

**GM 1.1 - Heywood/Pilsworth**

**Topic Paper**

**October 2020**

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# Section A – Background

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Northern Gateway is an extensive area located around Junction 18 of the M60 motorway extending east to Junction 19 of the M62 and north to Junction 3 of the M66. It comprises two key sites within the wider North-East Growth Corridor:
- Heywood / Pilsworth (Bury and Rochdale)
  - Simister and Bowlee (Bury and Rochdale)
- 1.2 The Northern Gateway straddles the districts of Bury and Rochdale and is positioned at a strategically important intersection around the M60, M62 and M66 motorways. As such, it represents a highly accessible opportunity for growth in Greater Manchester with wider benefits on a regional and national level. The central theme of the spatial strategy for Greater Manchester is to deliver inclusive growth across the city region complemented by a key aim to boost the competitiveness of the northern parts of Greater Manchester. The Northern Gateway is one of the key locations that will help to deliver these fundamental objectives.
- 1.3 This strategic allocation will enable the delivery of a large, nationally-significant employment opportunity to attract high quality business and investment, with a complementary housing offer on the M62 corridor, where there is strong evidence of market demand.
- 1.4 The allocation at Heywood/Pilsworth provides an opportunity for a substantial and high quality employment-led development. The scale and location of this allocation will help to rebalance the Greater Manchester economy, ensure the GMSF plays its part in driving growth within the north of England and enable Greater Manchester to be competitive both nationally and internationally.
- 1.5 This Topic Paper brings together a wide range of information and evidence in connection with the proposed strategic site allocation at Heywood and Pilsworth (GM1.1). However, it should be read in conjunction with the separate Topic Paper relating to the Simister/Bowlee allocation (GM1.2). The paper may be subject to further technical amendments in advance of the formal commencement of consultation.

## 2 Site Details

- 2.1 GM1.1 lies wholly north of the M62 and extends to approximately 330 hectares. The land is situated to the east of Bury and to the south of Heywood. Its southern boundary borders onto the M62, its western boundary follows the M66 and eastern boundary straddles Hareshill Road. To the north, it borders directly onto Pilsworth Road and Heywood Distribution Park. The allocation is approximately:
- 3.2km from Bury Town Centre;
  - 3.7km from Heywood Town Centre;
  - 4.5km from Whitefield Town Centre;
  - 6.4km from Middleton Town Centre; and
  - 7.7km from Rochdale Town Centre
- 2.2 The allocation currently comprises a number of large agricultural fields, a fishery and a golf course.

### **3 Proposed Development**

- 3.1 Development within this allocation seeks to deliver a total of around 1,200,000 sq.m of industrial and warehousing space (with around 700,000 sq.m. being delivered within the plan period). This will 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. Such development will have the potential to create up to 17,000 jobs with a further 1,700 jobs created through supply chains and employee spending.
- 3.2 Around 1,200 new homes will be delivered within the allocation. 1,000 homes, coupled with a new primary school, will be located in the eastern part of the allocation (within Rochdale) to support early delivery of the infrastructure and provide a planned buffer between existing housing and new employment development. A further 200 homes will be created in the west of the allocation off Castle Road. An appropriate buffer will be incorporated to separate this part of the allocation from the wider employment area and appropriate highways measures will be put in place to prevent the use of residential roads by traffic associated with the wider employment area. The housing is proposed to include a mix of house types, including affordable housing.
- 3.3 The design and layout within the allocation will allow 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 (GM1.2). High quality, publicly accessible multifunctional green and blue infrastructure within the allocation will provide health benefits to workers and residents as well as creating a visually attractive environment.
- 3.4 Appendix 1 sets out the GM1.1 Heywood/Pilsworth policy wording.
- 3.5 The allocation boundary or the area proposed to be released from the Green Belt has not been amended from that proposed in the 2019 GMSF. However, land to the southwest and south that was proposed to be released (GM1.3 – Whitefield and part of GM1.2 – Simister Bowlee) in the 2019 Draft GMSF are now proposed to be retained within the Green Belt.

### **4 Site Selection**

- 4.1 The GMSF Site Selection work had the purpose of identifying the most sustainable locations for residential and employment development that can achieve the GMSF Vision, Objectives and Spatial Strategy.
- 4.2 This allocation forms part of the wider Northern Gateway allocation and straddles the districts of Bury and Rochdale. The allocation provides the opportunity to deliver a large nationally significant employment opportunity to attract high quality business and investment with complementary residential development.
- 4.3 The allocation is positioned at a strategically important intersection around the M60, M62 and M66 motorways. As such, it represents a highly accessible opportunity for growth in Greater Manchester, with wider benefits on a regional and national level.
- 4.4 Due to the current undeveloped nature of the allocation, much of the immediate highway network is not of a nature that could accommodate strategic development without an appropriate upgrade. Key to delivery of the allocation will therefore be the provision of significant improvements to highway infrastructure, delivery of improved public transport infrastructure through the allocation (potentially including Bus Rapid Transport corridor) and

- close to the allocation (including potential tram-train on the East Lancashire rail line between Bury and Rochdale) and the provision of high quality walking and cycling routes.
- 4.5 The scale of the development will help to deliver a significant jobs boost to the northern and eastern parts of Greater Manchester, increasing the economic output from this area. It will also enable new residential and community facilities to come forward in what is currently an area with significant pockets of deprivation, low skills and worklessness.
- 4.6 The GMSF site selection process considered the entire Northern Gateway allocation when considering sites for inclusion in the GMSF. On this basis the Northern Gateway allocation was selected for inclusion based on:
- Criteria 1 (land which has been previously developed and/or land which is served by public transport);
  - Criteria 3 (land that can maximise existing opportunities which have significant capacity to deliver transformational change and/or boost the competitiveness and connectivity of Greater Manchester and genuinely deliver inclusive growth);
  - Criteria 5 (land which would have a direct significant impact on delivering urban regeneration);
  - Criteria 6 (land where transport investment (by the developer) and the creation of significant new demand (through appropriate development densities), would support the delivery of long term viable sustainable travel options and delivers significant wider community benefits);
  - Criteria 7 – Land that would deliver significant local benefits by addressing a major local problem/issue.
- 4.7 Further detail is provided within in the GMSF Site Selection Paper available at <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing/gmsf2020/supporting-documents/>.
- 4.8 The Heywood/Pilsworth allocation forms part of the GMSF North East Corridor Policy (GM-Strat 7) and offers an opportunity to deliver a significant mixed use, housing and employment development which is of a transformative scale and significantly change the economic growth potential of the wider area. Development could capitalise on the existing successful employment locations at Heywood/Pilsworth and further exploit the important connection to the M62 corridor. The location of this allocation will make it particularly attractive to the logistics and advanced manufacturing sectors.
- 4.9 Development could also contribute towards regeneration of adjacent areas of deprivation and this would help deliver one the GMSF's key aims of boosting the competitiveness of the northern Greater Manchester Boroughs and supporting long-term economic growth in Greater Manchester.
- 4.10 Given this, the allocation is relevant to the GMSF objectives of:
- Objective 1 – Meet our housing need;
  - Objective 3 – Ensure a thriving and productive economy in all parts of Greater Manchester;
  - Objective 4 – Maximise the potential arising from our national and international assets;
  - Objective 5 – Reduce inequalities and improve prosperity;
  - Objective 6 – Promote the sustainable movement of people, good and information.

## 5 Planning History

- 5.1 In Bury, planning permission has not been granted for any significant uses within the allocation.
- 5.2 In Rochdale, planning permission was granted in March 2020 for land within the north eastern part of the allocation. The scheme comprised a new link road between Junction 19 of the M62 and Pilsworth Road, approximately 135,000 sqm of employment floorspace, 1000 new homes, a new local centre and primary school and associated landscaping and sports pitches. This scheme is currently being delivered.

## 6 GMSF 2019 Consultation Responses

- 6.1 The consultation responses and consultation summary report is available at <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing/gmsf2020/supporting-documents/>.
- 6.2 345 comments were received in relation to the GM1.1 Heywood and Pilsworth during the consultation on the Revised Draft GMSF in 2019. A summary of the key issues are as follows:

<b>Principle / Scale of development</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Disproportionate distribution of employment land.</li> <li>▪ Large scale of site is a concern as it has potential to give rise to traffic impacts due to it being close to motorways.</li> <li>▪ No need when existing estates in area are below capacity.</li> <li>▪ Economic growth should not be at the expense of the community and the environment.</li> <li>▪ Considerable impact on local agriculture.</li> <li>▪ Pilsworth landfill – include within developable area/unsuitable for development but could be a country park/should remain rural.</li> <li>▪ Highly accessible and sustainable location for growth.</li> </ul>
<b>Housing (inc affordable housing)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Should be set back from motorways and at high densities.</li> <li>▪ Will be expensive executive homes. Affordable home prices will not be affordable. Must provide for elderly. Need terraced homes.</li> <li>▪ Land is available for development. More housing needed closer to the planned jobs.</li> </ul>
<b>Employment and Economy</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Over-reliance on logistics and warehouses which have low-skilled and low wage jobs, needs to attract high technology industries. Will not solve the issue of a lack of suitable premises.</li> <li>▪ More detail required on jobs created, investors.</li> <li>▪ Should expand existing under-capacity industrial estates.</li> <li>▪ New jobs should be for local residents.</li> <li>▪ Consider impact of automation and Brexit.</li> <li>▪ Need to promote business growth in town centres.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provides significant employment opportunities and new impetus for regeneration.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Green Belt</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Release of Green Belt disproportionate in this area of the Borough and compared to other districts.</li> <li>▪ Will result in the merging of towns and urban sprawl.</li> <li>▪ Retained Green Belt includes land that is not appropriate such as Pilsworth Quarry.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Brownfield</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Must use brownfield land within the urban areas before considering greenfield land.</li> </ul>

## 7 GMSF 2019 Integrated Assessment

- 7.1 The 2019 GMSF Integrated Assessment (IA) is available at <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing/gmsf2020/supporting-documents/>.
- 7.2 The IA reviewed how the draft GMSF policies could impact upon the environment, the economy, local communities, equality and public health. The IA also recommended ways in which the GMSF can be improved to ensure that the policies are as sustainable as possible.
- 7.3 The Northern Gateway draft allocations were considered together against the 2019 Integrated Assessment objectives. The allocations performed well although a number of recommendations were made:
- Ensure that all three allocations refer to a mix of housing types;
  - Make specific reference to energy efficiency of the housing stock;
  - The policy should also highlight the importance of local employment during construction;
  - Consider feasibility study into requirements and ability of local network to support development;
  - Benefits such as creation of construction and operational employment, or improved transport links or increases in the range of community facilities, should consider benefits to deprived areas. Where possible such benefits should be maximised to help bring about long term benefits for deprived areas.
  - The allocation needs to encourage integration with existing communities and provision of a range of housing tenures.
  - Ensure any new health provision is accessible to all and that local capacity is considered throughout future masterplanning stages;
  - Ensure any new community facilities provision is accessible to all and that local capacity is considered throughout future masterplanning stages.
  - Ensure any new recreation provision is accessible to all and that local capacity is considered throughout future masterplanning stages.
  - Seek to minimise the number of trips made by private car to/from the site. Consider the use of mitigation solutions including green infrastructure, incentivising electric vehicles and/or masterplan layout which reduces emissions near sensitive receptors. This is especially relevant to buffer around the AQMA adjacent to the site.
  - A suitable flood risk assessment may be required and associated mitigation in order to prevent the flood zone expanding.

- Appropriate flood risk mitigation should be implemented (in line with best practice) for all developments that are within or near to areas of flood risk. This is especially relevant around the areas of flood zone 2 and 3.
- Make reference to energy efficiency directly and ways that it can be increased, such as highlighting the benefits of sustainable modes of transport.
- Consider the listed structures throughout detailed design to reduce the risk throughout construction and operational phases.
- Consider how development of PDL sites could be encouraged as a result of greenfield development (e.g. by incentives or inclusion of adjacent PDL).
- Promote sustainable construction methods.
- Consider waste and recycling facilities in design e.g. consider location of waste/recycling facilities in design/layout of masterplans, and how waste facilities can be located to encourage recycling.

7.4 It is important to note that the IA was focusing on each policy in isolation from other policies and that many of the recommended changes for the Northern Gateway allocation policies are already covered in other GMSF policies. However, some wording changes have been made as a result of the IA in relation to housing types, electric vehicles, heritage and archaeology.



# Section B – Physical

## 8 Transport

- 8.1 The allocation is positioned at a strategically important intersection around the M60, M62 and M66 motorways. Due to the current undeveloped nature of the allocation, much of the immediate local highway network is currently not of a nature that could accommodate strategic development without an appropriate upgrade. Key to the delivery of the allocation will be the provision of significant improvements to highway infrastructure, delivery of improved public transport infrastructure through the allocation and close to the allocation and the provision of high quality and connected walking and cycling routes.
- 8.2 The Locality Assessment (<https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing/gmsf2020/supporting-documents/>) concludes that whilst the allocation is expected to give rise to significant levels of traffic demand over both the strategic and the local road networks, mitigation schemes have been developed and tested which could be expected to address the impacts on both the strategic and local road networks.
- 8.3 The following mitigation measures have been identified:

Mitigation	Description
Supporting Strategic Interventions	
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor to Manchester city centre	Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor to Manchester city centre and Rochdale via Heywood Old Road/ Manchester Road
Necessary Local Mitigations	
Permeable network for pedestrian and cyclist priority to/from/ within the development	Assumed new or upgraded cycle and pedestrian access, linked to PROWs and the Bee Network, providing connectivity to adjacent local areas and employment/educational opportunities, supported by high quality design for active travel within the allocation area.
Introduction of local bus services to/from/ within the allocation	Assumed local bus services to link the allocation with Metrolink and Rail interchanges and key local centres such as Bury, Heywood, Rochdale and Middleton, supported by permeable design of future development to support bus services within the allocation area.
Moss Hall Road / Pilsworth Road (South)	Replace existing three arm priority junction with a three arm roundabout.  New roundabout, including a 56m (inscribed circle diameter) with two circulating lanes.
A6045 Heywood Old Rd / Whittle Lane	Additional traffic management measures on Whittle Lane.
Moss Hall Road / Pilsworth Road (North)	Replace existing three arm signalised junction with a three arm unsignalised roundabout.  New roundabout will include a 56m (inscribed circle diameter) with two circulating lanes and a left turn bypass from Pilsworth Road South

Hollins Brow / Hollins Lane	Remove mini roundabout arrangement and replace with a 3 arm signalised junction.
Pilsworth Road (Between M66 Link Road and "3-Arrows" Junction)	Upgrading to dual carriageway standard – two lanes in each direction with a central reserve.
<b>SRN Interventions</b>	
M66 Junction 3 / Pilsworth Road	Upgrading to a 4-arm grade separated signalised configuration including widened slip road approaches from the M66 and a 3 lane circulating carriageway.
M62 J19 / A6046 Heywood Interchange	Removal of at-grade pedestrian / cycle facilities at the SHLR arm and adjacent section of the circulating carriageway and replacing them with a pedestrian / cycle subway.
M66 Junction 2 / A58	Addition of a fourth lane to the circulating carriageway of the roundabout.
M66 Link Road	Upgrading existing Pilsworth Road between M66 Junction 3 and Moss Hall Lane to dual carriageway - two traffic lanes in each direction, with a central reservation & cycle/pedestrian provision.

- 8.4 The proposed policy wording for the GM 1.1 Allocation has been informed by the Locality Assessment and ensures the allocation will be supported by the appropriate mitigation measures.
- 8.5 The allocation is therefore considered to be deliverable, although, in line with good practice further work will be needed to substantiate these findings as the allocation moves through the planning process.

## 9 Flood Risk and Drainage

### Flood Risk Summary

- 9.1 The majority of the allocation is located within Flood Zone 1 (i.e. land assessed as having a lower than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding) and development should be directed into these areas, if possible.
- 9.2 The EA Main River Map identifies 3 watercourses within the allocation boundary that are classified as Main Rivers:
- Whittle Brook flows from south east to north west within the allocation;
  - Castle Brook flows south to north and has a confluence with Whittle Brook; and
  - Brightley Brook flows from east to west through the north of the allocation.
- 9.3 There are areas along the banks of both Whittle Brook and Brightley Brook that are shown as Flood Zone 3 (i.e. land with a 1 in 100 annual probability of river flooding occurring). An 8m easement will be employed either side of watercourses within the allocation, so these areas of Flood Zone 3 do not present any restriction to the development.
- 9.4 There is an intricate network of overland flows and ponding throughout the allocation. These flows are generally of low risk and can be considered as runoff from agricultural land into the

watercourses described above. There is an area at high risk of localised ponding to the west of Stock Nook Farm.

- 9.5 There is a localised risk of groundwater flooding at and below ground level around Brightley Brook, Whittle Brook and Castle Brook and in the south west largely around the area of peat. The allocation is at low risk of sewer flooding.
- 9.6 Future plans for the development will take into account the overland flow routes, groundwater flood risk and potential areas of ponding. This is a large allocation with the potential to create significant volumes of runoff if infiltration is not possible. Downstream areas at risk and additional volumes of water, even if the runoff rate is controlled, could increase scale or duration of flooding downstream. Development within the allocation could reduce risk by safeguarding areas for flood storage and enhancement of storage areas to reduce flows downstream.
- 9.7 Parts of the allocation lie within areas recommended for tree planting and targeted tree planting on floodplains, as shown by the Working within Natural Processes (WwNP) dataset. There are also numerous areas recommended for riparian tree planting alongside both banks of Whittle Brook and other drains within the allocation boundary. These WwNP techniques can significantly delay the timing of peak runoff in catchments and can also provide obstructions to significant flow paths.
- 9.8 The allocation also includes parts of urban and rural loss improvement areas within the Irwell Natural Flood Management dataset. Both of these include scenarios where soil structure is improved, thereby making the land more permeable and thus increasing the soil moisture storage capacity of these areas. In the urban loss parts, this also includes an increase in overall greenspace.

### **GMSF Greater Manchester Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment**

- 9.9 The Greater Manchester Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (GM Level 1 SFRA) was completed in March 2019 as part of the evidence base to inform the preparation of the GMSF available at <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing/gmsf2020/supporting-documents/>. This SFRA initiated the sequential risk-based approach to the allocation of land for development and identified whether application of the Exception Test was likely to be necessary using the most up-to-date information and guidance.
- 9.10 97% of Heywood/Pilsworth Allocation falls within Flood Zone 1 with the remaining in Flood Zones 2 and 3. The GM Level 1 SFRA recommended that the identified flood risk within the GM1.1 allocation could be avoided through allocation layout and design as part of a detailed flood risk assessment.
- 9.11 However GM1.1 Heywood/Pilsworth was included within the GMSF Level 2 SFRA in order for broad scale river modelling to cover existing gaps within the baseline information to be carried out. This has meant that additional flood risk assessment has been carried out in relation to the allocation.

### **GMSF Level 2 SFRA**

#### Level 2 SFRA Conclusions

- Over 95% of the allocation lies within Flood Zone 1 and development should be directed into these areas, if possible.
- There is additional surface water flood risk across the allocation though locations are sporadic and in small pickets when compared to the entirety of the proposed allocation allocation.

- This is a large allocation with potential to create significant volumes of runoff if infiltration is not possible. Downstream areas at risk and additional volumes of water, even if the runoff rate is controlled, could increase scale or duration of flooding downstream. This allocation could reduce risk by safeguarding areas for flood storage and enhancement of storage areas to reduce flows downstream. The WwNP dataset, discussed above, should provide a start for assessing possible areas for storage or tree planting.
  - A drainage strategy would be required to ensure current onsite risk can be managed effectively with no increase in surface water flood risk elsewhere as a result of new development. This will require surface water modelling based on the proposed layout and investigation into appropriate SuDS techniques. Infiltration SuDS may be feasible on parts of the allocation, subject to ground investigation and contamination testing.
  - Development should avoid the 8m no development buffer that the EA requires alongside watercourses for access and maintenance requirements.
- 9.12 Building on the conclusions of the Level 2 SFRA, the site promoters for GM1.1 Heywood/Pilsworth have prepared a GM1.1 Flood Risk and Drainage High Level Constraints Review to assess the risk of flooding in more detail available at <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing/gmsf2020/supporting-documents/>
- 9.13 To ensure that flood risk is not increased at the allocation or elsewhere as a result of the development, surface water runoff from the development will be restricted to the existing greenfield run-off rate of 7.58 l/s/ha.
- 9.14 No public surface water sewers have been identified within the allocation, therefore surface water run-off will be discharged into the ground through multiple infiltration structures or to the watercourses within the allocation at the limiting discharge rates. This will require discussion and agreement with the Environment Agency and the Lead Local Flood Authority.
- 9.15 Parts of the allocation have been identified as potentially contaminated e.g., the former bleach works. It is considered likely that infiltration of surface water will only be an environmentally safe option if remediation has been carried out in advance, to a standard specifically to suit infiltration.
- 9.16 The Review states that the masterplan for the allocation is being developed with due consideration to the existing topography, watercourses and rivers and development plots are likely to be located with substantial offsets from these features. This provides the opportunity to create green/blue corridors adjacent to the existing watercourses and will not require the diversion of any watercourses and culverted works will be kept to a minimum and required only where there are highway crossings.
- 9.17 The Review states that the proposed drainage system will include a variety of SuDS features providing green/blue spaces (such as detention basins and swales). These shall address both flooding and water quality issues and be designed to mimic natural drainage features within the allocation and provide recreational areas for the public. Alternate SuDS options, such as wetlands, provide an opportunity to maximise biodiversity and maximise public open space and will be considered. Infiltration may be possible across some of the allocation subject to detailed ground investigations on a localised basis.
- 9.18 The proposed policy wording for the GM 1.1 Allocation has been informed by the SFRA work undertaken and ensures that any development within the allocation is safe from and mitigates for potential flood risk from all sources. Policy GM1.1 requires development to incorporate sustainable drainage systems to manage surface water and control the rate of surface water run-off, discharging in accordance with the hierarchy of drainage options. Proposals to discharge to public sewer will need to submit clear evidence demonstrating why alternative options are not available. As a green and blue infrastructure network will provide

more sustainable options discharge surface water, only foul flows should communicate with the public sewer.

- 9.19 The allocation is therefore considered to be deliverable although further work will be needed as the allocation moves through the planning process.

## 10 Ground Conditions

### Site Geology and Hydrogeology

- 10.1 The supporting Desk Top Assessment has identified:
- Made ground – expected where quarries and sand pits have been backfilled and around buildings where ground has been disturbed by construction activities.
  - Superficial deposits - Glacial Till overlain by peat deposits in the south west, sand and gravel in the centre and north east and morainic deposits (poorly sorted sand, gravel and clay) in the north west.
  - Bedrock - predominantly Coal Measures which is near surface in the north east of the allocation where there is potential for shallow mineworkings and where five mineshafts are indicated on Coal Authority plans.
- 10.2 Borehole records are available for eight boreholes in the north west of the allocation, eighteen boreholes to the south of Birch Industrial Estate and one at the golf club. At the golf club, sandstone bedrock (part of the Coal Measures formation) was encountered at 17.5m depth. The maximum depth of the other boreholes was 12m and they were all terminated in the superficial deposits.
- 10.3 The superficial deposits and the Coal Measures are Secondary Aquifers. There are no Principal Aquifers beneath the allocation. Groundwater was generally encountered in the boreholes in the granular superficial deposits.

### Ground Contamination

- 10.4 The allocation predominantly comprises agricultural land which is not expected to be significantly contaminated.
- 10.5 The potential risks from and mitigation for contamination on the allocation are given in the table below.
- 10.6 Intrusive ground investigation will be undertaken to establish if any contamination is present and, if it is, to establish its nature and extent. An initial characterisation investigation will enable an outline remediation strategy for the allocation to be developed. More detailed investigation, assessment and detailed remediation design can then be undertaken on a phase by phase basis as each area of the allocation comes forward for development.

**Table 1 Geo-environmental Aspects and Mitigation**

Area of Potential Contamination	Contamination Risk	Potential Mitigation
Pilsworth Landfill adjacent to the north of the site.	Gas and leachate migration from the landfill on to the site	Installation of a leachate and/or gas collection system along the northern boundary of the site. Ground gas protection measures may be required in new build properties.

Historic area of bleach works in the north east of the site	Hydrocarbons, solvents, asbestos, galligu	Remediation of contamination and where possible re-use of the end material.
Backfilled quarries / pits	Backfill material unknown. May contain contamination especially asbestos. See also Table 2 below.	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 properties.
Lignite in peat in the south west	Risk of spontaneous combustibility	Placement of lignite at depth if it is present near surface or removal off site.
Shallow groundwater	Contaminated groundwater. See also Table 2 below.	Consideration of contamination if shallow groundwater present in contaminated parts of the site.

### Geotechnical Summary

- 10.7 Geotechnical aspects to consider at the allocation include mining, compressible peat deposits, backfilled quarries and pits and groundwater presence. The ground will also need to be characterised for cut and fill works and for foundation design. The geotechnical aspects are given in the table below along with potential mitigation measures. Intrusive investigations will be undertaken to assess these aspects further. Potential geotechnical constraints and associated standard mitigation measures have been identified and can be incorporated into the design of the scheme at the detailed planning application stage.

**Table 2 Geotechnical Aspects and Mitigation**

Geotechnical Aspect	Geotechnical risk	Potential mitigation
Mining and mineshafts	Presence or absence of mineworkings is unknown. Mineshaft locations need to be confirmed. There are no treatment records which indicates that they have not been grouted / capped.	Identify presence or absence of workings and mineshafts. Assess significance for development and treat / grout / cap as required
Backfilled quarries / pits	Backfill material unknown. Risk of unacceptable settlements / collapse especially if loaded	Identification and intrusive investigation of backfill. Geotechnical assessment and re-engineering of material as required.
Slopes	Existing slopes and new slopes – risk of instability / slope failures	Investigation and assessment of existing slopes. Reprofiling or remediation if required. Geotechnical design of new slopes / appropriate retaining structures

Shallow groundwater	Groundwater in excavations. Risks of instability from groundwater ingress.	Temporary support / pumping during works if required.
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10.8 The Assessment has been reviewed by Bury Council Environmental Health department. They have recommended the following prior to any planning applications being submitted within the allocation:

- The Desk Top Assessment is reproduced to consider a residential end use for the proposed housing development of 200 plots;
- A Site Investigation proposal. It is recommended that this is exploratory in nature and undertaken to support any future planning approvals for this allocation. This will also address the contamination issues highlighted in their report;
- A Site Investigation and Risk Assessment Report; and
- An Outline Remedial Strategy summarising any potential remedial solutions that will provide evidence to demonstrate how any contamination risks can be mitigated.

10.9 The documents are available at:

<https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing/gmsf2020/supporting-documents/>

10.9 The allocation is therefore considered to be deliverable although further work will be needed as the allocation moves through the planning process.

## 11 Utilities

11.1 It is not considered that there are any utilities constraints, either current infrastructure or identified need, which will prevent the Northern Gateway sites from being allocated for development.

### United Utilities

11.2 United Utilities have provided guidance to pre-development enquires and advised that the anticipated point of connection for the allocation will be the nearest practical point on the network to the development boundary. This is identified as a 250mm PE point of connection located on Pilsworth Road and a 160mm PE point of connection located on Moss Hall Road, with a further connection through the approved 'South Heywood' development to the north. Distribution of water and fire main facility will be routed along the allocation road network suitably sized for metered connection to the individual units and residential dwellings.

11.3 No public foul sewers were identified within the development boundary, therefore foul water is likely to need to be pumped to a new or existing point of discharge specified by United Utilities, outside of the development boundary. Consultations must be made with United Utilities to develop a cost-effective strategy for managing the discharge of foul flows from the development.

11.4 A water main runs through the north western part of the allocation. This will be diverted or accommodated in the masterplan.

### Electricity North West

11.5 Electricity North West in their response to the latest GMSF consultation advised that they were confident in being able to meet the network capacity requirements for the investment

and growth in proposed in Greater Manchester. Where necessary they have secured the appropriate regulatory allowances within their 'Well Justified Business Plan.'

- 11.6 Electricity North West have carried out assessments on the proposed areas, which fed into the 'Spatial Energy Plan' document. This is a high level assessment of the expected impact of the proposed developments on the electricity network, the information was presented as a Red/Amber /Green (RAG) indicator.
- 11.7 The Heywood and Pilsworth allocation presented as red which indicated that capacity at the primary substation level is likely to be exceeded due to forecast additional load resulting from proposed developments.
- 11.8 Discussions with ENW have identified a requirement for two new primary 33KV substations to serve the development, and a Point of Connection at Castleton BSP. From the new 33KV Primary Substations a further network of 11KV substations will be provided that distribute demand across the allocation. There are optional connection points via the approved 'South Heywood' scheme which could serve an early phase of the development of the GM 1.1 allocation.

### **Gas - National Grid Infrastructure**

- 11.9 Cadent Gas have confirmed that the current mains have sufficient capacity to support the load required for the development without any reinforcement works. The development can be connected to the existing Intermediate Pressure main located at the western allocation boundary. There is another Medium Pressure connection available local to the northern part of the allocation.
- 11.10 A localised high-pressure gas main runs through the northern part of the allocation and then runs north-west to south-east across the allocation south of Whittle Brook. The main and associated easements can be accommodated into the design of the development, providing an opportunity for a green landscaping corridor.

## **12 Telecommunications**

### Existing BT Infrastructure

- 12.1 The scheme already tabled and being implemented through the permitted South Heywood Development scheme to provide BT Openreach communication network coverage is being developed to facilitate the Northern Gateway Proposals to both the Northern and Southern areas of the allocation. BT Openreach are presently developing their network layout and will be installing high speed data & fibre networks throughout the development.

### Existing Virgin Media Infrastructure

- 12.2 The scheme already tabled and being implemented through the permitted South Heywood Development scheme to provide Virgin Media communication network coverage will be developed to facilitate the Northern Gateway Proposals to both the Northern and Southern areas of the allocation. Virgin Media are presently developing their network layout for this area and will be a suitable alternative network provider.
- 12.3 It should be noted that spare underground ductwork network facilities are being provided to enable alternative network providers to invest into the allocation.
- 12.4 The proposed policy wording for the GM 1.1 Allocation has been informed by the ground conditions and utilities assessments undertaken to date and summarised above. The policy requires a phasing strategy relating to the area to come forward in the plan period which should include the delivery of highways infrastructure, surface water drainage, grey



infrastructure including utilities provision, green and blue infrastructure, broadband and electric vehicle charging points, recreation provision and social infrastructure and ensure coordination between phases of development.

# Section C – Environmental

## 13 Green Belt Assessment

- 13.1 The proposed removal of Green Belt in conjunction with the Heywood/Pilsworth Allocation has been informed by several studies undertaken by LUC available at <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing/gmsf2020/supporting-documents/>.
- The Greater Manchester Green Belt Assessment 2016
  - Green Belt Harm Assessment, 2020;
  - Greater Manchester Green Belt Study – Identification of Opportunities, 2020
- 13.2 The proposed allocation would remove 330 hectares of land from the Green Belt.
- 13.3 In 2016 GMCA commissioned LUC to undertake an assessment of the Green Belt within GM. The Study assessed the extent to which the land within the GM Green Belt performs against the purposes of Green Belts, as set out in paragraph 80 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The aim of this Green Belt Assessment is to provide the GM Authorities with an objective, evidence-based and independent assessment of how GM's Green Belt contributes to the five purposes of Green Belt, as set out in national policy. It also examines the case for including within the Green Belt potential additional areas of land that currently lie outside it.
- 13.4 In The Greater Manchester Green Belt Assessment 2016 Heywood/Pilsworth was included within Strategic Green Belt Area 15. There were 4 different purposes of Green Belt that each Area was assessed against and the Area performs as follows:
- Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas: **Strong**
  - Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another: **Strong**
  - Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment: **Weak-Moderate**
  - Purpose 4: Preserving the setting and special character of historic towns: **Weak-Moderate**
- 13.5 The summary of findings for Bury in this report stated that most parcels close to Heywood/Pilsworth, east of M66 make a moderate- strong contribution to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas. Parcels between Bury and Middleton play a moderate role in relation to assisting in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
- 13.6 In 2019 LUC carried out an assessment identifying the potential opportunities to enhance the beneficial use of remaining Green Belt within 2 km of the allocation site. The study considered the opportunities to offset the loss of Green Belt through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of the remaining Green Belt land.
- 13.7 Land lying within 2 km of GM 1.1, Heywood / Pilsworth formed the focus of Green Infrastructure (GI) recommendations / mitigation to enhance the 'beneficial use' of the Green Belt for the Northern Gateway as a whole. There are two proposed additions to the Green Belt west of this GM sub-Allocation at Hollins Brook and Hollins Brow.
- 13.8 The potential GI opportunities in the Green Belt relevant to the Northern Gateway Allocations identified in the assessment include:

- Upgrade the public footpath along Brightly Brook to a multi user route.
  - Create a new pedestrian footpath in the Green Belt north east of Heywood/Pilsworth to create a local level walk at the settlement edge.
  - Upgrade surfacing treatments and access points along the Rochdale Way.
  - Upgrade surface treatments to create all weather routes.
  - Enhance pedestrian and vehicle links to football pitches in Heaton Park to increase usability.
  - Introduce enhancements to local sporting facilities within the retained Green Belt.
  - Enhance sport and recreational provision at Heaton Park.
  - Introduce interventions which complement the proposals included within the planning application for development off J19 of the M62 (Planning application 16/01399/HYBR).
  - Restore ditches and field boundaries within the landscape.
  - Review the conservation and management of areas which form part of SBIs and LNRs to ensure improvement of the key aspects of their designation. Connect the SBIs of Hollins Vale, Hollins Plantation and Pilsworth across the M66.
  - Enhance waterways to ensure the management of invasive species and surrounding vegetation.
  - Support woodland management practices to maintain longevity of broadleaved woodland stock.
  - Improve the biodiversity value of agricultural land around Birch Service Area, providing additional habitat creation. Landscape and visual.
  - Create new green wedges and green buffers to prevent settlement coalescence.
  - Establish planting buffers for increased landscape integration at Heywood Distribution Park.
  - Provide additional woodland planting and the reinstatement of field boundaries parallel the corridor of the M62.
- 13.9 Some of these opportunities have been included within the policy requirements for the allocation, for others it is more appropriate for them to form part of the overall masterplan or subsequent planning applications.
- 13.10 In conjunction with the assessment of GI opportunities within the Green Belt, LUC carried out an assessment to identify potential harm to the Green Belt through The Green Belt Harm Assessment. The Assessment shows that release of the land in the west of the allocation from the Green Belt would be the most harmful as it has less urbanising containment and a greater distinction from the urban edge. The assessment shows that release of Green Belt in the east of the allocation would have lower harm, as it is more contained by and has less distinction from the urban edge.
- 13.11 Evidence on Green Belt is only one part of the evidence base that influence any decision on green belt release. Consequently where studies have found that high harm is to be caused by release of the Green Belt, this finding should be balanced against other important factors that could make up exceptional circumstances such as sustainability, viability and deliverability.
- 13.12 The Heywood/Pilsworth allocation is deemed necessary to deliver a key strategic employment and housing opportunity with supporting transport infrastructure. The allocation

is critical in responding to the spatial strategy in the GMSF and its key themes of 'Inclusive Growth', 'Making the Most of Key Locations and Assets' and 'Addressing Disparities' It also directly addresses the aspirations set by Policy GM – P 1 'Supporting Long-Term Economic Growth', Policy GM –E 1 'Sustainable Places', Policy GM – H1 'Scale, Distribution and Phasing of New Housing Development' and Policy GM – N1 'Our Integrated Network'.

- 13.13 The potential GI opportunities in the Green Belt study discussed earlier are not exhaustive and will require consultation with key stakeholders and may require further surveys and viability testing to establish costings. However the enhancement opportunities nonetheless demonstrate that opportunities exist to help offset the loss of Green Belt which will have a potential positive effect on the beneficial use of the Greater Manchester Green Belt moving forward.
- 13.14 The final masterplan for the allocation will be required to use the findings from all the assessments on Green Belt in the area to inform the layout and form development across the allocation.

## **14 Green Infrastructure**

- 14.1 The emerging Masterplan for GM1.1 includes a substantial green/blue infrastructure network providing a range of opportunities for movement, recreation, biodiversity as well as sustainable drainage.
- 14.2 It is intended that the development will ultimately achieve net gains in biodiversity and central to the development will be a substantial green corridor along Whittle Brook connecting to Pilsworth Reservoir to the north and other existing ecological networks off-site. The allocation also presents the opportunity to explore the potential to utilise and enhance the biodiversity value of the former landfill sites at Pilsworth North and South themselves.
- 14.3 Key features such as trees, hedgerows and water features will be retained and enhanced where possible and site constraints, such as the underground high pressure gas main, will be used positively to create new green corridors.

## **15 Recreation**

- 15.1 New play areas and sports facilities will be required to support the delivery of housing at Heywood/Pilsworth in line with Bury and Rochdale's Local Plan requirements.
- 15.2 The consented South Heywood scheme will deliver a range of informal and formal recreation facilities including the provision of sports pitches next to the new local centre. Recreation facilities will also be provided to serve the residential development off Castle Road.
- 15.3 Opportunities for recreation will also be considered in relation to the delivery of employment and other uses on the balance of the allocation, as key to ensuring an attractive business location. These will include a range of recreation activities along green corridors that connect across the allocation such as walking/cycling routes, fitness trails, 'outdoor gyms' and open spaces for more informal leisure and recreation.
- 15.4 Good public transport and cycling/walking links will integrate GM1.1 with surrounding communities allowing access to existing nearby sports and recreation facilities.

## **16 Landscape**

- 16.1 GM1.1 lies within the National Character Area 54, Manchester Pennine Fringe, occupying the transition zone between open moorlands of the Peaks and the Southern Pennines. The M62 motorway runs east to west and is the dominant feature in the landscape. The land

scape is mostly farming, characterised by large open fields bounded by broken hedgerows and field trees. There are woodland blocks, mainly located along the Whittle Brook river corridor.

- 16.2 There are several areas which are designated as having Tree Preservation Orders, with such flora contributing to local character and interest to the area.
- 16.3 GM1.1 is surrounded by more densely populated areas located within lower ground, with ground starting to rise towards the north of the allocation. The allocation rises to the east towards Heywood and falls along the river corridors of Whittle Brook and Castle Brook.

### **Landscape Opportunities**

- 16.4 The following opportunities have been identified to inform the evolving masterplan process, and ensure the development can be incorporated successfully into the local landscape:
- The u-shaped valleys of the brooks and associated vegetation form pleasant characteristic features in the landscape. Enhancing these natural features so they become part of the blue and green infrastructure strategy for the allocation.
  - The zone of visibility of any proposed development.
  - Retention of longer distance views out of the allocation to maintain the connection of the allocation to the wider landscape.
  - The setting of residential buildings within the allocation and the views available to the residents of these properties will be considered within any design evolution.
  - Mature trees, hedgerows and woodland blocks. Where possible these will be retained and enhanced to create a mature green landscape framework.
  - Tree planting along the motorway corridors. This would serve a double purpose of enhancing landscape and visual amenity and enhancing wildlife corridors.
  - A management plan to show how green and blue infrastructure and nature conservation assets will be managed to provide health benefits to workers and residents as well as creating a visually attractive environment.
  - Although current PRowS appear to be underused in places, retaining established links where possible and creating appropriate new high quality walking and cycling links will be considered to create a connective landscape linking to the wider area.

## **17 Ecological/Biodiversity Assessment**

- 17.1 There are no designated Natura 2000 (European designated) sites within the allocation or within 2km of the allocation boundary.
- 17.2 There are no nationally designated sites within the allocation or within 2km of the allocation boundary.
- 17.3 There are two Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) within a 2km radius of the allocation boundary. Hopwood woodlands LNR, 1.7km east and Hollins Vale LNR, 0.1km west.
- 17.4 There are ten Sites of Biological Interest (SBI) within a 2km radius of the allocation boundary. There is one SBI, Pilsworth, which is adjacent to the northern boundary of the allocation.
- 17.5 There are no ecological constraints which would prevent the allocation of the allocation.

## **Habitats**

17.6 Key habitats include:

- Watercourses and ponds.
- Grassland
- Woodland and trees.
- Hedgerows

17.7 More detailed site-specific surveys, including a full extended Phase 1 Habitat survey for each area, will be undertaken as plans progress and this will enable detailed characterisation of habitats represented throughout the allocation.

## **Protected and Notable Species**

17.8 Protected and notable species which are or may be present at the allocation include:

- Great crested newt
- Reptiles
- Brown Hare
- Bats
- Badger
- Otter
- Water vole
- Birds
- Invertebrates
- And other notable species including common toad and hedgehog.

17.9 The potential presence of these species has been considered through information derived from the desk study, data search and walkover survey. Species-specific surveys will be carried out as plans progress.

## **Biodiversity Net Gain**

17.10 The GM1.1 Allocation policy sets out that net gain will be expected. The prospective developer's ecology report states that ecological mitigation for the development cannot be wholly achieved on site so opportunities for off-site mitigation will have to be sought.

17.11 At Northern Gateway, opportunities for Biodiversity Net Gain should focus on enhancing the areas with existing and potential value.

17.12 The habitats of most value within the allocation are the ponds, watercourse corridors, broadleaved woodland and species-rich grassland. Habitats could be enhanced to improve value where suitable and appropriate so that a lower value habitat could become a higher value habitat.

17.13 Site-specific opportunities have been identified by the prospective developer's ecologist which could promote and enhance biodiversity, maintain wildlife corridors within the site and enhance connectivity with the wider landscape. These will be incorporated into the final masterplan for the site and involve:

- Enhancing and extending the woodland along the north of the site by:
  - planting native trees and shrubs of local provenance;
  - creating a buffer along the northern edge with rough or marshy grassland. This northern edge of the site backs onto the restored habitats of Pilsworth South Landfill site, which are further connected to the wider landscape to the north by a series of linked woodland, grassland and scrub habitats.
- Enhancing the Whittle Brook and associated riparian habitats of high ecological value by:
  - Native woodland and shrub planting along the corridor, as well as within woodland areas which lead off the corridor;
  - Retaining and enhancing the area of good quality semi-improved grassland with the aim of increasing its coverage to connect existing waterbodies to the riparian habitat.
  - The creation of a large area of rough grassland to lead from the riparian habitat northwards. This would link known areas of barn owl presence, using high value hunting habitat, to the riparian habitat, a source of further hunting as well as nesting/roosting.
  - Creating of a buffer zone along either side of the riparian corridor and species-rich grassland, marshy grassland or rough grassland established.
- Developing a management plan for the allocation to provide and enhance wildlife habitats where opportunities arise. This could include:
  - Enhancing areas of grassland to create native wildflower meadows.
  - Enhancing woodland areas.
  - Ponds on site to be retained and enhanced where possible
  - Strips of rough grassland with appropriate management incorporated to provide hunting habitat for bird species such as barn owl.
  - Bird and bat boxes of varying specification for different species to be incorporated into buildings and landscaping.

17.14 Documents available at <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing/gmsf2020/supporting-documents/>

17.15 The allocation is therefore considered to be deliverable although further work will be needed as the allocation moves through the planning process.

### **Habitat Regulation Assessment**

17.16 A Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) (available at <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing/gmsf2020/supporting-documents/>) is required for the GMSF because it is considered to have the potential to cause harm to the special nature conservation interest of European Protected Sites. The HRA made an appropriate assessment of the implications of the GMSF in view of conservation objectives.

17.17 The Northern Gateway allocations were considered together within the HRA. The assessment concluded that although more than 10km from the South Pennine Moors and separated from it by the significant built development the allocation had the potential to cause increases in diffuse air pollution because of traffic generation along the M62 and recreational impacts from population uplift.

- 17.18 The Assessment recommended that each phase of development must be individually assessed once detailed plans are available particularly in relation to air pollution impacts, with cumulative (in combination) effects taken into account.

## 18 Heritage Impact Assessment

### Designated Sites

- 18.1 The GMSF Historic Environment Assessment Screening Exercise (June 2019) concluded that further assessment of the historic environment was required given the number of designated sites within and outside the allocation (<https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing/gmsf2020/supporting-documents/>)
- 18.2 There are no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Battlefields or Protected Wrecks within the allocation or within the 1km study area. There two Grade II Listed Buildings within the allocation boundary.
- Brick Farmhouse is a presumed 17<sup>th</sup> century brick 2-storey building, with front rendering and 20<sup>th</sup> century renovation. It is thought to be the oldest brick-built farmhouse in the area.
  - Lower Whittle Farmhouse dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> century and is a timber-framed structure with substantial 18<sup>th</sup> century rebuilding of parts and 19<sup>th</sup> century renovations, resulting in rendered masonry walls.
- 18.3 The Listed Buildings within the allocation will be incorporated into the future development to preserve the heritage of the area.

### Areas of Potential Interest

#### Meadow Croft Fold

- 18.4 The archaeological assessment to date of the site of Meadow Croft Fold indicates that it may be the site of a deserted medieval settlement and iron smelting works. Records also indicate cropmarks of field systems, ridge and furrow, possible house platforms etc., discovered by aerial photography and field walking within the surrounding immediate fields of the Farmhouse. The Farmhouse itself was extensively fire damaged during the summer of 2019 especially the central part of the building.
- 18.5 The site has the potential to be Scheduled as a nationally important archaeological site, and as such given protection against unauthorised change. This would mean that development would not be possible within the designated area of Meadow Croft Fold.
- 18.6 However, a programme of archaeological works to better understand the nature, extent and significance of the area of Meadow Croft Fold is being developed with GMAAS to inform decisions about whether it might be designated. This includes geophysical survey, fieldwalking and the potential for targeted archaeological evaluation excavation.
- 18.7 Informed by this further work, the Masterplan for the allocation will be designed to take into account the potential asset at Meadow Croft Fold.

#### Whittle Brook (Iron Smelting Site)

- 18.8 A site adjacent to Whittle Brook is suggested as an iron smelting site as a result of archaeological investigations in 1984. Whilst not conclusive in proving that a bloomery (a type of furnace for smelting iron) existed here, it is suggested that there is good potential for such a site.



- 18.9 The site has local to regional significance, but is not currently considered to be of sufficient significance to Schedule. Archaeological mitigation for this asset could be a geophysical survey to potentially obtain the extent of the iron smelting site, later leading onto targeted archaeological evaluation prior to any development within or close to the area of the Whittle Brook Iron Smelting Site

#### Unsworth Moss

- 18.10 Preserved organic palaeoenvironmental remains may be present at Unsworth Moss due to the areas of peat. A watching brief undertaken during the 1990's at Back o' th' Moss Farm, to the north of Unsworth Moss, revealed no sites of archaeological interest.
- 18.11 In advance of development in this area, archaeological mitigation for this asset would be expected to be in the form of palaeoenvironmental sampling, to potentially establish the extent of the organic palaeoenvironmental remains and potentially any archaeological remains of prehistoric settlement sites that may have been preserved within the peat deposits. This could later lead onto targeted archaeological evaluation.

#### Castle Brook

- 18.12 The earthworks at Castle Brook Farm in the western part of the allocation may be indicative of a prehistoric camp with the feature situated on a well-drained spur above Castle Brook. A vaguely oval cropmark with turns defined by differential growth appears to surround the earthworks. In addition, a sub-circular feature defined by a dark cropmark, thought to be a possible backfilled pond, may relate to these earthworks.
- 18.13 In advance of development within this area, archaeological mitigation for this asset could be a geophysical survey to determine the extent, character and significance of the remains. Any further mitigation works would be dependent on the result of archaeological mitigation.

#### Historic Hedgerows

- 18.14 Consultation with the Greater Manchester Archaeology Advisory Service, alongside the review of historic mapping and the site walkover, indicates a potential requirement for a Historic Hedgerow survey. A Historic Hedgerow survey would be undertaken into inform the masterplan as part of the wider assessment strategy. .

#### Summary

- 18.15 The Promoters have been engaging closely with GMAAS regarding the proposed development of the allocation. A programme of further works to inform next steps and future masterplans has been agreed with GMAAS in the form of a Written Scheme of Investigation to govern an Archaeological Strategy for the allocation. The purpose of the Archaeological Strategy will be to identify and characterise areas of heritage potential across GM1.1 and GM1.2 and to support the developing masterplan for the Northern Gateway allocation, through the assessment of archaeological potential and development of tools to ensure the development responds appropriately to the potential effects of development on the historic environment.
- 18.16 The proposed policy wording for the GM 1.1 Allocation has been informed by the archaeological work undertaken and ensures appropriate evaluation of the heritage assets within the allocation will be undertaken to ensure the protection of these assets in the development proposals.
- 18.17 The allocation is therefore considered to be deliverable although further work will be needed as the allocation moves through the planning process.

## 19 Air Quality

- 19.1 Future development traffic has the potential to increase pollutant levels in this area and affect levels within the Air Quality Management Area which is along the M62 and M66 motorways. It is expected that a Detailed Air Quality Assessment (DAQA) will be required at a future planning application stage. It is anticipated that the provision of the best practice air mitigation measures will be sufficient to mitigate any predicted reductions in air quality.
- 19.2 The DAQA will be required to include Construction Phase and Mitigation Measures Report and a proposal for the DAQA will need to be approved prior to the planning application stage.
- 19.3 Any stand-off from the motorways required due to 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. Any air quality risks associated with the commercial aspect of the development are not anticipated. However, where possible, design phase mitigation will be considered at future planning stage.
- 19.4 The allocation is therefore considered to be deliverable although further work will be needed as the allocation moves through the planning process.

## 20 Noise

- 20.1 There are a limited number of noise sensitive receptors within and around the allocation. Existing high levels of noise are anticipated at some identified receptor locations, most exposed to the motorway network, with lower levels of noise anticipated at locations further into the allocation.
- 20.2 The incorporation of key design measures will protect both existing and future occupiers and neighbours of the allocation from adverse noise impacts. Measures may include:
- Separation distance between ‘noisy’ employment uses and residential properties.
  - Orientating service yards / access routes away from the properties;
  - Use of localised screening in the form of bunds or fences;
  - Incorporation of a stand-off distance from the motorway, for the proposed residential dwellings
  - Orientation of residential dwellings to provide screening from noise sources.
- 20.3 Opportunities to improve the environment with respect to noise and air quality include:
- Positioning sources of emissions, e.g. spine roads, away from sensitive receptors where feasible.
  - Provision of green and blue infrastructure network to provide health benefits to workers and residents as well as creating a visually attractive environment which provides opportunity for amenity space in a more tranquil environment.
  - Electric Vehicle charging points across the scheme.
  - A travel plan which sets out measures to encourage sustainable means of transport (public, cycling and walking) via subsidised or free-ticketing, improved links to bus stops, improved infrastructure and layouts to improve accessibility and safety.
- 20.4 The allocation is therefore considered to be deliverable although further work will be needed as the allocation moves through the planning process.

# Section D – Social

## 21 Education

- 21.1 This Heywood and Pilsworth allocation is predominantly for employment use. However, 1,200 homes (1,000 in Rochdale and 200 in Bury) are planned within the allocation. This would result in a total yield of 252 primary age pupils, and 168 secondary age pupils.
- 21.2 Since this is area largely undeveloped, there is no existing primary school provision and therefore a new 1/1.5fe primary school would be required, located within the allocation. The approved South Heywood development will provide for a new primary school.
- 21.3 Secondary school provision in the area is at full capacity with existing intakes forecast to increase. Therefore additional demand pressures would need to be met through increased capacity which will need to be considered more strategically, potentially linked to other proposed developments across Bury and Rochdale.

## 22 Health Impact Assessment

- 22.1 Further work will be required to determine whether there is additional capacity within any local healthcare facilities to meet the increased demands arising from the prospective occupants of the new development. If additional provision is necessary, the most appropriate means and location for such provision can be identified through future iterations of the masterplan. Alternatively, there may be a requirement to make a financial contribution toward off site health provision through a planning obligation or condition at the planning application stage.
- 22.2 The allocation is therefore considered to be deliverable although further work will be needed as the allocation moves through the planning process.

# Section E – Deliverability

## 23 Viability

- 23.1 The Three Dragons viability appraisal has tested this allocation as two parts: the strategic employment site of up to 1.2m sq.m. employment floorspace and the residential site of 200 units at Castle Road. The parts of the allocation with planning permission (1,000 homes and a proportion of the 1.2m sq.m. employment floorspace within Rochdale) have not been tested within this assessment.
- 23.2 The base model appraisal is based on the floorspace without planning permission anticipated to come forward within the plan period (circa 700,000 sq.m. employment floorspace, plus 200 residential units at Castle Road).
- 23.3 The sensitivity test includes all of the proposed development yet to receive planning permission, including the employment development that will come forward beyond the end of the plan period.

Test Type	Scheme type	Total BMLV, SDLT & Land acq fees	Scheme RV (incl BLV & return)	Viability measure as a % of BLV	Headroom (blended return)	Test result category
Whether the test is the 'Base' test or a sensitivity test	Housing, employment or mixed	The total figure used in the testing for land value, includes tax and fees.  BLV = benchmark land value  SDLT = Stamp duty land tax	Scheme value (could also be described as headroom) once all costs have been accounted for including land and developer return  RV = Residual value  BLV = benchmark land value	Description of whether the scheme provides sufficient residual value in terms of how it compares with the benchmark land value i.e. if it is 10% or more above the benchmark land value it is shown as green, if it is within 10% of the benchmark land value it is shown as amber and where it is less than 90% of the benchmark land value it is shown as red.	The headroom expressed as blended rate of return. The percentages shown are the headroom available after all costs, except developer return divided by the total gross development value for the scheme. If schemes were to go ahead as described, then this is the total return available to the developer.	Category 2 - The residual value is positive and the residual value is above the benchmark by 0% to 10%. Schemes in this group are viable and should be able to proceed but are more marginal and should be monitored for any early signs of significant change. Category 4 - These schemes are generally not viable with the measures used in this study and will likely require public sector support to be developed.
Base model	Emp.	£63,370,000	-£16,440,000	Less than 90% BLV	7%	Cat 4
	Housing	£2,080,000				
Sensitivity test – inc. dev. beyond the plan period	Emp.	£106,840,000	£7,760,000	Within 10% BLV	14%	Cat 2
	Housing	£2,080,000				

- 23.4 The appraisal shows that the amount of development expected to come forward on the allocation within the plan period would result in a residual value of less than 90% of the benchmark land value, after all costs including the full strategic transport costs have been included. The impact of the strategic transport costs is set out in the table below:

Scheme Type	Base / sensitivity test	Scheme RV incl land costs	Scheme RV (less return)	Strategic transport costs	Out-turn scheme RV
Whether site is predominantly housing, employment or mixed	Whether the test is the 'Base' test or a sensitivity	This is the residual value, including the land purchase and associated costs	This is as column 3 but is less the developer return (profit) in line with NPPG.	This is the strategic transport cost provided by TfGM	This is column 4 less the strategic transport cost. Could also be described as headroom, and is the scheme value once all costs have been accounted for including land and developer return.
Employment	Base	£81,284,000	£59,990,000	£76,430,000	<b>-£16,440,000</b>
Housing	Base	£17,283,000			
Employment	Sensitivity – include development post 2037	£126m	£84,190,000	£76,430,000	£7,760,000
Housing	Sensitivity (no change)	£17,283,431			

23.5 GM1.1 is a very large-scale employment allocation that is well located for the motorway network and should be able to attract good values for serviced land parcels. The underlying viability of providing serviced land is strong, with the ability to provide a contribution to the wider GM 1.1 Heywood/Pilsworth scheme transport costs. The testing for the combined allocation of GM1.1 (employment plus housing at Castle Road) shows a positive residual land value of £98.6m which falls to £59.99m once developer and contractor returns have been accounted. However, this residual value is not sufficient to accommodate the strategic transport costs of £76.4m and, when these costs are included, there is a shortfall of just under £16.5m.

23.6 The sensitivity test shows that if the whole allocation is considered the allocation would be viable, but this is reliant on transports costs remaining at the same level which may not be realistic. This allocation is a strategically important employment opportunity, both regionally and nationally. Whilst there will be a shortfall in relation to the development funding the full infrastructure requirements, due to the opportunity it presents to deliver a large, nationally significant employment led development, contributing to driving growth within the north of England, this allocation is likely to secure funding from other sources to support its delivery.

## 24 Phasing

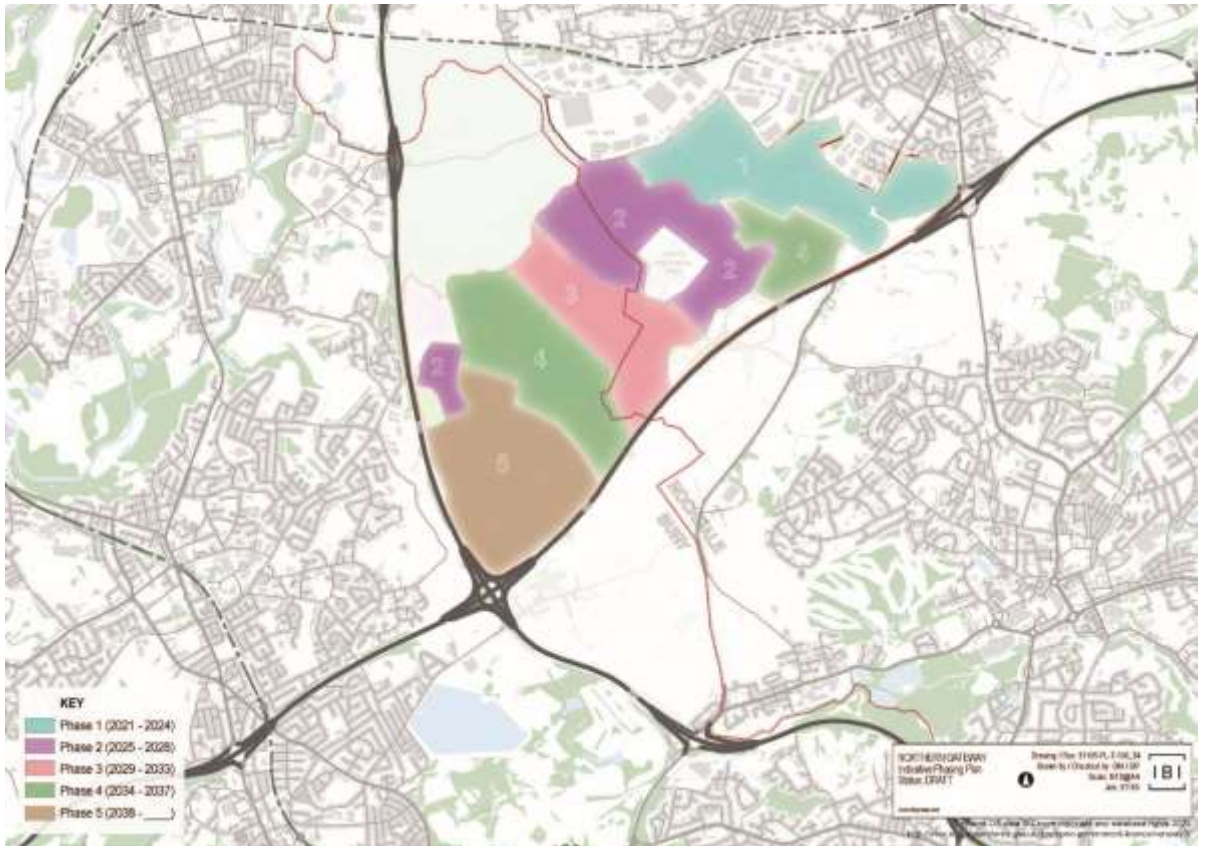
24.1 The Northern Gateway presents the opportunity to deliver transformative change in this part of Bury and Rochdale. Delivering growth of this scale will require a careful approach to phasing to ensure that as development comes forward, it follows the established place making principles for the allocation and is supported by the required infrastructure.

24.2 The policy wording for GM 1.1 requires a comprehensive masterplan to be approved by the LPA for the allocation, which any proposals must then be in accordance with. The policy states that this shall include a clear phasing strategy as part of an integrated approach to the delivery of infrastructure to support the scale of the whole development. This should include the delivery of highways, infrastructure, surface water drainage, grey infrastructure, green

and blue infrastructure, broadband and electric vehicle charging points, recreation provision and social infrastructure and ensure coordination between phases of development.

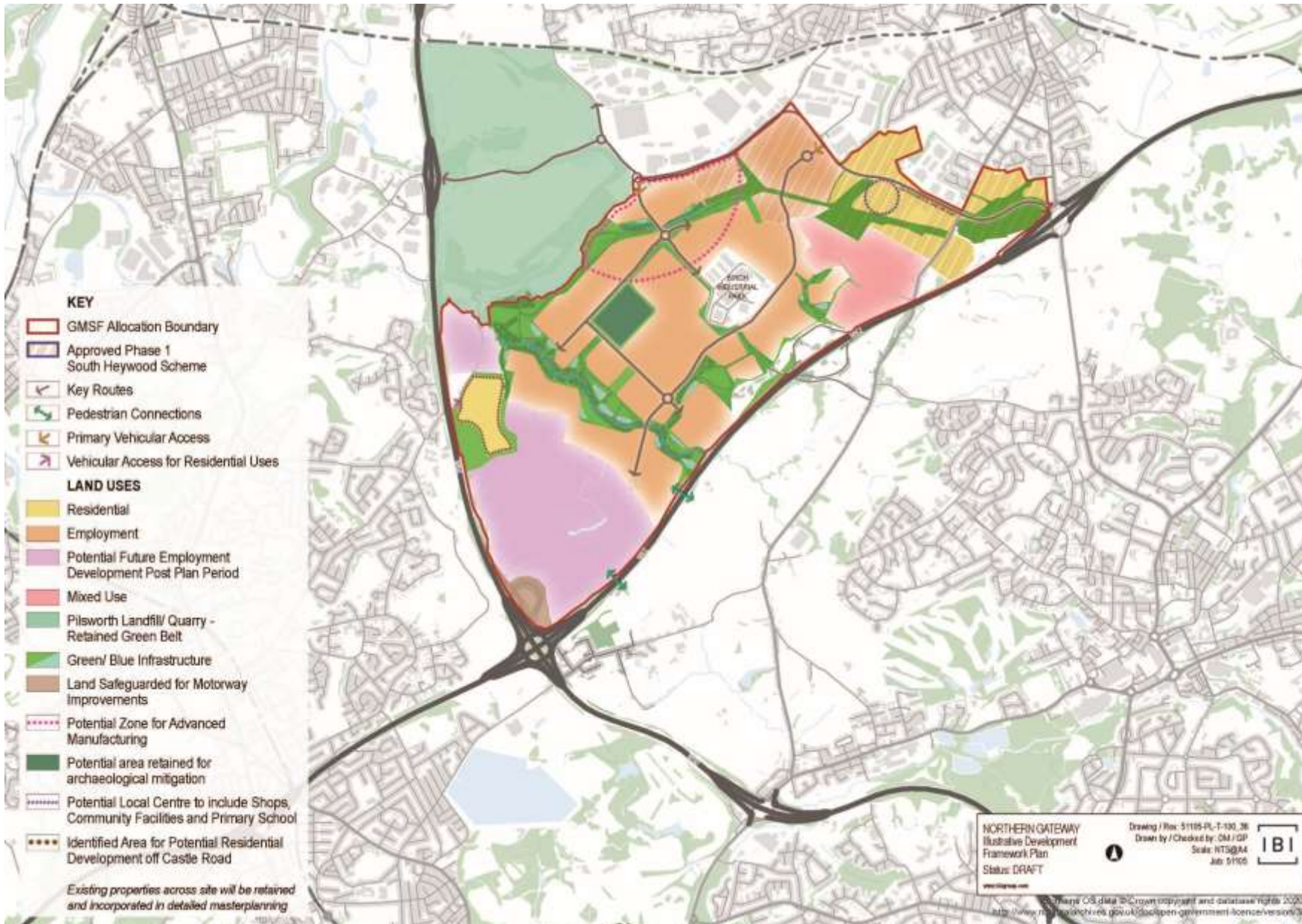
- 24.3 A phasing strategy is being developed through on-going discussions with key stakeholders in relation to highways, utilities infrastructure, land availability, as well as technical work into how the earthworks and drainage strategy for the allocation can be delivered. The estimated phasing and delivery trajectory for the allocation will evolve as the plans for the allocation are developed further.
- 24.4 The first phase of the GM 1.1 allocation is already being brought forward under the approved South Heywood development scheme. This includes improvements to Junction 19 of the M62 and the delivery of a new link road creating an improved connection between Junction 19 of the M62 and Pilsworth Road and on to Junction 3 of the M66. The South Heywood development will realise improvements in local infrastructure – specifically in regards to highways and utilities - unlocking sufficient capacity to deliver an early, second phase of the wider GM 1.1 allocation. This second phase can therefore be brought forward in advance of any significant additional infrastructure improvements. These phases will be located in proximity to the 2 key existing access points, being Junction 19 of the M62 and Junction 3 of the M66 before development occurs on the remainder of the allocation. The exact extent of the phasing will be determined by the nature of any end users, both in terms of size of units and also requirements, i.e. likely peak hour highways trips for example. It is also anticipated that the 200 dwellings proposed off Castle Road will be able to come forward as a separate stand-alone phase without requiring major infrastructure works.
- 24.5 Further into the plan period, the phasing of the development will be influenced largely by market demand for specific unit types and sizes, and will be brought forward alongside strategic infrastructure upgrades including the blue/green infrastructure networks across the allocation. Given the scale of the development, it is anticipated that approximately 365,000 sqm of the total employment floorspace will be delivered beyond the plan period phase. This will be in the southern-most part of the allocation, adjacent to the M62.

## Heywood/Pilsworth – Proposed Phasing



## 25 Indicative Masterplanning

- 25.1 The Site Promoters for the Heywood/Pilsworth Allocation have produced an Illustrative Development Framework Plan to show how proposed development could come forward within the allocation. This provides an indicative layout of the development, including the location of the employment and residential parcels, green infrastructure, local centre and key pedestrian and vehicular access. The illustrative plan also shows an area of land proposed as safeguarded land for motorway improvements.
- 25.2 Policy GM1.1 requires a comprehensive masterplan to be submitted prior to any planning applications within the allocation. The masterplan must include a clear phasing strategy as part of an integrated approach to the delivery of infrastructure to support the scale of the whole development in line with Policy GM-D1 Infrastructure Delivery. This should include the delivery of highways infrastructure, surface water drainage, grey infrastructure including utilities provision, green and blue infrastructure, broadband and electric vehicle charging points, recreation provision and social infrastructure and ensure coordination between phases of development.



**KEY**

- GMSF Allocation Boundary
- Approved Phase 1 South Heywood Scheme
- Key Routes
- Pedestrian Connections
- Primary Vehicular Access
- Vehicular Access for Residential Uses

**LAND USES**

- Residential
- Employment
- Potential Future Employment Development Post Plan Period
- Mixed Use
- Pilsworth Landfill/ Quarry - Retained Green Belt
- Green/ Blue Infrastructure
- Land Safeguarded for Motorway Improvements
- Potential Zone for Advanced Manufacturing
- Potential area retained for archaeological mitigation
- Potential Local Centre to include Shops, Community Facilities and Primary School
- Identified Area for Potential Residential Development off Castle Road

*Existing properties across site will be retained and incorporated in detailed masterplanning*

NORTHERN GATEWAY  
 Illustrative Development  
 Framework Plan  
 Status: DRAFT

Drawing / Rev: 51105-PL-1-100\_26  
 Drawn by / Checked by: OM / GP  
 Scale: HTS@A4  
 Job: 51105

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# Section F – Conclusion

## 26 GMSF 2020 Integrated Assessment

- 26.1 An Integrated Appraisal (IA) was undertaken on the 2020 draft GMSF in order to understand how the policy had changed since the 2019 IA and to identify if any further enhancement/mitigation was required.
- 26.2 The majority of the 2019 recommendations for the GM1.1 Heywood/Pilsworth were positively addressed by the policy itself or another thematic policy. A small number of residual recommendations remained from the 2020 IA, in order to further strengthen the policies.
- 26.3 In particular this included:
- Climate Change – since the 2019 IA was undertaken there has been greater emphasis on the climate change agenda and this is reflective of the declaration of a climate emergency by the ten GM authorities;
  - Accessible design standards – whilst this is broadly covered in Policy GM-E1 and within GM-H3 relating to housing, it was suggested that policies are strengthened with more specific reference to accessible design of buildings and spaces to meet the needs of users. This could be achieved through strengthening Policy GM-E1.
  - Deprivation – whilst this is also broadly covered within the supporting text and broadly within Policy GM-E1, particularly referencing social inclusivity, it is considered that the policy could be more explicitly in terms of inclusive growth and making jobs available to existing local communities or to those suffering deprivation.
- 26.4 The residual IA recommendations for GM1.1 could therefore be met through the strengthening of thematic Policy GM-E1 rather than any specific amendments to Policy GM1.1. This demonstrates the overall improvement of the 2020 draft GMSF in relation to the IA Framework.

## 27 The main changes to the Proposed Allocation

- 27.1 The allocation boundary or the area proposed to be released has not been amended from that proposed in the 2019 GMSF. However land to the southwest and south that was proposed to be released (GM1.3 - Whitefield and part of GM1.2 Simister/Bowlee) in the 2019 Draft GMSF will now be retained.
- 27.2 The structure of the Northern Gateway GMSF policies has altered in the 2020 GMSF. There is no longer an overarching policy on the Northern Gateway (GM1) but instead the requirements are included within the GM1.1 and GM1.2 policies.
- 27.3 The 2020 GMSF has additional criteria within the policy requiring:
- A comprehensive masterplan and phasing strategy for the allocation.
  - The provision for other necessary infrastructure such as utilities, broadband and electric vehicle charging points in accordance with relevant GMSF or local planning policies;
  - The provision for the long-term management and maintenance of areas of green infrastructure, biodiversity features, other areas of open space and sustainable drainage features;
  - A project specific Habitats Regulation Assessment for planning applications of 1,000 sq.m./50 dwellings or more to be carried out;
  - Provide an appropriate buffer between the development and the motorway where required to serve multiple functions including air quality, noise and visual mitigation and high quality landscaping.

- Protect and, where appropriate, enhance the heritage assets and their setting within the allocation including the Grade II Listed buildings – Brick Farmhouse and Lower Whittle Farmhouse and the wider historic character of the surrounding setting in accordance with the findings and recommendations of a Heritage Impact Assessment; and
- 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.

27.4 A significant amount of evidence base work has been produced to support the allocation since 2019 and this has allowed the criteria within the policy to be expanded upon and be more specific to the allocation.

## **28 Conclusion**

28.1 GM1.1 Heywood/Pilsworth is considered to meet the site selection criteria and make a positive contribution to the overall vision, objectives and strategy of the GMSF. The allocation is considered to be deliverable and available for development. Further work has been identified to take forward the allocation through the planning process.

28.2 The allocation provides the opportunity to deliver an extensive range of high quality employment development opportunities in a strategically important location building on the strong and established brands of Heywood and Pilsworth to attract a wider range of business sectors including logistics, industry and high value/knowledge based employment.

28.3 With investment much of the area is capable of being served by rail for freight as well as benefiting from the excellent road connections via the M62, M66 and M60 and there is potential to significantly improve connections via public transport.

28.4 The allocation will provide significant new job opportunities for local residents and enable the north and east of Greater Manchester to uplift its contribution to the wider Greater Manchester economy.

28.5 The employment opportunities will be supported by new communities as part of the Heywood/Pilsworth allocation as well as at Simister/Bowlee 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.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1 – GM1.1 Heywood/Pilsworth

### Northern Gateway

The Northern Gateway is an extensive area located around Junction 18 of the M60 motorway extending east to Junction 19 of the M62 and north to Junction 3 of the M66. It comprises two key sites within the wider North-East Growth Corridor:

- Heywood / Pilsworth (Bury and Rochdale) (see Policy GM Allocation 1.1 'Heywood/ Pilsworth (Northern Gateway)'); and
- Simister and Bowlee (Bury and Rochdale) (see Policy GM Allocation 1.2 'Simister/Bowlee (Northern Gateway)')

The Northern Gateway straddles the districts of Bury and Rochdale and is positioned at a strategically important intersection around the M60, M62 and M66 motorways. As such, it represents a highly accessible opportunity for growth in Greater Manchester with wider benefits on a regional and national level. The central theme of the spatial strategy for Greater Manchester is to deliver inclusive growth across the city region complemented by a key aim to boost the competitiveness of the northern parts of Greater Manchester. The Northern Gateway is one of the key locations that will help to deliver these fundamental objectives.

This strategic allocation will enable the delivery of a large, nationally-significant employment opportunity to attract high quality business and investment, with a complementary housing offer on the M62 corridor, where there is strong evidence of market demand.

The allocation at Heywood/Pilsworth provides an opportunity for a substantial and high quality employment-led development. The scale and location of this allocation will help to rebalance the Greater Manchester economy, ensure the GMSF plays its part in driving growth within the north of England and enable Greater Manchester to be competitive both nationally and internationally.

This will be supported by new communities as part of the Heywood/Pilsworth allocation as well as at Simister/Bowlee 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.

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.

The opportunities at Heywood/Pilsworth and Simister/Bowlee will need to incorporate extensive supporting infrastructure. The full delivery of the allocation at Heywood/Pilsworth is likely to extend beyond the plan period.

## Policy GM Allocation 1.1 - Heywood / Pilsworth (Northern Gateway)

Any proposals for this allocation must be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan relating to the area to come forward in the plan period that has been previously approved by the LPA(s). It shall include a clear phasing strategy as part of an integrated approach to the delivery of infrastructure to support the scale of the whole development in line with Policy GM-D1 Infrastructure Implementation. This should include the delivery of highways infrastructure, surface water drainage, grey infrastructure including utilities provision, green and blue infrastructure, broadband and electric vehicle charging points, recreation provision and social infrastructure and ensure coordination between phases of development.

Development at this allocation will be required to:

1. 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:
  - i. Deliver a total of around 1,200,000 sq.m. of industrial and warehousing space (with around 700,000 sq.m. 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;
  - ii. 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;
  - iii. Deliver around 200 new homes, including provision of plots for custom and self-build housing, 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; and
  - iv. An appropriate range of supporting and ancillary services and facilities.
2. Make provision for significant new and improved highways infrastructure to enable the proposed level of development to be accommodated, including:
  - i. Improvements to Junction 3 of the M66;
  - ii. Improved links between Junction 3 of the M66 and Junction 19 of the M62;
  - iii. Other off-site highway works where these are necessary to ensure acceptable traffic movement, including a contribution towards the mitigation proposed at Croft Lane, Hollins Lane/Hollins Brow.
3. Support the delivery of improved public transport infrastructure through the allocation (including Bus Rapid Transit corridors) and close to the allocation (including potential tram-train on the East Lancashire rail line between Bury and Rochdale) to enhance sustainable connectivity to the wider sub-region and adjoining districts and neighbourhoods;
4. Deliver a network of safe and convenient cycling and walking routes through the allocation designed to national and GM standards of design and construction and local planning policy requirements;
5. Make provision for affordable housing in accordance with local planning policy requirements;
6. Provide financial contributions for offsite additional primary and secondary school provision to meet needs generated by the development;
7. Make provision for other necessary infrastructure such as utilities, broadband and electric vehicle charging points in accordance with relevant GMSF or local planning policies.

8. 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 (GM1.2).
9. Retain, enhance and replace existing recreation facilities, where required, and make provision for new recreation facilities to meet the needs of the prospective residents in accordance with local planning policy requirements;
10. Make provision for new, high quality, publically accessible multifunctional green and blue infrastructure to provide health benefits to workers and residents as well as creating a visually attractive environment and providing linkages to the sites wider drainage strategy in accordance with Policy GM-G2 Green Infrastructure Network and Policy GM-G9 Standards to a Greener Greater Manchester. This should include the integration and enhancement of existing features such as Hollins Brook/Brightly Brook SBI and Whittle Brook.
11. Minimise impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity assets within the allocation in accordance with Policy GM-G10 – A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity;
12. 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;
13. Ensure that sustainable drainage systems are fully incorporated into the development to manage surface water and control the rate of surface water run-off, discharging in accordance with the hierarchy of drainage options. Where possible, natural SuDS techniques should be utilised, prioritising the use of ponds, swales and other infrastructure which mimic natural drainage and be designed as multi-functional green infrastructure connecting to the wider green and blue infrastructure network in accordance with Policy GM-S5 - Flood Risk and the Water Environment and nationally recognised SuDS design standards. Proposals to discharge to the public sewer will need to submit clear evidence demonstrating why alternative options are not available.
14. Make appropriate provision for the long term management and maintenance of areas of green infrastructure, biodiversity features, other areas of open space and sustainable drainage features;
15. Carry out a project specific Habitats Regulation Assessment for planning applications of 1,000 sq.m./50 dwellings or more;
16. Provide an appropriate buffer between the development and the motorway where required to serve multiple functions including air quality, noise and visual mitigation and high quality landscaping.
17. Incorporate appropriate noise and air quality mitigation measures along the M62 and M66 motorway corridors and local road network if required within the allocation;
18. Protect and, where appropriate, enhance the heritage assets and their setting within the allocation including the Grade II Listed buildings – Brick Farmhouse and Lower Whittle Farmhouse and the wider historic character of the surrounding setting in accordance with the findings and recommendations of a Heritage Impact Assessment; and
19. 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.

### **Justification**

This allocation has been identified as a large, nationally significant location for new employment-led development within the Northern Gateway opportunity area between Bury and Rochdale. The scale of the opportunity will help to deliver a significant jobs boost to wider northern and eastern parts of

the conurbation, increasing the economic output from this area and helping to rebalance the Greater Manchester economy. It also includes the potential to deliver a significant amount of new housing as well as an appropriate range of supporting and ancillary services and facilities.

Planning permission has been granted for a scheme to deliver around 135,000 sq.m. of employment floorspace, 1,000 homes and a new primary school on the eastern part of the allocation at South Heywood and this land is included in the allocation for removal from the Green Belt. As well as delivering an early phase of the employment development this proposal will help to create a more mixed-use urban extension. The new school will not only provide space to accommodate children from the new development but will also help tackle a shortage of local school places. The residential development along with secured public funding is a key element to delivering improved linkages from Junction 19 of the M62. The employment floorspace and homes covered by this planning application are included in the current baseline supply.

Although the allocation has the capacity to deliver a total of around 1,200,000 sq.m. of new employment floorspace, it is anticipated that around 700,000 sq.m. of this will be delivered within the plan period (in addition to the 135,000 sq.m. that has an extant planning permission at South Heywood). Nevertheless, it is considered necessary to release the site in full at this stage given that the scale of the proposed development means that it will need to be supported by significant strategic infrastructure and this level of investment needs the certainty that the remaining development and associated economic benefits will still be able to come forward beyond the plan period.

This allocation benefits from being in close proximity to existing regionally renowned employment sites at Heywood Distribution Park and Pilsworth and the development of this allocation will complement other opportunities in the Northern Gateway as well as other key sites in the north of the sub-region such as Logistics North.

Whilst the location of this allocation along the key M62 corridor will be particularly attractive to the logistics sector, it is important that it provides high quality business premises for a range of other sectors including advanced manufacturing and higher value knowledge-based businesses. This variety will not only provide a better range of good quality jobs but has the potential to provide premises for new and growing sectors, thus diversifying both the local and sub-regional economy.

The size of the proposal would also support the provision of an appropriate range of supporting services and facilities, such as a new local centre, hotel, leisure and conference facilities. However, it is important that these are of a scale that is appropriate to the main employment use of the allocation.

The delivery of such an allocation will require significant investment in infrastructure if it is to be successful and sustainable. The allocation clearly has excellent access to the motorway network but will benefit from improved linkages between Junction 19 of the M62 and Junction 3 of the M66. The local authorities will continue to explore opportunities for a new junction at Birch which could provide additional accessibility and be of benefit to the allocation in the longer term. Furthermore, in conjunction with the development of the allocation, there will be an expectation that opportunities are fully explored to deliver a rail freight spur exploiting the existing heavy rail connections from the East Lancashire Railway line which adjoins the allocation to the north and Calder Valley line to the east.

The allocation will also need to be served by a wide range of public transport and significant interventions will be required in order to promote sustainable travel and make the allocation more accessible to the local labour pool. This could potentially include rapid transit linking the expanded Heywood employment area with surrounding neighbourhoods and key locations helping to maximise the public transport accessibility of the employment opportunities and to better integrate existing and new communities with the rest of Greater Manchester. The potential tram-train on the East Lancashire rail line between Bury and Rochdale should be explored and the allocation will

also need to be supported by safe and attractive walking and cycling routes to promote healthier and more sustainable journeys to work.

It should be noted that the existing Birch Industrial Estate is located within the allocation. This is a successful estate that has benefited from recent investment and would be retained as part of any development. This allocation will also share the benefits of the improved accessibility of the area.

The area also includes an existing golf club and school playing field. Whilst the intention is for these to be retained, they could potentially be incorporated into the wider development if they were to subsequently become available.

In addition to the 1,000 homes with planning permission at South Heywood, the allocation is also considered to have the potential to accommodate around 200 further dwellings on land accessed via Castle Road in Unsworth. However, it is important that an appropriate buffer is incorporated into the development to create separation from the wider employment development and that appropriate highways measures are in place to prevent the inappropriate use of residential roads by vehicular traffic associated with the wider employment area.

Any housing development within the allocation will be required to make provision for affordable housing and recreation to meet the needs of the prospective residents in line with Local Plan policy requirements.

The land is relatively undulating and the contours offer opportunities to create an attractive and interesting setting for the development as well as providing some natural screening. This should be complimented by the creation of a good quality green and blue infrastructure network which will provide publicly accessible open spaces to provide recreational opportunities to workers and residents in the wider area. Such a network should seek to maximise the value of existing features and areas of nature conservation value. There are some existing recreation facilities, ponds, reservoirs and brooks within and adjacent to the allocation and any development should seek to retain and enhance such features, where appropriate. Other opportunities for new blue infrastructure may exist to further enhance visual amenity, provide SUDS and widen local biodiversity. A management plan will be required to demonstrate how the retention and improvement of green and blue infrastructure and nature conservation assets will continue to be managed.

Delivery of the allocation should be guided by an appropriate flood risk and drainage strategy which ensures co-ordination between phases of development. Measures such as rainwater recycling, green roofs, water butts and permeable driveway surfaces should be considered to mitigate the impact of potential flood risk both within and beyond the site boundaries. As a green and blue infrastructure network will provide more sustainable options discharge surface water, only foul flows should communicate with the public sewer.

Traffic to and from the site is likely to include travel on the M62 which passes close to designated European sites and, as such, a project specific Habitats Regulation Assessment will be required for planning applications involving 1,000 or more sq.m. or 50 or more residential units.

Given that the allocation is located adjacent to the M62 and M66 motorways, there will be a need to incorporate a buffer between the allocation and the motorway to serve multiple functions including air and noise mitigation and high quality landscaping. Mitigation through tree planting could be undertaken in conjunction with proposals for the Northern Forest.

There are two Grade II Listed buildings within the allocation boundary and known significant archaeological sites, notably at Meadow Croft Fold. In addition, there are a number of potentially significant archaeological sites, locally listed buildings and structures throughout and adjacent to the allocation. Any development would need to consider the impact on their setting through the completion of a Heritage Impact Statement. There will be a need to undertake detailed archaeological work including field walking and evaluation trenching leading to further investigations and recording and, if necessary, preserving features in-situ.