

**Appendix A**  
**Bolton**

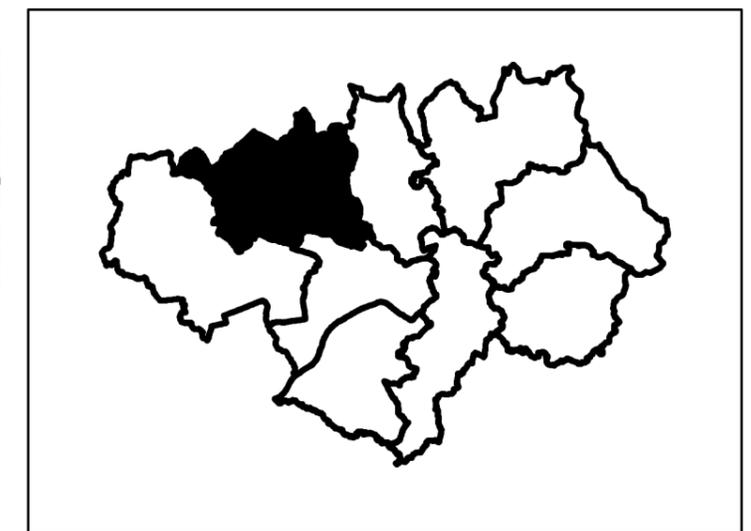
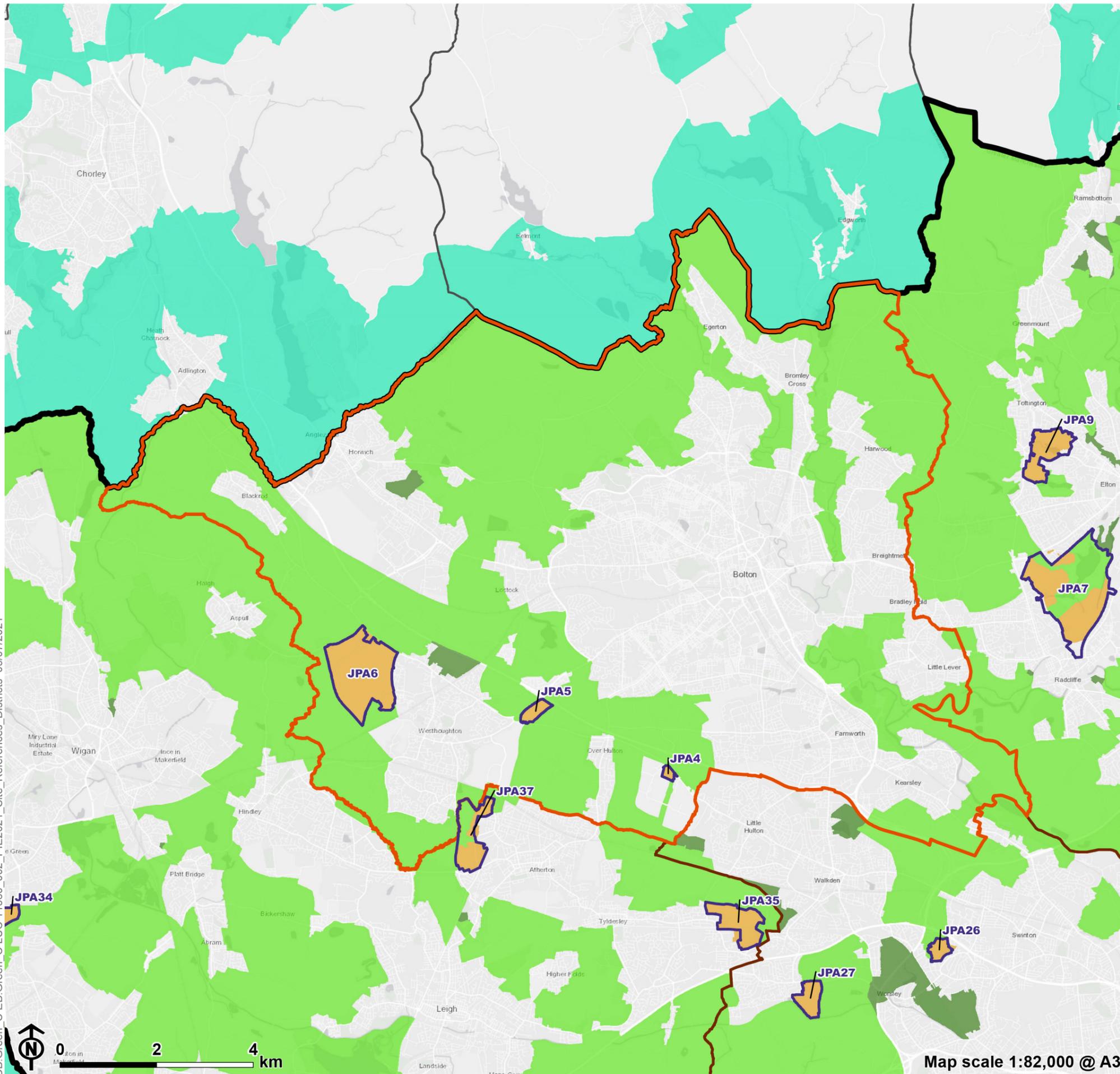
## PfE 2021 SITE REFERENCES INSERT

The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) was replaced by the Places for Everyone (PfE) Plan in 2021. This report still forms part of the PfE Plan evidence base, but the allocation policy numbers used in it have subsequently changed. The 2020 GMSF policy numbers (and in some instances the allocation names) were also different to the allocation references used by LUC in their original assessments. The table below sets out a comparison between the LUC Allocation references and names, the 2020 GMSF policy numbers and names, and the 2021 PfE policy numbers. The following map shows the allocation locations with their PfE Plan policy numbers.

District	LUC Allocation Ref	LUC Allocation Name	GMSF 2020 policy number	2020 GMSF / 2021 PfE Allocation Name	2021 PfE policy number
Bolton	GM4	Bewshill Farm	GMA4	Bewshill Farm	JPA4
Bolton	GM5	Chequerbent North	GMA5	Chequerbent North	JPA5
Bolton	GM6	West of Wingates / M61 Junction 6	GMA6	West of Wingates / M61 Junction 6	JPA6

**PfE 2021 Site References:  
Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council**

- Places for Everyone Plan boundary
- Bolton Borough boundary
- Greater Manchester Local Authority boundary
- Other Local Authority boundary
- Site allocation
- PfE 2021 Green Belt proposed for release
- PfE 2021 Green Belt land to be retained
- PfE 2021 Proposed additional Green Belt
- Green Belt outside PfE boundary

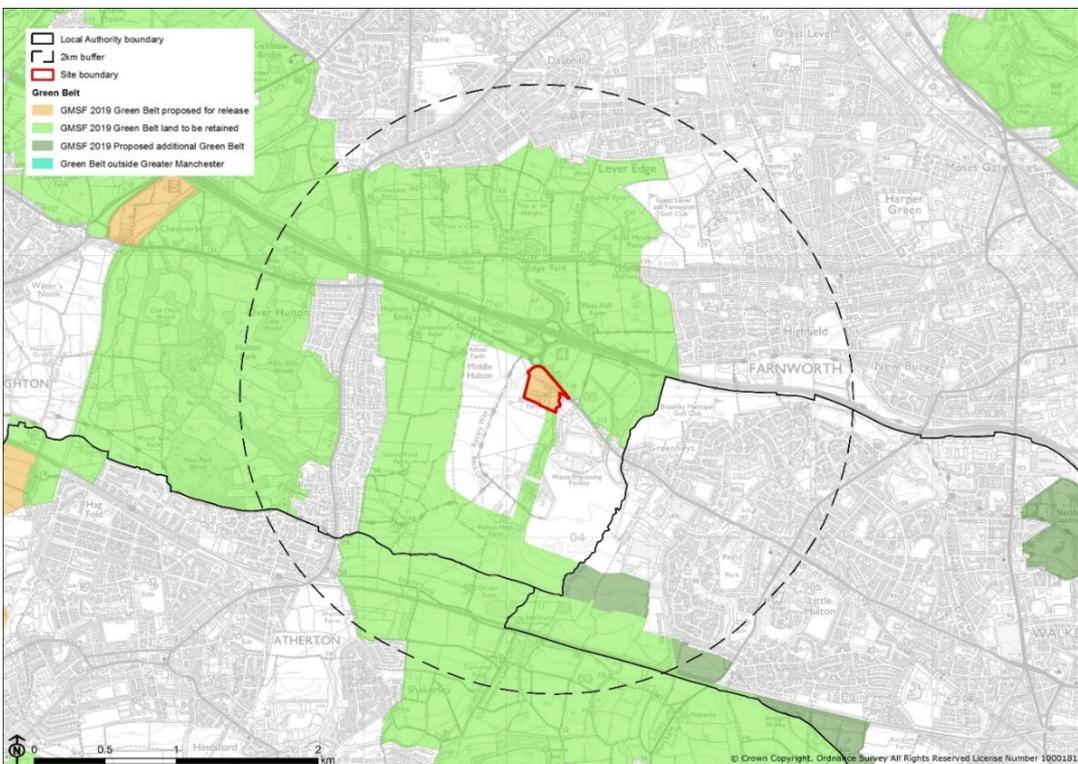


CB:Green\_C EB:Green\_C LUC 11560\_002\_PfE2021\_Site\_References\_Districts\_05/07/2021

# GM Allocation 04, Bewshill Farm



Above: View from industrial estate north west across GM Allocation 04 towards retained Green Belt adjacent M61



GM Allocation Area: 5.59 ha

Potential Enhancement Opportunities  
for the Green Belt

## Study area definition

This small GM Allocation is located approximately 4km south west of Bolton town centre south of motorway junction 4 on the M61. GM Allocation 04 consists of 7 small grazing and improved pasture fields providing the landscape setting for Bewshill's Farm. The GM Allocation site is located entirely within the Green Belt within the local authority of Bolton, and the GM Allocation as a whole is proposed for release from the Green Belt. It is bounded to the north by the tree-lined corridor of the A6, and the feeder roundabout to junction 4 of the M61, to the west and south by industrial units and to the east by Cutacre Brook. Cutacre Brook runs west-east through the site acting as a drainage feature for the surrounding fields.

Land lying within 2km of GM Allocation 04, Bewshill Farm (identified as retained Green Belt) will form the focus of GI recommendations / mitigation to enhance the 'beneficial use' of the Green Belt. There are two proposed additions to the Green Belt within 2km of the GM Allocation site at Cutacre Country Park and Wharton Playing Fields to the south east.

## Summary of evidence and policy influencing 'beneficial use' proposals

### Published landscape character assessments – Greater Manchester Combined Authority

GM Allocation 04 is located within the Reclaimed Land / Wetlands LCT as identified within the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment, 2018<sup>1</sup>. It is further defined within LCA 10: Lever Edge and Tyldesley. This is a landscape strongly influenced by its industrial past, with an undulating landform interspersed with distinctive artificial landforms remnant of past mineral extraction and landfill. Land use is predominantly medium-sized, regular shaped pastoral fields often defined by a network of drainage ditches and species poor hedgerows. The M61 on raised embankment, to prevent subsidence, exerts a strong visual and audible influence on the landscape. Large-scale industrial developments which have been

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<sup>1</sup> Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2018) Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment

located along major transport routes provide sharply defined boundaries to the LCT and form prominent skyline features in many long-ranging views. Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Area include:

- Avoid siting development on highly visible areas which form the skyline in views e.g. elevated areas on the urban fringe including Edge Fold / Lever Edge.
- Ensure that the sense of separation the landscape provides between distinct settlements is retained.
- Ensure that any development is in keeping with the mainly rural character of the landscape in terms of form, density and vernacular.
- Utilise areas of existing woodland to integrate new development into the landscape.
- Conserve and manage existing woodlands to encourage habitat diversity, using locally appropriate species and protecting from grazing during establishment.
- Consider additional woodland planting to enhance landscape structure, soften the urban fringe, screen industrial areas and reduce the noise and visual impacts of motorway corridors, where appropriate.
- Restore and enhance areas of deteriorating farmland including additional, species-rich hedgerow planting to fill gaps and replace post and wire fencing. Reintroduce hedgerow trees where appropriate.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development.
- Enhance existing public access and provide new informal recreational provision e.g. by creating circular routes.
- Improve signage, interpretation and waymarking at areas used for informal recreation.
- Maintain open and long ranging views across the Greater Manchester conurbation from elevated parts of the urban fringe e.g. Lever Edge.

## **Published landscape character assessments – Local level**

GM Allocation 04 lies wholly within the Agricultural Coal Measures LCT, according to A Landscape Character Appraisal of Bolton, 2001<sup>2</sup>. This area is typified by low grade agricultural

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<sup>2</sup> Bolton Council (2001) A Landscape Character Appraisal of Bolton

land, defining fields of rough grazing and pasture with relict hedgerows. The landscape reflects the history of coal mining within the area, with gently sloping hills and valleys with evidence of subsidence. The area is also characterised by a scattering of small ponds and broadleaved woodland. The local level assessment has identified a number of landscape management recommendations:

- Further woodland establishment or conservation in areas of deteriorating farmland.
- Secure the maintenance and management of the existing woodland resource.
- Where small farms and horse paddocks predominate, the aim should be to enhance the landscape framework created by hedgerows and ponds and encourage / maintain species rich pastures.
- Restrict the extension of the urban edge out into the rural fringes. The clear distinction between the urban fringe and the rural areas should be maintained and reinforced by natural strong defensible boundaries where possible. Where appropriate, this should include block woodland planting to create a visual screen of dominant and unsightly urban fringe uses.
- Where new development is permitted, ensure that the landscape screening of industrial areas and farm structures strengthens and enhances the landscape character.
- Ensure any built development or changes in land use respect the overall character, in particular, by complimenting traditional design in terms of scale, grouping, massing, materials and landscape treatment including hard / soft landscaping and boundary treatments.

## **Policy OA4 Core Strategy Sub Area – West Bolton**

According to the Bolton Core Strategy, 2011<sup>3</sup>, GM Allocation 04, Bewshill Farm lies within the West Bolton Core Strategy Sub Area. The key details to note relating to the Green Belt within this wider policy are:

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<sup>3</sup> Bolton Council (2011) Local Development Framework, Bolton's Core Strategy Development Plan Document

- Conserve and enhance the character of the existing physical environment, especially the conservation areas at Deane and Chorley New Road and the historic registered Hulton Park.

## **Policy 8 Mineral Safeguarding Area**

Policy 8 from the Bolton Core Strategy, 2011<sup>3</sup> relates to the safeguarding of known resources of minerals and existing and planned infrastructure that supports mineral exploitation. This policy relates to large tracts of the Green Belt adjacent GM Allocation 04 and is reflective of the Core Strategy's Prosperity vision for the Borough.

## **Open Space Study**

GM Allocation 04 falls within the Heaton & Lostock and Hulton analysis area according to the Bolton Council Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study<sup>4</sup>. The primary findings of this assessment are summarised as:

- Improve quality provision of current facilities rather than meet catchment gaps in the creation of new facilities.
- Any sites retained with low value evaluations should be increased to high through a comprehensive programme of maintenance and enhancement.
- New semi-natural greenspace provision identified as a requirement in the Over Hulton area.

## **Existing baseline**

### **Access**

The Green Belt to the north, south and west, adjacent GM Allocation 04 is criss-crossed with a number of Public Rights of Way which create a network of local-level recreational routes, many of which access reclaimed mining sites.

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<sup>4</sup> Bolton Council (2007), Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study

The Rotary Way Long Distance Footpath is 50 miles of circular route following mainly the borough boundary of Bolton MBC. A section of the route passes through Green Belt to the west of this GM Allocation, south of Hulton Park and joining the A6 to the north.

Cycleway provision is more sporadic with piecemeal routes existing within some of the urban areas in Little Hulton and Over Hulton to the east and west and Daubhill to the north, but little evidence of off-road facilities. The majority of neighbouring road infrastructure form severance lines according to TfGM's Greater Manchester Bee Network.

## **‘Beneficial use’ proposals and potential GI enhancements subject to further work**

### **Access**

Key enhancements to the existing Public Right of Way infrastructure within the adjacent Green Belt would target improved quality and increased accessibility. Existing pedestrian / equestrian footpaths and tracks should be restructured into a hierarchy of user routes. Enhancements could include a new trail or circular multi-user route linking neighbouring Hulton Park in the West with Salford to the east.

Surface improvements to existing routes around Spout Fold Farm and the creation of a new Public Right of Way in adjacent Green Belt to the South would formalise local level informal paths. These green infrastructure enhancements would link the pond features north of Engine Lane which are typical of this landscape and create new linkages across the proposed addition to the Green Belt at Cutacre Country Park.

Opportunities to upgrade surfacing treatments and access points on this route, particularly for local settlement fringes will ensure increased usability.

There may also be the potential for creating a small diversion to the route to cut out the on-road section at the A6, by re-routing to the east, south of the Aldi distribution centre and then north along Cutacre Brook. A new crossing point on the A6 would then link this diversion with the existing Rotary Way continuation to the north.

There is significant opportunity to enhance the cycling infrastructure in the adjacent Green Belt both through the provision of new and the upgrading of existing infrastructure.

The A6 in Green Belt to the west could be utilised through higher level design interventions such as light segregation, continuous footpaths and side road zebra crossings for pedestrians. This would link the urban areas of Westhoughton with the periphery of Salford, where an existing TfGM on-road cycle route is available, creating enhanced cycle-commuting opportunities.

In line with the Greater Manchester Bee Network strategy, the upgrading of Restricted Byway BOL 396/398/399/400 to cycleway standard with surfacing improvements, access improvements and legible signage would create a further enhancement in adjacent Green Belt to the south of GM Allocation 04, with a potential southern link to existing TfGM infrastructure parallel to the railway line.

## Existing baseline

### Sport and recreation

The majority of sport provision within the adjacent Green Belt is associated with Golf Courses, including Great Lever and Farnworth Golf Course in adjacent Green Belt to the north.

There are two allotment sites on the urban fringe of Daubhill in adjacent Green Belt to the north of GM Allocation 04. The site off Smethurst Lane is privately owned. The larger site at Sapling Road is owned by Bolton Council and has a waiting list of approximately a year.

Over Hulton Bowling Club is located in adjacent Green Belt close to the M61. The site has been assessed as 'Good' according to the Open Space Study and Bolton Playing Pitch Strategy, 2014.

## 'Beneficial use' proposals and potential GI enhancements subject to further work

### Sport and recreation

Beneficial use proposals associated with the use of these facilities could include access improvements such as access track and car park resurfacing (using the principals of SuDS) and

improved signage. Landscape treatments could also be promoted to improve species diversity and improve habitats.

There is opportunity to create new local level sports facilities in adjacent Green Belt, in particular provision for mini-football where there is a deficit within the local area. In Green Belt adjacent Adam Glover Memorial Park to the west or the Golf Courses to the east and north to create a cluster of beneficial Green Belt uses.

The existing allotments could be extended to accommodate more plots as waiting lists are around a year. Improvements to fencing, security, and accessibility including car parking would also enhance both sites.

New allotments could be created within adjacent Green Belt at strategic edge of settlement locations where need has been identified and there is an opportunity to develop without affecting key landscape characteristics. For example, this could be achieved adjacent Over Hulton Bowling Club in Green Belt to the west.

Increased accessibility for disabled users is a key outcome from the Open Space Sport and Recreation Study. This would include improvements to access tracks and car parking areas and improvements to spectator and ancillary facilities. These are all potential enhancements for the Over Hulton Bowling Club site.

## Existing baseline

### Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

There are a number of key water networks located within adjacent Green Belt to the west and south east, including Carr Brook, Mill Dam Stream and Cutacre Brook.

Mill Dam Stream in adjacent Green Belt the west of GM Allocation 04 is classified as 'Moderate' according to the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

There are a number of SBIs located within the adjacent Green Belt, most of which are associated with the pondscape which form prominent features within the landscape, including the Ponds Near Lomax Brow (south), Hulton Park (west), Marsh and Reedbeds at Shakerley (south), Ponds North of Cleworth Hall (South).

Potential Enhancement Opportunities  
for the Green Belt

There is a Local Nature Reserve and ancient woodland located in adjacent Green Belt south west of Bewshill Farm at Pretoria Pit.

## **‘Beneficial use’ proposals and potential GI enhancements subject to further work**

### **Biodiversity and wildlife corridors**

Enhancements to waterways would include the management of invasive species and surrounding vegetation, in particular the health and viability of surrounding trees to ensure the flow of waterways are maintained.

There is opportunity for green infrastructure enhancements to improve this status to ‘Good’ through interventions such as the removal of historic modifications which prevent natural flow, and the introduction of appropriate native planting to enhance water health.

Green infrastructure enhancements should be in keeping with local ecological requirements, including management of invasive species and structure planting to improve the key aspects for designation.

There may be opportunities to enhance the areas of deciduous woodland within the surrounding Green Belt. Reconnecting fragmented areas with careful planting regimes will benefit biodiversity and increase accessible green space for neighbouring communities, whilst simultaneously allowing for greater species dispersal. The potential to connect the SBI’s of Ponds North of Cleworth hall (South), Ponds North of Cleworth hall (North) with the SBI ponds near Lomax Brow should be explored.

Biodiversity and wildlife enhancements should be complimented with increased public accessibility through footpath creation / enhancement and signage whilst respecting the environmental designations associated with the site.

## Existing baseline

### Landscape and visual

According to the Greater Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation (2008), the majority of the Green Belt surrounding GM Allocation 04 is defined as Historic Enclosed Land, Agglomerated Fields.

The GMCA Landscape Character Assessment (2018) suggests the consideration of additional woodland planting to enhance landscape structure, soften the urban fringe, screen industrial areas and reduce the noise and visual impacts of motorway corridors, where appropriate.

Hulton Park in adjacent Green Belt west of Bewshill Farm is a Grade II registered Park and Garden. The site forms an early 19th Century park, with plantations and the remains of pleasure grounds and a kitchen garden.

GM Allocation 04 has been subject to a masterplan to look at the development of around 1,000 new homes and a golf course. The development proposals are largely focused on the fringes of the estate with the golf course retaining much of the fabric of the existing parkland landscape.

## 'Beneficial use' proposals and potential GI enhancements subject to further work

### Landscape and visual

Interventions could include strengthening historic field boundaries particularly in the adjacent Green Belt north of the M61 where boundaries are gappy or have been replaced with post and wire fencing.

There is opportunity to enhance the existing green corridors of the M61 with extended native planting buffers, particularly in adjacent Green Belt islanded between the A6 and M61.

Further woodland planting could also be included as a planting belt the west of the existing industrial estate along Rosemary Lane. This will assist in softening the built form and provide a level of landscape integration.

New woodland plantations could also be created at the edge of urban settlements, in conjunction with recreational enhancements suggested previously, or as stand-alone interventions with potential locations west of Over Hulton.

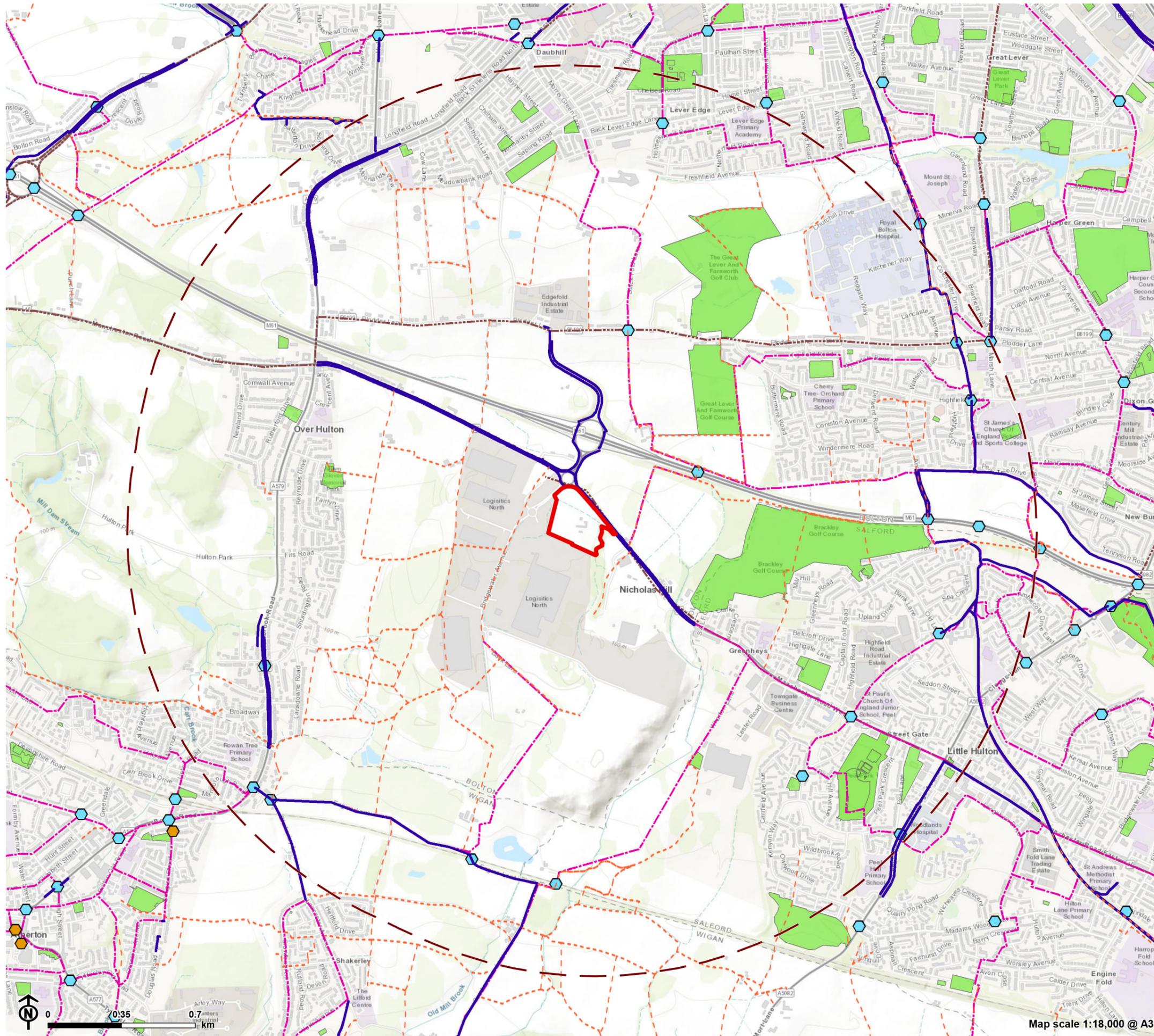
Former mining sites to the south of the industrial estate also have the potential for new structure woodland planting to enhance the remediated landscape and ensure additional landscape integration for existing industrial units.

Interventions at Hulton Park could range from small scale woodland and habitat management projects to maintain the historic fabric of the parkland landscape, to boundary replacement and access improvements.

The existing boundaries, particularly on main roads such as the A6 are modern interventions, and there is opportunity to create new wall or hedge boundaries that would respect the character and heritage of the GM Allocation site.

Public rights of way could further be developed to encourage wider access of the park landscape, particularly along Carr Brook linking with PROW WES134 and WES126.

Access, Sport and Recreation  
GM Allocation 4

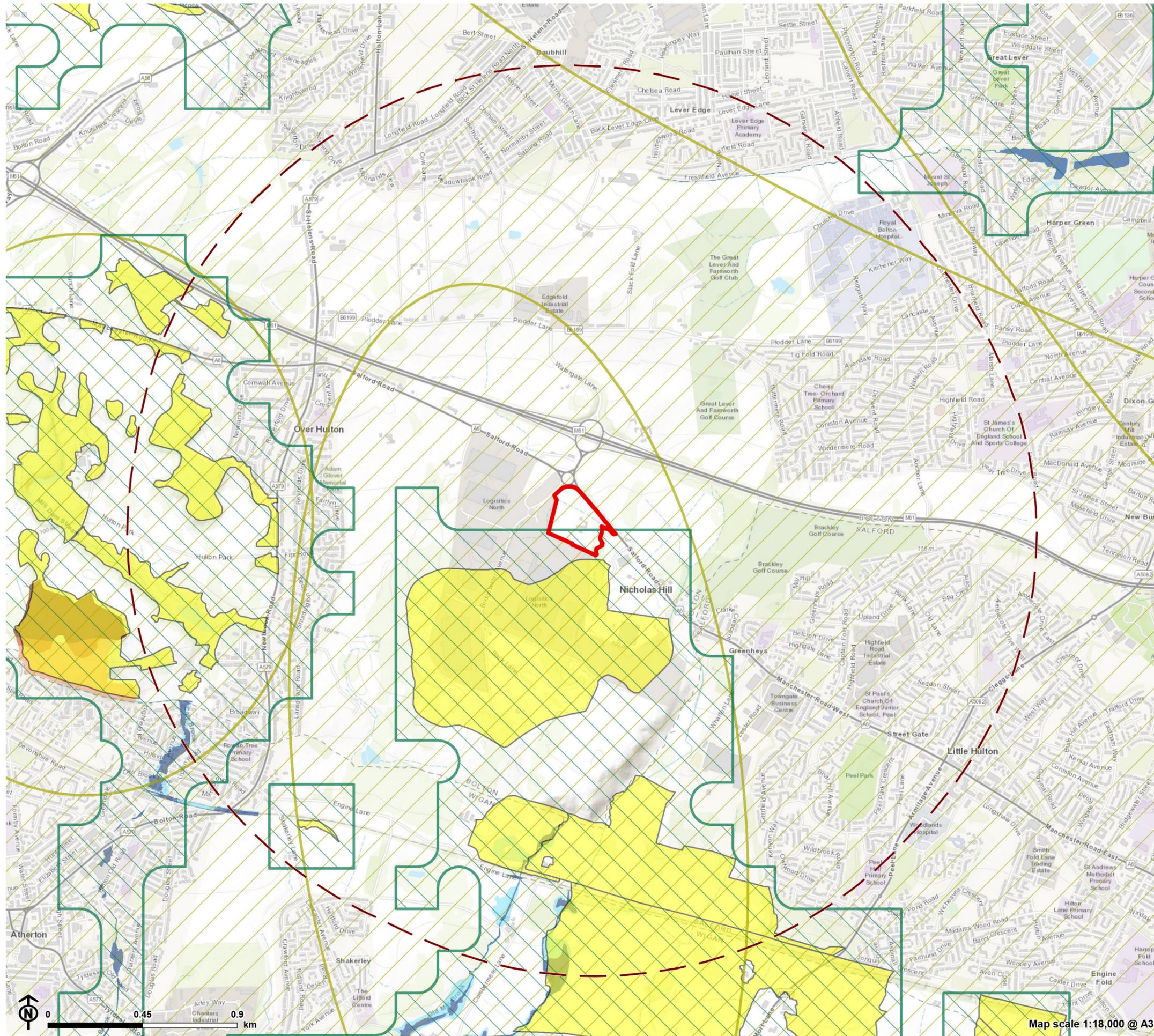


- Site boundary
- Site boundary - 2km buffer
- Access**
- Public right of way
- Sustrans route
- TfGM cycle route
- ◆ Bee network - confirmed infrastructure
- ⬡ Bee network - crossing point
- Bee network - beeway
- Bee network - busy beeway
- Sport and Recreation**
- Open green space



Map scale 1:18,000 @ A3

**Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual  
GM Allocation 4**



- Site boundary
- Biodiversity**
- Site of biological importance
- Local nature reserve
- National nature reserve
- SSSI
- Special Area of Conservation
- Ancient woodland
- Flood zone 2
- Flood zone 3
- Landscape and Visual**
- Priority green infrastructure
- Green infrastructure opportunity area

# Potential enhancement projects

## Access

1. Footpath upgrading in Green Belt to south west.
2. Accessible walking / cycling trail linking key local assets such as the Hulton Park, Cutacre Country Park and the surrounding urban settlements of Little Hulton, Over Hulton and Westhoughton.

## Sport and recreation

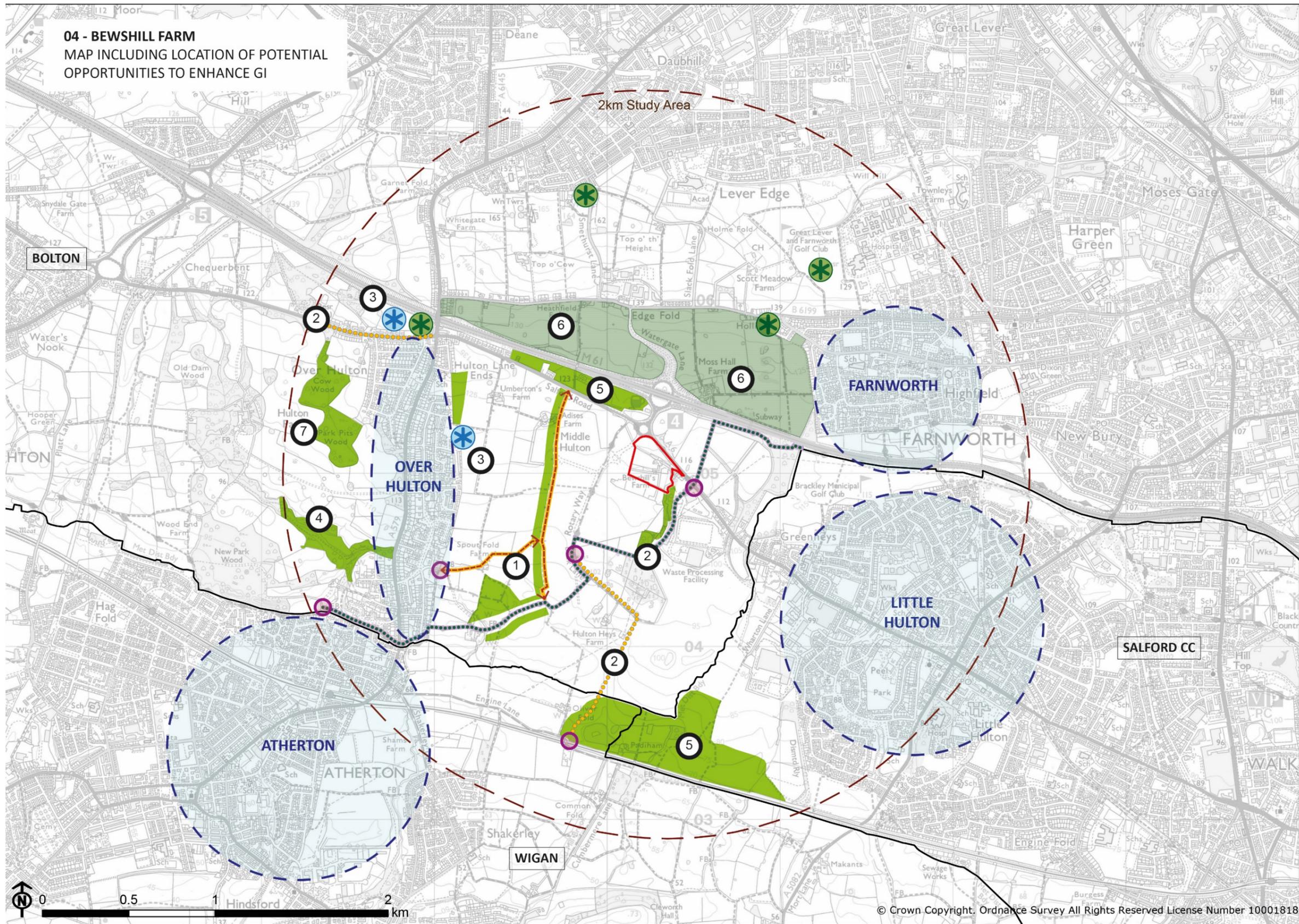
3. Creation of new sports playing pitch facilities adjacent existing community facilities.

## Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

4. Improvements to Mill Dam Stream to improve water quality in line with WFD 'Good' standard.

## Landscape and visual

5. Enhance woodland block and belt plantations adjacent settlements, infrastructure and industrial development to afford greater landscape integration.
6. Hedgerow restoration in Green Belt north of the M61.
7. Large scale woodland plantations on reclaimed mining land in the Green Belt.



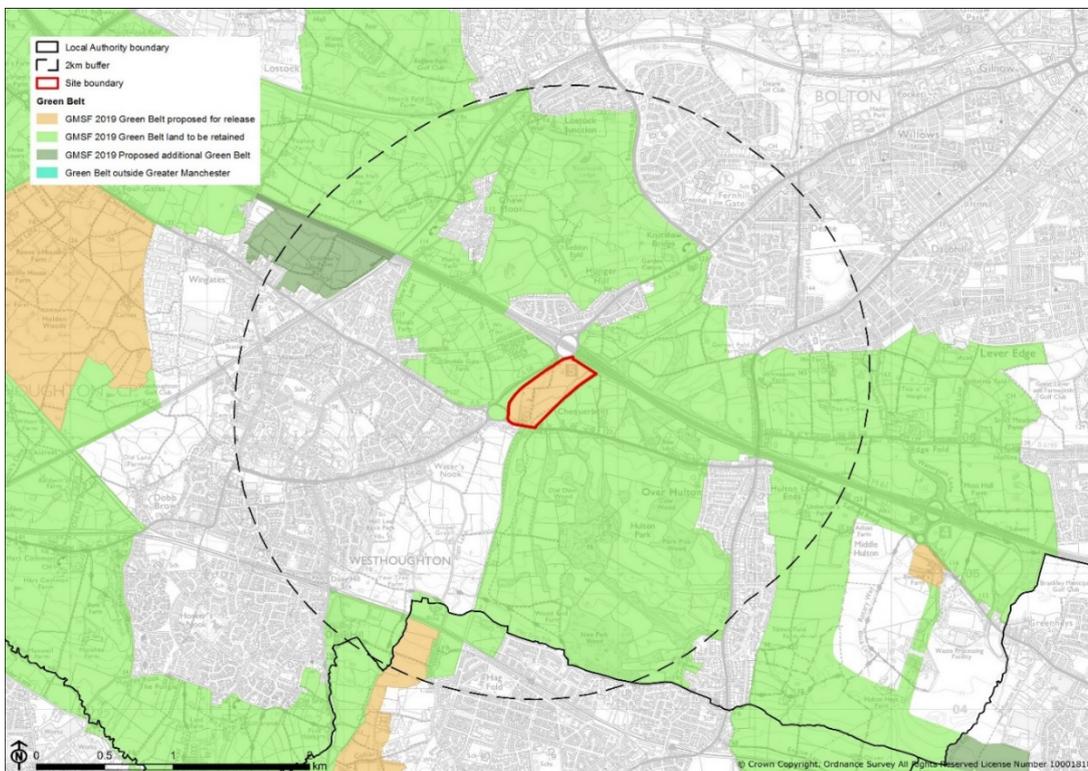
-  LOCAL SETTLEMENT
-  LOCAL AUTHORITY BOUNDARY
-  REVISED GMSF ALLOCATIONS (2019)
-  POTENTIAL CONTIGUOUS HABITAT NETWORK
-  POTENTIAL AREA FOR EXTRA HEDGEROW RESTORATION
-  POTENTIAL FOOTPATH UPGRADE / ADDITION
-  POTENTIAL CYCLEWAY UPGRADE / ADDITION
-  ACCESS / CROSSING POINT IMPROVEMENTS
-  EXISTING RECREATIONAL ASSET ENHANCEMENT
-  POTENTIAL RECREATIONAL ASSET ENHANCEMENT
-  POTENTIAL LONG DISTANCE FOOTPATH UPGRADE / ADDITION
-  REFER TO POTENTIAL ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS

Potential Enhancement Opportunities for the Green Belt

# GM Allocation 05, Chequerbent North



Above: View from industrial units north west across GM Allocation 05 towards retained Green Belt adjacent M61



GM Allocation Area: 15.82 ha

Potential Enhancement Opportunities  
for the Green Belt

## Study area definition

GM Allocation 05, Chequerbent North is located within the local authority boundary of Bolton approximately 4.5km south west of the town centre. It lies entirely within the Green Belt comprising pastoral fields enclosed by scrubby hedgerows which almost completely enclose the GM Allocation site. The entire GM Allocation is proposed to be released from the Green Belt. A medium-sized industrial development is located in the centre of the GM Allocation and a row of Pre-Second World War terraced houses sit on the southern boundary adjacent the A6. The northern and western parts are bounded by the M61 and A58 respectively, whilst the eastern boundary consists of a former railway line on slight embankment. There is a 320sqm parcel identified as land for future Industrial / Warehousing development within the GMSF (Ref. 96891/16) in the southern part of the GM Allocation. This proposal is indicative of the redevelopment of an existing industrial unit.

Land lying within 2km of GM Allocation 05, Chequerbent North (identified as retained Green Belt) will form the focus of GI recommendations / mitigation to enhance the 'beneficial use' of the Green Belt. There is one proposed addition to the Green Belt within 1.5km north west of the GM Allocation at Ditchers Farm, Westhoughton.

## Summary of evidence and policy influencing 'beneficial use' proposals

### Published landscape character assessments – Greater Manchester Combined Authority

GM Allocation 05 lies wholly within the Historic Parks and Wooded Estate LCT according to the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment, 2018<sup>1</sup>. This characterisation is further refined into LCA 9: Hulton Park. The undulating landform of hills cut by deep, sided wooded valleys (cloughs) form prominent features. The farmland of medium to large sized fields is mixed consisting of arable cultivation on more gentle slopes with pasture on

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<sup>1</sup> Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2018) Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment

steeper land. Woodland blocks are associated with the estate landscape of Hulton Park to the south, although transport corridors including the A6 separate the landscape. The M61 motorway exerts a human influence, reducing the sense of rurality. Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Area include:

- Prevent further fragmentation of the landscape by associating new development with existing buildings and urban areas.
- Ensure that any new development is in keeping with the form, density and vernacular of existing buildings.
- Protect areas of semi-natural habitat, including wooded cloughs and wetland areas designated as SBIs. Seek to enhance these where possible and provide linkages to form robust habitat networks.
- Protect areas of broadleaved woodland which provide important semi-natural habitat and create wooded skylines. Utilise the screening effects of existing woodland to integrate development into the landscape where possible.
- Conserve and manage existing woodlands to encourage habitat diversity, using locally appropriate species and protecting from grazing during establishment.
- Consider additional woodland planting to screen existing industrial areas and motorway corridors.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development.
- Ensure any new development respects the character and historic qualities of the Registered Parks and Gardens (Hulton Park) and their settings.
- Enhance existing public access and provide new informal recreational provision e.g. by improving connections between public footpaths and long distance routes.

## **Published landscape character assessments – Local level**

A Landscape Character Appraisal of Bolton, 2001<sup>2</sup> assessed GM Allocation 05 within the Agricultural Coal Measures LCT. Key characteristics of this LCT include an undulating topography with hills and valleys falling to the Mersey Basin in the south, low-grade agricultural

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<sup>2</sup> Bolton Council (2001) A Landscape Character Appraisal of Bolton

land and a lack of historical continuity. These features contribute to a landscape with varying quality from post-industrial reclamation sites to listed parks and gardens. The local level assessment has identified a number of landscape management recommendations:

- Further woodland establishment or conservation in areas of deteriorating farmland.
- Secure the maintenance and management of the existing woodland resource.
- Where small farms and horse paddocks predominate, the aim should be to enhance the landscape framework created by hedgerows and ponds and encourage / maintain species rich pastures.
- Restrict the extension of the urban edge out into the rural fringes. The clear distinction between the urban fringe and the rural areas should be maintained and reinforced by natural strong defensible boundaries where possible. Where appropriate, this should include block woodland planting to create a visual screen of dominant and unsightly urban fringe uses.
- Where new development is permitted, ensure that the landscape screening of industrial areas and farm structures strengthens and enhances the landscape character.
- Ensure any built development or changes in land use respect the overall character, in particular, by complimenting traditional design in terms of scale, grouping, massing, materials and landscape treatment including hard / soft landscaping and boundary treatments.

## **Policy 8 Mineral Safeguarding Area**

- Policy 8 from the Bolton Core Strategy, 2011 relates to the safeguarding of known resources of minerals and existing and planned infrastructure that supports mineral exploitation. This policy relates to large tracts of the Green Belt adjacent GM Allocation 05, Chequerbent North and is reflective of the Core Strategy's Prosperity vision for the Borough.

## Open Space Study

GM Allocation 05 is located within the Westhoughton with Chew Moor analysis area according to the Bolton Council Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study<sup>3</sup>. The primary findings of this assessment are summarised as:

- Catchment gaps will be met by long term investment in other typologies fulfilling the same recreational function. For this analysis area, amenity greenspace sites in Hunger Hill, South West Westhoughton and North Westhoughton will provide functionality for gaps in parks and garden provision.
- Particular opportunity to improve size and quality of Beaumont Chase Woodland to increase catchment area.
- Any sites retained with low value evaluations should be increased to high through a comprehensive programme of maintenance and enhancement.
- New semi-natural greenspace provision has been identified as a requirement within the Westhoughton area.

## Existing baseline

### Access

The Green Belt surrounding GM Allocation 05 is well served with a network of Public Rights of Way. There is a deficiency to the south east within the grounds of Hulton Park.

The Rotary Way Long Distance Footpath is 50 miles of circular route following mainly the borough boundary of Bolton MBC. A section of the route passes through Green Belt to the south of GM Allocation 05, south of Hulton Park.

Cycleway provision is more sporadic with piecemeal routes existing within some of the urban areas in Over Hulton to the east and Westhoughton to the west, but little evidence of off-road facilities. The M61 forms a significant barrier for north-south cycle movement according to TfGM's Greater Manchester Bee Network.

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<sup>3</sup> Bolton Council (2007), Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study

# **‘Beneficial use’ proposals and potential GI enhancements subject to further work**

## **Access**

Access to the Grade II Listed Hulton Park site in adjacent Green Belt to the south east through the formalisation of a number of Public Rights of Way would enhance local level recreational access.

Key routes to formulate would be along Carr Brook linking with PROW WES126, and creating an east-west pedestrian link between Westhoughton and Over Hulton.

A new circular multi-user pedestrian and equestrian route could also be created in adjacent Green Belt to the north of the M61 around Rumworth Lodge Reservoir connecting PROW BOL337, BOL336 and BOL332.

Elsewhere within the adjacent Green Belt, existing footpaths could be upgraded through re-surfacing works appropriate to the user requirements, with improved access points. This could be achieved at WES139 south of the A6 and opposite the GM Allocation site.

Opportunities to upgrade surfacing treatments and access points on this route, particularly for local settlement fringes will ensure increased usability.

The route can also link with other proposed interventions such as a cycle way on the disused rail corridor east of this GM Allocation – discussed in further detail below.

There is a remnant rail corridor in adjacent Green Belt to the east of GM Allocation 05. This infrastructure would provide a strategic north-south off-road cycle route connecting the urban settlements of Salford with the urban fringe of Bolton for onwards travel into Bolton town centre. This intervention aligns with TfGM’s Beeways vision.

A new crossing point across the M61, east of Junction 5 would be required to facilitate this new cycleway as identified within TfGM’s Beeways Vision.

An alternative to a costly connection across the M61 would be diverting the cycleway north west along PROW WES211, connecting with existing and proposed TfGM cycle infrastructure at the M61 Junction 5 roundabout with a northern connection back along PROW WES211.

The A6 in Green Belt to the east could be utilised through higher level design interventions such as light segregation, continuous footpaths and side road zebra crossings for pedestrians. This would link the urban areas of Westhoughton with the periphery of Salford, where an existing TfGM on-road cycle route is available, creating enhanced cycle-commuting opportunities.

## Existing baseline

### Sport and recreation

Lostock Sports Club is located in adjacent Green Belt north west of the GM Allocation site. It is a new development (2015) and provides both senior and junior cricket facilities and was classified as 'Good' according to the Open Space Study and Bolton Playing Pitch Strategy, 2014.

Over Hulton Bowling Club is located in adjacent Green Belt east of GM Allocation 05. The site has been assessed as 'Good' according to the Open Space Study and Bolton Playing Pitch Strategy, 2014.

St.John's Road Recreation Ground is located in adjacent Green Belt to the north of the M61. The site is home to Tempest United AFC, and scored a 'Good' rating according to the Open Space Study and Bolton Playing Pitch Strategy, 2014.

## 'Beneficial use' proposals and potential GI enhancements subject to further work

### Sport and recreation

The Sports Club has been relocated to Chew Moor Lane due to development at its previous site. Whilst the facilities and infrastructure are relatively new, the site could benefit from increased spectator provision (seating) particularly for disabled users.

Increased accessibility for disabled users is a key outcome from the Open Space Sport and Recreation Study. This would include improvements to access tracks and car parking areas and improvements to spectator and ancillary facilities. These are all potential enhancements for the Over Hulton Bowling Club site.

Potential Enhancement Opportunities  
for the Green Belt

There is opportunity to improve site drainage and integrate ancillary facilities such as spectator seating and car parking.

## **Existing baseline**

### **Biodiversity and wildlife corridors**

Large tranches of the adjacent Green Belt are designated Sites of Biological Importance. In particular Rumworth Lodge to the North, designated for its wetland habitat and multiple sites at Hulton Park to the south east.

There are a number of key water networks located within adjacent Green Belt to the south east and north, including Mill Dam Stream and Knutshaw Brook.

The M61 motorway corridor in adjacent Green Belt to the north of the GM Allocation site provides a strategic green corridor east-west.

The former railway line on the eastern fringe of GM Allocation 05 forms a strategic green corridor providing a linear habitat between the urban fringe of Daubhill and Atherton.

The network of scattered ponds in combination with the other habitats mentioned above is abundant in the local landscape and acknowledged in the SBI designations.

The Local landscape has a semi- rural character with a strong network of hedgerows which interlink small copses and scattered trees.

## **‘Beneficial use’ proposals and potential GI enhancements subject to further work**

### **Biodiversity and wildlife corridors**

There is opportunity to review Greater Manchester Ecology Unit’s designation criteria for each site and ensure management plans are in place to protect and enhance the key habitat features.

For Rumworth Lodge, this could include the enhancement of the existing reed beds through management of invasive species and reintroduction of appropriate aquatic and semi-marginal

Potential Enhancement Opportunities  
for the Green Belt

species. Sensitively sited education facilities could also be provided alongside biodiversity enhancements, including waterside access points and signage / interpretation.

Enhancements to include the management of invasive species and surrounding vegetation, in particular the health and viability of surrounding trees to ensure the flow of waterways are maintained.

Opportunities to improve this existing wildlife corridor include additional planting, structurally diverse and species rich woodlands to join up existing green infrastructure and create a reinforced buffer for noise absorption and visual integration.

Green infrastructure interventions should focus on the protection and management of the existing woodland and shrub planting with additional connections to the M61 green corridor, particularly to the south to create a more integrated habitat network.

To minimise the effect of severance and barriers to wildlife, the creation of new wetland and pond ecosystems should be considered within the surrounding Green Belt.

There is opportunity within the retained Green Belt to enhance or re-instate species rich hedgerows as one mechanism to maximise connectivity through the landscape. Increasing the species diversity and length/size of hedgerows will provide benefits for the wider landscape by reducing fragmentation and allowing for greater dispersal.

## Existing baseline

### Landscape and visual

According to the Greater Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation (2008), the majority of the Green Belt surrounding the GM Allocation 05 is defined as Historic Enclosed Land, Piecemeal Enclosure, although the area surrounding nearby Hulton Park is defined within the Ornamental, Parkland and Recreational categorisation.

The GMCA Landscape Character Assessment (2018) suggests the protection of areas of semi-natural habitat, including wooded cloughs and wetland areas designated as SBIs. Seek to enhance these where possible and provide linkages to form robust habitat networks.

Hulton Park in adjacent Green Belt south east of Chequerbent North is a Grade II registered Park and Garden. The site forms an early 19th Century park, with plantations and the remains of pleasure grounds and a kitchen garden.

The landscape to the north west rises considerably to an elevated position of 145m AOD near the M61 motorway. Views are far ranging across GM Allocation 05.

## **‘Beneficial use’ proposals and potential GI enhancements subject to further work**

### **Landscape and visual**

Relict field boundaries, particularly in the adjacent Green Belt to the north, surrounding the Bolton village of Chew Moor should be restored or reinstated to enhance the legibility of historic landscapes.

The creation of new native woodland and shrub planting blocks to connect with the SBIs and provide a coherent habitat network would also create new semi-natural greenspace as identified within the Bolton Open Space Study.

Such interventions should be focused in the adjacent Green Belt to the south east of Chequerbent North, linking the SBIs of Hulton Park, Mill Dam Wood and New Park with hedgerow and boundary planting and discreet new plantation additions to join existing woodlands and create contiguous SBIs.

Interventions at Hulton Park could range from small scale woodland and habitat management projects (as noted above) to maintain the historic fabric of the parkland landscape, to boundary replacement and access improvements.

The existing boundaries, particularly on main roads such as the A6 are modern interventions, and there is opportunity to create new wall or hedge boundaries that would respect the character and heritage of this site.

Public rights of way could further be developed to encourage wider access of the park landscape, particularly along Carr Brook linking with PROW WES134 and WES126.

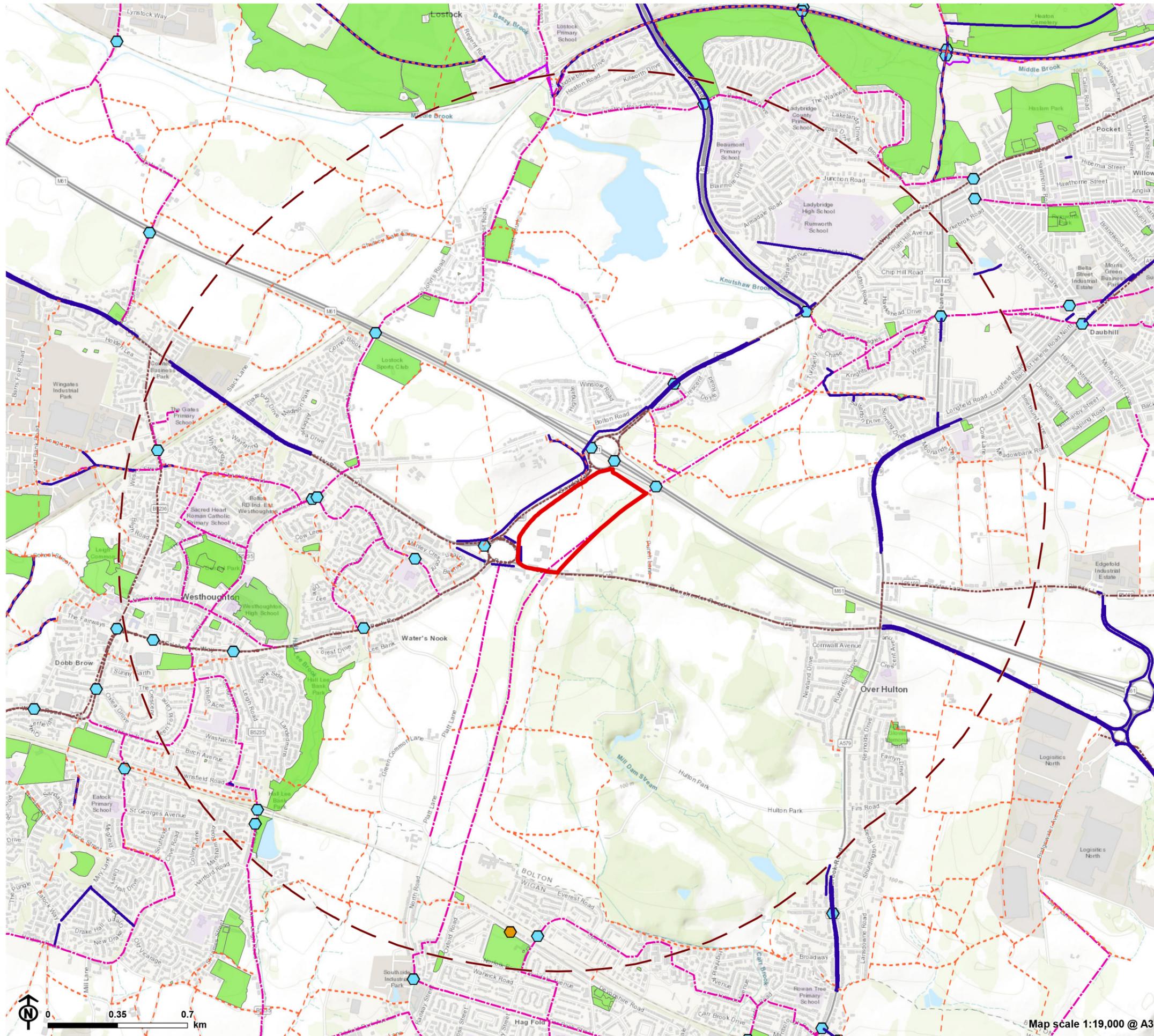
The A58 road corridor in Green Belt to the north west of GM Allocation 05, offers scope for woodland buffer planting both within the island between carriageways, and within this GM

Potential Enhancement Opportunities  
for the Green Belt

Allocation itself. Such treatments would help maintain a sense of separation between Westhoughton to the south west and Hunger Hill to the north.

The northern side of the A58 offers the potential for hedgerow restoration / tree belt planting to filter views of any potential development within the GM Allocation from Snydale Hall Farm and housing on Bolton Road.

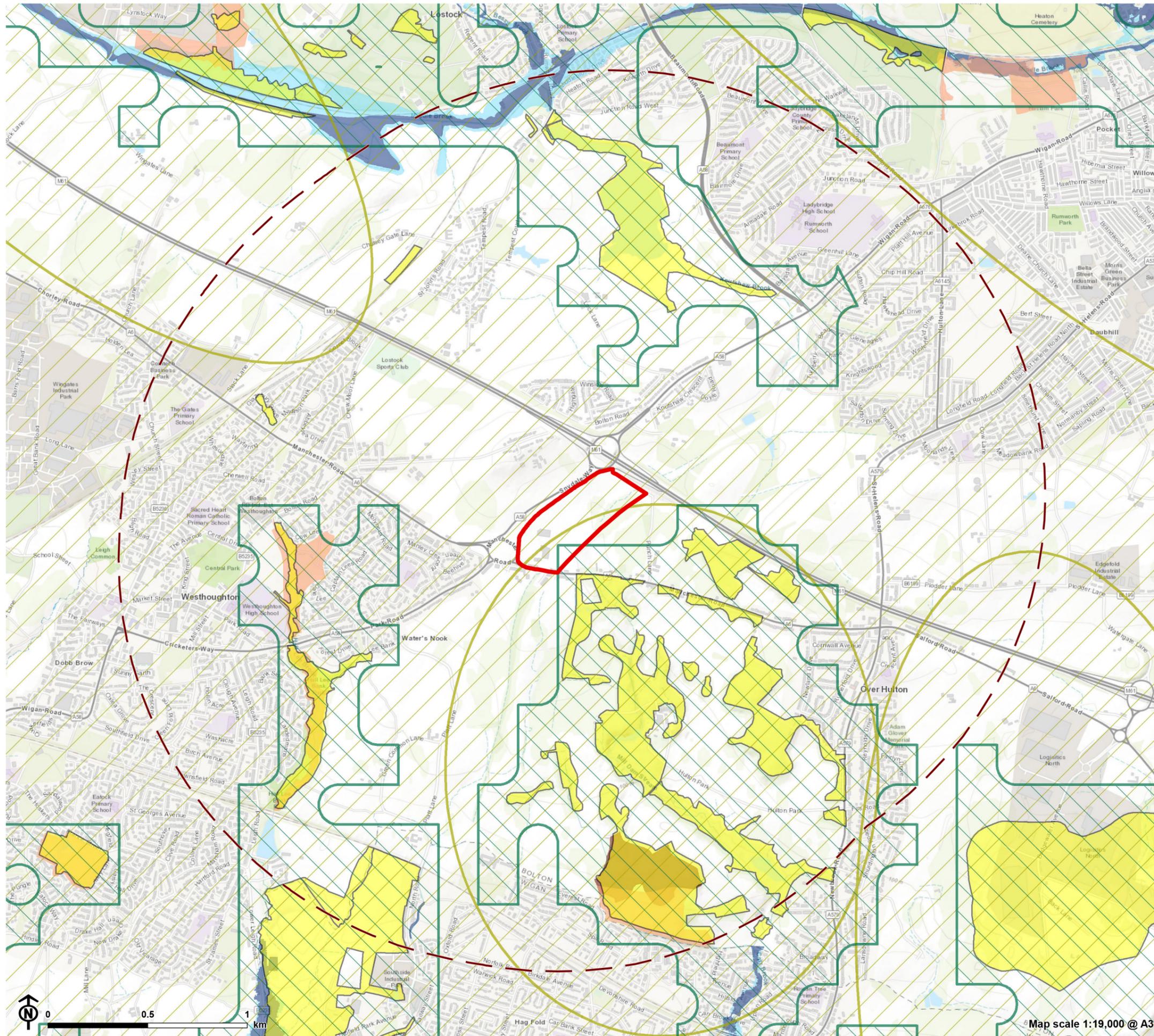
Access, Sport and Recreation  
GM Allocation 5



- Site boundary
- Site boundary - 2km buffer
- Access**
- Public right of way
- Sustrans route
- TfGM cycle route
- ◆ Bee network - confirmed infrastructure
- ⬡ Bee network - crossing point
- Bee network - beeway
- Bee network - busy beeway
- Sport and Recreation**
- Open green space

Map scale 1:19,000 @ A3

**Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual  
GM Allocation 5**



- Site boundary
- Biodiversity**
- Site of biological importance
- Local nature reserve
- National nature reserve
- SSSI
- Special Area of Conservation
- Ancient woodland
- Flood zone 2
- Flood zone 3
- Landscape and Visual**
- Priority green infrastructure
- Green infrastructure opportunity area



Map scale 1:19,000 @ A3

# Potential enhancement projects

## Access

1. Access improvements to existing PRow and development of a multi-user route along the disused railway line east of Westhoughton.

## Sport and recreation

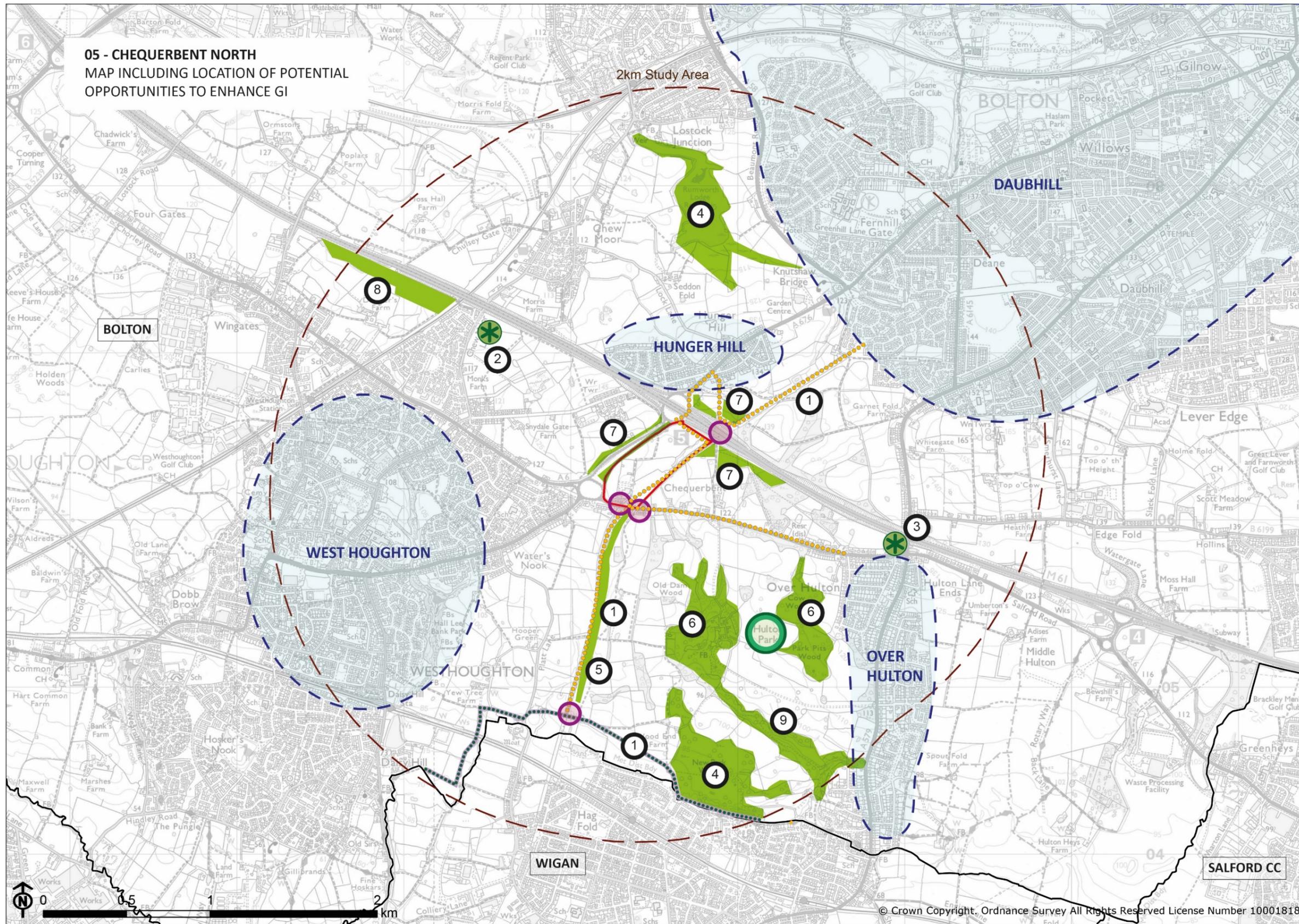
2. Disabled spectator provision at Lostock Sports Club.
3. Disabled spectator provision at Over Hulton Bowling Club.

## Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

4. Vegetation enhancements specific to each SBI, including reed bed improvements at Rumworth Lodge and woodland management at New Park Wood.
5. Woodland structure planting along the disused railway corridor to create contiguous habitat links.

## Landscape and visual

6. Woodland block planting within Hulton Park.
7. Woodland planting adjacent infrastructure corridors to reinforce green corridors.
8. Additional Green Belt area to be intensively planted with woodland habitat.
9. Boundary improvements at Hulton Park.



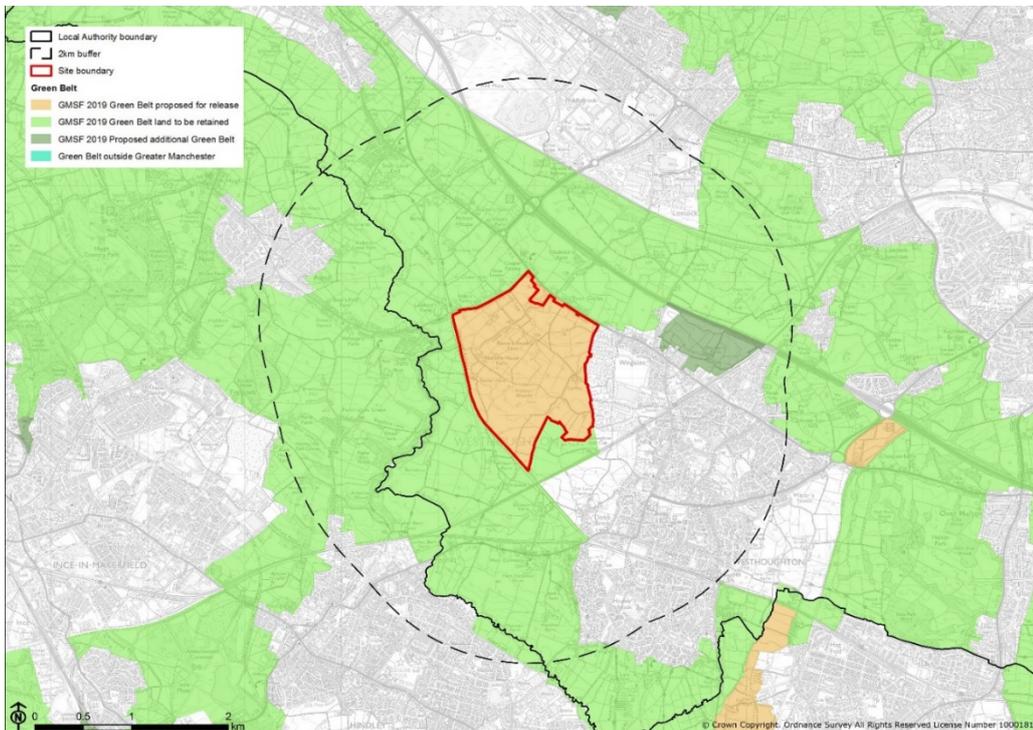
-  LOCAL SETTLEMENT
-  LOCAL AUTHORITY BOUNDARY
-  REVISED GMSF ALLOCATIONS (2019)
-  POTENTIAL CONTIGUOUS HABITAT NETWORK
-  ACCESS / CROSSING POINT IMPROVEMENTS
-  POTENTIAL CYCLEWAY UPGRADE / ADDITION
-  POTENTIAL FOOTPATH UPGRADE / ADDITION
-  IMPROVEMENT OF REGIONAL RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
-  EXISTING RECREATIONAL ASSET ENHANCEMENT
-  REFER TO POTENTIAL ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS

Potential Enhancement Opportunities for the Green Belt

# GM Allocation 06, West of Wingates / M61 Junction 6



Above: View from B5239 south over GM Allocation 06 towards retained Green Belt in Wigan



GM Allocation Area: 183.69 ha

Potential Enhancement Opportunities  
for the Green Belt

## Study area definition

This large GM Allocation located in west Bolton (Westhoughton) on the border with Wigan. GM Allocation 06, West of Wingates / M61 Junction 6 lies completely within the Green Belt and its entirety is proposed for release. The relatively flat GM Allocation consists of a series of medium to large size arable and pasture fields surrounding a number of farm steadings and dotted with small ponds. Apart from roadside vegetation, intermittent hedgerows and occasional hedgerow trees, the GM Allocation has an open feel, particularly in the north, with far-ranging views towards Winter Hill. The residential and industrial urban areas contrast strongly with the open farmland. The GM Allocation is bound to the North by the B5239 and the A6, skirting around Dodd Lane Industrial Estate. To the east is the development extent of Wingates Industrial Estate and the western boundary is formulated by a disused railway line on embankment. The southern boundary is less robust with Westhoughton Golf Club and 18 hole Course adjacent GM Allocation 06, West of Wingates / M61 Junction 6. According to the GMSF, there is large parcel of land allocated to housing development at Lower Leeches Farm in the northern part of the GM Allocation (Ref. 1277-BOL).

Land lying within 2km of GM Allocation 06, West of Wingates / M61 Junction 6 (identified as retained Green Belt) will form the focus of GI recommendations / mitigation to enhance the 'beneficial use' of the Green Belt. There is one proposed addition to the Green Belt approximately 0.7km east of GM Allocation 06 at Ditchers Farm, Westhoughton.

## Summary of evidence and policy influencing

### 'beneficial use' proposals

#### Published landscape character assessments – Greater Manchester Combined Authority

In reference to the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment, 2018<sup>1</sup>, GM Allocation 06 is located within the Urban Fringe Farmland LCT. This LCT is further

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<sup>1</sup> Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2018) Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment

refined into LCA 8: Standish Crest, Blackrod and Westhoughton. The most notable landscape characteristics of this LCT include a rolling landscape offering a variable land use of grazing on more elevated ground and pastoral and arable fields within the fatter more fertile floodplain. Field boundaries often comprise gappy, species-poor hedgerows with occasional clumps of trees. Post and wire fencing replaces hedges in many locations. Frequent recreational land uses with sports fields and golf courses are located nearer to settlement edges. Settlement tends to be characterised by a dispersed pattern of scattered farmsteads. There are key recreational routes including the Rotary Way long distance footpath located within the LCT. Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Area include:

- Utilise dips in the landform, including existing tree / woodland cover to integrate new development into the landscape.
- Protect and enhance semi-natural habitats and networks, including pockets of ancient and riparian woodland, patches of dry heath and acid grassland, remnant semi-natural grasslands, ponds and flashes.
- Ensure any new development does not dilute the strong field patterns associated with the landscape.
- Conserve remaining industrial relicts, including disused railway lines, canals and mill buildings.
- Encourage woodland creation schemes on areas of low grade agricultural land, including the Northern Forest Initiative.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, particularly adjacent the Greater Manchester River networks.
- Conserve the rural road network, ensuring any new highway design minimises unnecessary signage and lighting and reflects local characteristics (e.g. road verges / boundaries).
- Protect the pockets of tranquillity and relative remoteness associated with the landscape and the role the LCT plays as a buffer between discrete urban areas.

## Published landscape character assessments – Local level

At a local level, GM Allocation 06 has been assessed within the Agricultural Coal Measures LCT according to A Landscape Character Appraisal of Bolton, 2001<sup>2</sup>. The landscape is characterised by low grade agricultural land a number of ponds. The ponds are of particular importance for supporting protected species including Great Crested Newts and are considered ecologically important on a regional scale. Other features of note are the multitude of local level footpaths and unmade gravel tracks which criss-cross the landscape and link the scatterings of agricultural buildings and dwellings. Recommendations for landscape management and opportunities for intervention have been identified as:

- Further woodland establishment or conservation in areas of deteriorating farmland.
- Secure the maintenance and management of the existing woodland resource.
- Where small farms and horse paddocks predominate, the aim should be to enhance the landscape framework created by hedgerows and ponds and encourage / maintain species rich pastures.
- Restrict the extension of the urban edge out into the rural fringes. The clear distinction between the urban fringe and the rural areas should be maintained and reinforced by natural strong defensible boundaries where possible. Where appropriate, this should include block woodland planting to create a visual screen of dominant and unsightly urban fringe uses.
- Where new development is permitted, ensure that the landscape screening of industrial areas and farm structures strengthens and enhances the landscape character.
- Secure the retention, enhancement and management of the existing 'pondscape' to maintain its contribution to landscape character in addition to its importance as a wildlife haven.
- Ensure any built development or changes in land use respect the overall character, in particular, by complimenting traditional design in terms of scale, grouping, massing, materials and landscape treatment including hard / soft landscaping and boundary treatments.

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<sup>2</sup> Bolton Council (2001) A Landscape Character Appraisal of Bolton

## **Policy OA3 Core Strategy Sub Area - Westhoughton**

According to the Bolton Core Strategy, 2011<sup>3</sup>, GM Allocation 06, West of Wingates / M61 Junction 6 lies within the Westhoughton Core Strategy Sub Area. The key details to note relating to the Green Belt within this wider policy are:

- Ensure Protected Open Land around Westhoughton remains undeveloped.
- Conserve and enhance the character of the existing physical environment.
- Ensure regard is had to the character of farm complexes, folds, vernacular cottages and the wider open landscape.

### **Flood Risk<sup>3</sup>**

The Environment Agency has identified small sections of the adjacent Green Belt to the west along the Borsdane Brook within Flood Zone 2 and 3. This presents an opportunity to combine Nature Based Solutions for Flood Risk reduction with green infrastructure enhancements. This approach also aligns with Bolton Council's Flood Risk Management Strategy, 2013 for increased provision of SuDS to alleviate flooding risk<sup>4</sup>.

### **Policy 8 Mineral Safeguarding Area**

Policy 8 from the Bolton Core Strategy, 2011<sup>5</sup> relates to the safeguarding of known resources of minerals and existing and planned infrastructure that supports mineral exploitation. This policy relates to large tracts of the Green Belt adjacent GM Allocation 06, West of Wingates / M61 Junction 6 and is reflective of the Core Strategy's Prosperity vision for the Borough.

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<sup>3</sup> The Environment Agency (2018), Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea)

<sup>4</sup> Bolton Council (2013), Bolton's Flood Risk Management Strategy

<sup>5</sup> Bolton Council (2011), Local Development Framework, Bolton's Core Strategy Development Plan Document

## Open Space Study

GM Allocation 06, West of Wingates / M61 Junction 6 is located within the Westhoughton with Chew Moor analysis area according to the Bolton Council Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study<sup>6</sup>. The primary findings of this assessment are summarised as:

- Catchment gaps will be met by long term investment in other typologies fulfilling the same recreational function. For this analysis area, amenity greenspace sites in Hunger Hill, South West Westhoughton and North Westhoughton will provide functionality for gaps in parks and garden provision.
- Improve quality provision of current facilities rather than meet catchment gaps in the creation of new facilities.
- Any sites retained with low value evaluations should be increased to high through a comprehensive programme of maintenance and enhancement.
- New semi-natural greenspace provision has been identified as a requirement within the Westhoughton area.
- Catchment gaps were also identified in the provision of allotments for Westhoughton, Chew Moor and Hunger Hill. Particular focus should be given to investments in site quality and security to ensure allotments thrive in this area.

## Existing baseline

### Access

The adjacent Green Belt surrounding GM Allocation 06 contains a number of Public Rights of Way. Routes currently link Wigan and Westhoughton and outlying villages of Aspull and Lostock.

There are several Public Rights of Way located within the GM Allocation site. These should be retained or diverted as part of any development in order to retain local level user routes.

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<sup>6</sup> Bolton Council (2007), Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study

The Rotary Way Long Distance Footpath is 50 miles of circular route following mainly the borough boundary of Bolton MBC. A section of the route passes through Green Belt to the west of GM Allocation 06 along the course of Borsdane Brook.

Cycle way provision is currently fragmented with infrastructure focused around the main commuter routes (A6, B5239) and main junctions (M61 Junction flyover).

There is a TfGM off-road cycleway located within GM Allocation 06 on the line of PROW WES033, WES034 and WES197. This should be retained or diverted as part of any development.

## **‘Beneficial use’ proposals and potential GI enhancements subject to further work**

### **Access**

There is an opportunity to upgrade a number of the key Public Rights of Way within the adjacent Green Belt. Borsdane Brook on the Wigan / Bolton district border is part of the Rotary Way Long Distance Footpath and host to a TfGM off-road cycleway. Surface improvements to this route, including bridge upgrades would create a strategic multi-user recreational route with local level access provision into Aspull to the west, Hindley to the south and to other recreational routes such as the disused railway line.

Enhancements could also include access and parking improvements at Mill Lane at the northern end of the route.

These proposals are in alignment with TfGM’s Beeways vision.

Apart from the enhancement along Borsdane Brook, there is also opportunity to create a new cycleway along the disused railway line within Green Belt immediately adjacent the western perimeter of this GM Allocation. This intervention would create a strategic north-south recreational route and a potential local level circular route in conjunction with the Borsdane Brook upgrade. This corresponds with TfGM’s Beeways vision.

A new crossing point across the B5239 would be required to facilitate the northern stretch of this proposed cycleway.

## Existing baseline

### Sport and recreation

Lostock Sports Club is located in adjacent Green Belt east of GM Allocation 06, West of Wingates / M61 Junction 6. It is a new development (2015) and provides both senior and junior cricket facilities and was classified as 'Good' according to the Open Space Study and Bolton Playing Pitch Strategy, 2014<sup>7</sup>.

Blackrod Play Park is located in adjacent Green Belt north west of GM Allocation 06. It consists of a large area of amenity grass and a small play area.

Westhoughton Rangers AFC are located on adjacent Green Belt to the south of GM Allocation 06, West of Wingates / M61 Junction 6. The facility supports 6 pitches and youth teams from Under 7s to Under 16s.

There are no allotments within the Green Belt adjacent GM Allocation 06.

## 'Beneficial use' proposals and potential GI enhancements subject to further work

### Sport and recreation

The Sports Club has been relocated to Chew Moor Lane due to development at its previous site. Whilst the facilities and infrastructure are relatively new, the site could benefit from increased spectator provision (seating) particularly for disabled users.

The play area would benefit from investment to ensure equipment meets current play standards and offers a diverse range of activities for able and disabled users. There is also opportunity to create informal sporting provision by marking out pitches on adjacent amenity grass. Signage and surfacing improvements would also aid access and improve attractiveness of the facility.

Enhancements could include drainage works and the introduction of 4-G all-weather surfacing to one of the pitches to enable all-weather play.

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<sup>7</sup> Bolton Council (2014) Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment Report

Ancillary facilities and car parking could also be improved.

The Open Space strategy identified the need for new allotment facilities within the area. Such facilities could be located on proposed addition to the Green Belt (Ditchers Farm) at the urban fringe of Wingates.

## Existing baseline

### Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

There is an SBI located within the GM Allocation site at Four Gates. This is designated for the presence of Great Crested Newts and should be retained and enhanced as part of any development proposals.

There are also several other non-designated ponds dotted throughout GM Allocation 06, with a particular cluster in the southern area around Holden Woods.

There are a number of SBI designations within Green Belt adjacent GM Allocation 06, West of Wingates / M61 Junction 6 indicating the rich and diverse ecological habitats present within the surrounding landscape. These include Borsdane Wood to the west, Little Cannel Pit to the north west, Junction 6, M61 to the north, Middlebrook Sidings and Marsh to the north east and Hart Common to the south.

The network of scattered ponds in combination with the other habitats mentioned above is abundant in the local landscape and acknowledged in the SBI designations.

The Local landscape has a semi- rural character with a strong network of hedgerows which interlink small copses and scattered trees.

Borsdane Brook and Cunningham Brook are located within adjacent Green Belt to the south and south west. These waterways provide important wildlife corridors and link a number of the ponds associated with the landscape to the south of the M61.

There are a number of former (disused railway line west of GM Allocation 06) and existing (M61, east-west rail line) transport routes which offer potential wildlife corridor enhancement projects.

New semi-natural greenspace provision has been identified as a requirement within the Westhoughton area.

Potential Enhancement Opportunities  
for the Green Belt

# **‘Beneficial use’ proposals and potential GI enhancements subject to further work**

## **Biodiversity and wildlife corridors**

It is recommended that the ponds, characteristic of the Landscape Character Type, are retained and enhanced. There are opportunities to integrate SuDS, retain biodiversity across GM Allocation 06 and help develop sense of place benefits associated with such features, particularly within modern developments.

There is opportunity to review Greater Manchester Ecology Unit’s designation criteria for each site and ensure management plans are in place to protect and enhance the key habitat features.

Further improvements could be made through increased connectivity between the SBIs to promote a contiguous habitat network, aligning with recreational and landscape and visual enhancements. Specifically, the Wigan to Manchester rail corridor could provide a strategic link to physically join the majority of key environmental sites.

There may also be the potential of creating new pond habitats with a view to increasing environmental designations within the landscape and thereby affording some degree of protection from future urban expansion. This could be achieved along the Wigan / Bolton boundary within farmland east of Borsdane Brook and adjacent the Rotary Way Long Distance Footpath to enhance the biodiversity value of this recreational route. There should be suitable wetland habitat created in connection with the ponds to ensure connectivity between sites.

There are opportunities to link Borsdane Wood and Little Cannel Pit SBI’s along the route of Borsdane Brook. This could include enhancing and reinstating species rich hedgerows and tree lines with native species both along the SBI woodland spine and adjoining habitats.

At Little Cannel Pit, the area is designated for its bryophytes and woodland habitats and will require specialist management techniques to enhance provision. Borsdane Wood should involve a woodland management plan to maintain key features while providing an enriched area for recreation.

The Junction 6, M61 SBI is designated for its grassland vegetation. Interventions here could include weed and tree management to ensure habitat is maintained.

Potential Enhancement Opportunities  
for the Green Belt

Enhancements to include the management of invasive species and surrounding vegetation, in particular the health and viability of surrounding trees to ensure the flow of waterways are maintained. This will also assist in improving the 'Moderate' rating attributed to Borsdane Brook as part of the Water Framework Directive.

The rail line within Green Belt to the south of GM Allocation 06, West of Wingates / M61 Junction 6 offers potential for green infrastructure enhancement in the form of species diverse woodland shrub and tree planting to reinforce the existing green infrastructure and create a new wildlife corridor.

Green infrastructure interventions to create new semi-natural greenspace could be included at access points to the disused rail line footpath / cycleway in adjacent Green Belt to the east of the GM Allocation site. New native tree planting will join with Borsdane Brook woodland and create a new recreational semi-natural greenspace.

There is additional scope for a more comprehensive east-west green infrastructure Corridor in Green Belt to the south east. A new green platform could connect Borsdane Brook through existing woodland and across the rail corridor with links into GM Allocation 06. Native tree, shrub and marginal planting will extend this part of Borsdane Wood East SBI and provide an opportunity for enhanced recreation via new footpath links, and improved infrastructure.

## Existing baseline

### Landscape and visual

According to the Greater Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation (2008), the majority of the Green Belt surrounding GM Allocation 06 is defined as Historic Enclosed Land, Piecemeal Enclosure.

Farmland to the south of the Wigan - Bolton railway line and north of Dobb Brow is fragmented and hedgerows appear gappy. Fronds of new housing development have spread into the countryside and appear disconnected with the surrounding countryside. This is evident at Dobb Brow Road.

The GMCA Landscape Character Assessment (2018) suggests the protection and enhancement of semi-natural habitats and networks, including pockets of ancient and riparian

Potential Enhancement Opportunities  
for the Green Belt

woodland, patches of dry heath and acid grassland, remnant semi-natural grasslands, ponds and flashes.

The GMCA Landscape Character Assessment (2018) also suggests the conservation of remaining industrial relicts, including disused railway lines, canals and mill buildings.

## **‘Beneficial use’ proposals and potential GI enhancements subject to further work**

### **Landscape and visual**

Relict field boundaries, particularly in the adjacent Green Belt to the north west, east of the Wigan village of Aspull should be restored or reinstated to enhance the legibility of historic landscapes.

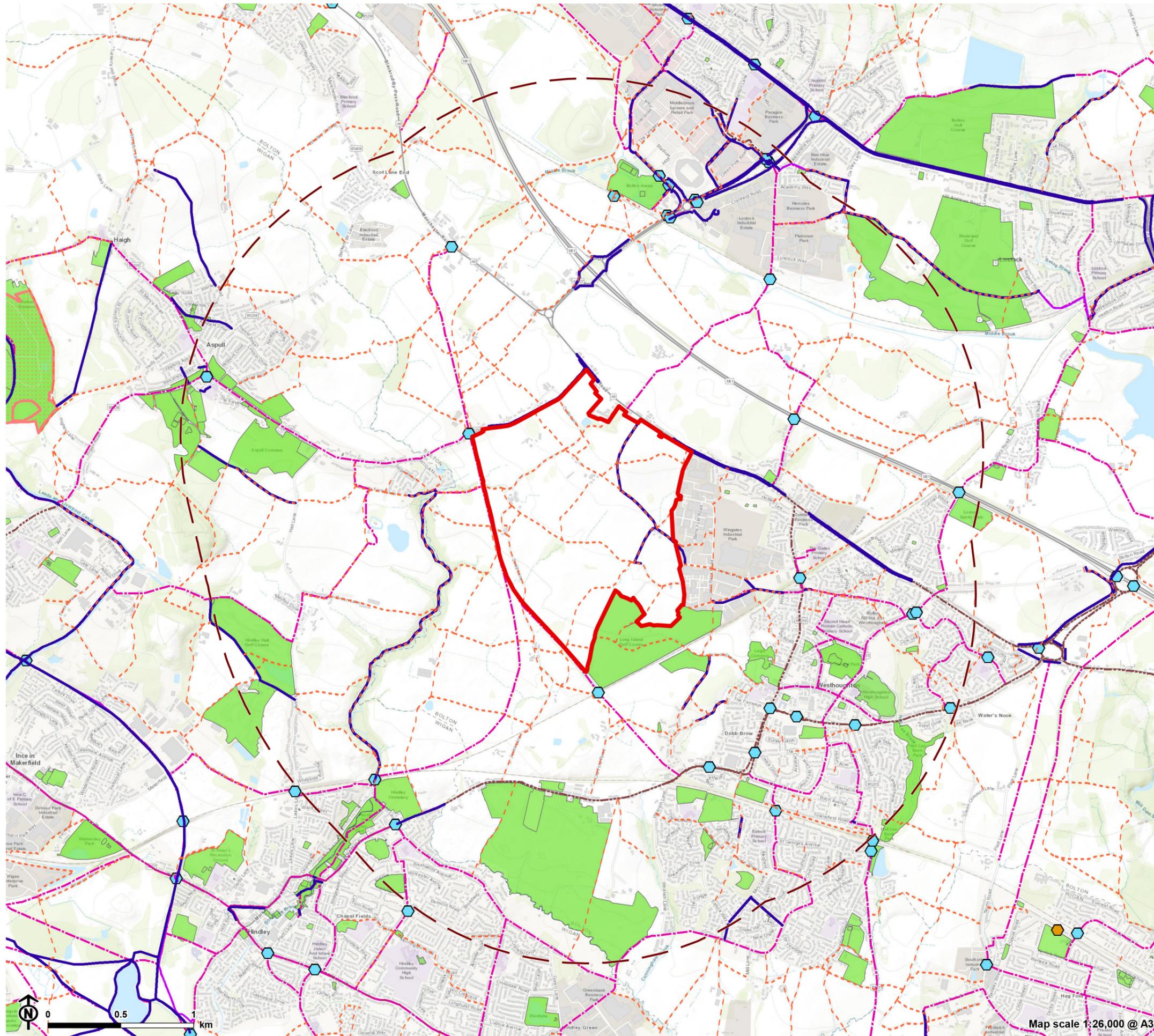
Landscape character could also be enhanced by restoring intensively managed farmland between the A6 and M61 in Green Belt north of GM Allocation 06. Small woodland blocks and belts along the M61, within field boundaries and along the A6 corridor will also help filter views of potential development from elevated land south of Lostock.

This part of the Green Belt to the south of GM Allocation 06 provides the opportunity to restore hedgerows and introduce softer settlement edges which provide greater integration with the surrounding farmland.

Many of these points have been discussed as interventions under the Biodiversity and Wildlife Corridor theme, but this could further be expanded to include the expansion of non-designated woodlands at Middle Brook in adjacent Green Belt north of the GM Allocation site and at Brinsop Hall west of the A6.

As discussed within the Access theme, the creation of a new multi-user pedestrian, cycle and equestrian route along the disused railway line in adjacent Green Belt to the south west of GM Allocation 06, West of Wingates / M61 Junction 6 will ensure the preservation of this historic landscape feature.

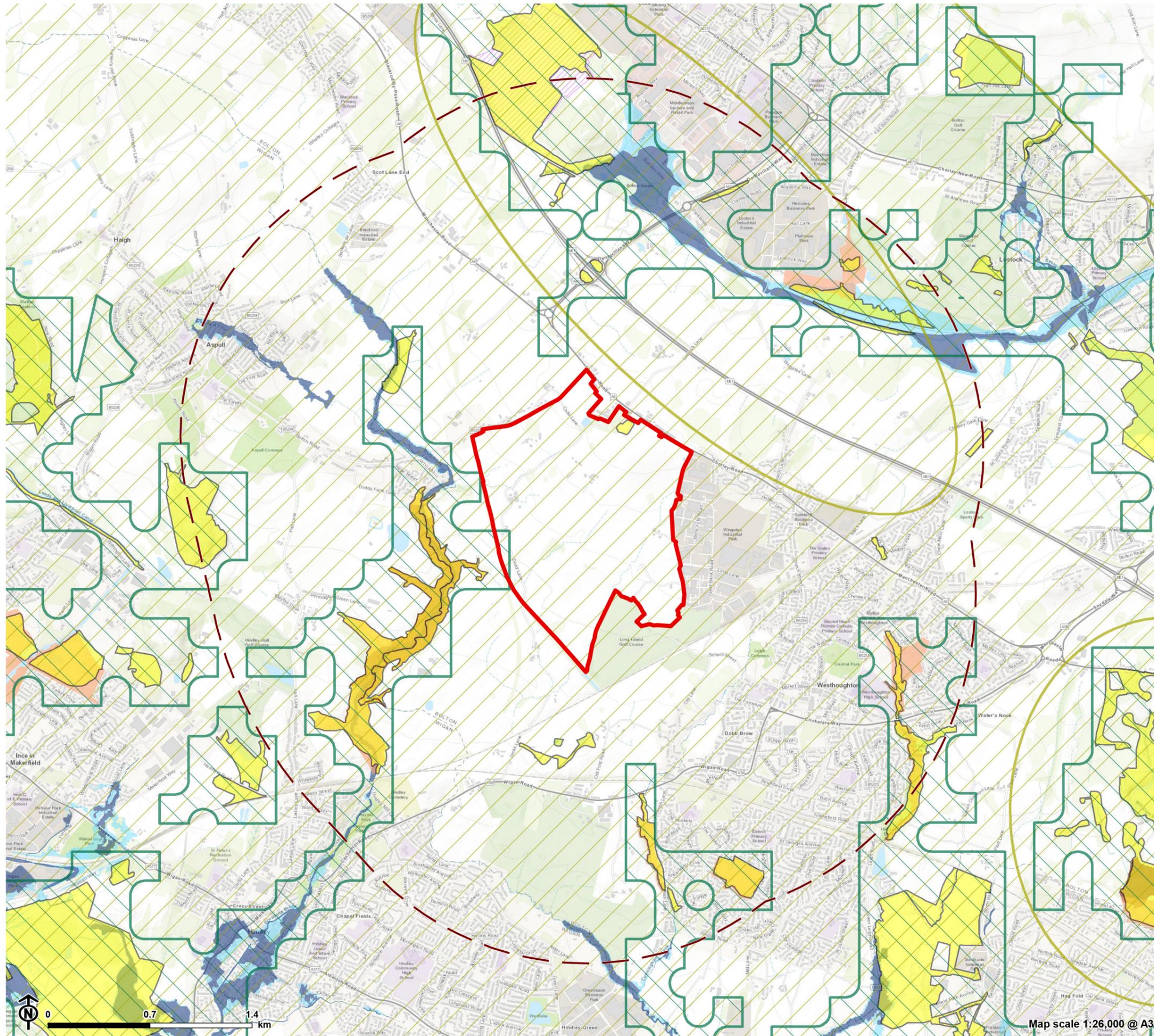
Access, Sport and Recreation  
GM Allocation 6



- Site boundary
- Site boundary - 2km buffer
- Access**
- Public right of way
- Sustrans route
- TfGM cycle route
- ◆ Bee network - confirmed infrastructure
- ⬡ Bee network - crossing point
- Bee network - beeway
- Bee network - busy beeway
- Sport and Recreation**
- Open green space
- Country park

Map scale 1:26,000 @ A3

**Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual  
GM Allocation 6**



- Site boundary
- Biodiversity**
- Site of biological importance
- Local nature reserve
- National nature reserve
- SSSI
- Special Area of Conservation
- Ancient woodland
- Flood zone 2
- Flood zone 3
- Landscape and Visual**
- Priority green infrastructure
- Green infrastructure opportunity area



Map scale 1:26,000 @ A3

# Potential enhancement projects

## Access

1. Creation of new multi-user routeway and crossing point along disused railway line.

## Sport and recreation

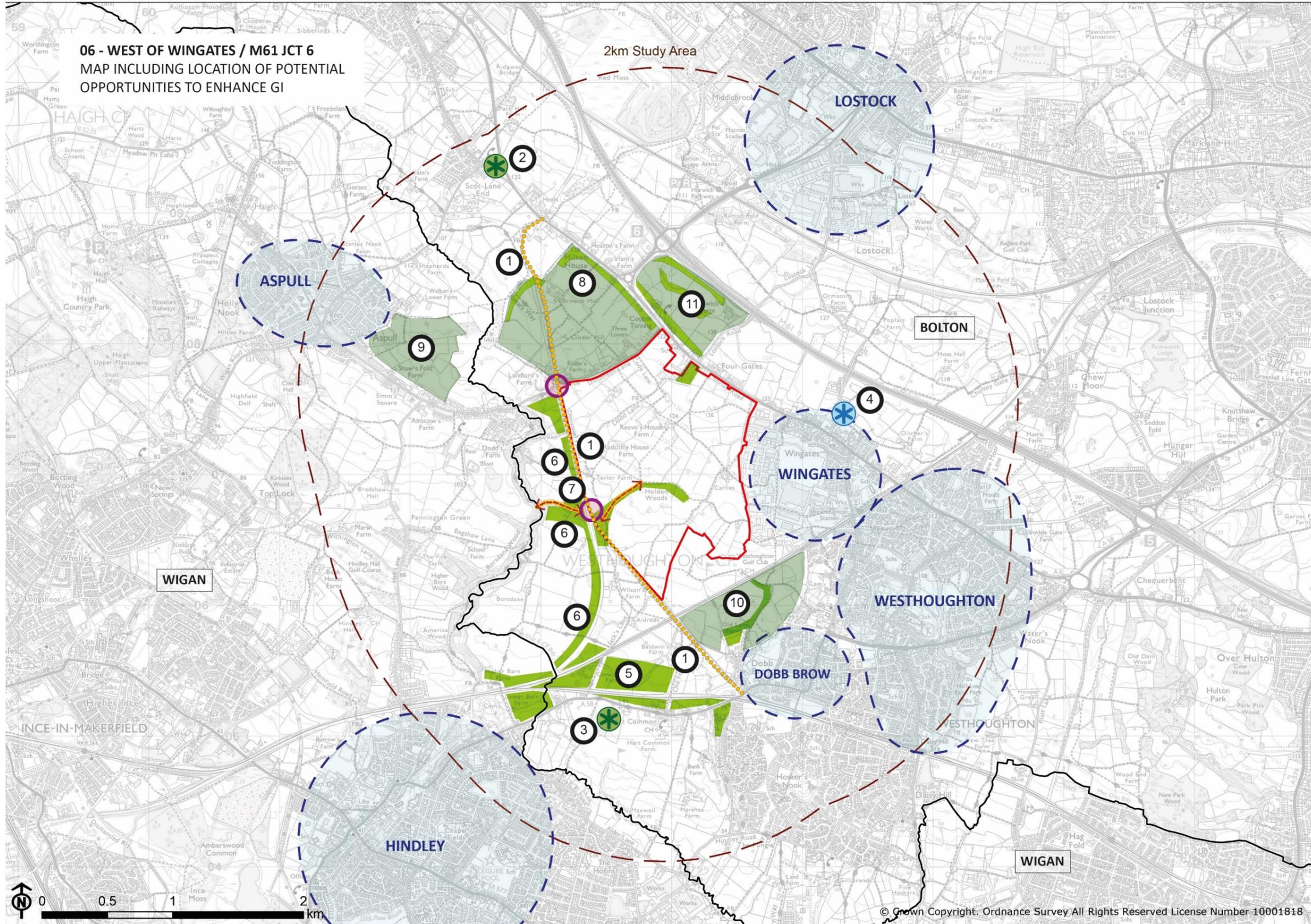
2. Enhancements to accessibility and functionality of Blackrod Play Park.
3. Installation of drainage and 4G all-weather pitch at Westhoughton Rangers AFC.
4. New allotment facility at Wingates.

## Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

5. Creation of large scale new habitat network linking a series of SBIs, to the south west and south of GM Allocation 06 along the Rotary Way Long Distance Footpath and the Wigan to Manchester railway line.
6. Creation of new accessible semi-natural greenspace between Borsdane Brook and the disused railway.
7. Creation of a new green infrastructure corridor linking Borsdane Brook into GM Allocation 06.

## Landscape and visual

8. Woodland expansion scheme at Brinsop Hall.
9. Hedgerow restoration in Green Belt east of Aspull.
10. Hedgerow restoration and settlement edge integration north of Dobb Brow.
11. Hedgerow restoration and landscape character integration between the M61 and the A6.



Potential Enhancement Opportunities for the Green Belt