mayor Dennett stated that the report was appropriately substantive, covering some 2000 pages and 59 recommendations. It would take time to work through the detail and legislative change would be required. There were actions that would need to be taken on by all parts of the system – including all levels of government and housing associations. Greater Manchester would be taking the 59 actions very seriously and discussions would be taking place on an appropriate implementation plan to create a regulatory environment locally that reflects the one that will be required at the national level. The swiftness with which the government was now responding to the report was

welcomed, as it was known that many thousands of people would still be living in homes that had cladding that could be deemed unsafe and that this was intolerable.

The Mayor of Greater Manchester provided an update following the Labour Party Conference held in Liverpool earlier in the week. At the Conference the second meeting of the Liverpool Manchester Railway Board had taken place. During the meeting the announcement was made that former Railways Minister Huw Merriman would be the first chair of the Partnership Board. Mayor Burnham stated that in his roles with the former government Mr Merriman had always been a great friend of the region and had sought to advocate for funding high-speed rail in the region following the HS2 cancellation announcements. Long-term infrastructure projects such as this always benefit from a cross-party approach and Mr Merriman would also bring this to the table.

The Old Trafford Regeneration Task Force had also been in attendance at the Conference. This had been the first big opportunity to put forward the coherent vision of the opportunities for growth that Old Trafford regeneration represented. This vision would include the relocation of freight from behind Old Trafford, if successful this would take freight away from the West Coast Main Line and free up capacity within the city of Manchester region, particularly the bottlenecks seen in Stockport. This would also create a growth opportunity in Port Salford, which was proposed as one of the alternative freight locations.

Mayor of Greater Manchester advised members of the amendments to leaders portfolios, including Mayor Burnham himself taking on the Health & Care portfolio, Mayor Dennett taking the Housing First portfolio, and the introduction of a new portfolio focusing on reform of the Greater Manchester Pension Fund.

Members welcomed a strengthening of the governance arrangements for the Greater Manchester Pension Fund. There were some concerns expressed regarding changes to the appointments process to the Pension Fund Board introduced with no local authority consultation. The Mayor of Greater Manchester noted these concerns and asked officers to liaise with Tameside Council to gain further clarity on the changes.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That an update following the publication of the Grenfell Tower Report, including the plans for addressing the 59 actions within it be received and that an implementation plan be submitted to a future meeting of the GMCA for consideration.
2. That the appointment of Huw Merriman, as the Chair of the Liverpool Manchester Railway Partnership Board be noted.
3. That the update on the Old Trafford Regeneration Task Force and the opportunities that lie within it be received.
4. That update on the amendments to Leaders Portfolios be received.
5. That the GMCA will liaise with Tameside to ask for further clarity around recent changes to the Pension Fund's appointments process.

**GMCA 120/24      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**RESOLVED /-**

That Mayor Andy Burnham registers an interest on Item 20 (Q1 Capital Funding) in relation to LEVI funding.

**GMCA 121/24      MINUTES OF THE GMCA MEETING HELD ON 12 JULY 2024**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the minutes of the GMCA meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2024 be approved as a correct record.

**GMCA 122/24      GMCA WASTE & RECYCLING COMMITTEE MINUTES – 17<sup>TH</sup>  
JULY 2024**

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the minutes of the GMCA Waste & Recycling Committee held on 17 July 2024 be approved.
2. That the appointment of Councillor Alan Quinn as the Chair of the Waste & Recycling Committee for 2024/25 year be approved.
3. That the appointment of Councillor Steve Adshead as Vice Chair of the Greater Manchester Waste and Recycling Committee for 2024/25 be approved.

**GMCA 123/24      GMCA RESOURCES COMMITTEE MINUTES – 22 MARCH &  
12 JULY 2024**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the minutes of the GMCA Resources Committee meetings held on 22 March & 12 July 2024 be approved.

**GMCA 124/24      GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY MINUTES – 24 JULY & 14  
AUGUST 2024**

Councillor Nadim Muslim, Chair of the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee was invited to address the GMCA and present the committee's annual report. The report detailed some of the key pieces of work undertaken over the last municipal year, but also guided the Committee in the strongest direction for the forthcoming year to ensure that its work continued to add value, create an impact and be in line with the things that matter most to local residents.

Highlights in the previous year included the ability to have real oversight of the priorities and focus of the Combined Authority whilst scrutinising in more detail those issues that mattered most, including the cost of public transport, waste contractual arrangements and the benefit of business rate retention.

The Mayor of Greater Manchester welcomed the report and reflected upon the continued improvements being seen through the Combined Authority's scrutiny

processes, and as the single settlement arrangements became further embedded, the need for strong and robust scrutiny would become even more vital.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the minutes of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 24 July & 14 August 2024 be noted.
2. That the update from Councillor Nadim Muslim, Chair of Overview & Scrutiny, be received.
3. That the contents of the Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report be noted.

**GMCA 125/24      GMCA AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES – 31 JULY 2024**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the minutes of the GMCA Audit Committee held on 31 July 2024 be noted.

**GMCA 126/24      BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE MINUTES – 27 JUNE & 25 JULY 2024**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the minutes of the Bee Network Committee held on 27 June & 25 July 2024 be noted.

**GMCA 127/24      GREATER MANCHESTER APPOINTMENTS AND NOMINATIONS 2024/25**

Gillian Duckworth, GMCA Solicitor & Monitoring Officer, presented a report setting out appointments and nominations to various Committees and other bodies within Greater Manchester.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the nomination to the Integrated Care Partnership Board be withdrawn from the agenda.
2. That the appointment of Councillor Paul Heilbron (Salford) as the member and Councillor Jonathan Moore (Salford) as the substitute member on the GMCA Waste & Recycling Committee for 2024/25 be approved.
3. That the appointment of Councillor Nathan Evans (Trafford), Councillor David Tilbrook (Tameside) and Councillor Diane Williamson (Oldham) as substitute members on the Bee Network Committee for 2024/25 be approved.
4. That the appointment of Councillor Tony Davies (Salford), to the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee replacing Councillor Joshua Brooks (Salford) be approved.
5. That the appointment of Councillor Martin Donaghy (Bolton) to the GMCA Homelessness Board be approved.
6. That the appointment of Councillor Jake Austin (Stockport) as a member and Councillor Joshua Charters (Oldham) as a substitute member on the Police, Crime & Fire Panel be noted.
7. That the appointment of Councillor David Chadwick (Bolton), Councillor Jake Austin (Stockport) as members of the Police, Crime & Fire Steering Group and the appointment of Councillor Steve Gribbon as a substitute member of the Police, Crime & Fire Steering Group be noted.

**GMCA 128/24      BUSINESS PLAN FOR THE INTEGRATED WATER  
MANAGEMENT PLAN TO 31 MARCH 2025**

Mayor Paul Dennett, Portfolio Lead for Housing, and Councillor Tom Ross, Portfolio Lead for the Green City Region, presented a report seeking approval for the Business Plan for the Integrated Water Management Plan (IWMP) to 31 March 2025 to deliver



the objectives outlined in the full plan and provide an update on the resources that were being deployed to enable the plan to be progressed and delivered.

The report drew attention to funding that was being deployed to reduce flooding across the region. This would require collaborative working across the system. Investment plans from United Utilities were also welcomed. Early engagement around plans and working across organisational boundaries would be critical to progressing the agenda.

Ian Crewe was invited to address the GMCA on behalf of the Environment Agency. He stated that as the nation and the world faced a climate and biodiversity emergency, no one could sit back anymore as urgent action was required. Adaption was required at scale and at pace. The cost of mitigating climate impacts was likely to reach £10bn to the UK economy by 2050, so the plans within the IWMP would be hugely helpful. There were concerns highlighted that ever growing pressures placed upon public funding meant that ever greater levels of traditional partner funding contributions, whilst vital, would not be sufficient. Therefore, innovative and collaborative investment as planned within the IWMP was necessary and the region was leading the way in this field.

Jo Harrison was invited to address the GMCA on behalf of United Utilities. It was highlighted that public expectations had changed, and UU sought to meet that aspiration around cleaner rivers and more resilient water quality and flooding protection for the future. The Water Act was driving the opportunity to increase investment across the North West. It was anticipated that there would be £3bn investment in GM alone over the next five years investment period to change the way that water was managed in the region.

In response to concerns regarding sewage overflow and United Utilities plan to tackle this issue as soon as possible, Members were advised that 54% of GM's sewers were 'combined sewers' and Victorian infrastructure, and it was noted that over 1300 overflows had been seen in the region. Therefore, an extraordinary level of investment was required to completely change the sewage system. In the shorter term there would be prioritisation of investment into changing the overflow levels. Significant levels of investment were also being placed into modernising the region's wastewater treatment works, which would provide huge improvements in the quality of water.

Members sought to highlight in the building of partnership working, the role of blue light services. These services were shouldering significant costs at the moment in addressing flooding and related events, and improvements in the protection of the natural environment would see a reduction in the impact upon them.

Reference was made to the potential breach of the Toddbrook Reservoir. Despite this being beyond the boundaries of the region, this would have a significant impact upon Stockport and had resulted in heightened concerns. This would be an issue for a number of GM Local Authorities who had reservoirs in neighbouring areas. members were advised that the responsibilities for reservoirs was often a complex environment with a range of different types of ownership but the sheer risks involved meant that a strong reservoir strategy was being heavily invested into. Local resilience forums also had integrated working across regions in place, and it was hoped that the increase in combined authority regions would further increase levels of collaboration.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the Business Plan for the Integrated Water Management Plan to 31 March 25 (Annex A) be approved.
2. That the existing budget allocation 2024-2026 be noted.
3. That the national announcements be noted, as contained with paragraph 1.12-1.13 of the report be noted.
4. That the progress and outputs from the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Business Plan, as contained within paragraphs 2.1–2.2 of the report be noted.
5. That the verbal update received from the Environment Agency be received.
6. That the verbal update received from United Utilities on the Integrated Water Management Plan and the work taking place to address ongoing sewage overflow issues be received.
7. That closer integration of blue light services into the Integrated Water Management Plans be progressed.

8. That closer integration with neighbouring authorities be progressed on cross boundary issues, including the future management of assets such as reservoirs, which have a direct impact on Greater Manchester.
9. That a report on the potential pipeline for investment be submitted to a future meeting of the GMCA.

#### **GMCA 129/24      BEE NETWORK FARES & TICKETING**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report proposing a number of changes to Bee Network fares and ticketing products to increase access to public transport through affordable and simpler fares and ticketing.

The continuing success of Bee Network franchising and how that was now allowing for the introduction of an annual ticket, and the multi-modal pay as you go system which it was confirmed would be within a launch window of either March 16<sup>th</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup> 2025.

The Annual Bee Bus Ticket offer was set to offer considerable savings to those who took it up. However, it was fully understood that the initial cost of £800 made it too expensive for most people as a one-off purchase, and that those who would benefit most from this were the least likely to be able to afford it. Therefore a partnership with local credit unions to create a manageable payment system opens up access to a much wider range of residents. This scheme also sought to highlight the great work that credit unions undertook in the region and would hopefully encourage more residents to make use of what they could offer.

Sheenagh Young (South Manchester Credit Union) and Owen Roberts (Unify) were invited to further expand upon the role of credit unions in supporting residents. It was advised that the region contained a consortium of 14 different credit unions who collaborated to ensure that all residents had access to affordable loans, including loans to local social enterprises. The credit unions collectively had £200m of savings held with them from customers in GM. Feedback from members was that they wanted

credit unions rooted within their communities, and this is what the consortium all sought to offer.

Sheenagh and Owen were thanked for their contributions and asked that all Leaders actively promote the Annual Bus Ticket Credit Scheme and information relating to local credit unions to all of their staff members.

Members asked about funding for capped bus fares going forward, in particular the continuation of BSIP funding which was introduced by the previous government, or if there was a need for 'Plan B' to ensure financial sustainability. Concern was raised that if the fund was not to continue, then Local Authorities may be asked to contribute funding they could not afford. The Mayor of Greater Manchester acknowledged the concerns and stated that the system from commencement had been established upon the need to increase patronage. Figures showed that these increased levels of patronage were encouragingly building. The increases seen in the north and west of the region since franchising was established were strong, and it was hoped that this would be replicated in the south of the region after January. It was also hoped that the multi-modal fare introduction would also have a similar impact upon user numbers. Obviously at the present time there were still unknowns, and by the middle of 2025 there should be a real picture of how strong the patronage had become. In terms of a 'Plan B' there would need to be consideration of increases to the Mayoral precept.

#### **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the introduction of an Annual Bee Bus Ticket priced at £800 be approved.
2. That the introduction of a TfGM scheme with local Credit Unions, from January 2025, to improve access to annual bus tickets be endorsed.
3. That the continuation of the Bee Network Recompense Scheme for Tranche 3 bus customers be approved.
4. That the introduction of multi modal 'pay as you go' (PAYG) contactless ticketing and capped fares across bus and tram in March 2025 be approved.

5. That the potential go live dates for the 'pay as you go' scheme of either 16<sup>th</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025 be acknowledged.
6. That the plans to provide an update on the annual review of the Capped Fares Scheme and proposed next steps be noted.
7. That the potential extension of the Care Leavers scheme, from aged 21 to aged 25, from April 2025 be noted.
8. That the GMCA acknowledges the achievements of the Bee Network bus integration following the first anniversary of the tranche 1 go live date.
9. That the verbal updates provided by SM Credit Union and Unify on the work of GM's 14 credit unions be received.
10. That GM Leaders be requested to actively promote the Annual Bus Ticket Credit Scheme and information relating to local credit unions to all of their staff members.

## **GMCA 130/24      HOUSING FIRST GREATER MANCHESTER**

Mayor Paul Dennett, Portfolio Lead for Housing, presented a report confirming the launch of the Housing First Unit, setting out the Housing First vision for Greater Manchester, the challenges of the current housing crisis, the headline measures to build a new system and the potential for GM Housing Investment Loan Fund surpluses to support delivery of the Housing First vision.

Ambitions for the unit included the delivery of 75,000 new homes within the period of the current parliament, a target that would include 10,000 Truly Affordable Net Zero homes.

These plans would require considerable levels of collaboration, including with the region's growth locations partners and agencies across sectors.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the launch of the Housing First Unit be welcomed, that the proposed Housing First vision for Greater Manchester be approved, and that support be given for a programme of engagement with the government, private sector and broader stakeholders to gain support and contribution to the necessary radical actions.
2. That commitment be given to an ambition to drive forward growth and increase housing supply by delivering 75,000 new homes in the current Parliament, including 10,000 Truly Affordable Net Zero (TANZ) homes, subject to necessary support from Government.
3. That the potential for GM Housing Investment Loan Fund surpluses to significantly assist in work to deliver the Housing First vision be noted.

**GMCA 131/24      TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION: VALUE FOR MONEY IN GREATER MANCHESTER**

Mayor Paul Dennett, Portfolio Lead for Housing First, presented an overview of the current temporary accommodation landscape in GM and described the emerging work to collaborate across the region to reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation, with a particular emphasis on the worst quality and highest cost housing – particularly ad hoc and Bed and Breakfast accommodation. The report presented, for the first time, a regional action plan on Temporary Accommodation, and summarises the work progressed to date, seeking endorsement from Leaders.

Mayor Dennett asked that his thanks be put on the record to the GMCA officers for the work they had undertaken to provide the evidence base and their proactive work to inform the development of the regional action plan. This evidence base allowed for meaningful and proactive work to now take place.

Over 100,000 households in the country were in temporary accommodation, and within those, over 150,000 children. This was of huge concern and given local authorities statutory duties to provide this temporary accommodation, created an



existential crisis where the risks of council bankruptcy was increased by the burden of these costs.

It was proposed that the initial focus would be on the worst quality housing first and foremost and the highest cost temporary accommodation (such as bed and breakfast housing).

The Mayor of Greater Manchester stated that post budget, when it was known what levers the region would have, he planned to work with the Housing First team and the GMCA Treasurer to establish when the £75m pressures currently faced on temporary accommodation could be reduced to zero.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the 6-point GM Temporary Accommodation Action Plan be approved.
2. That the financial outputs of the data analysis exercise be noted.
3. That the Influencing Priorities, described in section 4 of the report, as a starting point for dialogue with government be endorsed.
4. That the GM Out of Borough Protocol be approved.
5. That the GMCA record its thanks to the GMCA team for the work undertaken on providing the evidence base and proactive work to inform the development of the regional action plan.
6. That the GMCA Treasurer be requested to undertake analysis of the potential for reducing, through government support, the £75m pressure currently faced by GM authorities on temporary accommodation.

**GMCA 132/24      GREATER MANCHESTER BROWNFIELD HOUSING  
REALLOCATIONS**

Mayor Paul Dennett, Portfolio Lead for Housing First, presented a report seeking approval for the reallocation of £21.3m of funding from the GMCA Brownfield Housing

Fund. There had been slippage in some schemes, so this reallocation was vital in order to meet the timelines for spend as set out by central government.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the £11.1m allocations to projects identified in the “2024/25 Reallocations” schedule be approved.
2. That approval be given to the £10.2m allocations to projects identified in the “2024/25 in-principle Reallocations” schedule, subject to successful due diligence being completed.
3. That the variations to projects detailed in Appendix 2 of the report, be approved.

**GMCA 133/24      ATOM VALLEY MAYORAL DEVELOPMENT ZONE BUSINESS PLAN 2024/25**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report seeking seek approval from GMCA for the Atom Valley MDZ Business Plan 2024 – 2025.

It was important to hold an in-depth discussion on the Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone at a forthcoming meeting of the GMCA and that this would be arranged to take place following the spending review. The strategic importance and potential of Atom Valley would be raised as a key part of the agenda at the Global Investment Summit taking place on 14<sup>th</sup> October.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the draft Atom Valley MDZ Business Plan 2024 - 2025 be approved.
2. That a further report be submitted to the GMCA on the Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone following the outcome of the Spending Review.

**GMCA 134/24      RAIL INTEGRATION AND REFORM PROGRAMME:  
EMERGING RAIL REFORM POLICY POSITION & NEXT STEPS**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report that advised the GMCA on the progress of the emerging Rail Integration and Reform proposition and to seek approval to progress the work further.

Once the franchised bus network was fully established on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2025, the focus would be fully onto the integration of 8 nominated rail lines into the wider Bee Network. Work would be undertaken with TfGM to draft a series of milestones and timelines for this integration process. These 8 lines would immediately increase the attractiveness of the areas around them due to the increased connectivity options.

Councillor Nadim Muslim was invited to feed back following the Overview & Scrutiny consideration of this item. There was significant support from the Committee on the direction of travel and the opportunities for regeneration that this potentially offered. Members recognised that some of greatest benefits, rather than just accessing the city centre easier, could be improved access to the jobs and amenities within their local towns.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the importance of the rail network for GM and unlocking future economic growth be noted.
2. That the government's plans for rail reform and ongoing GM engagement with Shadow Great British Railways.
3. That further engagement with HMG, rail partners and others to explore and influence legislative and structural options that would achieve GM ambitions be approved.
4. That the update received following the consideration of this item at the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee be received.
5. That TfGM be requested to consider provisional timelines for the integration of the eight nominated rail lines into the wider Bee Network.

**GMCA 135/24      GOLBOURNE STATION LAND ACQUISITION STRATEGY**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report setting out the proposed strategy for acquiring land interests required to deliver the Golborne New Station Project and sought approval to make offers for those interests and secure those land interests whilst also commencing the drafting of a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) and supporting documentation and progressing the planning consents.

Members emphasised the importance of access for all and ensuring that there was a strategic piece demonstrating that all stations would be fully accessible.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the update from the DfT Outline Business Case review and associated risks highlighted be noted.
2. That the proposals for securing the land interests required to deliver the scheme as set out within this report be noted.
3. That TfGM securing the required land interests in accordance with the agreed programme budgets be approved.
4. That the submission of a planning application for the scheme and the preparation of the CPO and supporting documentation including issuing Land Interest Questionnaires to affected landowners be approved.
5. That the entering into of any ancillary agreements required to achieve the scheme objectives be approved.
6. That the importance of ensuring all railway stations on the 8 rail lines, identified for integration within the wider Bee Network, be fully accessible be endorsed.

**GMCA 136/24      WORKING WELL: WORK AND HEALTH PROGRAMME  
DIRECT AWARD AND CONTRACT EXTENSION OF THE  
INDIVIDUAL PLACEMENT AND SUPPORT IN PRIMARY CARE**

Sara Todd, Portfolio Lead Chief Executive for Education, Skills & Work, presented a report seeking delegated authority to award a contract for the Working Well: Work and Health Programme (WHP) under regulation 32 (2)(c) and to seek approval for a contract extension to Working Well: Individual Placement Support in Primary Care (IPSPC).

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the proposed award of the Working Well: Work and Health Programme contract on the basis set out in the report be approved.
2. That the proposed Working Well: Individual Placement and Support in Primary Care 12-month contract extension and increase in value on the basis set out in this Report be approved.

**GMCA 137/24      Q1 CAPITAL UPDATE 2024-2025**

Steve Wilson (GMCA Treasurer) presented a report providing an update in relation to the GMCA's 2024/25 capital expenditure programme.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the current 2024/25 forecast of £636.3m compared to the 2024/25 budget of £685.2m and approve changes to the capital programme as set out in the report be noted.
2. That the addition of £3.8m to the 2024/25 GMCA Capital Programme from an extension to the fourth round of the Active Travel Fund (ATF4) award as outlined in section 2.6.1 be approved.
3. That the addition to the capital programme of £16.2m of Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding to deliver local, on-street charging infrastructure

across Greater Manchester and to accelerate the commercialisation of, and investment in, the local charging infrastructure sector be approved.

4. That the addition to the capital programme of £4.8m of Investment Zone grant funding to support the development of high-potential clusters identified as Investment Zones with a focus on developing Advanced Manufacturing & Materials be approved.

#### **GMCA 138/24      Q1 REVENUE UPDATE 2024-2025**

Steve Wilson (GMCA Treasurer) presented a report informing members of the financial position at the end of June 2024 (Quarter 1) and forecast revenue outturn position for the 2024/25 financial year.

#### **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the forecast position at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024 be noted.
2. That an increase to the Mayoral budget of £357k funded from Mayoral reserves towards spend on mayoral priorities (para 3.2) be approved
3. That an increase to the revenue grant to Transport for Greater Manchester of £3m funded from DfT devolved BSOG grant for tendered services (para. 6.5) be approved.

#### **GMCA 139/24      ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW 2023/24**

Steve Wilson (GMCA Treasurer) presented a report that confirmed that the GMCA had complied with the requirement under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2023/24, and to give prior scrutiny to all of the treasury management reports by the Audit Committee before they were reported to the Full Authority.

#### **RESOLVED /-**



That the annual treasury management report for 2023/24 be noted.

**GMCA 140/24      GREATER MANCHESTER HOUSING INVESTMENT LOANS  
FUND – INVESTMENT VARIATION RECOMMENDATION**

Mayor Paul Dennett (Portfolio Lead for Housing) presented a report that sought approval to a variation of the terms for the GM Housing Investment Loans Fund loan detailed in the recommendations.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That a variation to the terms of the GM Housing Investment Loans Fund loan detailed in the table below, as detailed further in this and the accompanying Part B report be approved.

BORROWER	SCHEME	DISTRICT	LOAN
Manchester New Square Limited Partnership	Manchester New Square	Manchester	£26.700m

2. That authority be delegated the GMCA Treasurer acting in consultation with the GMCA Monitoring Officer to prepare and effect the necessary legal agreements.

**GMCA 141/24      GREATER MANCHESTER INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK,  
CONDITIONAL PROJECT APPROVAL**

Steve Wilson, GMCA Treasurer, presented a report that sought approval for three investments through GMCA's new Advanced Manufacturing and Materials Investment Fund, GM Advance, to agree the update on its loan to Holiferm Ltd, and note that an equity investment of up to £750k to Watercycle Technologies Limited and an update on an existing loan to Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce have been approved under delegation.

The Mayor of Greater Manchester welcomed the investments into advanced manufacturing and materials, stating that he would welcome a fuller discussion of the potentials around the fund at a future meeting of the GMCA.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That an equity investment of £50,000 to NeuWave Technologies Limited be approved.
2. That an equity investment of £50,000 to Verciti Ltd be approved.
3. That an equity investment of £50,000 to H2Origin Ltd be approved.
4. That the changes to the terms of the existing loan to Holiform Ltd in line with the update provided in the confidential part of the agenda be approved.
5. That an equity investment of up to £750k to Watercycle Technologies Limited, approved under delegation be noted.
6. That amendments to the terms of the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce loan in line with the update provided in the confidential part of the agenda be noted.
7. That authority be delegated to the GMCA Treasurer and GMCA Monitoring Officer to review the due diligence information in respect of the above loans, and, subject to their satisfactory review and agreement of the due diligence information and the overall detailed commercial terms of the investments, to sign off any outstanding conditions, issue final approvals and complete any necessary related documentation in respect of the investments and loans noted above.
8. That a fuller discussion of the potential of the Advanced Manufacturing and Materials Investment Loans Fund be held at a future meeting of the GMCA.

**GMCA 142/24      EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

That, under section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business on the grounds that this involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as set out in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

**GMCA 143/24      GREATER MANCHESTER HOUSING LOANS INVESTMENT  
FUND – INVESTMENT VARIATION RECOMMENDATION**

**Clerk's Note:** This item was considered in support of the report considered in Part A of the agenda (GMCA 140/24)

**RESOLVED /-**

That the report be noted.

**GMCA 117/24      GM INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK APPROVALS**

**Clerk's Note:** This item was considered in support of the report considered in Part A of the agenda (GMCA 141/24).

**RESOLVED /-**

That the report be noted.

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Regulation 21(1)(A) of the Local Authorities (Executive  
Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England)  
Regulations 2000.

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