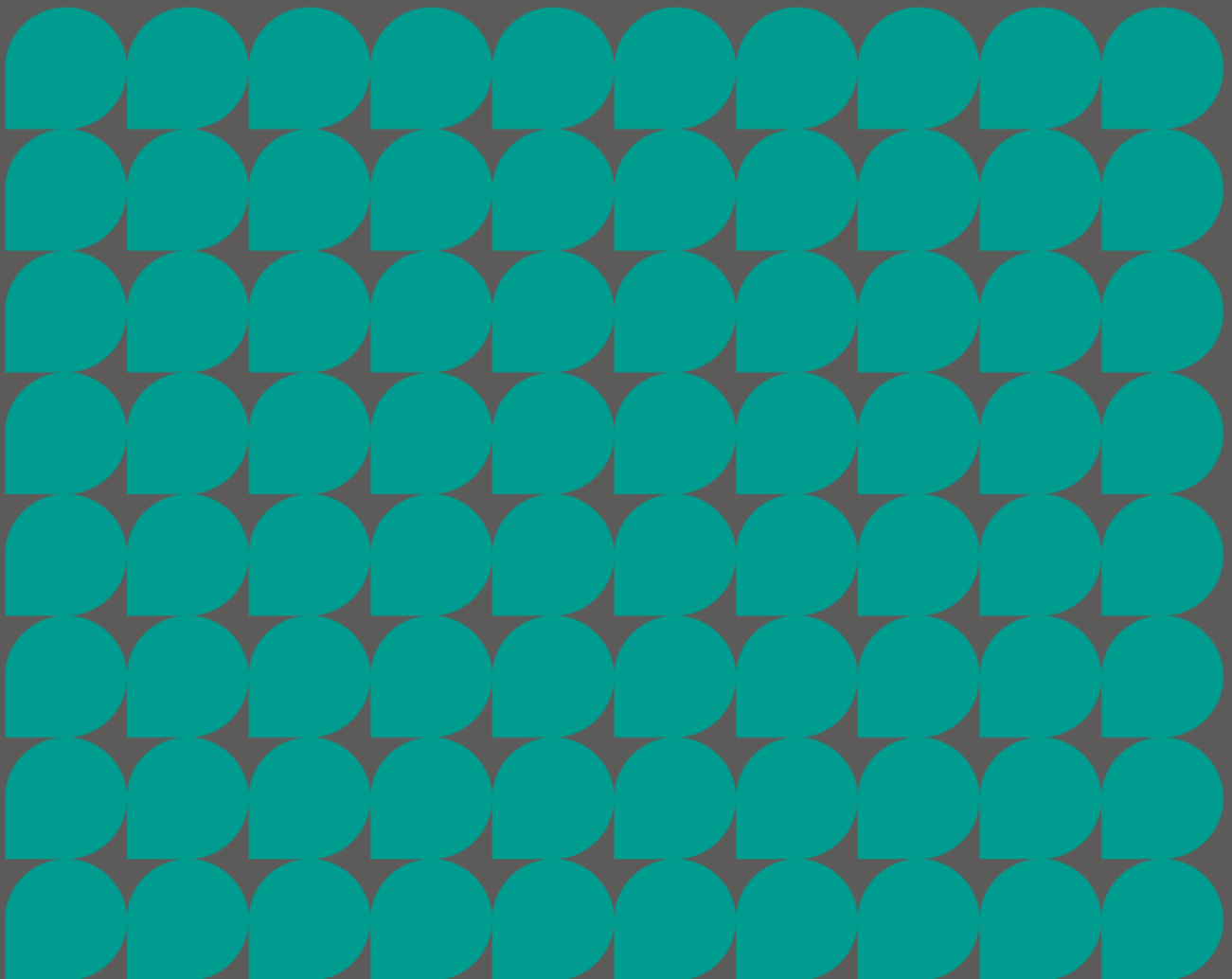


# Places for Everyone

JPA17 Land South of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road)

Allocation Topic Paper

July 2021



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# Section A – Background

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In November 2014, the AGMA Executive Board recommended to the 10 Greater Manchester local authorities that they agree to prepare a joint Development Plan Document (“Joint DPD”), called the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (“GMSF”) and that AGMA be appointed by the 10 authorities to prepare the GMSF on their behalf.
- 1.2 The first draft of the GMSF DPD was published for consultation on 31st October 2016, ending on 16th January 2017. Following substantial re-drafting, a further consultation on the Revised Draft GMSF took place between January and March 2019.
- 1.3 On 30 October 2020 the AGMA Executive Board unanimously agreed to recommend GMSF 2020 to the 10 Greater Manchester Councils for approval for consultation at their Executives/Cabinets, and approval for submission to the Secretary of State following the period for representations at their Council meetings.
- 1.4 At its Council meeting on 3 December Stockport Council resolved not to submit the GMSF 2020 following the consultation period and at its Cabinet meeting on 4 December, it resolved not to publish the GMSF 2020 for consultation.
- 1.5 As a joint DPD of the 10 Greater Manchester authorities, the GMSF 2020 required the approval of all 10 local authorities to proceed. The decisions of Stockport Council/Cabinet therefore signalled the end of the GMSF as a joint plan of the 10.
- 1.6 Notwithstanding the decision of Stockport Council, the nine remaining districts considered that the rationale for the preparation of a Joint DPD remained. Consequently, at its meeting on the 11th December 2020, Members of the AGMA Executive Committee agreed in principle to producing a joint DPD of the nine remaining Greater Manchester (GM) districts. Subsequent to this meeting, each

district formally approved the establishment of a Joint Committee for the preparation of a joint Development Plan Document of the nine districts.

- 1.7 Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Regulation 32 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 enable a joint plan to continue to progress in the event of one of the local authorities withdrawing, provided that the plan has ‘substantially the same effect’ on the remaining authorities as the original joint plan. The joint plan of the nine GM districts has been prepared on this basis.
- 1.8 In view of this, it follows that PfE should be considered as, in effect, the same Plan as the GMSF, albeit without one of the districts (Stockport). Therefore “the plan” and its proposals are in effect one and the same. Its content has changed over time through the iterative process of plan making, but its purpose has not. Consequently, the Plan is proceeding directly to Publication stage under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.
- 1.9 Four consultations took place in relation to the GMSF. The first, in November 2014 was on the scope of the plan and the initial evidence base, the second in November 2015, was on the vision, strategy and strategic growth options, and the third, on a Draft Plan in October 2016.
- 1.10 The fourth and most recent consultation on The Greater Manchester Plan for Homes, Jobs and the Environment: the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework Revised Draft 2019 (GMSF 2019) took place in 2019. It received over 17,000 responses. The responses received informed the production of GMSF 2020. The withdrawal of Stockport Council in December 2020 prevented GMSF 2020 proceeding to Regulation 19 Publication stage and instead work was undertaken to prepare PfE 2021.
- 1.11 Where a local planning authority withdraws from a joint plan and that plan continues to have substantially the same effect as the original joint plan on the remaining authorities, s28(7) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides that

any step taken in relation to the plan must be treated as a step taken by the remaining authorities for the purposes of the joint plan. On this basis, it is proposed to proceed directly to Publication stage under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.

- 1.12 A comprehensive evidence base was assembled to support the policies and proposals in the GMSF 2020. Given the basis on which the Plan has been prepared, this evidence base remains the fundamental basis for the PfE 2021 and has remained available on the GMCA's website since October 2020. That said, this evidence base has been reviewed and updated in the light of the change from GMSF 2020 to the PfE 2021 and, where appropriate, addendum reports have been produced and should be read in conjunction with evidence base made available in October 2020. The evidence documents which have informed the plan are available via the GMCA's website.
- 1.13 PfE2021 and all supporting documents referred to within this topic paper can be found at (<https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/placesforeveryone>).

## **2.0 Allocation JP 17 Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) Overview**

- 2.1 The site is currently designated Green Belt. It has the potential to meet local housing need in the immediate vicinity and across the borough through the delivery around 175 homes, contributing to the delivery of PfE's spatial strategy, vision and objectives. It will help to diversify the existing housing stock and enhance the housing mix in the area, through adding to the type and range of housing available.
- 2.2 The site is well positioned in a sustainable and accessible location and has good connectivity to the wider strategic highway network. The site has good access to public transport and a range of local services, with a number of bus routes along Ashton Road between Tameside and Oldham.

- 2.2 The site was first allocated in the 2019 Draft GMSF where it formed part of the proposed strategic allocation GMA 13 'Ashton Road Corridor', along with a site to the south east at Bardsley Vale. In the 2020 GMSF Publication Plan: Draft for Approval (October 2020) GMA 13 'Ashton Road Corridor' was amended to remove the Land at Bardsley Vale parcel and increase the site area of the Land south of Coal Pit Lane parcel. At this stage the allocation was renamed as GMA 18 'Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road)'.
- 1.4 In PfE 2021 the allocation name has been renamed Policy JP Allocation 17 'Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road)' and the boundary and capacity have been reduced slightly, as explained in section 4. The allocation is referred to within this Topic Paper as Policy JP Allocation 17 hereafter.

### **3.0 Site Details**

- 3.1 Policy JP Allocation 17 Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) is made up of Green Belt land to the south of Coal Pit Lane, the west of the A627 and north of Knott Lane and Crime Lane, towards Ashton under Lyne at the southern end of Oldham borough. It is located close to Ashton Road (a regular bus route and prospective upgraded TfGM Quality Bus Transit orbital route) and presents a sustainable and accessible location with potential for further connectivity with the planned improvements.
- 3.2 The site comprises areas of former coal mining activity and agricultural land. To the south east of the site is Oldham Rugby Union Football Club and to the west are areas of open land which extend towards Daisy Nook Country Park.
- 3.3 In the GMSF Publication Plan: Draft for Approval (October 2020) the allocation measured 26.42ha. Since then the allocation boundary has been reduced along the western boundary and the site now measures 19.9ha.

- 3.4 The red line boundary incorporates the existing saved Oldham Unitary Development Plan (UDP) allocation at Danisher Lane (reference Housing Land Availability (HLA) 2451), to ensure it forms part of the comprehensive development of the site. The saved UDP allocation is for 18 homes. This has not been included in the allocation capacity to avoid double-counting as it is already identified as part of Oldham's base line housing land supply (as at 1 April 2020).
- 3.5 A map of the site as designated in PfE 2021 is provided in Appendix 1.

## 4.0 Proposed Development

- 4.1 The site will deliver around 175 homes, providing a range of dwelling types and sizes to deliver more inclusive neighbourhoods and meet local needs, including the delivery of high-quality family housing. The site will help to diversify the existing housing stock through adding to the type and range of housing available.
- 4.2 The type and range of housing, including affordable, will be delivered in line with local planning policy requirements contained in the current Local Plan (the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document, adopted November 2011):
- Policy 3 sets out the policy for the distribution and release of housing land;
  - Policy 10 sets out the affordable housing policy, which now applies to all residential developments of 10 homes and above in line with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); and
  - Policy 11 sets out that all residential developments must deliver a mix of appropriate housing types, sizes and tenures that meet the needs and demands of the borough's urban and rural communities based on local evidence.
- 4.3 With regards to 'local evidence' Oldham Council has recently completed a Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) to inform the council's Housing Strategy and review of the Local Plan. The LHNA suggests a split of 30% affordable housing and 70% market housing. It identifies a need for three and four or more-bedroom houses



given the pressures on larger family housing and a marked shift in aspirations for smaller flats and bungalows reflecting an ageing population and identified need for older persons' specialist accommodation. In terms of affordable housing provision, the LHNA suggests an affordable tenure split of 50% social affordable rented and 50% intermediate tenure. A broad housing mix of 16.7% one-bedroom, 48.7% two-bedroom, 29.6% three-bedroom and 5% four or more-bedroom dwellings is suggested.

- 4.4 The housing policies within the Local Plan will be reviewed as part of the emerging Local Plan Review.
- 4.5 Development will need to provide for suitable access to and from the site, in liaison with the local highway authority. Potential access points to the site may be from Coal Pit Lane and Ashton Road. As part of bringing the site forward consideration will need to be given to how movement and connectivity along Coal Pit Lane can be enhanced to improve highway safety, for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. As such, provision should be made to safeguard a route from the north western edge of the site to Coal Pit Lane, with appropriate links through the site as part of an internal spine road to an appropriate access onto Ashton Road.
- 4.6 Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) has identified the A627/A671 corridor between Rochdale – Oldham – Ashton within the first tranche of the 'Streets for All' corridor studies to improve connectivity on Greater Manchester's (GM) Key Route Network. These corridors have been identified for their potential to support a range of GM agendas, around delivering modal shift (particularly to public transport, walking and cycling), improving air quality and regenerating local centres. Any development will therefore be required to enhance links to, and from, the site to the bus network, encourage sustainable modes of travel and maximise the site's accessibility, and provide for high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure linking into existing recreation routes, Public Rights of Way (PROW) and the Bee Network.
- 4.7 Alongside the above development will be required to:

- Deliver multi-functional green infrastructure and high-quality landscaping to minimise the visual impact of any development proposed, provide links within, and to and from, the site and ensure areas of biodiversity within the site are retained and enhanced to deliver a clear and measurable net gain.
- Provide for new and / or improved open space as well as contributing towards the provision of appropriate education, health and community facilities to ensure that the increased demand that will be placed on existing provision by the proposed development is met.
- Have regard to the findings of the Stage 2 GM Green Belt Study, including mitigation measures needed to mitigate harm to the Green Belt, and contribute towards green infrastructure enhancement opportunities in the surrounding Green Belt, as identified in the Identification of Opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of the Green Belt assessment.
- Conserve and enhance heritage assets and their setting in accordance with the findings and recommendations of the Historic Environment Assessment (2020) and addendum (2021).
- Have a comprehensive drainage strategy for the site that includes details of how surface water will be managed throughout the site including the exploration of opportunities to use natural flood management and Sustainable Urban Drainage.
- Incorporate necessary remediation measures in those areas affected by contamination and which have been previously worked for landfill purposes reflecting the presence of historic landfill areas within the allocation.

4.8 The full policy wording for Policy JP Allocation 17 as proposed in PfE 2021 can be found at Appendix 1.

4.9 A high-level indicative concept plan has been prepared by IBI, on behalf of the council to support the allocation and inform consultation (this can be found at Appendix 2). It is based on the boundary as proposed in GMSF 2019. Since preparation of the concept plan the site boundary has reduced along the western boundary, however it is still considered to be of relevance in terms of illustrating how the site may come forward and the main developable areas identified. However, it is important to note that whilst the requirements set out in Policy JP Allocation 17 will

need to be met, the concept plan may change with the preparation of more detailed masterplans and in conjunction with a future developer's planning application. Reflecting this, Policy JP Allocation 17 requires that any development will need to be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan and design code for the site agreed by the local planning authority.

- 4.10 The main changes made to Policy JP Allocation 17 between GMSF 2019, GMSF Publication Plan: Draft for Approval (October 2020) and PfE 2021 are as follows:
- Since GMSF 2019 land south of Bardsley Vale (part of the Ashton Road Corridor allocation) has been removed due to site constraints.
  - The allocation land south of Coal Pit Lane was proposed to be extended in the GMSF Publication Plan: Draft for Approval (October 2020) utilising adjacent land within the same ownership. However, a slightly reduced boundary from that shown in the GMSF Publication Plan: Draft for Approval (October 2020) is now proposed in PfE 2021. This represents a reduction of 6.52ha along the western boundary, compared to the proposed allocation as set out in the 2020. Appendix 3 contains a map of the allocation as it appeared in GMSF 2019 and Appendix 4 contains a map of the allocation as proposed in the GMSF Publication Plan: Draft for Approval (October 2020). The allocation boundary as proposed in PfE 2021 can be found at Appendix 1.
  - As a result of the boundary changes explained above the capacity of the site has now been reduced to 175 homes (not including the 18 homes proposed on the Oldham UDP allocation at Danisher Lane). This is a reduction of 80 dwellings from the allocation as was proposed in the GMSF Publication Plan: Draft for Approval (October 2020).
- 4.11 The changes made to Policy JP Allocation 12 between GMSF 2019, GMSF Publication Plan: Draft for Approval (October 2020) and PfE 2021 are set out in Appendices 3 and 4.
- 4.12 The previous draft policy wording and boundary as proposed in GMSF 2019 can be found at Appendix 5 and as proposed in the GMSF Publication Plan: Draft for Approval October 2020 can be found at Appendix 6.

4.13 In terms of the changes between the 2020 GMSF and the 2021 PfE, as these changes were either minor or as a result of Stockport's withdrawal from the plan, it is concluded that the effect of the plan is substantially the same on the districts as the 2020 version of the policy.

## 5.0 Site Selection

- 5.1 To identify potential development sites for allocation a Site Selection methodology was developed to inform preparation of GMSF / PfE. The methodology includes four stages and seven site selection criteria, informed by the Vision, Objectives and Spatial Strategy in the GMSF 2019 (see Appendix 5 for full site selection criteria).
- 5.2 A Call for Sites exercise to identify available land was launched across Greater Manchester in 2015 to inform the first draft GMSF in 2016. Call for Sites were also submitted in response to the first GMSF consultation in Spring 2016 and Summer 2016. Part of the allocation at Land South of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) was submitted as a Call for Sites by the landowners and/or their representatives (see the Site Selection Background Paper).
- 5.3 Areas of Search were identified where any identified site, including the Call for Sites and proposed allocations within the Draft GMSF 2016, met one or more of the Site Selection Criteria. Based on the PfE Spatial Strategy, plan objectives and guidance in NPPF on Green Belt release seven Site Selection Criteria have been developed to identify the most sustainable sites in the Green Belt.
- 5.4 Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) falls within the Area of Search OL-AS-07 which is considered to meet the following Site Selection Criteria:
- **Criterion 7:** Land that would deliver significant local benefits by addressing a major local problem / issue.

- 5.5 Criterion 7 links to sites which can demonstrate direct link(s) to addressing a specific local need. It is considered that Land south of Coal Pit Lane meets criterion 7 as it will help to diversify the existing housing stock, enhance the housing mix in the area, through adding to the type and range of housing available and address local housing need and contribute to boosting the competitiveness of the north. Whilst it falls outside criterion 5, the site also lies between two areas of the borough that are within the top 10% of most deprived areas, as such the contribution that the site will have towards diversifying the housing stock will also have regeneration benefits.
- 5.6 Following their identification, the sites within the Areas of Search were subject to a planning constraints assessment, which included an assessment of flood risk, ecology, landscape, heritage, social infrastructure etc.
- 5.7 The outcome of the Site Selection and planning constraints assessment for Ashton Road Corridor allocation (as proposed in GMSF 2019 and which included part of Policy JP Allocation 17 as proposed in PfE 2021) was that the site:
- has the potential to provide a range of high-quality housing, including large family homes, in an attractive place;
  - has potential for sustainable transport options;
  - lies in an area close to one of the most deprived areas in the country and thus would aid regeneration of the area; and
  - benefits from proximity to A672, where there are good transport links.
- 5.8 In terms of the GMSF Spatial Strategy and Strategic Objectives, Policy JP Allocation 17 Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) will deliver around 175 homes, with a mix of dwelling types and sizes to deliver more inclusive neighbourhoods and meet local needs. As such the allocation contributes to the spatial objective of boosting Northern Competitiveness, within the boroughs of Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Tameside, Wigan and west Salford, through contributing to meeting the housing need across Oldham.
- 5.9 Land south of Bardsley Vale, previously proposed as part of Ashton Road Corridor in GMSF 2019, was also submitted as a Call for Sites and fell within Area of Search Site Allocation Topic Paper – PfE 2021

OL-AS-07. As stated above this site is no longer proposed for allocation for the following reasons:

- Further evidence indicates the developable area is limited due to ecological constraints (including Site of Biological Importance (SBI), priority habitat and protected trees), the presence of a gas mains running through the site and access and highway safety constraints.; and
- Sufficient housing land supply has been identified to deliver the vision, plan objectives and overall spatial strategy whilst maintaining a reasonable buffer.

5.10 For more information on the site selection and planning constraints assessment for Land south of Coal Pit Lane please see the Site Selection Background Paper.

## **6.0 Planning History**

6.1 There are no known major planning applications which affect the allocation.

6.2 As stated above in paragraph 3.4 the red line boundary for Policy JP Allocation 17 incorporates the existing saved Oldham UDP allocation at Danisher Lane (HLA2451), to ensure it forms part of the comprehensive development of the site and support its delivery. The saved UDP allocation is for 18 homes. It is not included in the residential capacity proposed as part of the allocation to avoid double counting, as it has already been identified as part of Oldham's base line housing land supply.

## **7.0 GMSF 2019 Consultation Responses**

7.1 A summary of the 2019 consultation responses to the Ashton Road Corridor (which includes part of Land south of Coal Pit Lane allocation) is set out below. Further details can be found in the Statement of Consultation.

7.2 A total of 240 comments were received during the 2019 GMSF consultation in relation to the Ashton Road Corridor proposed strategic allocation. The majority of comments received were in relation to the Land at Bardsley site. With regards to this Site Allocation Topic Paper – PfE 2021

site there was some specific transport comments including those related to highways with the proposed access being on a hill which is a blindspot at the narrowest point of Ashton Road, opposite the Smokies entrance. It was felt that the level of public transport provision had been overstated with services already being recently reduced. With regards to Green Belt it was pointed out that there was refusal of a planning application in 1982 which referring to the Green Belt retained to preserve Medlock Valley. There were concerns about ecology and in particular regarding the impact on SBIs and wildlife. Finally, it was highlighted that a constraint on the site is a high-pressure CADENT gas pipe which cuts through the site.

- 7.3 In terms of Land south of Coal Pit Lane, the site received objections on the grounds of highways and particularly the lack of pavement along Coal Pit Lane which was noted as already unsafe for use. Constraints on the site were highlighted in relation to it being a former pit shaft head, covered in slag heaps and the ground being sunken which made the site unviable.

## 8.0 GMSF 2019 Integrated Assessment

- 8.1 The GMCA commissioned ARUP to complete an Integrated Assessment (IA) of the first and second draft of the GMSF and PfE 2021.
- 8.2 The IA is a key component of the evidence base, ensuring that sustainability, environmental quality and health issues are addressed during its preparation. The Integrated Assessment combines the requirements and processes of:
- **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)**: mandatory under section 19 (5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
  - **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**: mandatory under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (which transpose the European Directive 2001/42/EC into English law).
  - **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)**: required to be undertaken for plans, policies and strategies by the Equality Act 2010.

- **Health Impact Assessment (HIA):** there is no statutory requirement to undertake HIA, however it has been included to add value and depth to the assessment process.

8.3 The IA carries out an assessment of the draft policies by testing the potential impacts and consideration of alternatives against the plans objectives and policies. This ensures that any potential impacts on the aim of achieving sustainable development considered and that adequate mitigation and monitoring mechanisms are implemented. It does this through an iterative assessment, which reviews the draft policies and the discrete site allocations against the IA framework.

8.4 Stakeholder consultation is a significant part of the IA. Comments have been sought on, and informed the preparation of, previous iterations of the IA as part of developing GMSF and PfE 2021. A summary of the 2019 consultation feedback relevant to the 2020 IA and response to those comments is included in Appendix A of the 2020 IA report.

8.5 As well as the thematic policies, each allocation policy was assessed against the IA framework. To determine levels of effect when scoring the policies against the strategic objectives of the plan IA framework, the following assessment key was used:

Table One: IA Scoring

++	Very positive effect
+	Positive effect
?	Uncertain
-	Negative effect
--	Very negative effect
O	Neutral/ no effect



- 8.6 Combined symbols are sometimes used in the assessment (e.g. '+/ ?' or '- / ?'). Where this occurs, it is because there is a strong likelihood of positive/negative effects but that there is insufficient information to achieve certainty at this stage. Alternatively, there may be a combination of positive or negative effects, depending on how the option under consideration is eventually delivered.
- 8.7 The key outcomes of the 2019 IA on the Ashton Road Corridor allocation policy in the 2019 Draft GMSF have been considered to inform the production of the revised Policy JP 17 Allocation. This has been reassessed in the 2020 IA. Appendix D of the 2020 IA provides the assessment tables for each allocation policy. It includes the assessment from 2019 including mitigation proposed, commentary on changes since 2019 and how this responds to the recommendations. Finally, it details any residual recommendations.
- 8.8 It is important to note that the IA was focusing on each policy in isolation from other policies in the Plan and that many of the recommended changes for the allocation policy are already covered in other policies in the Plan. However, some changes have been made to the allocation policy as a result of the 2019 IA and the policy has been reassessed in the 2020 IA.

## 9.0 **GMSF 2020 Integrated Assessment**

- 9.1 As mentioned above the key outcomes of the 2019 IA assessment on the Ashton Road Corridor allocation policy in the 2019 Draft GMSF have been considered to inform the production of the revised Policy JP Allocation 17. This has been reassessed in the 2020 IA. Appendix D of the 2020 IA provides the assessment tables for each allocation policy. It includes the assessment from 2019 including mitigation proposed, commentary on changes since 2019 and how this responds to the recommendations. Finally, it details any residual recommendations. A summary of the assessment for Policy JP Allocation 17 can be found below.

- 9.2 Each site allocation policy has been appraised using the IA framework. The allocation policies primarily focus on the site-specific topics and therefore some of the IA objectives which are less relevant for most allocations or more appropriate to assess in the thematic policies have been picked up in the IA of the thematic policies.
- 9.3 Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) generally performed well against the strategic objectives of the plan. The allocation scored as having a very positive effect either in full or partly in relation to nine Objectives. There are uncertainties towards reducing levels of deprivation as the IA states it cannot be certain that development will affect deprived areas. The IA has put a negative / neutral against flood risk.
- 9.4 In response, changes to the allocation policy wording including: 1) a requirement for development of the site to be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan and design code; 2) reference to and sustainable modes of transport; 3) and development being subject to a site specific flood risk assessment, as well as changes to the thematic policies, means that the residual recommendation in the assessment completed for the GMSF Publication Plan Draft for Approval October 2020 was that no change to the scoring has been made, as when the framework is read as a whole no further recommendations are made.
- 9.5 Further details can be found in the 2020 Integrated Appraisal Report and 2020 Integrated Appraisal Addendum Report.
- 9.6 A 2021 PfE Integrated Appraisal Addendum has been produced and has reviewed the changes made between GMSF 2020 and PfE 2021. Given that the changes proposed relate to the site allocation itself, these were identified as 'potentially significant' and the allocation policies were reassessed. The IA concluded that the changes proposed did not fundamentally change the physical character of the site allocation. Furthermore, the sites which had more significant Green Belt removal, did result in improved scoring against Objective 17 (Green Belt).

# Section B – Physical

## 10.0 Transport

- 10.1 TfGM commissioned Systra to complete locality assessments of each of the allocations proposed in GMSF 2019 as part of the evidence base developed in order to assess and evaluate the impact of the proposals on the transport network. These locality assessments forecast the likely level and distribution of traffic generated by each allocation and assess its impact on the transport network. Where that impact is considered significant, possible schemes to mitigate that impact have been developed, tested and costed where appropriate.
- 10.2 It is important to note that the mitigation schemes developed are intended to demonstrate only that significant transport impacts of the allocation can be appropriately ameliorated. As such they are indicative only and are not intended to act as definitive proposal for the mitigation of any allocation. Detailed proposals would need to be developed as part of a Transport Assessment submitted as part of a planning application at a later date.
- 10.3 These Locality Assessments have been prepared within the context of the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040, Five-Year Transport Delivery Plan and district's Local Implementation Plans. Within these Oldham Council and TfGM have planned a number of improvements across Oldham which are intended to make it easier for people to travel sustainably. This includes elements of the Bee Network, a comprehensive cycling and walking network which covers all Districts within Greater Manchester. The overall delivery plan of strategic transport interventions that will support all allocations in Oldham and details of the Bee Network in Oldham can be found in the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040, Five-Year Transport Delivery Plan.

### GMSF 2020 Locality Assessment Findings

- 10.4 Locality Assessments of the GM strategic allocations have been carried out by SYSTRA to inform development of the Joint DPD following GMSF 2019. As such the assessment summary below is based on the allocation as proposed in the GMSF Publication Plan Draft for Approval October 2020. An updated locality assessment has been prepared to reflect the changes to the allocation proposed in PfE 2021 and details of this are summarised at the end of this section.
- 10.5 Details regarding the process for preparing the Locality Assessments can be found in the Transport Locality Assessments – Introductory Note and Assessments - Oldham. To ensure a consistent basis for assessing traffic impacts, all sites have been assessed using traffic forecasts from the GM strategic modelling suite.
- 10.6 The locality assessments provide an insight into the combined impacts of all the proposed strategic allocations and site-specific impacts, including:
- Cumulative traffic impact(s) of the site on the transport network;
  - Testing the effectiveness of the proposed off-site local highway network mitigation measures; and
  - Providing outline costs for essential transport interventions and mitigation measures.
- 10.7 The completion of locality assessments on the proposed strategic allocations has ensured that each site has been subject to a thorough, robust and consistent evaluation of its likely contribution to transport impacts in Greater Manchester. Sites that have been selected for inclusion in the Joint DPD have been found to be suitable from a transport perspective and satisfy the requirements of NPPF in that they do not place an unacceptable impact on highway safety or severe impact on the road network. As stated above where necessary, illustrative mitigation schemes have been developed, and their effectiveness in reducing traffic impacts has been demonstrated. Those schemes which have a strategic benefit and are likely to be needed in the next five-year period have been referenced in Our Five-Year Transport Delivery Plan and form part of the Greater Manchester Improvement Plan (GMIP).

10.8 For some allocations it is recognised that there is further work to be done in order to develop a solution that fully mitigates the site's impact on the transport network. In these instances care has been taken to ensure that the allocation is not identified for delivery in the first five years of the Plan, to enable more work to be undertaken to ensure that the site can be delivered in a safe and sustainable manner at a later point in time. All phasing information contained in the locality assessment is indicative only and has only been used to understand the likely intervention delivery timetable.

### *Access arrangements*

10.9 This site access arrangement has been developed to illustrate that there is a practical option for site access in this location and to develop indicative cost estimations. It is assumed that a detailed design consistent with Greater Manchester's best practice Streets for All highway design principles will be required at the more detailed planning application stage.

10.10 No highway infrastructure is present within the allocation. Coal Pit Lane is an interurban single-carriageway road with no streetlighting or walking facilities, and a speed limit of 30mph, while the A627 Ashton Road is a single-carriageway urban road with footpaths, streetlighting and a 30mph speed limit.

10.11 For the purposes of this assessment the access points identified as part of the indicative high-level concept plan have been assessed - one onto Coal Pit Lane to the north and one onto the A627 Ashton Road to the east, adjacent to Simkin Way.

10.12 With regards to the Coal Pit Lane access, this would also have the potential to alleviate traffic impacts on the A627 Ashton Road junction. The assessment noted that whilst Coal Pit Lane presents carriageway width restrictions, as well as having no dedicated pedestrian/cycle facilities in the vicinity of the site, a potential access onto this road could be delivered as long as a clear pedestrian/cycle route connecting the site to the surrounding areas is presented.

- 10.13 Systra therefore suggest that development will need to ensure that there is a clear pedestrian/cycle route that connects the pedestrian desire lines (for all non-motorised users) from east to west parallel to Coal Pit Lane. This option is likely to be preferred over the creation of dedicated pedestrian/cycle facilities along the full length of Coal Pit Lane itself and would result in a more amenable route for users. West of the proposed site access on Coal Pit Lane, new pedestrian/cycle facilities will be required along the carriageway itself to connect to existing residential developments on White Bank Road. To support this the Locality Assessment concludes that the Coal Pit Lane access would benefit from being positioned as far west as possible – near to the proposed site boundary as can be practically permitted – this would align with an existing PROW so that pedestrian/cycle crossing facilities meet with this at one place.
- 10.14 A longer-term aspiration for the council, not directly linked with delivery of the proposed strategic allocation, is for the internal road network for the allocation to be designed in a manner that allows for easy upgrade to A-road standards to provide a through spine road to improve east/west corridor connections between the A627 and Hollinwood – as illustrated on the high-level indicative concept plan. This would consist of a wide single carriageway with an adequate verge width and frontage design that allows for a future upgrade of this main spine. Were this to be put in place the provision of this new carriageway could result in the downgrade of Coal Pit Lane as a through route for vehicular traffic, to instead be converted for use as a dedicated pedestrian and cycle route. The potential deliverability of the spine road will need to be considered at the detailed planning stage, as well as whether the costs of this scheme are to be allocated to the site developer.
- 10.15 In the event these longer-term aspirations do not come forward, the proposed site access onto Coal Pit Lane put forward in the Locality Assessment has been designed to integrate standard width footpaths between the proposed access and the wider road network at White Bank Road, providing suitable non-vehicular access to Failsworth and other local destinations.

10.16 Details of the suggested access arrangements for the allocation can be found in the Transport Locality Assessments – Introductory Note and Assessment – Oldham.

### *Multi-Modal Accessibility*

10.17 Accessibility is measured using Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels (GMAL). GMAL is a detailed and accurate measure of the accessibility of a point to both the conventional public transport network (i.e. bus, Metrolink and rail) and Greater Manchester's Local Link (flexible transport service), taking into account walk access time and service availability. The accessibility index score is categorised into eight levels, 1 to 8, where level 8 represents a high level of accessibility and level 1 a low level of accessibility.

10.18 The current accessibility of the – Ashton Road Corridor site using GMAL has been identified as comprising areas of level 2 and 3 for accessibility, giving it a lower rating.

10.19 The Locality Assessment concludes that the main local destinations likely to generate walking and cycling trips are the local shops at Hathershaw (1.6km), The Hathershaw College (1.3km), Holy Family RC Primary School (0.6km), Limehurst Primary School (0.6km), and Lyndhurst Primary School (1.5km).

10.20 The A627 provides the main walking and cycling route to the site and benefits from standard width footpaths both north and south of the site, including full lighting and signalised crossing point controls. The A627, however, has no facilities for cyclists and does not provide cycling infrastructure such as cycle lanes. Coal Pit Lane along the northern edge of the site lacks footways or alternative suitable walking and cycling provision and as such is not a suitable route for pedestrians and cycle users.

10.21 There are multiple Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within close proximity of the site, with at least one PRoW bounding the proposed western and southern perimeter. The surface conditions of this footpath are of poor quality and therefore require positive upgrading to make it suitable for regular use by allocation users.

10.22 National Cycle Route 626 (NCN626) runs 2.7km east of the site, linking Oldham with Ashton-under-Lyne via Park Bridge Road. While this offers an attractive route away from traffic, it cannot be easily accessed from the – Ashton Road Corridor site as no dedicated cycle paths or bridleways connect the two.

10.23 In terms of access to public transport the Coal Pit Lane bus stop on the A627 Ashton Road is located immediately adjacent to the proposed site access onto the A627 and is easily accessible. This stop provides peak time services to Ashton, Oldham and Rochdale every 10 minutes as a main arterial route.

10.24 Reflecting the above the Locality Assessment recommends:

- That a permeable network for pedestrian and cyclist priority within the development is required including sufficient secure cycle parking for all dwellings.
- Given the location of the allocation and its proximity to the Fitton Hill, Limeside and Bardsley the internal walking and cycle network should be linked to high quality routes connecting through to these areas, including the proposed Bee Network. Existing PRowWs that either pass near or cross the proposed site should be positively upgraded, with both PRowWs and the internal pedestrian/cycle network of the site being constructed to the standards set out by the Bee Network.
- A contribution could be sought from the developers of the site towards the Ashton-Oldham Quality bus transit corridor, which are expected to be implemented by 2025.

10.25 With regards to parking Systra conclude that it is not necessary to consider in detail the parking standards for residential units relevant to the site at this stage of assessment as there are no particular constraints on achieving likely minimum parking standards that may be in application at the time the site is brought forward. Accommodation of Electric Vehicle (EV) parking, while an important factor in developing more efficient transport connections for the allocation, should be considered at the detailed design stage, potentially as an integration of specific house design.



10.26 A broad assumption has been made that a maximum of 2 spaces per dwelling is likely to be proportionate however other alternative local policy requirements are likely to be equally deliverable and can be considered at the planning application stage.

#### *Impact on the Local Highway Network and Strategic Road Network*

10.27 While in isolation this development would be unlikely to present significant implications on the surrounding road network, its potential cumulative impact with the – South of Rosary Road and – Woodhouses Cluster sites (as proposed in GMSF 2019) by 2040 has resulted in several mitigation schemes being considered at junctions likely to see material impacts as a result of traffic introduced by these sites.

10.28 With regards to understanding the impact of the strategic allocation on the local highway network a ‘with GMSF’ scenario has been assessed against a Reference Case which assumes background growth and includes the housing and employment commitments from the districts. Through discussions with TfGM and the Combined Authority, it has been agreed that where mitigation is required, it should mitigate the impacts back to a reference case scenario. It should be noted that mitigating back to this level of impact may not mean that the junction operates within capacity.

10.29 In order to understand whether the mitigation developed for the site (and all other sites within the GMSF / PfE) is sufficient to mitigate the worst-case impacts of the proposed strategic allocations, a second run of the model with all identified mitigation included, was undertaken. Where a significant flow change was observed the junction models were rerun to check that the suggested mitigation by the Locality Assessment is still sufficient to mitigate site impacts and that all other in scope junctions continue to operate satisfactorily in light of any reassignment due to mitigation schemes.

10.30 The cumulative impact of the allocations on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) has also been considered.

10.31 The final list of interventions considered necessary to support Policy JP Allocation 17 and mitigate the cumulative impacts of the allocations are set out in Table Two below. These are categorised as follows:

- **Allocation Access**
- **Necessary Strategic Interventions** - interventions with strategic implications for which the development will be expected to contribute or pay for, and which have to come forward in order for the development to be allocated;
- **Necessary Local Mitigations** - includes measures such as improvements to off-site junction and public transport facilities which will be necessary for the development to be allocated.
- **Supporting Strategic Interventions** - interventions with strategic impacts to which development would be expected to make a contribution where possible to enhance the connectivity of the site – these costs are not included in the viability calculations – this includes measures such as Metrolink extensions and some motorway interventions.

10.32 As the Locality Assessment was being finalised changes were made to GMSF 2019 GM22 Woodhouses Cluster allocation resulting in a substantial reduction in capacity from 130 homes to 30 homes and a focus on the brownfield land at Bottom Field Farm. It is likely that these changes are sufficiently significant to materially affect the scope of cumulative impact of the proposed allocations on junction mitigations proposed (with specific to mitigation proposed at Cutler Hill Road / Coal Pit Lane).

Table Two – Final list of interventions to support Policy JP Allocation 17

<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Description</b>
<i>Allocation Access</i>	<i>Allocation Access</i>
Coal Pit Lane Access Junction	Priority junction assumed including provision of walking and cycling route along Coal Pit Lane (west).
A627 Ashton Road Junction	Priority junction assumed
<i>Necessary Strategic Interventions</i>	<i>Necessary Strategic Interventions</i>

<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Description</b>
None identified	
<i>Necessary local mitigations</i>	<i>Necessary local mitigations</i>
Improvement of Coal Pit Lane/A627 Ashton Road junction	An indicative scheme was developed as a potential improvement scheme at this location.
Permeable network for pedestrian and cyclist priority within the development	Assumed full permeability of cycle and pedestrian access, as well as direct connections to PRowS either bounding or near the development and improvement of walking/cycling facilities on Coal Pit Lane. All pedestrian and cycle networks internal to the site, as well as connecting PRowS, should be built or upgraded to the standards outlined in the Bee Network, as well as providing connections to the nearest section of the Bee Network
<i>Supporting Strategic Interventions</i>	<i>Supporting Strategic Interventions</i>
Ashton-Oldham Quality bus transit corridor	Proposed by TfGM for frequent bus services between Ashton, Oldham and Rochdale

10.33 Please note that the necessary local mitigation measures identified are purely a highway infrastructural intervention prepared to illustrate that options may be available at this location – further detailed consideration would be required at the time of a planning application to ensure development of an option suitable for all users including pedestrians, cyclists and bus users.

10.34 In relation to the necessary local mitigations and supporting strategic interventions these are as follows:

- At the **A627 Ashton Road / Coal Pit Lane junction**, the Local Assessment proposes the provision of an additional lane approach for the Coal Pit Lane arm

of the junction and straightening the approach for improving suitability for turning movements.

- **Ashton-Oldham Quality bus transit corridor** - general improvement to service reliability and facilities along the A627 Ashton Road. The introduction of the Quality bus transit corridor is expected to answer concerns regarding unreliable bus operations within the area surrounding the Policy JP 17 Allocation. Promotion of sustainable transport alternatives will also help to answer concerns regarding increased pollution from added vehicular trips on the local road network.
- A **permeable network for pedestrian and cyclist priority** within the development to promote and encourage sustainable transport modes, as well as providing safe and efficient accessibility for non-vehicular traffic. This is to include upgrading of the local PRow routes to meet the standards of the proposed Bee Network and, wherever possible, connect directly to sections of the Bee Network. The introduction of this mitigation scheme is expected to answer concerns regarding the suitability of Coal Pit Lane, in its current arrangement, to provide safe access for non-vehicular traffic due to it being narrow with no footpaths. Promotion of sustainable transport alternatives will also help to answer concerns regarding increased pollution from added vehicular trips on the local road network.

### Strategic Road Network

10.35 Based on the proposed buildout of the site, and its distance from the nearest section of the Strategic Road Network (SRN), Land south of Coal Pit Lane is considered unlikely to present traffic implications without the introduction of mitigation on the SRN. This also considers a cumulative impact with allocations South of Rosary Road and Bottom Field Farm (Woodhouses) development trips.

### *Phasing of Mitigation*

10.36 Expected phasing of the allocation, based on the concept planning work carried out by IBI, was provided to inform the modelling. The indicative intervention delivery timetable for the mitigation measures set out above are as set out in Table Three.

Table Three: Mitigation Measures – Indicative Intervention Delivery Timetable

MITIGATION	2020-2025	2025-2030	2030-2038
<b>Site Access</b>			
Coal Pit Lane Access Junction	✓		
A627 Ashton Road Junction	✓		
<b>Necessary Local Mitigations</b>			
Improvement of Coal Pit Lane/A627 Ashton Road junction	✓		
Beeline standard route along Coal Pit Lane between Access Junction and White Bank Road (260m).	✓		
Permeable network for pedestrian and cyclist priority within the development	✓		
<b>Supporting Strategic Mitigations</b>			
Ashton-Oldham Quality bus transit corridor contribution	✓		

### Summary

10.37 Based on the information contained within this report, we conclude that the traffic impacts of the site are considered to be less than severe subject to the implementation of localised mitigation at a discrete number of locations. The “High-Side” modelling work indicates that in general other junctions within the vicinity of the site will either operate within capacity in 2040 with the development proposed, or that in some cases junctions operating over capacity in the future year would not be materially worsened by development traffic.

10.38 In summary, the Locality Assessment has provided an initial indication that the allocation is deliverable, however, further detailed work will be necessary to identify the specific interventions required to ensure the network works effectively based on transport network conditions at the time of the planning application.

## Locality Assessment Update Report (2021)

10.39 Since preparation of the 2020 Locality Assessment's a number of factors have necessitated a review of their conclusions and the revision or confirmations to the findings as appropriate. Those factors include:

- The removal of some Allocations from the Plan;
- Changes to the quantum of development proposed within some Allocations;
- Changes to the scale or type of transport supply (also known as transport mitigation schemes or interventions) proposed close to or within some Allocations;
- The withdrawal of Stockport Council and their associated Allocations from the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework; and,
- Modifications to the reference transport network to include newly committed schemes on the strategic road network (SRN).

10.40 These are factors which, taken together, may alter the pattern of traffic movements close to the remaining Allocations and impact on wider traffic movements across the conurbation. As such, it was considered necessary to check that the conclusions of the original assessments remain robust. The Oldham Locality Assessment Update Report (2021) sets out the processes behind, and conclusions of, the review for Oldham. This note identifies whether any of these changes are likely to significantly impact on the conclusions of the original assessments. Where needed it sets out an updated technical assessment of the impact of the Allocations in Oldham on the operation of the transport network and reviews and revises the transport infrastructure necessary to mitigate the impacts of the allocations.

10.41 The largest change to demand since the publication of the locality assessments has been the removal of the Stockport allocations from the plan. In consideration of Oldham District's allocations in relation to Stockport District, Systra concluded that the distance between the two means it is unlikely to result in significant impacts upon the measured assumptions observed in the previous Locality Assessment study.

10.42 The main changes to be considered were therefore in relation to:

- The removal of allocations at GMA21 – Thornham Old Road, GMA17 Hanging Chadder and GMA20 Spinners Way between the fourth and fifth round of modelling; and
- Revisions to the allocations that have been made between the fourth and fifth round of modelling, particularly in relation to capacity and phasing.

10.43 Based on the removal of three allocation sites from Oldham (GMA21 – Thornham Old Road, GMA17 Hanging Chadder and GMA20 Spinners Way), as well as a general reduction in development quantum for those allocations remaining within the latest Locality Assessment Update Report (2021), it is considered unlikely that there will be significant changes or increased implications on both the local and strategic road networks within the district due to PfE related traffic.

10.44 Notwithstanding this, it is possible that between the fourth and fifth round of modelling junctions could potentially see increases in traffic due to background growth, changes in the assignment of traffic or the increased quantum of allocations outside the Oldham district which could have cumulative effects at specific locations.

10.45 For the purposes of testing the impact of the allocation through the strategic model, the Locality Assessment Update Report continues to test a total of 255 homes which has been assumed to be built out by 2040. From an allocation-specific perspective, there aren't expected to be any changes to the pattern of traffic and travel to and from the allocation between the previous work undertaken and now.

10.46 Access to the allocation is based on the high-level indicative concept plan prepared to support the allocation and the interventions identified in the Locality Assessment 2020 remain the same. As such there have been no changes to the proposed infrastructure since the publication of the Locality Assessment 2020.

10.47 The changes to the quantum of development considered through the Locality Assessment Update Report 2021 does not affect need for the active mode interventions previously proposed. It should be noted that, since the publication of Site Allocation Topic Paper – PfE 2021

the Locality Assessments, an Active Travel Design Guide has been published by GMCA and TfGM. This Design Guide identifies design principles for the Bee Network that should be followed, and encompasses aspects such as segregated and shared infrastructure, crossing facilities and junction design. Any active mode interventions that are implemented in support of this allocation should follow this Design Guide.

10.48 To summarise, based on the latest information provided within the fifth round of the GMSF Strategic Model, it is considered that the findings of the previous Locality Assessment remain robust.

10.49 In response to the above, Policy JP Allocation 17 sets out that development of the site is required to:

- Provide for appropriate access points to and from the site in liaison with the local highway authority. As part of this, provision should be made to safeguard a route from the north western edge of the site through to Coal Pit Lane, linked to the internal infrastructure of the site;
- Take account of and deliver any other highway improvements that may be needed to minimise the impact of associated traffic on the surrounding areas and roads, including off-site highways improvements, high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure and public transport facilities such as waiting facilities at bus stops near the site; and
- Deliver multi-functional green infrastructure (incorporating the retention and enhancement of existing public rights of way) and high-quality landscaping within the site so as to minimise the visual impact on the wider landscape, mitigate its environmental impacts, enhance linkages with the neighbouring communities and countryside and provide opportunities for leisure and recreation.

## **11.0 Flood Risk and Drainage**

11.1 A Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out for Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road Corridor). Since the SFRA was completed the site



boundary has been amended to a larger parcel. As such the revised site boundary is not reflected fully in the SFRA.

- 11.2 The council has used GIS from the SFRA to confirm that the site is in Flood Zone 1. The SFRA GIS included a layer for climate change (1 in 100 year – flood zone 3) and this is not included within the revised site boundary.
- 11.3 There is some high surface water flood risk present on the site which would need to be addressed in a site-specific FRA.
- 11.4 The Level 1 SFRA recommends that the site should consider the site layout and design around the identified flood risk as part of a detailed FRA or drainage strategy. This is considered to still be an appropriate recommendation for the revised allocation.
- 11.5 The SFRA Level 1, using Environment Agency datasets and River's Trust Irwell Catchment datasets, provides a high-level indication of where natural processes, through green infrastructure, could be used for future flood storage functions to support Natural Flood Management.
- 11.6 The allocation was found to have the opportunity to use woodland and riparian tree planting to help obstruct significant flow pathways.
- 11.7 Such opportunities, as outlined above, should be explored further as part of the more detailed masterplanning stage, site specific flood risk assessments and drainage strategies.
- 11.8 Reflecting the findings of the SFRA Policy JP Allocation 17 states that any development should be informed by an appropriate flood risk assessment and a comprehensive drainage strategy, which includes a full investigation of the surface water hierarchy. The strategy should include details of full surface water management throughout the site as part of the proposed green and blue infrastructure. Development should deliver any appropriate recommendations,

including mitigation measures and the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems as part of the multi-functional green infrastructure network), and be in line with the GM Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) advice. Opportunities to use natural flood management and highway SUDs features should be explored.

## 12.0 Ground Conditions

- 12.1 The high-level indicative concept plan report indicates that there are a number of historic landfill sites within the allocation. As such, Policy JP Allocation 17 requires development of the site to incorporate necessary remediation measures in areas which are affected by contamination and have been previously worked for landfill purposes.
- 12.2 Policy JP Allocation 17 also states development of the site would be required to provide an up to date archaeological desk-based assessment to determine if any future evaluation and mitigation will be needed.

## 13.0 Utilities

- 13.1 As much of the south and west of the site is currently undeveloped Green Belt land there is a clear lack of utility infrastructure within the site. The high-level indicative concept plan report therefore recommends that access to services and utilities that would serve the site are gained from the networks directly surrounding the site. Utilities infrastructure along Coal Pit Lane and Ashton Road is understood to provide opportunities for future connections into the development.
- 13.2 Policy JP Allocation 17 requires development of the site to be informed by a comprehensive drainage strategy, which includes a full investigation of the surface water hierarchy.
- 13.3 Policy JP-D1 Infrastructure Implementation also seeks to ensure that development does not lead to capacity or reliability problems in the surrounding area by requiring

applicants to demonstrate that there will be adequate utility infrastructure capacity, from first occupation until development completion.

# Section C – Environmental

## 14.0 Green Belt Assessment

- 14.1 The developable area used to identify the proposed capacity is based on a significant proportion of the allocation remaining undeveloped through incorporating green infrastructure as part of the proposed development alongside high-quality landscaping to minimise the visual impact on the wider landscape.

### Green Belt Exceptional Circumstances

- 14.2 Paragraph 136 of the NPPF requires that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are evidenced and fully justified. The Green Belt Topic Paper, available on the GMCA website, sets out the case for exceptional circumstances for seeking the proposed release of Green Belt to bring forward the allocations within the plan. The exceptional circumstances take the form of the strategic level case – high level factors that have influenced and framed the decision to alter boundaries, such as meeting housing need; and local level case – specific factors relevant to the proposed releases that complement the strategic case.
- 14.3 As outlined in section 4, the site selection process has identified the most sustainable locations by assessing potential sites against the site selection criteria to ensure the proposed allocations meet the spatial objectives of the plan. In terms of the local-level case, the exceptional circumstances for the release of the Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) allocation from the Green Belt is that:
- The site meets Criterion 7 of the Site Selection criteria, as the site is capable of providing a range of house types and sizes, including affordable housing so as to meet local needs.
  - The site is in a sustainable and accessible location, with good access to public transport and a range of local services, with access to a number of bus routes

along Ashton Road. The site is adjacent to the A627/A671 corridor, which has been identified by TFGM as having the potential for sustainable transport options.

14.4 The local-level case for exceptional circumstances, set out in the Green Belt Background Paper, also includes a summary of the Green Belt harm and mitigation assessment in relation to Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road). The findings from this assessment are also summarised in the section below (for information a summary of the Green Belt Stage 1 2016 study is also set out).

The Greater Manchester Green Belt assessment (2016)

14.5 The Stage 1 Green Belt assessment assessed the whole of the Green Belt in Greater Manchester, providing a comprehensive analysis of variations in contribution of land to the Green Belt purposes as set out in the NPPF.

14.6 The 2016 assessment identified the area of Green Belt which the proposed allocation falls within as Strategic Green Belt Area 18. This Strategic Green Belt Area forms a corridor along the valley of the River Medlock from close to Manchester city centre in the west to Mossley and Stalybridge in the east. It separates Oldham in the north from Ashton under Lyne to the south. It is crossed by a series of N-S transport corridors.

14.7 Within this Strategic Green Belt Area Land south of Coal Pit Lane strategic allocation falls within parcel OH46. The parcel scored moderate against Green Belt purposes 1 to 4 (purpose 5 was not part of the assessment). The full scoring is set out in Table Four below:

Parcel Reference	Purpose 1a Rating	Purpose 1b Rating	Purpose 2 Rating	Purpose 3 Rating	Strategic Green Belt Area
OH 46	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Strong	Weak

- 14.8 The Stage 2 Green Belt study assessed the potential impact on the Green Belt that could result from release of land within the development allocations proposed in the 2019 GMSF. Its intention was to inform the finalisation of the proposed strategic allocations. An addendum report was prepared to look at amendments made to site boundaries (including the larger site boundary proposed for Land south of Coal Pit Lane) as part of the GMSF Publication Plan: Draft for Approval October 2020. A summary of both assessments is shown below.
- 14.9 As stated above following changes to the allocation from the 2019 GMSF to the GMSF Publication Plan: Draft for Approval October 2020 the site was assessed in the Stage 2 harm addendum report. It was concluded that the release of the eastern area:
- would leave only a narrow gap between Bardsley and the Limeside suburb of Oldham, although neither are considered to constitute separate towns with regards to Purpose 2. Release was not considered to diminish the gap to the south between Oldham and Ashton-under-Lyne, nor Oldham and Failsworth/Hollinwood which are already largely contiguous urban areas.
  - would not weaken the Green Belt boundary. However, whereas the 2019 GMSF allocation was contained by a wooded perimeter, the extended allocation as proposed in the GMSF Publication Plan: Draft for Approval October 2020 has only weak field boundaries, which will constitute a weakening of the existing inset edge along the A627.
- 14.10 It was concluded that the extended parcel proposed in the GMSF Publication Plan: Draft for Approval October 2020 would cause 'high' harm to Green Belt purposes but would only have a 'minor' impact on adjacent Green Belt.
- 14.11 In terms of cumulative harm on Strategic Green Belt Area (SGBA) 18, release would constitute urban sprawl (Purpose 1) within the western part of the SGBA. Release will not diminish the gap to the south between Oldham and Ashton-under-Lyne, and Oldham and Failsworth / Hollinwood which are already largely contiguous urban areas (Purpose 2). Release of the allocation would contain the Green Belt land to the

north (Purpose 3). Release would not impact the setting or special character of any other historic towns in the SGBA (Purpose 4).

14.12 The assessment identified whether mitigation would address harm identified. It is considered that Coal Pit Lane currently marks a consistent Green Belt boundary to the south of Limeside. As such any release and development to the south of this will have some impact on the integrity of adjacent Green Belt land. However, the creation of stronger visual boundaries than those provided by the weakly defined field edges which mark the western and southern edges of the allocation, would help to minimise harm to the Green Belt purposes.

14.13 As outlined above since the Green Belt assessment was prepared the allocation boundary has been reduced by 6.52ha along the western boundary. This creates a larger separation between the allocation boundary and the urban area to the north-west at Limeside. The allocation also now follows the farm track boundary to the west, which may allow for a more defensible boundary to be created.

#### Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study Addendum: Assessment of Proposed 2021 PfE Allocations (2021)

14.14 This report forms a second addendum to the assessment of allocations proposed in the 2019 GMSF. It considers the impact, in terms of harm to the Green Belt purposes from the release of land, of changes to the proposed allocation boundaries and areas of Green Belt release identified in the 2021 PfE Plan.

14.15 The assessment acknowledges that the 2021 PfE Plan proposes a reduced allocation that excludes land to the west of the farm track that runs south from Coal Pit Lane. The land now proposed for retention in the Green Belt lies within an area that was added in the GMSF Publication Plan: Draft for Approval October 2020 to the original 2019 GMSF Allocation. In terms of the addendums that have been completed:

- The addendum which assessed the proposed 2020 GMSF allocations assigned a high harm rating to all of the land west of the former Wood Park Colliery (GM13-Site Allocation Topic Paper – PfE 2021)

3), citing a strong contribution to Green Belt Purpose 1 (checking the sprawl of a large built-up area) and Purpose 3 (safeguarding the countryside from encroachment). The revised Green Belt boundary, formed by field edges, was judged to be weaker than the wooded edge of the former colliery;

- The addendum which assessed the PfE 2021 allocation boundary found that although the farm track that forms the edge of the amended allocation can be considered a marginally stronger boundary than the poorly defined field edges to the west, it is still a weaker boundary than the wooded edge of the colliery site. The land in GM13-3 still makes a strong contribution to Purposes 1 and 3, so the harm of release of land in this part of the allocation is still high. The harm of releasing the former colliery, GM13-1, is still moderate-high.

#### Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study Addendum: Cumulative Assessment of Proposed 2021 PfE Plan Allocations and Additions (2021)

14.16 This report forms an addendum to the Cumulative Assessment of Proposed 2020 GMSF Allocations and Additions. It considers the impact of changes to the proposed allocation boundaries and areas of Green Belt release identified in the 2021 PfE Plan.

14.17 The 2021 PfE Plan proposes a reduction to Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) – that excludes land to the west of the farm track running south from Coal Pit Lane. As a result, the allocation area has reduced from 26.42 ha to 19.9 ha.

14.18 The reduction in the westward extent of the allocation represents a slight reduction in the containment of land to the north and west that would result from the release. This has some minor benefit in terms of reduced harm to Green Belt Purposes 1 and 3 but has little impact strategically.

#### Identification of Opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of the Green Belt (2020)

Site Allocation Topic Paper – PfE 2021



14.19 Lastly LUC prepared a report on the Identification of opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of the Green Belt in 2020. This report provides evidence to show where there are opportunities to offset the loss of Green Belt through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of retained and proposed Green Belt land. This study has sought to identify opportunities to enhance Green Infrastructure within 2km of the sites proposed for release. It should be noted that since the assessment the allocation boundary has been reduced along the western boundary.

14.20 These opportunities should feed into Local Plans and masterplanning work for the site allocations.

14.21 The summary of priority projects for enhancement surrounding Land south of Coal Pit Lane includes:

*Access:*

- Introduce Green Belt enhancements to improve access control to ensure accessibility of the existing PRow network, including the creation of new multi-user routes for recreational and health benefits as part of the Carbon Landscape Project as promoted by Lancashire Wildlife Trust;
- Develop well waymarked and easy to use circular 'health' walks on the urban fringe;
- Upgrade the lighting provision and drainage at the access point to the Medlock Valley Way / Oldham Way on the carriageway of the A627;
- Extend the Beeway following the route of the B6194, providing a wider linkage from Ashton-under-Lyne to Oldham;
- Develop interpretation and signage along the disused Hollinwood and Fairbottom Branch Canals to enhance visitor experience and promote the industrial heritage of the local area;
- Introduce an additional east-west cycle network linkage across the corridor of the M60 at Cutler Hill Road; and

- Extend the dedicated cycle lane on the A627 to create a strategic linkage between Ashton-under-Lyne in the south and Oldham to the north.

*Sport and recreation:*

- Explore Green Belt enhancement strategies to improve existing features within Daisy Nook Country Park; including the car park and visitor facilities; and
- Offer accessible sports packages to private recreational facilities to local residents.

*Biodiversity and wildlife corridors:*

- Enhance the ecological and hydrological beneficial features within the area of retained Green Belt by combining flood risk reduction (including the alleviation of surface water flood risk issues) with green infrastructure improvements; and
- Protect and enhance semi-natural habitats and networks, including riparian, broadleaved and ancient woodland tracts bordering the River Medlock. In addition, explore opportunities for habitat enhancement such as ponds for amphibians.

*Landscape and visual:*

- Review woodland management practices along the valley floor in order to emphasize the gap between discrete settlements;
- Adopt a radical review of the agricultural land at Park Bridge / Rocher Vale, to understand the potential for the creation of a regional country park visitor attraction;
- Create stronger links between the communities of Ashton-under-Lyne, Failsworth and Bardsley with the river corridor of the River Medlock. This could involve the expansion and maintenance of the PRoW network as well as the integration of opportunities for 'natural play'; and
- Preserve and reinstate species rich hedgerows to aid habitat enhancement and visual containment.

## 15.0 Green Infrastructure

- 15.1 The high-level indicative concept plan report proposes the retention of significant amount of land within the allocation as green infrastructure which would remain undeveloped, including a large portion of land to the north-east of the site. The developable areas have been also been informed by site constraints, including the historic landfill sites that are focused in the north-east of the site. The has informed identification of the net developable area and capacity that the allocation can accommodate.
- 15.2 Whilst the high-level indicative concept plan is based on the allocation boundary proposed in GMSF Publication Plan: Draft for Approval October 2020 the Green Infrastructure principles are still considered appropriate in that development should:
- incorporate high-quality landscaping and multi-functional green infrastructure that will minimise the visual impact on the wider landscape, mitigate its environmental impacts and enhances linkages with the neighbouring communities and countryside.
  - deliver a coherent green infrastructure network, combining attractive spaces and routes which link the development with the surrounding area. This should include green corridors, landscape buffers and open recreational spaces that are interconnected and coordinated.
  - respect the existing landscape and ecological features of the site and beyond, including the protection and enhancement of wildlife should also be prioritised.
  - use the Green Infrastructure to ensure development parcels are clearly defined and that boundaries are appropriately treated.
- 15.3 Collectively this will ensure a development that is fitting with the surroundings and promoted as an attractive, healthy place to live.
- 15.4 In response to the above Policy JP Allocation 17 sets out that development of the site is required to:
- Deliver multi-functional green infrastructure (incorporating the retention and enhancement of existing public rights of way) and high-quality landscaping within the site so as to minimise the visual impact on the wider landscape, mitigate its

environmental impacts, and enhance linkages with the neighbouring communities and countryside and provide for opportunities for leisure and recreation.

- Have regard to the recommendations of the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment for the Incised Urban Fringe Valley;
- Retain and enhance areas of biodiversity within the site, notably areas of priority habitat, following the mitigation hierarchy and deliver a meaningful and measurable net gain in biodiversity, integrating them as part of the multi-functional green infrastructure network;
- Contribute towards green infrastructure enhancement opportunities in the surrounding Green Belt as identified in the Identification of Opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of the Green Belt assessment; and
- Provide for new and/or improvement of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities commensurate with the demand generated and local surpluses and deficiencies, in line with local planning policy requirements.

## 16.0 Recreation

16.1 The high-level indicative concept planning report emphasises that development of the site should deliver high-quality landscaping and multi-functional green infrastructure. It is considered this would enhance the attractiveness of the site and provide opportunities for open space and recreational activities for users of the site. There is a need for development of the site to enhance recreational routes connecting the site with the surrounding countryside, including PRow, as well as ensuring green links provide an attractive interface within residential parcels, with a mix of hard and soft landscape with opportunities for formal and informal play opportunities.

16.2 In relation to open space, sport and recreation Policy JP Allocation 17 states that development of the site will be required to provide for new and/or improvement of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities commensurate with the demand generated and local surplus' and deficiencies, in line with local planning policy requirements.

16.3 At present, Oldham's Local Plan Policy 23 requires all major developments to contribute to new and/ or improved open space, sport and recreation provision whether onsite or, in some circumstances, offsite in line with local surplus' and deficiencies. Policy 23 will be reviewed as part of the ongoing Local Plan Review.

## 17.0 Landscape

17.1 Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) falls within Incised Urban Fringe (River Medlock) landscape character type as identified within the Landscape Character Assessment (2018), which was prepared to inform preparation of GMSF (now Places for Everyone). The assessment sensitivity tested two development scenarios against each identified landscape character area. For this character type, the assessment concluded that development of two to three storey residential development would have a medium to high sensitivity. The report sets out policy guidance and recommendations to mitigate impact on the landscape as a result of development within/ impacting on the character area.

17.2 The guidance and opportunities to consider within this landscape character type include:

- Avoid siting development on the edges of the valley where buildings would be prominent on the skyline. Conserve wooded and open undeveloped skylines;
- Utilise the screening effects of the tight valley topography and existing tree/woodland cover to integrate limited new development into the landscape;
- Protect and where possible enhance semi-natural habitats and networks including riparian, broadleaved and ancient woodland, wet grasslands, meadows and regenerating habitats on former industrial land. Avoid siting development in locations that would lead to the loss or fragmentation of any locally or nationally designated wildlife site;
- Strengthen the dry stone wall network in association with any new development, reflecting local building styles and materials. Any new boundaries should also reflect local characteristics;

- Hedgerows should be preserved and enhanced. New hedgerow planting should be encouraged where it has been removed and replaced by post and wire fencing.
- Avoid the felling of any significant areas of woodland to maintain the contained and secluded character of the valleys and to retain the existing screening of the urban edge;
- Explore opportunities to further develop post-industrial and reclaimed sites for habitat creation with possible links with The Northern Forest initiative;
- Conserve the character and setting of the Conservation Areas, as well as the role the landscape plays as a rural setting to historic settlements;
- Conserve remaining industrial relicts, including historic mill buildings, canals and railway lines. Development should be carefully sited in order to maintain the link between historic mills, canals, railways and roads;
- Conserve the nationally designated listed buildings and scheduled sites;
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). This is of particular importance as the LCT covers many of Greater Manchester's main river valleys;
- Encourage woodland creation schemes on areas of low-grade agricultural land, including through the Northern Forest initiative;
- Any new development should be sympathetic in style, vernacular and form to historic industrial development within the valleys (particularly the use of local stone and red brick);
- Recreational opportunities should be maintained and enhanced in order to preserve the high recreational value of the valleys as green fingers through densely populated areas. Opportunities should be sought to strengthen the links between valleys along public footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes and the various recreational destinations and heritage sites found within the landscape;
- Formal recognition should be sought for recreational routes with possible extensions of existing long-distance routes or the formation of new ones; and

- Protect the pockets of seclusion and tranquillity associated with the tightly enclosed valleys and their woodlands, along with their strong sense of time depth and traditional rural qualities in an urban context.
- 17.3 In response to the above Policy JP Allocation 17 sets out that development of the site should have regard to the recommendations of the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment for the Incised Urban Fringe Valleys.
- 17.4 The high-level indicative concept planning work identified that the site has some minor constraints with a high ridge towards the northern end of the site and a low-lying height in the southern end. The landfill area in the north east of the site includes a small hill. There are flat areas in the centre to the top western end of the site. It is therefore recommended that a further detailed topographical analysis will be required at the detailed design stage to fully reconcile the site and accommodate the design as required.
- 17.5 The principles behind the high-level indicative concept plan prepared for the allocation encourage development and urban form to be contextually responsive to the surrounding built and natural landscapes. A landscape strategy was prepared to support the high-level concept plan to retain features which contribute to the character of the site. The strategy includes utilising existing water features; retaining existing hedgerows; using trees as boundary treatments; a green corridor to connect development parcels and to maintain openness; the incorporation of SUDs; retaining and enhancing existing PROWs; using landscape buffers for screening; and introducing multi-functional open spaces, and use greenspaces to provide attractive entrances and interfaces between residential parcels and primary gateways.

## **18.0 Ecological/Biodiversity Assessment**

- 18.1 The site includes large areas of open land with a small woodland area to the north-east with hedgerows around the centre and to the south of the site.

- 18.2 The high-level indicative concept plan report recommends that where possible the development of the site should work with existing features to enhance ecological value and add value to the character of the site. It recommends a landscape-led development that seeks to retain and enhance the existing hedgerow network and tree features to improve on any features around the site.
- 18.3 The high-level indicative concept plan suggests the integration of a green corridor running north to south and east to west of the site as an extension to the existing corridor opposite the north-eastern boundary of the site (adjacent to Ashton Road). This could incorporate SUDs, planting, and recreational links between the development parcels and the wider countryside.

#### *Preliminary Ecology Appraisal*

- 18.4 Conclusions from the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, carried out by GMEU in 2020 to inform the strategic allocations as presented in the GMSF Publication Plan Draft for Approval October 2020, are that broadleaved woodland is a potential significant constraint.
- 18.5 The appraisal concludes that the site has the potential to support specially protected species such as foraging bats, great crested newts and badgers and potential to support priority habitat types such as ponds, broadleaved woodland and hedgerows. There would be a presumption against the loss of ponds and woodland.
- 18.6 An addendum to the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been prepared to inform PfE 2021 reflecting the boundary amendment. The conclusions of the addendum have not changed from the original appraisal in 2020.
- 18.7 In response to the above Policy JP Allocation 17 requires development to retain and enhance the hierarchy of biodiversity within the site, including areas of priority habitats, following the mitigation hierarchy and deliver a meaningful and measurable net gain in biodiversity, integrating them as part of the multi-functional green



infrastructure network. The policy also requires amphibian, extended phase 1 habitat, badger and bat surveys to be submitted at the planning application stage.

## 19.0 Habitat Regulation Assessment

- 19.1 A Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) has been carried out to appraise the GMSF (now Places for Everyone), by the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU). The most recent report, published to support the GMSF Publication Plan Draft for Approval October 2020 includes the identification of strategic sites which may have impacts on European protected sites, an assessment of these impacts and available mitigation for these impacts. All strategic allocations have been screened into the assessment because of potential cumulative effects from air pollution caused by increased road traffic.
- 19.2 The assessment concluded that the operation of the GMSF (now Places for Everyone) will not cause adverse impacts on site integrity of any European designated sites providing that the recommended mitigation measures are included in the Plan and implemented.
- 19.3 It is therefore concluded that there is insufficient evidence of any harm to the special interest of European sites for which no effective mitigation is available to justify the removal of any of the proposed allocated areas for strategic development from consideration at this stage of Plan production.
- 19.4 The HRA has been updated in 2021 to reflect amendments made to strategic allocations since the GMSF Publication Plan Draft for Approval October 2021, including the boundary and capacity change for Land south of Coal Pit Lane. Details can be found at <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/placesforeveryone>.
- 19.5 The GMCA and TfGM are responding to Natural England's comments on the draft HRA (2020) by commissioning additional air quality modelling to more accurately assess the implications of changes in air quality on European sites that could

potentially be affected by changes to nitrogen levels arising from changes in vehicle movements in Greater Manchester or within close proximity of the Greater Manchester boundary.

19.6 A Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) has been undertaken and supported by an assessment of air quality impacts on designated sites. The following sites have been screened out at Stage 1 HRA:

- Rixton Clay Pits (SAC)
- Midland Meres & Mosses – Phase 1 Ramsar
- Rostherne Mere (Ramsar)

19.7 The following sites requires Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment:

- Manchester Mosses (SAC)
- Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) (SPA)
- Rochdale Canal (SAC)
- South Pennine Moors (SAC)
- South Pennine Moors Phase 2 (SPA)

## 20.0 Historic Environment Assessment

- 20.1 An initial Historic Environment Assessment Screening Exercise prepared by Greater Manchester Archaeology Advisory Service (GMAAS) in February 2019 recommended that the Ashton Road Corridor allocation (as proposed in GMSF 2019) is screened in for further heritage assessment. This is due to the fact that whilst there are no designated heritage assets within the allocation there are two located further afield (Bardsley House and Holy Trinity). There is unlikely to be archaeological remains dating to before the Industrial period.
- 20.2 To address the recommendations of the initial screening exercise, Oldham Council has prepared a Historic Environment Assessment for each of its strategic allocations to inform preparation of the Joint DPD. In terms of Land South of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road), the assessment has been carried out on Ashton Road Corridor strategic allocation to assess the impact the site would have on the significance of heritage assets that may be affected within and outside of the allocation. This focussed on designated assets.
- 20.3 The following designated assets were assessed at Ashton Road Corridor:
- Church of Holy Trinity (Grade II), Ashton Road;
  - Bardsley House (Grade II), Ashton Road;
  - Bank Top Farmhouse (Grade II), Selbourne Street; and
  - Garden Suburbs Conservation Area.
- 20.4 The assessment concluded that the parcel does not make any contribution to the significance of the above assets. Enhancements include taking into account the recommendations of the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment and ensuring that new development is in keeping with the surrounding character of the area through the use of local materials and design.
- 20.5 An addendum to the Historic Environment Assessment was prepared in 2021 to reflect the changes to site boundaries, including Land south of Coal Pit Lane. It was concluded that the revised allocation boundary makes no significant changes to the outcome of the previous assessment.

- 20.6 In response to the above Policy JP Allocation 17 states development is required to conserve and enhance heritage assets and their setting in accordance with the findings and recommendations of the Historic Environment Assessment (2020) and addendum (2021). An up-to-date Heritage Impact Assessment will be required for any planning applications.
- 20.7 Policy JP Allocation 17 also requires development to take into consideration the findings of the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Assessment Screening Exercise and provide an up-to-date archaeological desk-based assessment to determine if any future evaluation and mitigation will be needed.

## **21.0 Air Quality and Noise**

- 21.1 Air Quality is covered by thematic policy JP-S 6 'Clean Air' in PfE 2021 which sets out a range of measures to support air quality. PfE 2021 sets out a commitment to improving air quality by locating development in locations which are most accessible to public transport. The proposed allocation is not within an AQMA.
- 21.2 The principles behind the high-level indicative concept plan prepared for the allocation encourage active travel to be considered through the development of the site, so as to encourage sustainable transport options, this includes the Quality Bus Transit Corridor, improved cycle infrastructure and ensuring streets are active and safe to encourage walkability.
- 21.3 Policy JP Allocation 17 requires development to take account of and deliver other highway improvements that may be needed to minimise the impact of associated traffic on the local highway network and improve access to the surrounding area, including off-site highway improvements, high-quality walking and cycling and public transport facilities, including opportunities for bus service provision into the site.
- 21.4 There are no significant noise constraints for the site.

21.5 Policy JP-G 7 of PfE 2021 aims to significantly increase tree cover and protect and enhance woodland. The justification for the policy notes that trees and woodland can help mitigate noise pollution.

# Section D – Social

## 22.0 Education

- 22.1 It is important to ensure that any development proposed does not place undue pressure on existing social infrastructure and takes account of the increased demand it may place on existing provision.
- 22.2 Within a 1.5-mile radius of Land south of Coal Pit Lane there are 13 primary schools and within 3 miles there are 10 secondary schools. Consideration will need to be given as to whether or not any of these have the potential for expansion at the appropriate time.
- 22.3 Policy JP Allocation 17 requires development to contribute to additional school places to meet the increased demand that will be placed on existing primary and secondary school provision within the area, either through an expansion of existing facilities or through the provision of new school facilities in liaison with the local education authority.
- 22.4 Oldham Council is currently working on developing a methodology for S106 Contributions for Education. Once finalised these will be used to secure contributions towards education provision as appropriate.

## 23.0 Health Impact Assessment

- 23.1 The high-level indicative concept plan report identifies that there are a number of health centres north of the site and outside Oldham, with a Pharmacy, Orthodontics and two Medical Centre's. However, the capacity of these facilities to support the development would require further detailed investigation. As such, Policy JP Allocation 17 requires development of the site to contribute to appropriate health and community facilities to meet the increased demand that will be placed on existing provision.

- 23.2 The Integrated Assessment carried out to inform preparation of the Joint DPD incorporates a Health Impact Assessment. Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) scored very positively against supporting healthier lifestyles and supporting improvements in determinants of health. This is due to Policy JP Allocation 17 requiring the delivery of multi-functional green infrastructure, enhanced linkages to the countryside, enhanced biodiversity and new or improved open space provision.
- 23.3 Policy JP Allocation 17 also supports active travel options to be delivered as part of the allocation, including high-quality walking and cycling facilities, linking to new and existing public transport provision, and the retention and enhancement of public rights of way.

# Section E – Deliverability

## 24.0 Viability

- 24.1 The team of Three Dragons, Ward Williams Associates and Troy Planning and Design were commissioned to undertake a Viability Assessment of the Spatial Framework (VASF) to test whether the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are met, that is that the policy requirements in a plan should not threaten the development viability of the plan as a whole.
- 24.2 Within this broad aim, the GMCA sets out a number of objectives for the VASF that are summarised as being to:
- Meet the tests of soundness, using the approach to viability set out in guidance;
  - Address issues identified in consultation and engage with the development industry;
  - Provide a broad strategic understanding of viability, including costs and values, across Greater Manchester area based on current available information;
  - Test the viability and deliverability of an appropriate range of sample sites across Greater Manchester, including allocated sites; and
  - Identify policies that will affect viability and examine the likely cumulative viability impact of the proposed policies and standards in the Plan.
- 24.3 The VASF comprises three linked reports, The Strategic Viability Report, The Allocated Sites Viability Report and the Consultation Report. These are available on the GMCA website.
- 24.4 For the allocated sites viability testing, site characteristics, values and costs collected for the viability modelling drew on analysis of national and local datasets and policy documents and local consultations.
- 24.5 For all sites results are presented in terms of headroom available after developer return has been taken into account. On some sites further sensitivity testing has



been carried out to show the impact of changes to the assumptions, based on the council's justification to move away from the main model of testing.

- 24.6 In terms of benchmark land values for the purposes of the allocated sites they have all been considered as strategic greenfield with a benchmark land value of £250,000 per gross hectare, on the basis of consistency and that the majority of the sites are greenbelt releases and/or predominantly greenfield.
- 24.7 In terms of residential values, the assumptions sheet contained within the Viability Report set out the values used for the individual site. For some allocations the local authority has suggested alternative figures. These are set out as sensitivity tests to the standard approach.

#### *GMSF Strategic Viability Assessment Stage 2 Allocated Sites Findings*

- 24.8 In terms of attributing build and site costs, Oldham Council have provided a high-level indicative concept plan for Land South of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) allocation setting out broad form of development for the site. This has informed the build costs of £41,849,792 for the site, as well as a degree of judgement from the consultants and officers.
- 24.9 In terms of the policy and mitigation costs assumed for this allocation, Oldham Council has provided affordable housing assumptions, education requirements and open space/recreation requirements to be used within the testing based on the currently adopted Local Plan policies and/or updated evidence. The figures used are set out in the site assessment assumption sheet in the Strategic Viability Report – Stage 2 Allocations Sites Viability Report (October 2020). In summary, for the Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) allocation, affordable housing contribution was tested at 15% of the site capacity (40 affordable homes) with a split of 50% Affordable Rent and 50% Shared Ownership, as per the recommendations of Oldham's Housing Strategy.

24.10 There are a range of other policy and mitigation costs around accessibility, future homes standards, electric charging points and biodiversity net gain that need to be applied when undertaking the testing, based on National and proposed PfE policies. These are applied in the same way as the generic testing. In addition to the affordable housing contribution tested, other planning obligation costs to a total of £2,927,326 were tested for this allocation.

24.11 In terms of transport costs, two types have been modelled. The first are costs found within the site and include roads serving the development, immediate site access and provision for pedestrians and cyclists, where available. For this site this information was provided by the Three Dragons team on the basis of available masterplans and in liaison with the Council’s highways team – Unity Partnership. These on-site transport costs were included in the main viability testing. For Land South of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) strategic transport costs of £790,000 were tested.

24.12 Table Five sets out the results of the viability assessment for the site.

24.13 A sensitivity test was carried out that increased market values by 20%. The site offers the opportunity to provide a significant amount of new homes, in a sustainable and accessible location, that will help to diversify Oldham’s housing stock and contribute to meeting housing needs. Therefore, it is considered reasonable to assume that a development in this location would be popular, with higher sales values than are general for the area.

Table Five: Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) Strategic Allocation Viability Assessment Results

Site Ref	Site Name	Scheme Type	Main/Sensitivity Test	Scheme RV incl land costs	Scheme RV (f less return)	Strategic transport costs	Out-turn scheme RV (g-h)
GM13 / GMA 18	Land south of Coal Pit Lane	Housing	Main model	-£1,614,000	- £8,870,000	£790,000	-£9,660,000

	(Ashton Road)						
GM13 / GMA 18	Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road)	Housing	Sensitivity test – increase sales values by 20%	£9,020,000	£370,000	£790,000	-£420,000

24.14 As Table Five shows, the site is not viable with the main test without taking into account the £790,000 strategic transport costs. With these costs included, the site is in deficit by £9.6m. As such, a sensitivity test of increasing sales values by 20% has been applied.

24.15 With the sensitivity test applied the site is marginal with an -£420,000 residual value. However, this is not adequate to cover the strategic transport costs of £790,000 and therefore the site is considered to be unviable.

24.16 Despite the viability testing results showing the site to be unviable, it is considered that the site provides significant opportunity, especially when paired with the nearby Rosary Road site, to create a new community in an attractive location with supporting infrastructure that will also benefit the wider community and contribute to serving existing issues.

*Strategic Viability Report – Stage 2 Allocated Sites Viability Report - Amended June 2021 Findings*

24.17 An updated viability assessment has been carried, based on Policy JP Allocation 17 as proposed in PfE 2021. The findings from this updated assessment are set out in Table Six below.

Table Six: Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) Strategic Allocation Viability Assessment Results – 2021 Update

Site Ref	Site Name	Scheme Type	Main/ Sensitivity Test	Scheme RV incl land costs	Scheme RV (f less return)	Strategic transport costs	Out-turn scheme RV (g-h)
GM13 / GMA 18	Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road)	Housing	Main model	£1,310,000	- £3,950,000	£790,000	-£4,740,000
GM13 / GMA 18	Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road)	Housing	Sensitivity test – increase sales values by 20%	£6,950,000	£790,000	£790,000	£0

24.18 The viability position of the allocation was found to have improved slightly when looking at the original assessment (see above):

- The main test (with an affordable housing requirement of 10%) gives a negative residual value of c£4m. The shortfall increases to £4.7m when the strategic transport costs are included.
- The sensitivity test provides an appraisal of the site with an increase in sales prices by 17.5%. This results in a residual value of £0.8m after accounting for the strategic transport costs.

## 25.0 Phasing

25.1 The phasing and delivery assumptions used to inform the high-level indicative concept plan split the site into development parcels and set out a phasing approach over three phases based on known constraints and assumptions around infrastructure delivery. Whilst there have been changes to the site boundary, and therefore the concept plan work, the phasing and delivery assumptions used to

inform the high-level indicative concept plan are still considered relevant and have been used to inform the development trajectory as follows:

- 2028/29 = 42 dwellings
- 2029/30 = 42 dwellings
- 2030/31 = 42 dwellings
- 2031/32 = 42 dwellings
- 2032/33 = 7 dwellings

## 26.0 Indicative Masterplanning

- 26.1 As referred to throughout this report a high-level indicative concept plan and accompanying report has been prepared to support the allocation and this topic paper.
- 26.2 The report has been produced to demonstrate deliverability and feasibility of development at the proposed allocation of Land South of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road). Within the report a high-level opportunities and constraints, landscape and ecology appraisal, and a townscape analysis has been carried out.
- 26.3 It should be noted that the allocation boundary has been amended since this work, however the principles and requirements are still considered relevant. The developable areas have also been informed by site constraints, including historic landfill sites, and capacity has been determined on broadly the same parcels as identified in the concept plan, albeit slightly reduced along the western edge to reflect the revised boundary.
- 26.4 Collectively, the analysis and outcomes have informed a set of strategic design principles developed specifically for the site and:
- An Urban Design Strategy to guide development of the high-level indicative concept plan.

- A Movement Strategy which considers access, vehicular hierarchy and access, pedestrian movement and public transport provision.
- Open Space and Landscape Strategy which considers existing water features, hedgerows and trees, openness, key green spaces, SUDs, ecology corridors and green routes.

26.5 As stated at the beginning of this topic paper it is important to note that whilst the requirements set out in Policy JP Allocation 17 will need to be met, the indicative concept plan may change with the preparation of more detailed masterplans and in conjunction with a future developer's planning application. As such, Policy JP Allocation 17 requires that any development will need to be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan and design code for the site agreed by the local planning authority.

26.6 Appendix 2 contains the high-level indicative concept plan for the allocation. The associated high-level indicative concept planning report is available on the GMCA website.

# Section F – Conclusion

## 27.0 The Sustainability Appraisal

- 27.1 Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) generally performed positively against the strategic objectives of the plan. This is covered in section 7 of the topic paper.
- 27.2 A 2021 PfE Integrated Appraisal Addendum has been produced and has reviewed the changes made between GMSF 2020 and PfE 2021. Given that the changes proposed relate to the site allocation itself, these were identified as ‘potentially significant’ and the allocation policies were reassessed. The IA concluded that the changes proposed did not fundamentally change the physical character of the site allocation. Furthermore, the sites which had more significant Green Belt removal, did result in improved scoring against Objective 17 (Green Belt).

## 28.0 The main changes to the Proposed Allocation

- 28.1 Appendices 5, 6 and 1 shows the policy wording in the 2019 GMSF, GMSF Publication Plan Draft for Approval October 2020 and PfE 2021 respectively. Appendices 3 and 4 sets out the proposed changes to the policy wording between the 2019 GMSF, GMSF Publication Plan Draft for Approval October 2020 and PfE 2021 for the Beal Valley allocation and the reasoned justification
- 28.2 The allocation has changed since the 2019 GMSF, where it was named Ashton Road Corridor and was made up Land south of Coal Pit Lane (albeit smaller than that proposed in PfE 2021) and land at Bardsley Vale. Due to site constraints and consultation responses the land at Bardsley Vale has since removed from the allocation and is no longer proposed for development. As such the allocation was revised and renamed as a single allocation - Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road).

- 28.3 Since the GMSF Publication Plan Draft for Approval October 2020 the allocation has been reduced along the western boundary, to increase the Green Belt gap to the north-west and to reflect a reduced allocation capacity – from 255 homes to 175 homes.
- 28.4 In terms of the reasoned justification for the allocation policy, as set out in the plan, the main changes include;
- An explanation of the capacity of the site, including changes to the site allocation itself;
  - Justification relating to the site’s opportunity to diversify existing housing stock and meet local housing needs;
  - Justification relating to the affordable housing required as part of the development of the site;
  - Further detail added on the identified access points to the site; the proposed internal highway network; and the connectivity of the site to the surrounding area;
  - Detail added to enhance the green infrastructure network and biodiversity of the site;
  - Detail added to explain the site’s flood risk and the requirements that development of the site must comply with, including further SUD opportunities;
  - Detail added to explain the site’s ecological assets, the identified green infrastructure/ ecosystem services opportunities and how development will be required to contribute to the green infrastructure network and biodiversity net gain; and
  - Detail added with regards to the land contamination within the site.
- 28.5 In addition to the changes referred to above there have also been some minor changes made to the policy and reasoned justification relating to references to GM, where this is no longer appropriate, policy references, numbering and other minor typographical errors.



28.6 In terms of the changes between the 2020 GMSF and the 2021 PfE, as these changes were either minor or as a result of Stockport's withdrawal from the plan, it is concluded that the effect of the plan is substantially the same on the districts as the 2020 version of the policy.

28.7 It is considered that these policy changes, along with the other requirements set out in the policy, will deliver a high quality, sustainable development that will help to deliver the vision, plan objectives and overall spatial strategy of PfE.

## 29.0 Conclusion

29.1 Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) site lies approximately 1km to the south of Oldham Town Centre. The site is currently designated Green Belt. The site is mainly greenfield, low grade agricultural land, though there is some brownfield land within the site, reflecting its mining legacy.

29.2 It is considered that the proposed allocation at Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) meets the Green Belt exceptional circumstances as the allocation is capable of meeting the site selection criteria, which seeks to identify locations for strategic allocations which meet objectives of the plan as a whole, thus meeting the wider strategic case for exceptional circumstances to alter the Green Belt.

29.3 The strategic allocation is proposed to deliver around 175 new homes (an additional 18 homes at Danish Lane are included within the red line boundary but which are within the baseline housing land supply), aiming to provide a range of dwelling types and sizes to deliver inclusive neighbourhoods and meet local needs, including a mix of high-quality family housing and affordable housing.

29.4 The gross site allocation area measures 19.9 hectares, with the anticipated developable area measuring approximately 6.07 hectares, as identified through the indicative high-level concept plan.

- 29.5 Located on the urban fringe and close to existing built development, the site is in a good position to utilise existing infrastructure. Furthermore, as part of the allocation it is proposed to contribute to the delivery of the Quality Bus Transit Corridor between Rochdale, Oldham and Ashton under Lyne.
- 29.6 The main points of access to the site are proposed to be Coal Pit Lane, to the north of the site and Ashton Road to the east. Development of the site will also be required to take account of and deliver any other highway improvements, that may be needed to minimise the impact of associated traffic on the local highway network and improve accessibility to the surrounding area, including off-site highway improvements, high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure and public transport facilities.
- 29.7 The site lies entirely within Flood Zone 1, even when taking into account climate change. There are some areas of high surface water flooding present onsite, which will need to be addressed in a site-specific FRA or drainage strategy.
- 29.8 Overall, it is considered that the policy, along with the other requirements set out in the policy, will deliver a high quality, sustainable development that will help to deliver the vision, plan objectives and overall spatial strategy of PfE.
- 29.9 The full strategic allocation policy wording and reasoned justification is set out in Appendix 1. A full suite of evidence and background papers are available on the GMCA website.

# Section G – Appendices

**Appendix 1 – JPA-17 Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) Allocation Policy  
(as proposed in PfE 2021)**

- 11.195** There are heritage assets in the surrounding area. Any development would need to consider the impact on their setting, through the completion of a further Heritage Impact Assessment and having regard to the Historic Environment Assessment (2020).
- 11.196** A flood risk assessment will be required to inform development. A comprehensive drainage strategy for the whole site should be prepared as part of the more detailed masterplanning stage, to ensure that undue pressure and burden is not placed on existing utilities infrastructure through piecemeal and uncoordinated development. Regard should be had to the GM SFRA SUDs guidance. Proposals should apply greenfield run off rates, be supported by a maintenance plan and the use of highway SUD's features.

### Land South of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road)

## Policy JP Allocation 17

### Land South of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road)



Picture 11.28 JPA 17 Land South of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road)

Development on this site will be required to:

1. Be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan and design code agreed by the local planning authority;

2. Deliver around 175 homes, providing a range of dwelling types and sizes to deliver more inclusive neighbourhoods and meet local needs, including the delivery of high-quality family housing;
3. Provide for affordable homes, in line with local planning policy requirements;
4. Provide for appropriate access points to and from the site in liaison with the local highway authority. As part of this, provision should be made to safeguard a route from the north western edge of the site through to Coal Pit Lane, linked to the internal infrastructure of the site;
5. Take account of and deliver any other highway improvements that may be needed to minimise the impact of associated traffic on the surrounding areas and roads, including off-site highways improvements, high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure and public transport facilities such as waiting facilities at bus stops near the site;
6. Deliver multi-functional green infrastructure (incorporating the retention and enhancement of existing public rights of way) and high-quality landscaping within the site so as to minimise the visual impact on the wider landscape, mitigate its environmental impacts, enhance linkages with the neighbouring communities and countryside and provide opportunities for leisure and recreation;
7. Have regard to the recommendations of the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment for the Incised Urban Fringe Valleys;
8. Retain and enhance the hierarchy of biodiversity within the site, notably areas of priority habitats, following the mitigation hierarchy and deliver a meaningful and measurable net gain in biodiversity, integrating them as part of the multi-functional green infrastructure network;
9. Provide further surveys on amphibians, extended phase 1 habitats, badgers and bats to inform any planning application;
10. Provide for new and/or the improvement of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities commensurate with the demand generated and local surpluses and deficiencies, in line with local planning policy requirements;
11. Have regard to the findings of the Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study, including mitigation measures to mitigate harm to the Green Belt;
12. Contribute towards green infrastructure enhancement opportunities in the surrounding Green Belt, as identified in the Identification of Opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of the Green Belt assessment;
13. Contribute to additional school places to meet the increased demand that will be placed on existing primary and secondary school provision within the area, either through expansion of existing facilities or through the provision of new school facilities, in liaison with the local education authority;
14. Contribute to appropriate health and community facilities to meet the increased demand that will be placed on existing provision;
15. Conserve and enhance heritage assets and their setting in accordance with the findings and recommendations of the Historic Environment Assessment (2020) and addendum (2021). An up-to-date Heritage Impact Assessment will be required for any planning applications;

16. Take into consideration the findings of the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Assessment Screening Exercise, and provide an up-to-date archaeological desk-based assessment to determine if any future evaluation and mitigation will be needed;
17. Be informed by an appropriate flood risk assessment and a comprehensive drainage strategy, which includes a full investigation of the surface water hierarchy. The strategy should include details of full surface water management throughout the site as part of the proposed green and blue infrastructure. Development should deliver any appropriate recommendations, including mitigation measures and the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems as part of the multi-functional green infrastructure network, and be in line with the GM Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) advice. Opportunities to use natural flood management and highway SUDs features should be explored; and
18. Incorporate necessary remediation measures in areas which are affected by contamination and have been previously worked for landfill purposes.

- 11.197** The site is currently designated Green Belt. The red line boundary incorporates the existing saved Oldham UDP allocation at Danisher Lane, to ensure it forms part of the comprehensive development of the site. The saved UDP allocation is not included in the residential capacity set out in the policy, as it has already been identified as part of Oldham's base line housing land supply. Whilst a significant proportion of Oldham's housing land will come from the urban area through maximising the use of brownfield land, it is considered that this site will help to diversify the existing housing stock in the area and the borough as a whole. The site has the potential to meet local housing need in the immediate vicinity and across the borough, and contribute to and enhance the housing mix within the area, through adding to the type and range of housing available.
- 11.198** Affordable housing will be provided as part of any development of the site, including a range of tenures, house sizes and types, in order to meet the needs of residents as appropriate. Affordable housing will be delivered in line with local planning policy. A Housing Strategy and Local Housing Needs Assessment has been prepared by Oldham Council which will inform the Local Plan affordable housing policy.
- 11.199** The site is well positioned in a sustainable and accessible location and has good connectivity to the wider strategic highway network. The site has good access to public transport and a range of local services, with access to a number of bus routes along Ashton Road between Tameside and Oldham. TfGM have also identified the A627/A671 corridor between Rochdale – Oldham – Ashton within the first tranche of the 'Streets for All' corridor studies to improve connectivity on Greater Manchester's Key Route Network. These corridors have been identified on the basis of their potential to support a range of GM agendas, around delivering modal shift (particularly to public transport, walking and cycling), improving air quality and regenerating local centres. Any development would therefore be required to enhance links to and from the site to the bus network, to encourage sustainable modes of travel and maximise the site's accessibility, developing the existing recreation routes and Public Right of Way network.

- 11.200** The development will need to provide for suitable access to the site, in liaison with the local highway authority. Potential access points to the site may be from Coal Pit Lane and Ashton Road. As part of bringing this site forward consideration should be given as to how movement and connectivity along Coal Pit Lane can be enhanced to improve highway safety, for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. As such, provision should be made to safeguard a route from the north western edge of the site through to Coal Pit Lane, with appropriate links through the site to an appropriate access onto Ashton Road.
- 11.201** It is important to ensure that any development proposed does not place undue pressure on existing social infrastructure and that any development takes account of the increased demand it may place on existing provision. As such any development would need to provide:
- a. new and/or improvement of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities;
  - b. additional school places through the expansion of existing facilities or provision of new school facilities; and
  - c. provide for appropriate health and community facilities.
- 11.202** These would need to be provided in line with local planning policy requirements and in liaison with the local authority.
- 11.203** The allocation provides opportunities to secure net gains for nature. This should be applied to green infrastructure and priority habitats.
- 11.204** Development should have regard to the ecosystem services opportunity mapping, in the improvement and enhancement of Green Infrastructure.
- 11.205** There are also heritage assets close to the proposed strategic allocation. Any development would need to consider the impact on their setting, through the completion of a further Heritage Impact Assessment.
- 11.206** A flood risk assessment will be required to inform any development. A comprehensive drainage strategy should be prepared, for the site as a whole, as part of the more detailed masterplanning stage, to ensure that undue pressure and burden is not placed on existing utilities infrastructure through piecemeal and uncoordinated development. Regard should be had to the GM SFRA SUDs guidance. Proposals should apply greenfield run off rates and be supported by a maintenance plan.
- 11.207** There are a number of historic landfill sites within the allocation. Necessary remediation measures in areas affected by contamination and previously worked for landfill purposes should be undertaken.



**Appendix 2 - High-level Indicative Concept Plan for Land at Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road)**





**Appendix 3: Main Changes to the Proposed Land South of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) Allocation Policy (2019 compared to 2020 Plan)**

<b>Draft 2019 Strategic Allocation Policy</b>	<b>Draft 2020 Strategic Allocation Policy</b>	<b>Reason</b>
	Be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan and Design Code agreed by the local planning authority	In accordance with the NPPF and NPPG. Other policy numbers have been 'amended to take into account this new requirement.
Deliver around 260 homes, providing a range of dwelling types and sizes so as to deliver more inclusive neighbourhoods and meet local needs	Deliver around 255 homes, providing a range of dwelling types and sizes, to deliver more inclusive neighbourhoods and meet local needs, including the delivery of high-quality family housing;	Updated site capacity to reflect the phasing and delivery trajectory with 255 houses delivered, which further reflects updated work on constraints analysis, which has resulted in a reduced number.
Make provision for affordable homes, in line with local planning policy requirements;	Provide for affordable homes, in line with local planning policy requirements;	Editorial change from previous requirement to reflect new clause 1.
Provide for appropriate access points to and from the sites in liaison with the local highways authority;	Provide for appropriate access points to and from the site, in liaison with the local highways authority. As part of this, provision should be made to safeguard a route from the north western edge of the site through to Coal Pit Lane, linked to the internal road infrastructure of the site;	Editorial change from previous requirement to reflect new clause 1. Previous requirement has also been split into two to reflect updated Locality Assessment requirements.
Take account of and deliver any other highway improvements that may be needed so as to minimise the impact of associated traffic on the surrounding areas and roads, including off-site highways improvements, high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure and public transport facilities such as waiting facilities at bus stops near the site;	Take account of and deliver any other highway improvements that may be needed, so as to minimise the impact of associated traffic on the surrounding areas and roads, including off-site highways improvements, high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure and public transport facilities such as waiting facilities at bus stops near the site;	
Deliver multi-functional green infrastructure and high quality landscaping within the site so as to minimise the visual impact on the wider landscape, mitigate its environmental	Deliver multi-functional green infrastructure (incorporating the retention and enhancement of existing public rights of way) and high-quality landscaping within the site so as to	Wording amended for clarity; green infrastructure included within previous policy, reference to Landscape Character Area moved to its own separate policy.

impacts, enhance linkages with the neighbouring communities and countryside and provide opportunities for leisure and recreation. Regard should also be had to the conclusions of the Incised Urban Fringe Valley – River Medlock Landscape Character Area;	minimise the visual impact on the wider landscape, mitigate its environmental impacts, enhance linkages with the neighbouring communities and countryside and provide opportunities for leisure and recreation;	Reflects findings and recommendations of the 'Identification of opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of the Green Belt in 2020' report.
	Have regard to the recommendations of the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment for the Incised Urban Fringe Valleys;	Wording amended for clarity; green infrastructure included within previous policy, reference to Landscape Character Area moved to its own separate policy. Reflects findings and recommendations of the 'Identification of opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of the Green Belt in 2020' report.
Retain and enhance areas of biodiversity within and adjoining the site, most notably Fennifields Lily Ponds SBI and areas of priority habitat to the south of the site, to deliver a clear and measurable net gain in biodiversity;	Retain and enhance the hierarchy of biodiversity within the site, notably areas of priority habitats, following the mitigation hierarchy and deliver a meaningful and measurable net gain in biodiversity, integrating them as part of multi-functional green infrastructure network;	Wording amended and further policies added to reflect the findings of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for the site and responses to the GMSF 2019.
	Have regard to the findings of the Greater Manchester Stage 2 Green Belt Study Harm Assessment, including mitigation measures to mitigate harm to the Green Belt.	Wording amended and further policies added to reflect the findings of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for the site and responses to the GMSF 2019.
	Contribute towards green infrastructure enhancement opportunities in the surrounding Green Belt, as identified in the Identification of Opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of the Green Belt assessment;	Wording amended and further policies added to reflect the findings of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for the site and responses to the GMSF 2019.
Provide for new and/or improvement of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities commensurate with the demand generated, in line	Provide for new and/or improvement of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities, commensurate with the demand generated <b>and</b>	Bold text added for clarity and to comply with local planning policy (Policy 23 Open Space, Sport and Recreation).

with local planning policy requirements;	<b>local surpluses and deficiencies</b> , in line with local planning policy requirements;	
Retain and enhance existing public rights of way running through the site, integrating them as part of the multi-functional green infrastructure network so as to improve linkages and connections to adjoining communities and countryside;		Removed as requirement is now contained within new clause 6 of revised allocation policy.
Provide for additional school places to meet the increased demand that will be placed on existing primary and secondary school provision within the area, either through an expansion of existing facilities or through the provision of new school facilities in liaison with the local education authority;	<b>Contribute to</b> additional school places to meet the increased demand that will be placed on existing primary and secondary school provision within the area, either through an expansion of existing facilities or through the provision of new school facilities, in liaison with the local education authority;	Bold text amended for clarity
Provide for appropriate health and community facilities to meet the increased demand that will be placed on existing provision;	<b>Contribute to</b> appropriate health and community facilities to meet the increased demand that will be placed on existing provision;	Bold text amended for clarity.
Identify any designated and non-designated heritage assets and assess the potential impact on the asset and their setting, when bringing forward the proposals. This includes Garden Suburbs Conservation Area, Bardsley House and Church of the Holy Trinity listed buildings, and other assets of local heritage significance;	Conserve and enhance heritage assets and their setting, in accordance with the findings and recommendations of the Historic Environment Assessment (2020). An up-to-date Heritage Impact Assessment will be required for any planning applications;	Wording amended and detail added as a result of the Historic Environment Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) findings and in response to comments by Historic England.
	Take into consideration the findings of the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Assessment Screening Exercise, and provide an up-to-date archaeological desk-based assessment to determine if any future evaluation and mitigation will be needed;	

<p>Identify any assets of archaeological interest, assess the potential impact on the asset and include appropriate mitigation strategies, which may include controlled investigation; and</p>		<p>No change.</p>
<p>Be informed by an appropriate flood risk assessment and comprehensive drainage strategy and deliver any appropriate recommendations and measures, (including mitigation measures and the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems as part of the multi-functional green infrastructure network).</p>	<p>Be informed by an appropriate flood risk assessment and a comprehensive drainage strategy, which includes a full investigation of the surface water hierarchy. The strategy should include details of full surface water management throughout the site as part of the proposed green and blue infrastructure. Development should deliver any appropriate recommendations, including mitigation measures and the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems as part of the multi-functional green infrastructure network), and be in line with the GM Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) advice. SUDs guidance. Opportunities to use natural flood management and highway SUDs features should be explored; and</p>	<p>Wording and policy order amended and as a result of the SFRA recommendations, and to reflect feedback provided by EA and United Utilities.</p>
	<p>18. Incorporate necessary remediation measures in areas which are affected by contamination and have been previously worked for landfill purposes.</p>	<p>Wording added to reflect comments provided by the Environment Agency.</p>

**Appendix 4: Main Changes to the Proposed Land South of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) Allocation Policy (2020 compared to 2021 Plan)**

<b>Draft 2020 Strategic Allocation Policy</b>	<b>Places for Everyone 2021 Strategic Allocation Policy</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan and Design Code agreed by the local planning authority		No change
Deliver around 255 homes, providing a range of dwelling types and sizes, to deliver more inclusive neighbourhoods and meet local needs, including the delivery of high-quality family housing	Deliver around 175 homes, providing a range of dwelling types and sizes to deliver more inclusive neighbourhoods and meet local needs, including the delivery of high-quality family housing.	Site capacity has reduced from 255 homes to 175 homes as explained in section 4.
Provide for affordable homes, in line with local planning policy requirements;		No change
Provide for appropriate access points to and from the site, in liaison with the local highways authority. As part of this, provision should be made to safeguard a route from the north western edge of the site through to Coal Pit Lane, linked to the internal road infrastructure of the site;		No change
Take account of and deliver any other highway improvements that may be needed, so as to minimise the impact of associated traffic on the surrounding areas and roads, including off-site highways improvements, high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure and public transport facilities such as waiting facilities at bus stops near the site;		No change
Deliver multi-functional green infrastructure (incorporating the retention		No change

and enhancement of existing public rights of way) and high-quality landscaping within the site so as to minimise the visual impact on the wider landscape, mitigate its environmental impacts, enhance linkages with the neighbouring communities and countryside and provide opportunities for leisure and recreation;		
Have regard to the recommendations of the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment for the Incised Urban Fringe Valleys;		No change
Retain and enhance the hierarchy of biodiversity within the site, notably areas of priority habitats, following the mitigation hierarchy and deliver a meaningful and measurable net gain in biodiversity, integrating them as part of multi-functional green infrastructure network;		No change.  New policy added related to biodiversity - Provide further surveys on amphibians, extended phase 1 habitats, badgers and bats to inform any planning application.
Have regard to the findings of the Greater Manchester Stage 2 Green Belt Study Harm Assessment, including mitigation measures to mitigate harm to the Green Belt.		No change
Contribute towards green infrastructure enhancement opportunities in the surrounding Green Belt, as identified in the Identification of Opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of the Green Belt assessment;		No change
Provide for new and/or improvement of existing		No change

<p>open space, sport and recreation facilities, commensurate with the demand generated <b>and local surpluses and deficiencies</b>, in line with local planning policy requirements;</p>		
<p><b>Contribute to</b> additional school places to meet the increased demand that will be placed on existing primary and secondary school provision within the area, either through an expansion of existing facilities or through the provision of new school facilities, in liaison with the local education authority;</p>		No change
<p><b>Contribute to</b> appropriate health and community facilities to meet the increased demand that will be placed on existing provision;</p>		No change
<p>Conserve and enhance heritage assets and their setting, in accordance with the findings and recommendations of the Historic Environment Assessment (2020). An up-to-date Heritage Impact Assessment will be required for any planning applications;</p>		No change
<p>Take into consideration the findings of the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Assessment Screening Exercise, and provide an up-to-date archaeological desk-based assessment to determine if any future evaluation and mitigation will be needed;</p>		No change

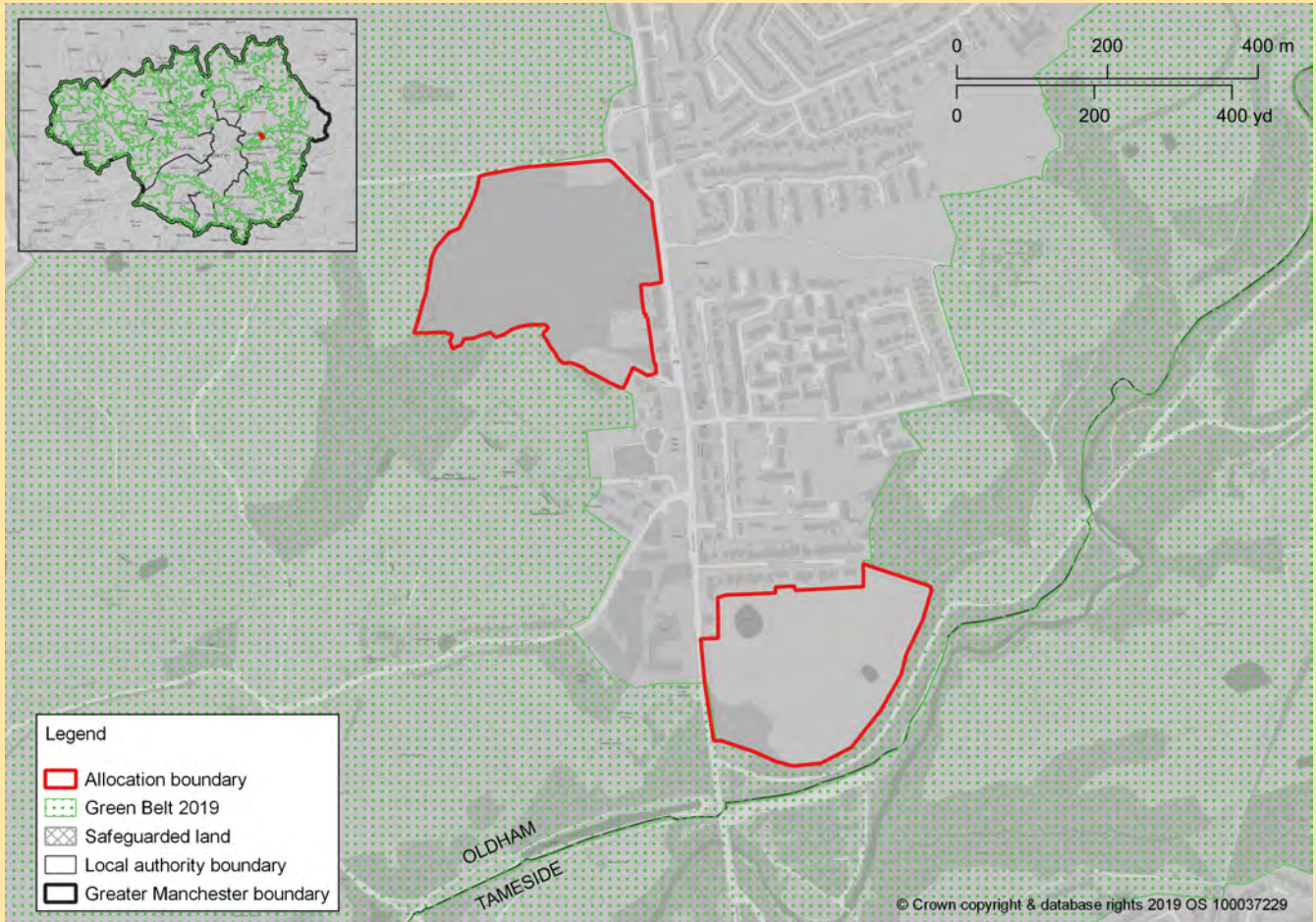
<p>Be informed by an appropriate flood risk assessment and a comprehensive drainage strategy, which includes a full investigation of the surface water hierarchy. The strategy should include details of full surface water management throughout the site as part of the proposed green and blue infrastructure. Development should deliver any appropriate recommendations, including mitigation measures and the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems as part of the multi-functional green infrastructure network), and be in line with the GM Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) advice. SUDs guidance. Opportunities to use natural flood management and highway SUDs features should be explored; and</p>		<p>No change</p>
<p>Incorporate necessary remediation measures in areas which are affected by contamination and have been previously worked for landfill purposes.</p>		<p>No change</p>



**Appendix 5: GMSF 2019 Map and Policy Wording for Ashton Road Corridor Allocation**

## Policy GM Allocation 13

### Ashton Road Corridor



Development at this site will be required to:

1. Deliver around 260 homes, providing a range of dwelling types and sizes so as to deliver more inclusive neighbourhoods and meet local needs;
2. Make provision for affordable homes, in line with local planning policy requirements;
3. Provide for appropriate access points to and from the sites in liaison with the local highways authority;
4. Take account of and deliver any other highway improvements that may be needed so as to minimise the impact of associated traffic on the surrounding areas and roads, including off-site highways improvements, high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure and public transport facilities such as waiting facilities at bus stops near the site;
5. Deliver multi-functional green infrastructure and high quality landscaping within the site so as to minimise the visual impact on the wider landscape, mitigate its environmental impacts, enhance linkages with the neighbouring communities and countryside and provide

- opportunities for leisure and recreation. Regard should also be had to the conclusions of the Incised Urban Fringe Valley – River Medlock Landscape Character Area;
6. Retain and enhance areas of biodiversity within and adjoining the site, most notably Fennifields Lily Ponds SBI and areas of priority habitat to the south of the site, to deliver a clear and measurable net gain in biodiversity;
  7. Provide for new and/or improvement of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities commensurate with the demand generated, in line with local planning policy requirements;
  8. Retain and enhance existing public rights of way running through the site, integrating them as part of the multi-functional green infrastructure network so as to improve linkages and connections to adjoining communities and countryside;
  9. Provide for additional school places to meet the increased demand that will be placed on existing primary and secondary school provision within the area, either through an expansion of existing facilities or through the provision of new school facilities in liaison with the local education authority;
  10. Provide for appropriate health and community facilities to meet the increased demand that will be placed on existing provision;
  11. Identify any designated and non-designated heritage assets and assess the potential impact on the asset and their setting, when bringing forward the proposals. This includes Garden Suburbs Conservation Area, Bardsley House and Church of the Holy Trinity listed buildings, and other assets of local heritage significance;
  12. Identify any assets of archaeological interest, assess the potential impact on the asset and include appropriate mitigation strategies, which may include controlled investigation; and
  13. Be informed by an appropriate flood risk assessment and comprehensive drainage strategy and deliver any appropriate recommendations and measures, (including mitigation measures and the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems as part of the multi-functional green infrastructure network).

**11.103** The Ashton Road Corridor sites are within the Green Belt. Whilst a significant proportion of Oldham's housing land will come from the urban area through maximising the use of brownfield land, it is considered that these sites will help to diversify the existing housing stock in the area and borough as a whole. The sites have the potential to meet local housing need in the immediate vicinity and across the borough and contribute to and enhance the housing mix within the area through adding to the type and range of housing available.

**11.104** The sites are well positioned in a sustainable and accessible location and have good connectivity to the wider strategic highway network. The sites have good access to public transport and a range of local services with access to a number of bus routes along Ashton Road between Tameside and Oldham. TfGM have also identified the A627/A671 corridor between Rochdale – Oldham – Ashton within the first tranche of the 'Streets for All' corridor studies to improve connectivity on Greater Manchester's Key Route Network. These corridors have been identified on the basis of their potential to support a range of GM agendas, around delivering modal shift (particularly to public transport, walking and cycling), improving air quality and regenerating local centres.

- 11.105** The development will need to provide for suitable access to the site, in liaison with the local highway authority. Potential access points to the sites may be from Coal Pit Lane and Ashton Road.
- 11.106** Any development would need to provide replacement for any open space, sport or recreation lost as a result of development. There are also a number of assets of historical significance in close proximity to the proposed strategic allocations. Whilst outside their boundary, any development would need to consider the impact on their setting, through the completion of a Heritage Impact Assessment.

A flood risk assessment will be required to inform any development in line with the Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) SUDs guidance. A comprehensive drainage strategy for each site as a whole should be prepared as part of the more detailed masterplanning stage to ensure that undue pressure and burden is not placed on existing utilities infrastructure through piecemeal and uncoordinated development. Proposals should apply greenfield run off rates and be supported by a maintenance plan.

### **Question 92**

**Do you agree with the proposed policy GM Allocation 13: Ashton Road Corridor?**

*Agree / Mostly agree / Neither agree or disagree / Mostly disagree / Disagree*

What is the reason for your answer?

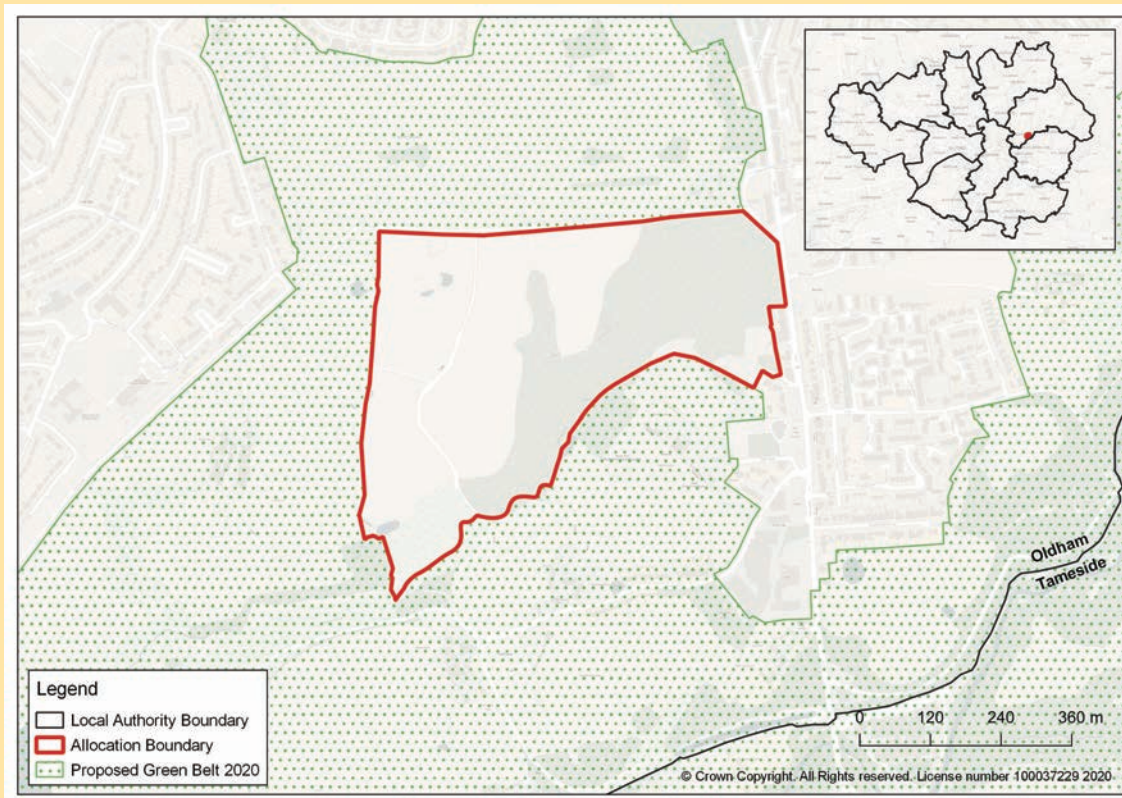
**Appendix 6: GMSF 2020 Map and Policy Wording for Land south of Coal Pit Lane Allocation**



## Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road)

### Policy GM Allocation 18

#### Land South of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road)



Picture 11.28 GMA 18 Land south of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road)

Development on this site will be required to:

1. Be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan and design code agreed by the local planning authority;
2. Deliver around 255 homes, providing a range of dwelling types and sizes to deliver more inclusive neighbourhoods and meet local needs, including the delivery of high-quality family housing;
3. Provide for affordable homes, in line with local planning policy requirements;
4. Provide for appropriate access points to and from the site in liaison with the local highways authority. As part of this, provision should be made to safeguard a route from the north western edge of the site through to Coal Pit Lane, linked to the internal infrastructure of the site;
5. Take account of and deliver any other highway improvements that may be needed to minimise the impact of associated traffic on the surrounding areas and roads, including

- off-site highways improvements, high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure and public transport facilities such as waiting facilities at bus stops near the site;
6. Deliver multi-functional green infrastructure (incorporating the retention and enhancement of existing public rights of way) and high-quality landscaping within the site so as to minimise the visual impact on the wider landscape, mitigate its environmental impacts, enhance linkages with the neighbouring communities and countryside and provide opportunities for leisure and recreation;
  7. Have regard to the recommendations of the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment for the Incised Urban Fringe Valleys;
  8. Retain and enhance the hierarchy of biodiversity within the site, notably areas of priority habitats, following the mitigation hierarchy and deliver a meaningful and measurable net gain in biodiversity, integrating them as part of multi-functional green infrastructure network;
  9. Provide further surveys on amphibians, extended phase 1 habitats, badgers and bats to inform any planning application;
  10. Provide for new and/or the improvement of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities commensurate with the demand generated and local surpluses and deficiencies, in line with local planning policy requirements;
  11. Have regard to the findings of the Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study, including mitigation measures to mitigate harm to the Green Belt;
  12. Contribute towards green infrastructure enhancement opportunities in the surrounding Green Belt, as identified in the Identification of Opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of the Green Belt assessment;
  13. Contribute to additional school places to meet the increased demand that will be placed on existing primary and secondary school provision within the area, either through expansion of existing facilities or through the provision of new school facilities, in liaison with the local education authority;
  14. Contribute to appropriate health and community facilities to meet the increased demand that will be placed on existing provision;
  15. Conserve and enhance heritage assets and their setting in accordance with the findings and recommendations of the Historic Environment Assessment (2020). An up-to-date Heritage Impact Assessment will be required for any planning applications;
  16. Take into consideration the findings of the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Assessment Screening Exercise, and provide an up-to-date archaeological desk-based assessment to determine if any future evaluation and mitigation will be needed;
  17. Be informed by an appropriate flood risk assessment and a comprehensive drainage strategy, which includes a full investigation of the surface water hierarchy. The strategy should include details of full surface water management throughout the site as part of the proposed green and blue infrastructure. Development should deliver any appropriate recommendations, including mitigation measures and the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems as part of the multi-functional green infrastructure network), and be in line with the GM Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) advice. Opportunities to use natural flood management and highway SUDs features should be explored; and
  18. Incorporate necessary remediation measures in areas which are affected by contamination and have been previously worked for landfill purposes.

- 11.205** The site is currently designed Green Belt. The red line boundary incorporates the existing saved Oldham UDP allocation at Danisher Lane, to ensure it forms part of the comprehensive development of the site. The saved UDP allocation is not included in the residential capacity set out in the policy, as it has already been identified as part of Oldham’s base line housing land supply. Whilst a significant proportion of Oldham’s housing land will come from the urban area through maximising the use of brownfield land, it is considered that this site will help to diversify the existing housing stock in the area and the borough as a whole. The site has the potential to meet local housing need in the immediate vicinity and across the borough, and contribute to and enhance the housing mix within the area, through adding to the type and range of housing available.
- 11.206** Affordable housing will be provided as part of any development of the site, including a range of tenures, house sizes and types, in order to meet the needs of residents as appropriate. Affordable housing will be delivered in line with Local Planning Policy. A Housing Strategy and Local Housing Needs Assessment has been prepared by Oldham Council which will inform the Local Plan affordable housing policy.
- 11.207** The site is well positioned in a sustainable and accessible location and has good connectivity to the wider strategic highway network. The site has good access to public transport and a range of local services, with access to a number of bus routes along Ashton Road between Tameside and Oldham. TfGM have also identified the A627/A671 corridor between Rochdale – Oldham – Ashton within the first tranche of the ‘Streets for All’ corridor studies to improve connectivity on Greater Manchester’s Key Route Network. These corridors have been identified on the basis of their potential to support a range of GM agendas, around delivering modal shift (particularly to public transport, walking and cycling), improving air quality and regenerating local centres. Any development would therefore be required to enhance links to and from the site to the bus network, to encourage sustainable modes of travels and maximise the site’s accessibility, developing the existing recreation routes and Public Right of Way network.
- 11.208** The development will need to provide for suitable access to the site, in liaison with the local highway authority. Potential access points to the sites may be from Coal Pit Lane and Ashton Road. As part of bringing this site forward consideration should be given as to how movement and connectivity along Coal Pit Lane can be enhanced to improve highway safety, for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. As such, provision should be made to safeguard a route from the north western edge of the site through to Coal Pit Lane, with appropriate links through the site to an appropriate access onto Ashton Road.
- 11.209** It is important to ensure that any development proposed does not place undue pressure on existing social infrastructure and that any development takes account of the increased demand it may place on existing provision. As such any development would need to provide:
- 11.210** a. new and/or improvement of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities;
- 11.211** b. additional school places through the expansion of existing facilities or new provision of new school facilities; and



- 11.212** c. provide for appropriate health and community facilities.
- 11.213** These would need to be provided in line with local planning policy requirements and in liaison with the local authority.
- 11.214** The allocation provides opportunities to secure net gains for nature. This should be applied to green infrastructure and priority habitats.
- 11.215** Development should have regard to the ecosystem services opportunity mapping, in the improvement and enhancement of Green Infrastructure.
- 11.216** There are also heritage assets close to the proposed strategic allocation. Any development would need to consider the impact on their setting, through the completion of a further Heritage Impact Assessment.
- 11.217** A flood risk assessment will be required to inform any development. A comprehensive drainage strategy should be prepared, for the site as a whole, as part of the more detailed masterplanning stage, to ensure that undue pressure and burden is not placed on existing utilities infrastructure through piecemeal and uncoordinated development. Regard should be had to the GM SFRA SUDs guidance. Proposals should apply greenfield run off rates and be supported by a maintenance plan.
- 11.218** There are a number of historic landfill sites within the allocation. Necessary remediation measures in areas affected by contamination and previously worked for landfill purposes should be undertaken.

# Section H – Bibliography

PfE2021 and all supporting documents referred to within this topic paper and listed below can be found at (<https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/placesforeveryone>)

## *Concept Planning*

- Oldham GMSF Concept Plan and Report – Land south of Coal Pit Lane - IBI Group, Amion and JLL on behalf Oldham Council, 2020

## *Environment*

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisals – Areas being considered for allocation for future development within the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework in Oldham; GMEU; June 2020
- Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment – Land Use Consultants (LUC), September 2018
- Habitat Regulations Assessment of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework – Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU), October 2020

## *Flooding*

- Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Greater Manchester – Update; JBA Consulting; March 2019

## *Green Belt*

- Stage 1 Greater Manchester Green Belt Assessment: LUC; 2016
- Stage 1 Greater Manchester Green Belt Assessment – Appendices; LUC; 2016
- Stage 2 GM Green Belt Study - Cumulative Assessment of Proposed 2020 GMSF Allocations and Additions; LUC; 2020
- Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study: Assessment of Proposed 2019 GMSF Allocations; LUC; September 2020
- Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study - Assessment of Proposed 2019 Allocations - Appendix B; LUC; 2020
- Stage 2 GM Green Belt Study - Addendum: Assessment of Proposed GMSF Allocations; LUC; 2020

- Stage 2 GM Green Belt Study - Contribution Assessment of Proposed 2020 GMSF Green Belt Additions; LUC; 2020
- Identification of Opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of the Green Belt – Land Use Consultants; LUC; September 2020

#### *Historic Environment*

- Historic Environment Assessment Screening Exercise - Greater Manchester Archaeology Advisory Service (GMAAS), February 2020
- Historic Environment Assessment for Places for Everyone: Oldham Allocations; Oldham Council; June 2021

#### *Integrated Assessment*

- Integrated Assessment of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework - Arup & Greater Manchester Combined Authority, January 2019
- Integrated Assessment of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework – IA of 2020 draft GMSF Consultation Document; GMCA / ARUP; October 2020

#### *Plan versions*

- Greater Manchester’s Plan for Homes, Jobs and the Environment – Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) Revised Draft; GMCA; January 2019 (GMSF 2019)
- Greater Manchester’s Plan for Homes, Jobs and the Environment: Greater Manchester Spatial Framework Publication Plan 2020 – Draft for Approval; GMCA; October 2020 (GMSF 2020)

#### *Site Selection*

- Greater Manchester’s Plan for Homes, Jobs and the Environment – Site Selection Process Background Paper; GMCA

#### *Transport*

- Transport Locality Assessments – Introductory Note and Assessments – Oldham Allocations - Beal Valley; Systra; November 2020

### *Viability*

- Greater Manchester Spatial Framework Strategic Viability Report – Stage 2 Allocated Sites Viability Report; Three Dragons, Ward Williams Associates, Troy Planning + Design (on behalf of GMCA); October 2020
- Greater Manchester Spatial Framework Strategic Viability Report – Stage 2 Allocated Sites Viability Report - Amended; Three Dragons, Ward Williams Associates, Troy Planning + Design (on behalf of GMCA); June 2021