

Appendix B










Bury

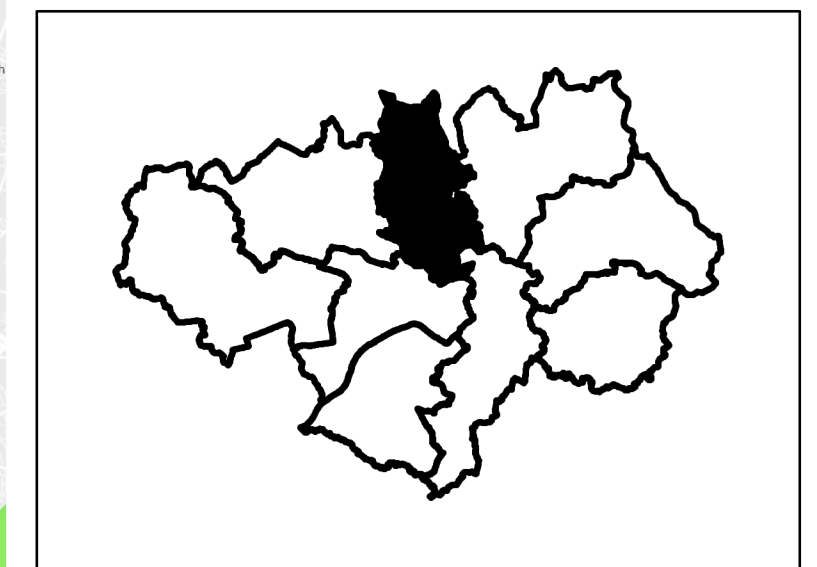
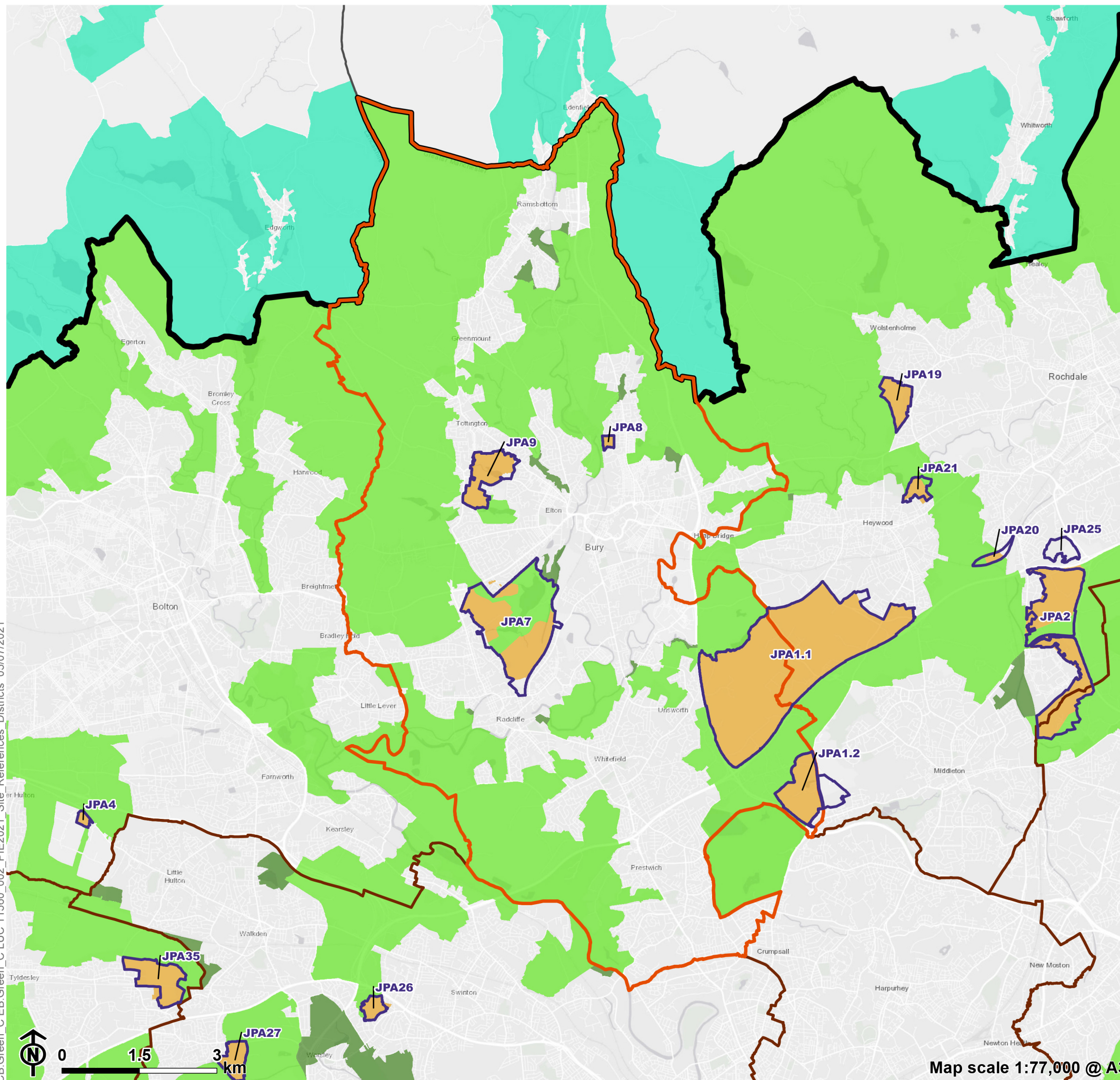
PfE 2021 SITE REFERENCES INSERT

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.

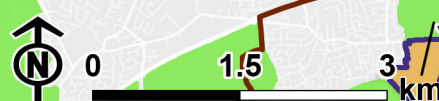
District	LUC Allocation Ref	LUC Allocation Name	GMSF 2020 policy number	2020 GMSF / 2021 PfE Allocation Name	2021 PfE policy number
Cross Boundary	GM1.1	Northern Gateway: Heywood/Pilsworth	GMA1.1	Heywood / Pilsworth (Northern Gateway)	JPA1.1
Cross Boundary	GM1.2	Northern Gateway: Simister/Bowlee	GMA1.2	Simister and Bowlee (Northern Gateway)	JPA1.2
Bury	GM1.3	Northern Gateway: Whitefield	Deleted	N/A	N/A
Bury	GM7	Elton Reservoir	GMA7	Elton Reservoir	JPA7
Bury	GM8	Seedfield	GMA8	Seedfield	JPA8
Bury	GM9	Walshaw	GMA9	Walshaw	JPA9

PfE 2021 Site References: Bury Metropolitan Borough Council

-  Places for Everyone Plan boundary
-  Bury 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

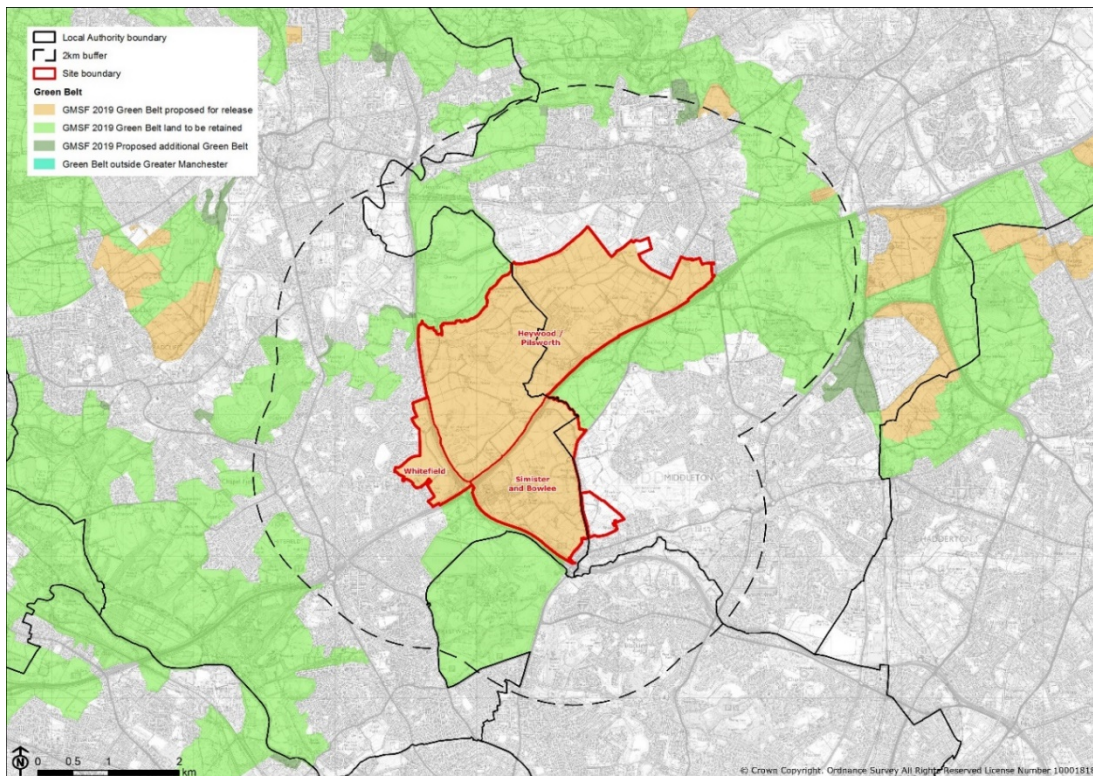


Map scale 1:77,000 @ A3

GM Allocation 01, Northern Gateway – Heywood / Pilsworth



Above: View from Aviation Road looking south west across proposed addition to the Green Belt at Hollins Brook



Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

GM Allocation Area: 640.42 ha

Study area definition

This large GM sub-Allocation, south-east of Bury town centre, is part of 3 GM sub-Allocations which constitute GM Allocation 01, Northern Gateway. The additional GM sub-Allocations at Whitefield and Simister & Bowlee adjoin this GM sub-Allocation to the west and south respectively.

GM Allocation 01 Heywood / Pilsworth is bounded by the M62 road corridor to the south, the M66 motorway to the west and the urban fringe of Heywood to the east. The motorways exert an audible human influence on an otherwise rural landscape. The northern boundary is framed by Brightley Brook and Reservoir with Pilsworth South Quarry and Landfill site approximately 400m north. This GM Allocation site consists of gently undulating land split into small, irregular pastoral fields with occasional arable crops. Pike Fold Golf Club, an 18 hole course and clubhouse is located in the southern quadrant of the GM Allocation site and Birch Industrial Estate is located in the centre, off Moss Hall Road. Whittle Brook meanders through the land parcel from the north west to the south east. The busy M60 / M62 interchange known as Simister Island forms part of the boundary to the south.

GM Allocation 01, Heywood / Pilsworth falls almost equally within both the Bury Council and Rochdale Borough Council local authority districts and is predominantly within the Green Belt, apart from a small field to the east. Adjacent Green Belt to the south in and around Heaton Park is within Manchester City Council local authority boundary. The GM Allocation as a whole, bar the small field to the east is proposed as release from the Green Belt. The Draft GMSF has identified a large area of housing allocation within the site (Ref. SH 2325) on the urban fringes of Heywood.

Land lying within 2km of GM sub-Allocation 01, Heywood / Pilsworth (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 west of this GM sub-Allocation at Hollins Brook and Hollins Brow.

Summary of evidence and policy influencing 'beneficial use' proposals

Published landscape character assessments – Greater Manchester Combined Authority¹

GM sub-Allocation 01, Heywood / Pilsworth is located within the **Urban Fringe Farmland** LCT and the Mosslands and Lowland Farmland LCT, as identified within the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment, 2018. It is further defined within LCA 27: Simister, Slattocks and Healds Green and LCA26: Prettywood, Pilsworth and Unsworth Moss respectively. A very small section of the northern part of the GM sub-Allocation around Brightley Brook and Reservoir is located within Incised Urban Fringe Valleys LCT and LCA 25: River Roch. The predominant landscape characteristics of this GM sub-Allocation include a rolling, predominantly pastoral landscape with small to medium irregular shaped fields, remnant of parliamentary enclosure. Recreational pursuits including golf courses are evident, as are pockets of woodland associated with settlement edges, road and stream corridors. Parts of the landscape are influenced by large scale industrial and commercial developments. Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Area include:

- Avoid siting development on highly visible skylines e.g. elevates areas on the urban fringe opposite Unsworth.
- Ensure that the sense of separation the landscape provides between distinct settlements is retained.
- Utilise areas of existing woodland to integrate new development into the landscape. Avoid sites designated for their nature conservation importance.
- Consider the potential to restore less productive areas of farmland to lowland raised bog habitat.
- 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.

¹ Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2018) *Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment*

- Enhance public access and provide new informal recreational provision.
- Improve signage, interpretation and waymarking at areas used for informal recreation.
- Ensure any development is in keeping with the mainly rural character of the landscape in terms of form, density and vernacular

Published landscape character assessments – Local Level

There is no local level LCA coverage for the parcel of GM sub-Allocation 01, Heywood / Pilsworth located within Rochdale Borough Council.

The western part of this GM sub-Allocation is located mainly within the **Fringe Settled Valley Pasture** LCA, with a small part around Brightley Brook in the **Fringe Industrial Brook** LCA, according to the Bury Landscape Character Assessment, 2009². The area is characterised by a network of small streams and brooks which break across the very gently undulating landscape. The groundcover is mainly improved grassland with sizable pockets of amenity grassland and cultivated arable land. Most of the landscape is open with the exception of the M66 motorway which dominates the area's western perimeter. The M66 corridor is screened with plantation and semi-natural woodland with fields dominated by hedgerows. The M66 has also historically acted as containment for the rapid urban expansion of eastern Bury suburbs..

Flood Risk³

The Environment Agency has identified small sections of the adjacent Green Belt to the north along Hollins Brook within Flood Zone 2 and 3 (which relates to surface, fluvial and open water). This presents an opportunity to combine Nature Based Solutions for Flood Risk reduction with green infrastructure enhancements.

Policy EN9/1 Special Landscape Area

Policy EN9/1 within the Bury Unitary Development Plan⁴ states that the Green Belt to the north of GM sub-Allocation 01, Heywood / Pilsworth is located in a Special Landscape Area. In those areas identified on the Proposals Map as Special Landscape Areas, any development which is

² Bury Council (2009) *Landscape Character Assessment*

³ The Environment Agency (2018) *Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea)*

⁴ Bury Council (1997) *Adopted Bury Unitary Development Plan*

permitted will be strictly controlled and required to be sympathetic to its surroundings in terms of its visual impact. High standards of design, siting and landscaping will be expected. Unduly obtrusive development will not be permitted in such areas.

RE/6 Recreational Rights of Way

Policy RE/6 from Rochdale MBC's UDP, 2006⁵ relates to the creation of a system of strategic recreational rights of way. The Council's intention will be to secure the protection, development and improvement of these routes to link areas of managed and accessible countryside and establish links with routes in the wider region. The Council will encourage and implement high quality links with such routes from the urban areas.

Open Space Study

The Bury District part of the Green Belt within 2km of GM sub-Allocation 01, Heywood / Pilsworth lies within the Whitefield and Unsworth Township according to the *Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy, 2015*⁶. The key priorities for greenspace within these areas include enhanced provision of natural / semi-natural Greenspace and new provision of allotments. The study also recommends Local Nature Reserve designation at Parr Brook.

Green Belt to the south of this GM sub-Allocation is within the boundary of Manchester City Council within the North Manchester area. This includes Heaton Park, one of the largest in Manchester and a regional destination greenspace. Heaton Park provides a variety of facilities and recreational opportunities for locals and visitors.⁷

Green Infrastructure Action Plan⁸

Rochdale MBC have undertaken a green infrastructure Action Plan for each of their four townships; Middleton, Heywood, Pennines and Rochdale. The Green Belt in Rochdale Council's boundary and within the study area boundary is located in both the Middleton

⁵ Rochdale MBC (2006), *Rochdale Unitary Development Plan*

⁶ Bury Council (2015), *Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy*

⁷ Manchester City Council (2009), *City Wide Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Study*

⁸ Rochdale MBC (2012), *Middleton Green Infrastructure Action Plan*

not defined. and Heywood⁹ townships. Key green infrastructure opportunities which have been identified include:

- Improve access and promotion of recreational and green travel opportunities to establish a link between the countryside and key communities including Langley and central Middleton and to further destinations such as Heaton Park, Hopwood Hall and Alkrington Woods LNR.
- Identify opportunities to create an extended and better connected biodiversity corridor.
- Identify opportunities for landscape enhancement through activities such as woodland and hedgerow planting and management.
- Explore opportunities for biomass planting.

Existing baseline

Access

The Green Belt adjacent GM sub-Allocation 01, Heywood / Pilsworth to the north has a number of Public Rights of Way. These mainly serve the east suburbs of Bury and the western fringe of Heywood with links to ecological assets including Brightley Brook. The Rochdale Green Belt to the south of the GM sub-Allocation (southern side of M62) has a robust network of north-south links even with the severance of the M62 but has more limited east-west links.

A section of the Rochdale Way Long Distance Footpath is located in Green Belt to the north east of GM sub-Allocation 01, Heywood / Pilsworth. The trail is 48 miles long passing through the Borough of Rochdale through large tracts of Moorland and skirting the urban fringes of Rochdale.

There is some local level and more strategic cycle infrastructure within the Green Belt surrounding GM sub-Allocation 01, Heywood / Pilsworth. Most notably at Brightley Brook to the north and around Heaton Park reservoir to the south west. These are a mixture of off-road routes which are unpaved and link into local level road networks and commuter routes such as the A665 Bury Old Road A576 Middleton Road.

⁹ Rochdale MBC (2012) *Heywood Green Infrastructure Plan*

TfGM's *Greater Manchester Bee Network* has identified both the M62 and M60 as severance lines, forming a barrier to both pedestrians and cyclists.

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

Access

The retention or diversion of existing Public Rights of way will be a key consideration in maintaining many of the local level routes linking the urban fringes of Bury, Rochdale and Manchester. Upgrades to existing routes such as the temporary replacement for Bridleway 79 along Brightley Brook to create multi-user pedestrian, equestrian and cycle routes will encourage local level recreation. Particular interventions should focus on access control, signage and vegetation management along the route to maintain site lines.

There is potential to create a new pedestrian footpath in Green Belt north east of GM sub-Allocation 01 Heywood / Pilsworth along Whittle Brook and linking PROW MidFp110 with Whittle Lane to create a local level circular walk.

Opportunities should be explored to upgrade surfacing treatments and access points on this route, particularly for local settlement fringes in northern Hollins to ensure increased usability.

Opportunities include upgrading of surface treatments to create all-weather routes. As mentioned above, a key intervention would be the re-surfacing of the temporary replacement for Bridleway 79 and PROW 12WHI to cycleway standard in Green Belt north of this GM sub-Allocation. This improvement would link with TfGM's confirmed infrastructure as part of the Fishpool Neighbourhood Bee Network and provide countryside cycle access for residents in Whitefield and wider Bury with links across existing road networks to the suburbs of Heywood.

Existing baseline

Sport and recreation

There are a number of Golf Courses within the adjacent Green Belt, including Bury Golf Club to the north west. It is also noted that Pike Fold Golf Club lies within GM sub-Allocation Heywood / Pilsworth. Golf Courses were not quality assessed as part of the Bury Open Space Study.

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

There are playing fields within GM sub-Allocation 01, Heywood / Pilsworth attributed to Castlebrook High on the western boundary of the GM sub-Allocation. These facilities have been rated partly 'Good' and partly 'Poor'. Playing fields within the adjacent Green Belt at Sunny Bank Primary to the north west were assessed as requiring an improved maintenance regime but this was not a Borough priority.

Heaton Park, in adjacent Green Belt to the south of GM sub-Allocation 01 Heywood / Pilsworth, is within Manchester City Council Local Authority. It has been assessed as a high quality asset in comparison to many of the other North area Parks. It contains three adult football pitches, Heaton Hall Bowling Club, 2 play areas and supports a weekly park run.

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

Sport and recreation

Bury Golf Club is well maintained and seemingly well served as a local sporting facility. There are small scale opportunities to improve access, although car parking has recently been upgraded. Interventions should largely focus on improving species diversity on site, including the enhancement of the grassland habitat at Hazlitt Wood SBI which would also improve visual amenity on site.

Interventions should complement the proposals included within the planning application for development off J19 of the M62 (Planning application 16/01399/HYBR) which includes the provision of playing pitches and other areas of accessible informal open space associated with the new development.

There is limited opportunity for relocating the playing fields associated with Castlebrook High School within proximity to the school. It would therefore be recommended that the playing fields are retained within the GM sub-Allocation and enhanced through drainage works and access track improvements. A reinforced species rich hedgerow with trees could be planted on the eastern boundary to define the space from neighbouring farmland. The retention of this greenspace will also assist in preventing coalescence between the urban fringes of Whitefield, Heywood and Prestwich through any new development on the whole of GM Allocation 01, Northern Gateway.

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

The playing fields at Sunnybank Primary are currently unavailable for community use. There is opportunity to create a local recreation and sport asset on site by improving access, including the creation of a car park and ancillary facilities (development of changing rooms and spectator seating).

Although Heaton Park has been assessed as a high quality green space asset, there is still opportunity to enhance sport and recreational provision. Proposals should primarily be in line with management plans for the park. These are recommended to focus on improved access for all and improved tertiary infrastructure (for example spectator seating and signage).

In particular, the path infrastructure at Heaton Park could be greatly improved to maintain all-weather and inclusive access, particularly on the route of the weekly park run and the unbound sections of path around the lake. Seating at both the bowling club and football pitches could be improved. The football pitches could be enhanced with an all-weather 3-G pitch with better links to the surrounding path network and ancillary facilities at the Bowling Club.

Existing baseline

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

The moss woodlands associated with Hollins Brook and Brightly Brook are located in Green Belt to the north and north west GM sub-Allocation 01, Heywood / Pilsworth and have resulted in several ecological designations.

There are a number of SBIs located within this landscape including Hazlitt Wood (south west), Heaton Park Reservoir (south west), Parr Brook (west), Hollins Vale and Hollins Plantation (north west), Pilsworth (north).

Hollins Vale Local Nature Reserve is located within retained Green Belt and a proposed addition to the Green Belt located north of GM sub-Allocation 01, Heywood / Pilsworth.

The nature reserve was declared in 2003 and is the result of a joint management agreement between Bury Council and Viridor Waste Management Ltd who own the Vale area. This agreement allows the area to be managed for the benefit of wildlife and as an area of accessible urban green space for use by the local community.

Hollins Conservation Group, a voluntary community group, actively manages and promotes the reserve for conservation, education and recreation.

Hollins Brook and Whittle Brook in Green Belt to the north of the GM sub-Allocation is classified as 'Moderate' according to the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

Other river corridors within the surrounding Green Belt include Parr Brook, Brightley Brook and Castle Brook.

Heaton Park has been identified within management plans and open space studies as a priority habitat site for the management and expansion of lowland broadleaved woodland.

The GMCA Landscape Character Assessment (2018) also suggests the potential to restore less productive areas of farmland to lowland raised bog habitat.

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

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

Interventions to improve the condition of the mossland 'rides', and efforts to restore ditches and field boundaries in the mosslands to improve grassland biodiversity would be recommended.

To avoid drying and erosion, review the conservation and management of those areas which form part of SBIs and LNRs to ensure improvement of the key aspects for designation. There may be opportunities to enhance the areas of moss woodland within the surrounding greenbelt. 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 SBIs of Hollins Vale, Hollins Plantation and Pilsworth across the M66 should be explored.

Hollins Vale LNR would benefit from habitat specific management practices relating to the primary function of a farmland reserve supported by areas of woodland and wetland habitat.

Connectivity and green linkages could be realised both within the reserve and along the M66 corridor and onto the Pilsworth SBI to create a contiguous habitat network.

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.

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.

The parkland landscape would support woodland management practices to maintain longevity of broadleaved woodland stock. Selective and sensitive clearance, tree works and re-stocking should be considered to enhance the parkland setting and create robust habitat networks both within and outwith the park.

Whilst the study area around GM sub-Allocation 01, Heywood / Pilsworth is not as appropriate for raised bog habitat creation as more rural landscapes further east, the agricultural land around Birch service area is low value and fields adjacent Whittle Brook may be appropriate for such habitat creation.

Existing baseline

Landscape and visual

The GMCA Landscape Character Assessment (2018) advises that the sense of separation the landscape provides between distinct settlements is retained.

A further element for discussion from the GMCA Landscape Character Assessment (2018) is the restoration and enhancement of areas of deteriorating farmland including additional, species-rich hedgerow planting to fill gaps and replace post and wire fencing. Reintroduce hedgerow trees where appropriate.

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

Landscape and visual

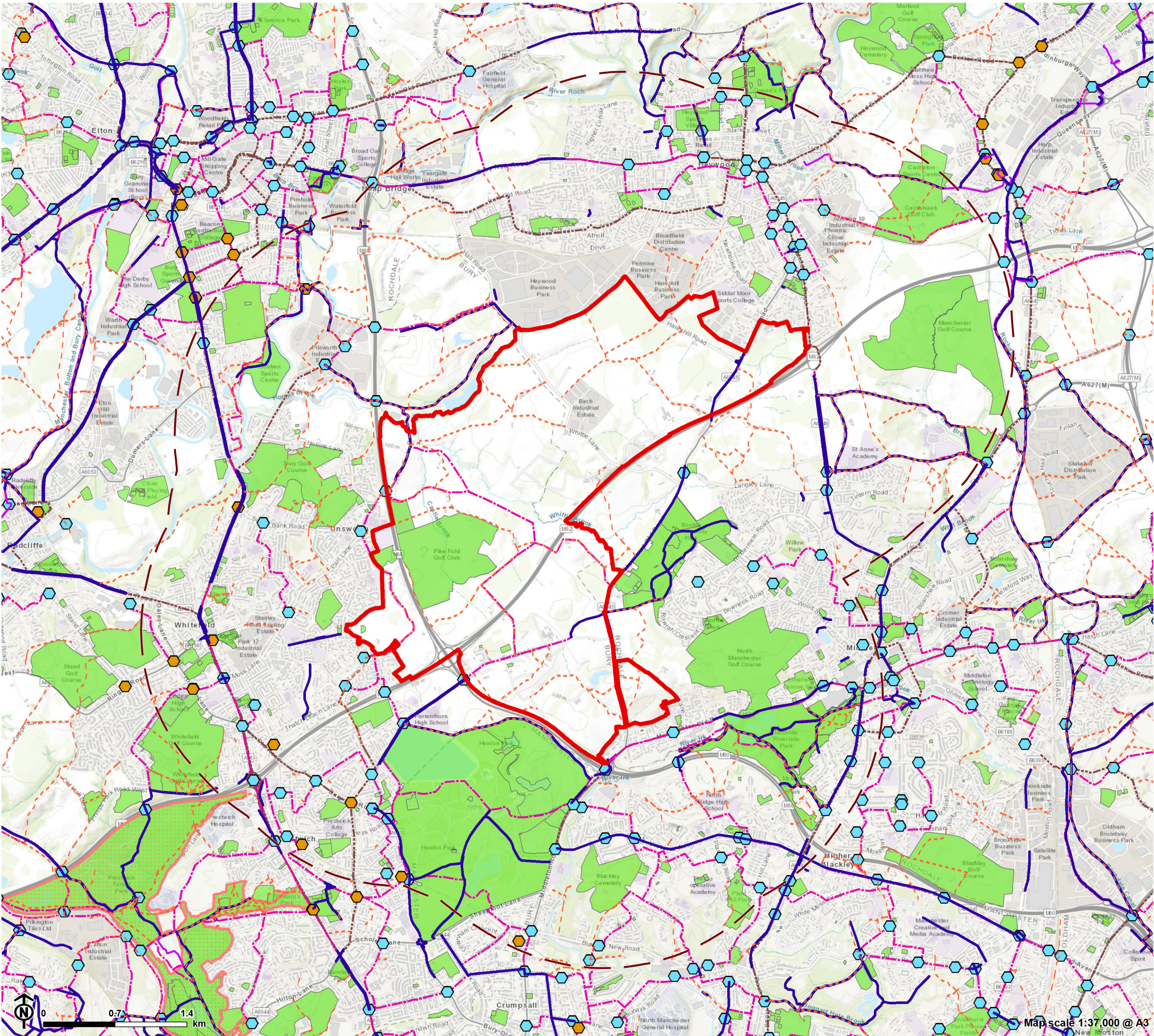
It will be strategically important to create a number of new green wedges and green buffers to prevent settlement coalescence should the combined GM Allocation 01, Northern Gateway sub-Allocations be developed.

This should be achieved both within the GM sub-Allocations, and within the adjacent Green Belt at existing and proposed urban fringes, along key field boundaries and the existing transport (M62, M66, M60) and river corridors (Parr Brook, Hollins Brook, Brightley Brook, Whittle Brook, Castle Brook).

There is particular opportunity to introduce a green wedge in the Green Belt along the Whittle Brook Corridor to the north east between the M62 and Heywood Old Road through reinforcement of the existing landscape structure with a view to enhanced designation status.

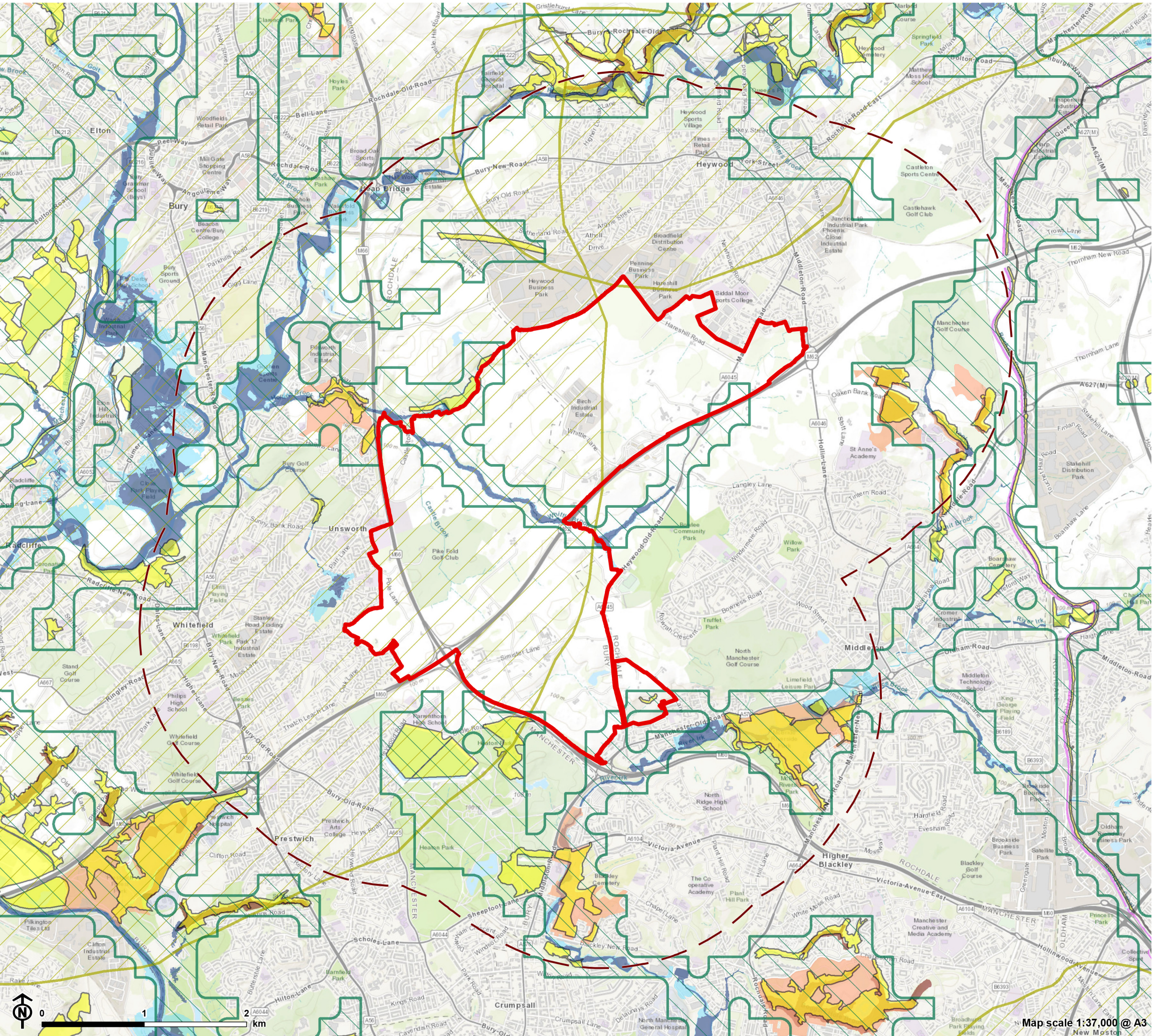
The existing industrial areas at Heywood Distribution Park on the periphery this GM sub-Allocation would benefit from additional green open space and planting buffers to enable a higher degree of landscape integration and separation with any new development.

The opportunity exists to reinstate robust field boundaries and provide additional woodland planting parallel the corridor of the M62 within farmland around Birch Services (Eastbound).



Access, Sport and Recreation
GM Allocation 1

- 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



Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual
GM Allocation 1

- Site boundary
- Biodiversity**Site of biological importanceLocal nature reserveNational nature reserveSSSISpecial Area of ConservationAncient woodlandFlood zone 2Flood zone 3
- Landscape and Visual**Priority green infrastructureGreen infrastructure opportunity area

Potential enhancement projects

Access

1. Upgrade the public footpath along Brightley Brook to a multi-user route.
2. Create a new pedestrian footpath in Green Belt north east of GM sub-Allocation 01 Heywood / Pilsworth to create a local level walk at the settlement edge.
3. Upgrade surfacing treatments and access points along the Rochdale Way.
4. Upgrade surface treatments to create all-weather routes.
5. Enhance pedestrian and vehicle links to football pitches in Heaton Park to increase usability.

Sport and recreation

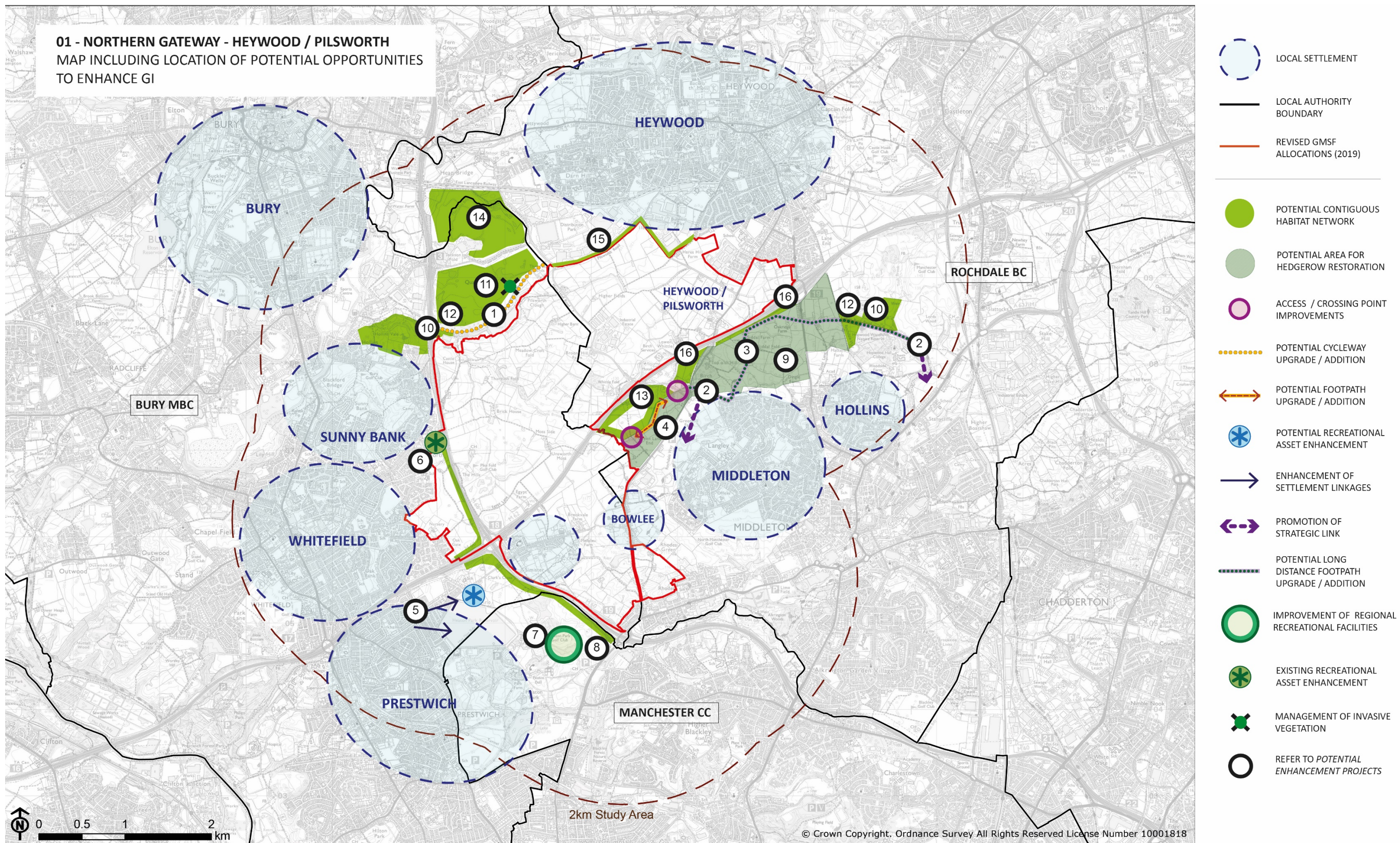
6. Introduce enhancements to local sporting facilities within the retained Green Belt.
7. Enhance sport and recreational provision at Heaton Park.
8. Introduce interventions which complement the proposals included within the planning application for development off J19 of the M62 (Planning application 16/01399/HYBR).

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

9. Restore ditches and field boundaries within the landscape.
10. Review the conservation and management of areas which form part of SBIs and LNRs to ensure improvement of the key aspects of their designation. Connect the SBIs of Hollins Vale, Hollins Plantation and Pilsworth across the M66.
11. Enhance waterways to ensure the management of invasive species and surrounding vegetation.
12. Support woodland management practices to maintain longevity of broadleaved woodland stock.
13. Improve the biodiversity value of agricultural land around Birch Service Area, providing additional habitat creation.

Landscape and visual

14. Create new green wedges and green buffers to prevent settlement coalescence.
15. Establish planting buffers for increased landscape integration at Heywood Distribution Park.
16. Provide additional woodland planting and the reinstatement of field boundaries parallel the corridor of the M62.

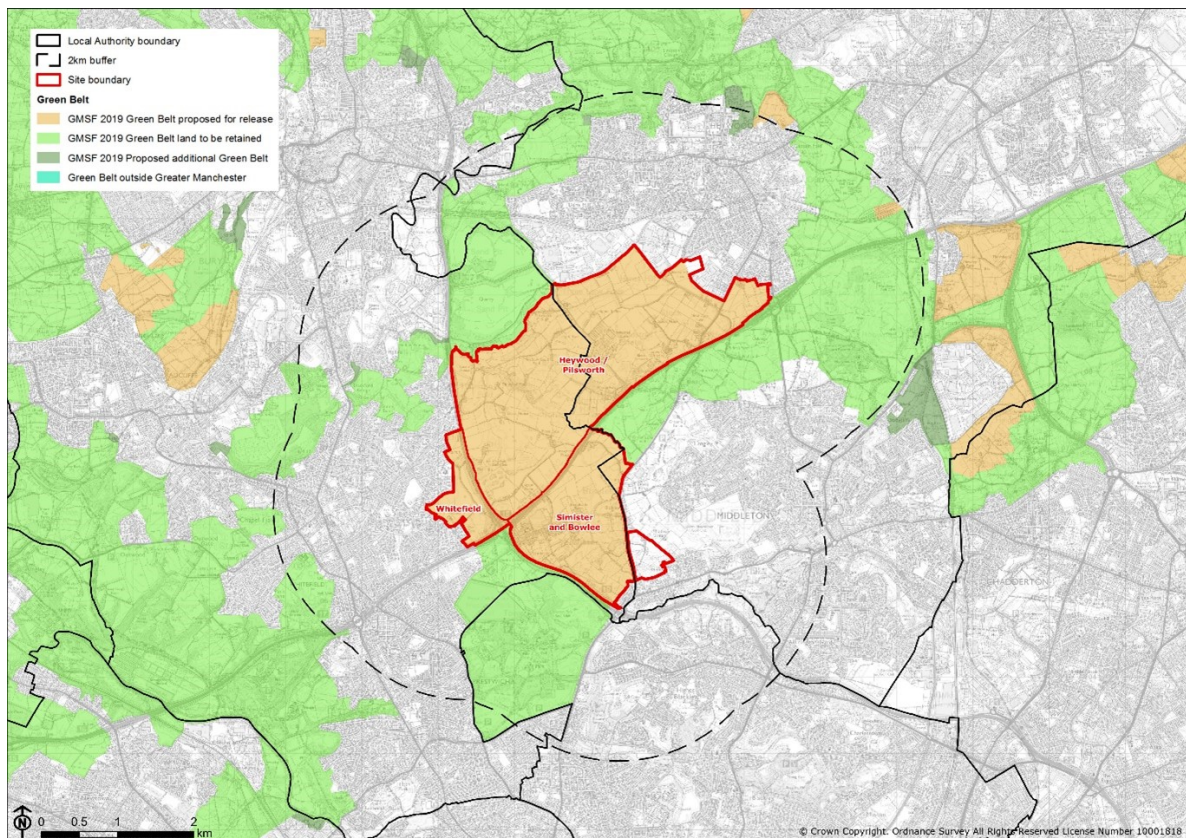


Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

GM Allocation 01, Northern Gateway – Simister & Bowlee



Above: View from Simon Lane looking south west across proposed Green Belt release towards Heaton Park and retained Green Belt



Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

GM Allocation Area: 217.87ha

Study Area Definition

This large GM sub-Allocation, lying to the south-east of Bury town centre, forms part of 3 GM sub-Allocations which constitute GM Allocation 01 Northern Gateway. The additional GM sub-Allocations at Whitefield and Heywood and Pilsworth adjoin this GM sub-Allocation to the north west and north respectively.

GM sub-Allocation 01 Simister & Bowlee is bounded by the M62 road corridor to the north, the M60 motorway to the west and the A6045 (Heywood Old Road) to the east. The motorways exert an audible human influence to an otherwise rural landscape. The northern boundary is framed by Whittle Brook which forms part of the boundary between Bury and Rochdale. The GM sub-Allocation site lies to the west of Middleton and consists of gently rolling farmland with elevated ridges. Scattered ponds connected by small streams and ditches are evident within the landscape around Heywood Farm, within the centre of Gm sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee. The village of Simister is located in the north western corner of this GM sub-Allocation, and the fringe of the hamlet of Bowlee is located on the eastern boundary. The busy M60 / M62 interchange known as Simister Island forms part of the boundary to the north west and severs this area from Heaton Park to the west.

GM sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee falls almost entirely within the Bury Council local authority district, with the exception of a small northern section surrounding Simon Lane which falls into Rochdale MBC boundary. The entire GM sub-Allocation is proposed as release from the Green Belt. A small housing development is permissioned within the centre of this GM sub-Allocation at Brook Farm (Ref. HL/2750/00).

Land lying within 2km of GM sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee (identified as retained Green Belt) will form the focus of GI recommendations / mitigation to enhance the 'beneficial use' of the Green Belt. There are no proposed additions to the Green Belt within this study limit.

Summary of evidence and policy influencing ‘beneficial use’ proposals

Published landscape character assessments - Greater Manchester Combined Authority¹

GM sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee is located within the Urban Fringe Farmland LCT, as identified within the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment, 2018. It is further defined within LCA 27: Simister, Slattocks and Healds Green. The predominant landscape characteristics of the GM sub-Allocation site include a rolling, elevated farmland landscape with small to medium irregular shaped fields, remnant of parliamentary enclosure. Recreational pursuits including golf courses are evident, as are pockets of woodland associated with settlement edges, road and stream corridors. Parts of the landscape are influenced by large scale industrial and commercial developments. Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Area include:

- Avoid siting development on highly visible skylines e.g. elevated areas on the urban fringe opposite Unsworth.
- Ensure that the sense of separation the landscape provides between distinct settlements is retained.
- Utilise areas of existing woodland to integrate new development into the landscape. Avoid sites designated for their nature conservation importance.
- Consider the potential to restore less productive areas of farmland to lowland raised bog habitat.
- 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.

¹ Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2018) *Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment*

- Encourage woodland creation schemes on areas of low grade agricultural land, including through the Northern Forest Initiative. Woodland planting along motorways and staggered blocks of planting should be used to help screen views of traffic and reduce noise.
- Enhance public access and provide new informal recreational provision.
- Protect the pockets of tranquillity and relative remoteness associated with the landscape and the role the LCT plays as a rural backdrop and buffer between discrete urban areas.
- Improve signage, interpretation and waymarking at areas used for informal recreation.
- Ensure any development is in keeping with the mainly rural character of the landscape in terms of form, density and vernacular.

Published landscape character assessments – Local Level

There is no local level LCA coverage for the parcel of GM sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee located within Rochdale Borough Council.

The western part of this GM sub-Allocation is located within the Fringe Settled Valley Pasture LCA according to the Bury Landscape Character Assessment, 2009². The area is characterised by a network of small streams and brooks which break across the very gently undulating landscape. The groundcover is mainly improved grassland with sizable pockets of amenity grassland and cultivated arable land. Most of the landscape is open with the exception of the M66 motorway which dominates the area's western perimeter. The M66 corridor is screened with plantation and semi-natural woodland with fields dominated by hedgerows. The M66 has also historically acted as containment for the rapid urban expansion of eastern Bury suburbs.

Flood Risk³

The Environment Agency has identified small sections of the adjacent Green Belt to the north east along Whittle Brook within Flood Zone 2 and 3 (which relate to surface, fluvial and open

² Bury Council (2009) *Bury Landscape Character Assessment*

³ The Environment Agency (2018) *Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea)*

water). This presents an opportunity to combine Nature Based Solutions for Flood Risk reduction with Green Infrastructure enhancements.

Policy EN6 / 4 Wildlife Links and Corridors

Policy EN6 / 4 Wildlife Links and Corridors from the *Bury Unitary Development Plan*, 1997⁴ relates to the M60 corridor south west of GM sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee. The Council will seek to consolidate and, where appropriate, strengthen wildlife links and corridors, and will not permit development which would adversely affect identified areas. In particular, the Council will seek to ensure that new development within or adjacent to identified links or corridors contributes to their effectiveness through the design, landscaping and siting of development proposals and mitigation works, where appropriate.

Open Space Study

The Bury District part of the Green Belt within 2km of GM sub-Allocation 01 Simister & Bowlee lies within the Whitefield and Unsworth Township according to the *Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy*, 2015⁴. The key priorities for greenspace within these areas include enhanced provision of natural / semi-natural Greenspace and new provision of allotments. The study also recommends Local Nature Reserve designation at Parr Brook.

Green Infrastructure Action Plan⁵

Rochdale MBC have undertaken a Green Infrastructure Action Plan for each of their 3 Townships; Middleton, Pennines and Rochdale. The Green Belt in Rochdale Council's boundary and within the assessment limit is located in the Middleton Township in the Character Area of Bowlee and Rhodes. Key Green Infrastructure opportunities which have been identified include:

- Improve access and promotion of recreational and green travel opportunities to establish a link between the countryside and key communities including Langley and central Middleton and to further destinations such as Heaton Park, Hopwood Hall and Alkrington Woods LNR.
- Identify opportunities to create an extended and better connected biodiversity corridor.

⁴ Bury Council (2015), *Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy*

⁵ Rochdale MBC (2012), *Middleton Green Infrastructure Action Plan*

- Identify opportunities for landscape enhancement through activities such as woodland and hedgerow planting and management
- Explore opportunities for biomass planting

Existing baseline

Access

The adjacent Green Belt to the north east of GM sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee contains a number of key local level recreational footpaths which run north-south and connect Heywood with the urban fringe of Middleton. There are fewer PROW connections east-west in the landscape surrounding Birch village.

A section of the Rochdale Way Long Distance Footpath is located in Green Belt to the north east of this GM sub-Allocation. The trail is 48 miles long passing through the Borough of Rochdale through large tracts of Moorland and skirting the urban fringes of Rochdale.

There is an existing pedestrian overbridge connecting the western boundary of GM sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee across the M60 with Heaton Park and Prestwich.

A TfGM cycle route exists along the A645 on the edge of Green Belt to the north of this GM sub-Allocation. There are also a number of unpaved off-road routes north of GM sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee in Green Belt adjacent Brightley Brook and near Heaton Park reservoir.

TfGM's *Greater Manchester Bee Network* has identified both the M62 and M60 as severance lines, forming a barrier to both pedestrians and cyclists.

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

Access

The retention or diversion of existing Public Rights of way will be a key consideration in maintaining many of the local level routes linking the urban fringes of Bury, Rochdale and Manchester. Upgrades to existing routes such as the temporary replacement for Bridleway 79 along Brightley Brook to create multi-user pedestrian, equestrian and cycle routes will

encourage local level recreation. Particular interventions should focus on access control, signage and vegetation management along the route to maintain site lines

There is potential to create a new pedestrian footpath in Green Belt north east of GM sub-Allocation 01 Heywood / Pilsworth along Whittle Brook and linking PROW MidFp110 with Whittle Lane to create a local level circular walk.

Opportunities should be explored to upgrade surfacing treatments and access points on this route, particularly for local settlement fringes in northern Hollins to ensure increased usability

The existing footbridge could be upgraded to provide multi-user cycle and pedestrian access with a link cycleway connecting the A6045 Heywood Old Road on the eastern boundary of this GM sub-Allocation with Heaton Park and the A665 Bury Old Road. This proposal echoes TfGM's *Greater Manchester Bee Network*.

Opportunities include upgrading of surface treatments to create all-weather routes. As mentioned above, a key intervention would be the re-surfacing of the temporary replacement for Bridleway 79 and PROW 12WHI to cycleway standard in Green Belt north of this GM sub-Allocation. This improvement would link with TfGM's confirmed infrastructure as part of the *Fishpool Neighbourhood Bee Network* and provide countryside cycle access for residents in Whitefield and wider Bury with links across existing road networks to the suburbs of Heywood.

Existing baseline

Sport and recreation

Heaton Park in adjacent Green Belt to the south west of GM sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee is within Manchester City Council Local Authority. It has been assessed as a high quality asset in comparison to many of the other North area Parks. It contains three adult football pitches, Heaton Hall Bowling Club, 2 play areas and supports a weekly park run. This facility will form the main emphasis for sport and recreation enhancements due to proximity to this GM sub-Allocation.

Bowlee Park borders the area of retained Green Belt, forming an area of Protected Open Land. Allotments are noted within this GM sub-Allocation at Simister village, north of Simister Lane.

A play area is also located within GM sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee north of Simister Green. This feature has been rated 'Good' within the Open Space Study.

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

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

Sport and recreation

Although Heaton Park has been assessed as a high quality green space asset, there is still opportunity to enhance sport and recreational provision. Proposals should primarily be in line with management plans for the park. These are recommended to focus on improved access for all and improved tertiary infrastructure (for example spectator seating and signage).

In particular, the path infrastructure at Heaton Park could be greatly improved to maintain all-weather and inclusive access, particularly on the route of the weekly park run and the unbound sections of path around the lake. Seating at both the bowling club and football pitches could be improved. The football pitches could be enhanced with an all-weather 3-G pitch with better links to the surrounding path network and ancillary facilities at the Bowling Club.

Whilst not contained within Green Belt itself, the opportunity exists to enhance the site boundaries and gateway features of the site. Potential interventions could also involve improved linkages to this recreational asset from the settlement edge or across the corridor of the M62. It is recommended that the allotments at Simister Lane are retained and enhanced as part of any development proposals. If this cannot be achieved, new allotment provision should be made in adjacent Green Belt to the west, either adjacent St. Margaret’s C of E Primary School or at the urban fringe on Simister Lane.

The play area at Simister Green should be retained within any development proposals. There are opportunities for enhancement at this or in a new location to provide natural play facilities. New facilities could be located in Green Belt to the west, adjacent St. Margaret’s C of E Primary

Existing baseline

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

The moss woodlands associated with Hollins Brook and Brightly Brook are located in Green Belt to the north and north west of GM sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee and have resulted in several ecological designations.

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

There are a number of SBIs located within this landscape including Hazlitt Wood (south west), Heaton Park Reservoir (south west), Parr Brook (north west), Hollins Vale and Hollins Plantation (north west), Pilsworth (north).

Hollins Vale Local Nature Reserve is located within retained and a proposed addition to the Green Belt located north of GM sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee.

The nature reserve was declared in 2003 and is the result of a joint management agreement between Bury Council and Viridor Waste Management Ltd who own the Vale area. This agreement allows the area to be managed for the benefit of wildlife and as an area of accessible urban green space for use by the local community.

Hollins Conservation Group, a voluntary community group, actively manages and promotes the reserve for conservation, education and recreation.

Hollins Brook and Whittle Brook in Green Belt to the north of this GM sub-Allocation is classified as 'Moderate' according to the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

Other river corridors within the surrounding Green Belt include Parr Brook, Brightley Brook and Castle Brook.

Heaton Park has been identified within management plans and open space studies as a priority habitat site for the management and expansion of lowland broadleaved woodland.

The GMCA Landscape Character Assessment (2018) also suggests the potential to restore less productive areas of farmland to lowland raised bog habitat.

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

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

Interventions to improve the condition of the mossland ‘rides’, and efforts to restore ditches and field boundaries in the mosslands to improve grassland biodiversity would be recommended.

To avoid drying and erosion, review the conservation and management of those areas which form part of SBIs and LNRs to ensure improvement of the key aspects for designation. There

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

may be opportunities to enhance the areas of moss woodland within the surrounding greenbelt. 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 SBIs of Hollins Vale, Hollins Plantation and Pilsworth across the M66 should be explored.

Hollins Vale LNR would benefit from habitat specific management practices relating to the primary function of a farmland reserve supported by areas of woodland and wetland habitat.

Connectivity and green linkages could be realised both within the reserve and along the M66 corridor and onto the Pilsworth SBI to create a contiguous habitat network.

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.

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.

The parkland landscape would support woodland management practices to maintain longevity of broadleaved woodland stock. Selective and sensitive clearance, tree works, and re-stocking should be considered to enhance the parkland setting and create robust habitat networks both within and outwith the park.

Whilst the study area around GM sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee is not as appropriate for raised bog habitat creation as more rural landscapes further east, the opportunity exists to reinstate robust field boundaries and provide additional woodland planting parallel the corridor of the M62 within farmland around Birch Services (Eastbound).

Existing baseline

Landscape and visual

The GMCA Landscape Character Assessment (2018) advises that the sense of separation the landscape provides between distinct settlements is retained.

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

A further element for discussion from the GMCA Landscape Character Assessment (2018) is the Encouragement of woodland creation schemes on areas of low grade agricultural land, including through the Northern Forest Initiative. Woodland planting along motorways and staggered blocks of planting should be used to help screen views of traffic and reduce noise. The GMCA Landscape Character Assessment (2018) also advocates the protection of pockets of tranquillity and relative remoteness associated with the landscape and the role the LCT plays as a rural backdrop and buffer between discrete urban areas.

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

Landscape and visual

It will be strategically important to create a number of new green wedges and green buffers to prevent settlement coalescence should the whole of GM Allocation 01, Northern Gateway be developed.

This should be achieved both within the GM sub-Allocations, and within the adjacent Green Belt at existing and proposed urban fringes, along key field boundaries and the existing transport (M62, M66, M60) and river corridors (Parr Brook, Hollins Brook, Brightley Brook, Whittle Brook, Castle Brook.

There is particular opportunity to introduce a green wedge in the Green Belt along the Whittle Brook Corridor to the north east between the M62 and Heywood Old Road through reinforcement of the existing landscape structure with a view to enhanced environmental designation such as a Site of Biological Importance or a Local Nature Reserve.

Linking in with the aforementioned interventions, there is also opportunity to expand and enhance existing native planting belts along the M60, in Green Belt south of gm sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee adjacent Heaton Park, along the M66 north of this GM sub-Allocation and along the M62 adjacent Whittle Brook within the GM sub-Allocation.

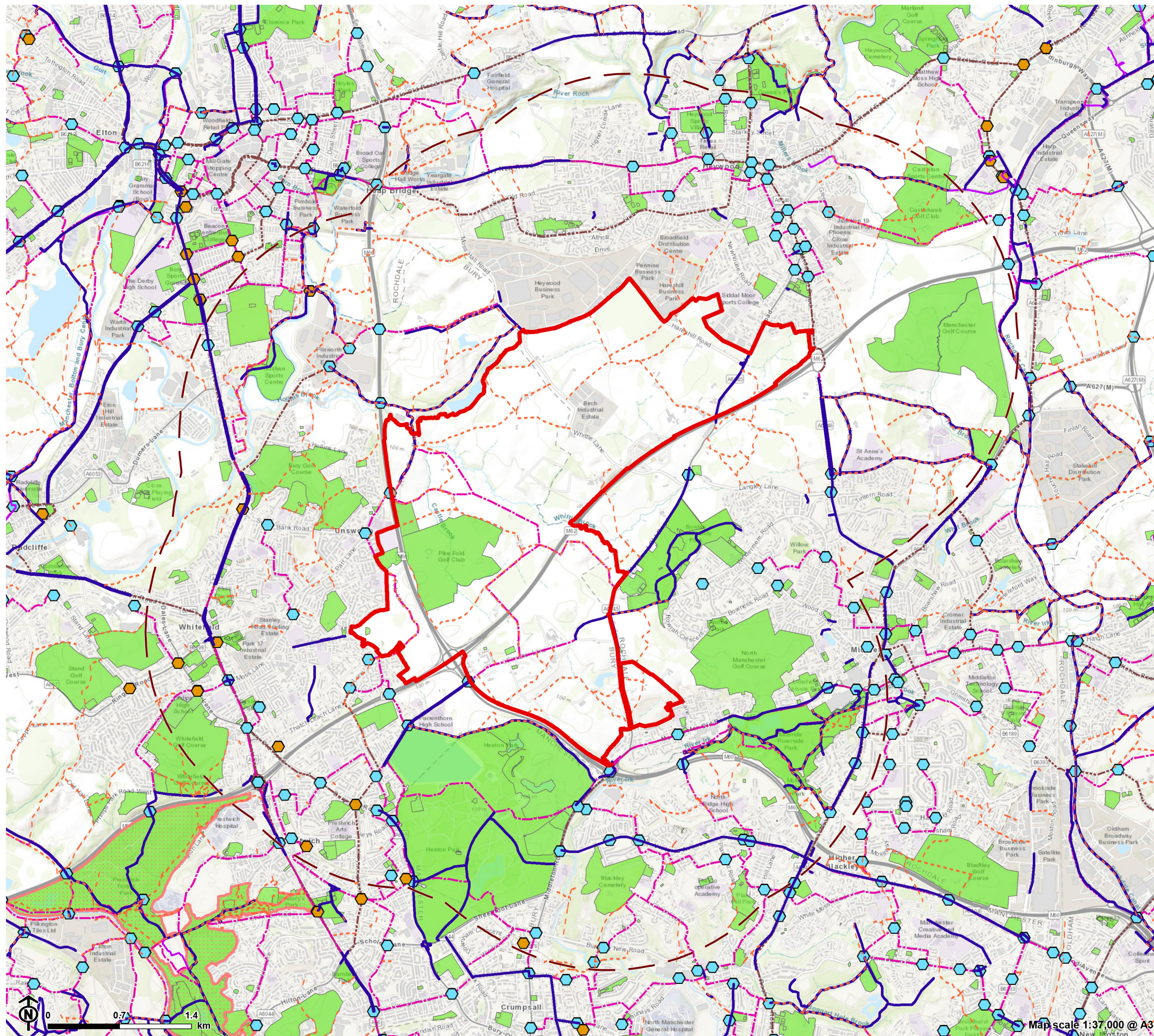
The Green Belt to the north east and south west of GM sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee should be enhanced through increased roadside planting adjacent the M60, around Simister

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

Island roundabout and on the M62 to screen and increase a sense of rurality in these Green Belt pockets.

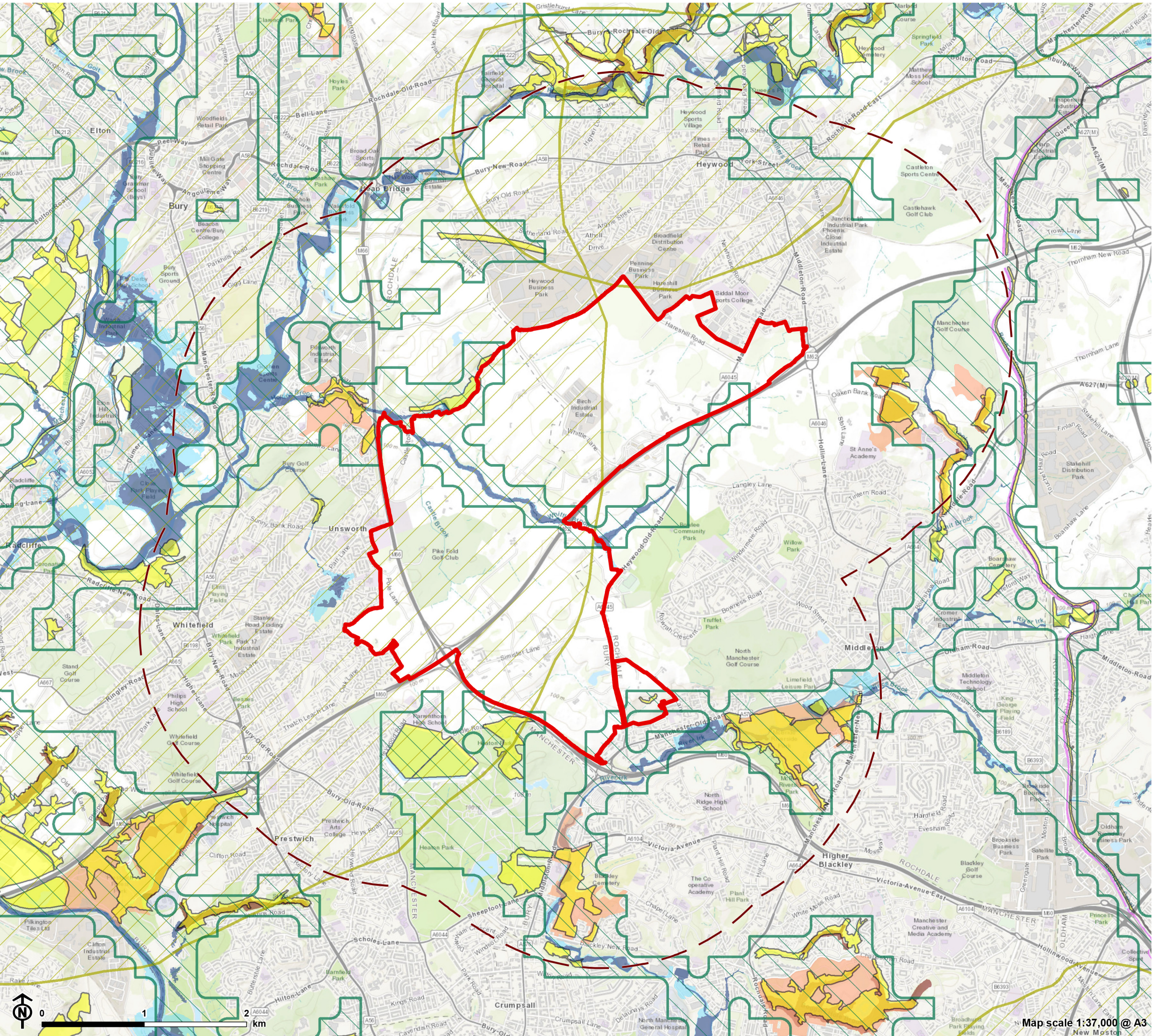
Buffer planting within GM sub-Allocation 01, Simister & Bowlee at the eastern urban fringes of Simister will help to create a degree of separation with any new developments.

Woodland belt planting along the Whittle Brook corridor on the northern eastern boundary will also enhance the rural backdrop for views across the adjacent Green Belt in this direction.



Access, Sport and Recreation
GM Allocation 1

- 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



**Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual
GM Allocation 1**

- 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. Upgrade footpath along Brightley Brook to a multi-user route.
2. Create a new pedestrian footpath in Green Belt north east of GM sub-Allocation 01 Heywood / Pilsworth to create a local level circular walk.
3. Upgrade surfacing treatments and access points along the Rochdale Way.
4. Upgrade path linkages to Heaton Park.
5. Upgrade surface treatments to create all-weather routes.
6. Upgrade the existing footbridge to provide a multi-user cycle and pedestrian access with a link connecting the A6045 Heywood Old Road on the eastern boundary of this GM sub-Allocation with Heaton Park and the A665 Bury Old Road.
7. Enhance pedestrian and vehicle links to football pitches in Heaton Park to increase usability.

Sport and recreation

8. Enhance sport and recreational provision at Heaton Park.
9. Improve the boundaries of Bowlee Park, including linkages to this recreational asset.
10. Increase allotment and play area provision in the Green Belt south west of Simister.

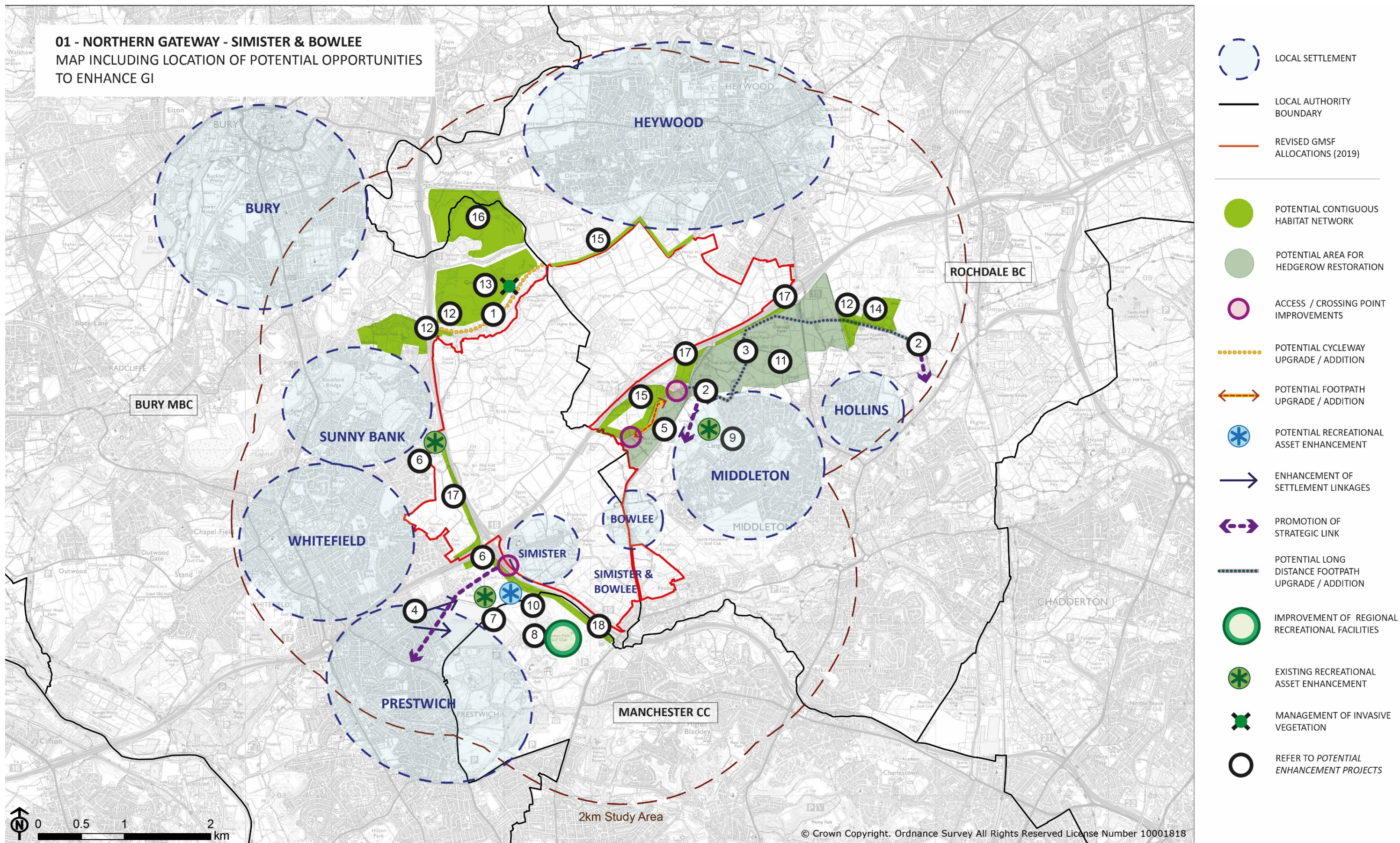
Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

11. Restore ditches and field boundaries within the landscape.
12. Review the conservation and management of areas which form part of SBIs and LNRs to ensure improvement of the key aspects of their designation. Connect the SBIs of Hollins Vale, Hollins Plantation and Pilsworth across the M66.
13. Enhance waterways to ensure the management of invasive species and surrounding vegetation.
14. Support woodland management practices to maintain longevity of broadleaved woodland stock.

15. Reinstate robust field boundaries and provide additional woodland planting parallel the corridor of the M62 within farmland around Birch Service Area.

Landscape and visual

16. Create a number of new green wedges and green buffers to prevent settlement coalescence.
17. Expand and enhance existing native planting belts along the M60 and M62.
18. Introduce buffer planting at the eastern urban fringes of Simister to create a degree of separation with any new developments as well as along the Whittle Brook corridor.

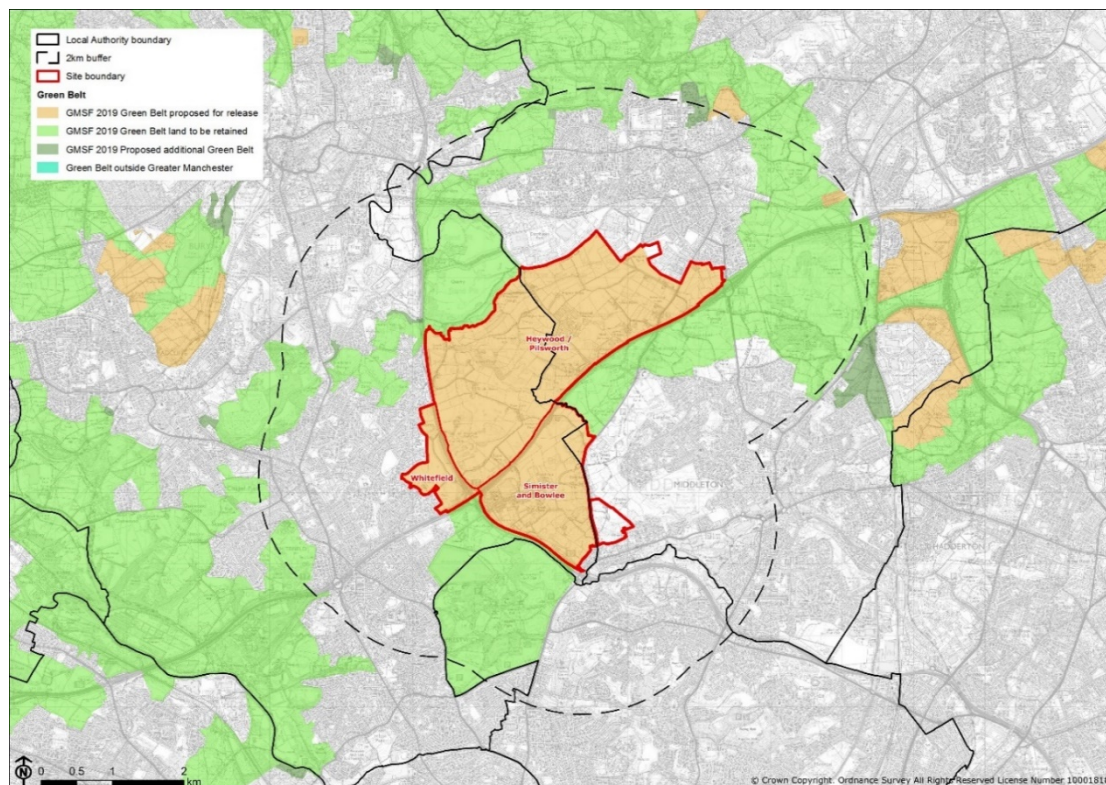


Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

GM Allocation 01, Northern Gateway – Whitefield



View from Pole Lane looking south west over proposed Green Belt Release towards urban fringe of Whitefield



Potential Enhancement Opportunities for the Green Belt

Study Area Definition

This small GM sub-Allocation, south-east of Bury town centre is part of 3 GM sub-Allocations which constitute GM Allocation 01, Northern Gateway. The additional GM sub-Allocations at Heywood / Pilsworth and Simister & Bowlee adjoin this GM sub-Allocation to the north east and south east respectively.

GM Allocation 01, Whitefield is bounded by the M62 road corridor to the south, the M66 motorway to the east and the urban fringe of Whitefield to the west and north. GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield consists of gently undulating farm land divided into irregular pastoral fields. There are a series of ponds and small marginal wetlands focused around the central part of this GM sub-Allocation. Tonge Close Play area and Unsworth Cricket and Tennis Club are located within GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield.

The GM sub-Allocation is located wholly within Bury Council local authority district and is situated in the Green Belt with the exception of two small parcels at Mode Hill Lane and Tonge Close in Whitefield on the western fringe of GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield. The GM sub-Allocation as a whole, bar the aforementioned parcels, are due for release from the Green Belt. The Draft GMSF has identified a permissioned housing site (Ref. HL/2182/00) on the parcel at Mode Hill Lane.

Land lying within 2km of GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield (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 north of the GM sub-Allocation at Hollins Brook and Hollins Brow.

Summary of evidence and policy influencing 'beneficial use' proposals

Published landscape character assessments - Greater Manchester Combined Authority¹

GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield is located within the **Mosslands and Lowland Farmland** LCT, as identified within the *Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment, 2018*. It is further defined within **LCA26: Prettywood, Pilsworth and Unsworth Moss**. The predominant landscape characteristics of the GM sub-Allocation include a gently undulating lowland farmland divided into a series of small to large sized fields with deep, open drainage ditches as field boundaries and interspersed with moss woodlands. Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Area include:

- Avoid siting development on highly visible skylines e.g. elevated areas on the urban fringe opposite Unsworth.
- Ensure that the sense of separation the landscape provides between distinct settlements is retained.
- Utilise areas of existing woodland to integrate new development into the landscape. Avoid sites designated for their nature conservation importance.
- Conserve and manage the mosslands, including those areas which form part of SBIs and LNRs to avoid drying and erosion.
- Conserve and manage existing woodlands to encourage habitat diversity using locally appropriate species and protecting from grazing during establishment.
- 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.

¹ Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2018) *Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment*

- Improve the condition of the mossland 'rides', and restore ditches and field boundaries in the mosslands to improve grassland biodiversity.
- 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.
- Enhance existing public access and provide new informal recreational provision.
- Improve signage, interpretation and waymarking at areas used for informal recreation.
- Ensure any development is in keeping with the mainly rural character of the landscape in terms of form, density and vernacular.

Published landscape character assessments – Local level

GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield is located wholly within the Fringe Settled Valley Pasture LCA according to the Bury Landscape Character Assessment, 2009². The area is characterised by a network of small streams and brooks which break across the very gently undulating landscape. The groundcover is mainly improved grassland with sizable pockets of amenity grassland and cultivated arable land. Most of the landscape is open with the exception of the M66 motorway which dominates the area's western perimeter. The M66 corridor is screened with plantation and semi-natural woodland with fields dominated by hedgerows. The M66 has also historically acted as containment for the rapid urban expansion of eastern Bury suburbs.

Flood Risk³

The Environment Agency has identified small sections of the adjacent Green Belt to the north along Parr Brook within Flood Zone 2 and 3 (which relates to surface, fluvial and open water). This presents an opportunity to combine Nature Based Solutions for Flood Risk reduction with Green Infrastructure enhancements.

² Bury Council (2009) *Bury Landscape Character Assessment*

³ The Environment Agency (2018) *Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea)*

Policy OL5 / 2 River Valleys

According to the Bury Unitary Development Plan, 1997⁴, part of the Green Belt to the north of the GM Allocation 8, Seedfield is designated under Policy OL5 / 2 River Valleys. This relates directly to the Parr Brook corridor. Bury Council's Policy is to maintain and preserve the open character of the Borough's river valleys.

Policy EN6 / 4 Wildlife Links and Corridors

Policy EN6 / 4 Wildlife Links and Corridors from the Bury Unitary Development Plan, 1997⁴ relates to the Parr Brook north of GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield and correlates with Policy OL5 / 2 River Valleys. The Council will retain, protect and enhance the natural environment of the Borough, particularly in relation to areas of ecological wildlife and geological importance.

Open Space Study

The Bury District part of the Green Belt within 2km of GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield lies within the Whitefield and Unsworth Township according to the Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy, 2015⁵. The key priorities for greenspace within these areas include enhanced provision of natural / semi-natural Greenspace and new provision of allotments. The study also recommends Local Nature Reserve designation at Parr Brook.

Existing baseline

Access

The Green Belt adjacent GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield to the north west is well served with a local level set of Public Rights of Way. Heaton Park to the south of this GM sub-Allocation has more limited Public Right of Way access, particularly from the north. There is also an apparent lack of east-west Public Rights of Way south west of Birch in Green Belt south of the M62.

⁴ Bury Council (1997) *Bury Unitary Development Plan*

⁵ Bury Council (2015), *Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy*

There is a mix of on and off-road cycle provision in the Green Belt surrounding GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield. This is predominantly focused around Brightley Brook to the north and Heaton Park reservoir to the south.

TfGM's Greater Manchester Bee Network has identified both the M62 and M60 as severance lines, forming a barrier to both pedestrians and cyclists.

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

Access

The retention or diversion of existing Public Rights of way will be a key consideration in maintaining many of the local level routes linking the urban fringes of Bury, Rochdale and Manchester. Upgrades to existing routes such as the temporary replacement for Bridleway 79 along Brightley Brook to create multi-user pedestrian, equestrian and cycle routes will encourage local level recreation. Particular interventions should focus on access control, signage and vegetation management along the route to maintain site lines.

There is potential to create a new pedestrian footpath in Green Belt north east of GM sub-Allocation 01 Heywood / Pilsworth along Whittle Brook and linking PROW MidFp110 with Whittle Lane to create a local level circular walk.

Opportunities include upgrading of surface treatments to create all-weather routes. As mentioned above, a key intervention would be the re-surfacing of the temporary replacement for Bridleway 79 and PROW 12WHI to cycleway standard in Green Belt north of GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield. This improvement would link with TfGM's confirmed infrastructure as part of the Fishpool Neighbourhood Bee Network and provide countryside cycle access for residents in Whitefield and wider Bury with links across existing road networks to the suburbs of Heywood.

Existing baseline

Sport and recreation

There are a number of Golf Courses within the adjacent Green Belt, including Bury Golf Club to the north west. Golf Courses were not quality assessed as part of the Bury Open Space Study.

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

There are playing fields within this GM sub-Allocation at Unsworth Cricket Club, west of the M66. This facility was rated 'Average' within the Open Space Study, with overplay and poor drainage reported.

Heaton Park, in adjacent Green Belt to the south of GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield, is within Manchester City Council Local Authority. It has been assessed as a high quality asset in comparison to many of the other North area Parks. It contains three adult football pitches, Heaton Hall Bowling Club (part of the 2002 Commonwealth Games facilities), 2 play areas and supports a weekly park run.

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

Sport and recreation

There are small opportunities to diversify the existing mature planting on at Bury Golf Club to increase biodiversity with the potential for improving existing or creating new ecological designations. Interventions could include the expansion of grassland at Parr Brook SBI located at Bury Golf Course or enhancement of the woodland and pondscape at Hazlitt Wood SBI.

There is opportunity to retain and enhance Unsworth Cricket club through improved drainage to reduce the impact from overplay. This enhancement could be achieved as part of a package which could also include boundary treatment improvements and spectator provision / enhancement.

Although Heaton Park has been assessed as a high quality green space asset, there is still opportunity to enhance sport and recreational provision. Proposals should primarily be in line with management plans for the park. These are recommended to focus on improved access for all and improved tertiary infrastructure (for example spectator seating and signage).

In particular, the path infrastructure at Heaton Park could be greatly improved to maintain all-weather and inclusive access, particularly on the route of the weekly park run and the unbound sections of path around the lake. Seating at both the bowling club and football pitches could be improved. The football pitches could be enhanced with an all-weather 3-G pitch with better links to the surrounding path network and ancillary facilities at the Bowling Club.

Existing baseline

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

The moss woodlands associated with Hollins Brook and Brightly Brook are located in Green Belt to the north and north east of GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield and have resulted in several ecological designations.

There are a number of SBIs located within this landscape including Hazlitt Wood (south), Heaton Park Reservoir (south), Parr Brook (north west), Hollins Vale and Hollins Plantation (north), Pilsworth (north east).

Hollins Vale Local Nature Reserve is located within retained and a proposed addition to the Green Belt located north of this GM sub-Allocation.

This nature reserve was declared in 2003 and is the result of a joint management agreement between Bury Council and Viridor Waste Management Ltd who own the Vale area. This agreement allows the area to be managed for the benefit of wildlife and as an area of accessible urban green space for use by the local community.

Hollins Conservation Group, a voluntary community group, actively manages and promotes the reserve for conservation, education and recreation.

Hollins Brook and Whittle Brook in Green Belt to the north of GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield is classified as 'Moderate' according to the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

Other river corridors within the surrounding Green Belt include Parr Brook, Brightley Brook and Castle Brook.

Heaton Park has been identified within management plans and open space studies as a priority habitat site for the management and expansion of lowland broadleaved woodland.

Areas of retained green belt surrounding GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield are contained within land defined as EA Flood Zones 2 and 3. Green Infrastructure associated with the River Roch and its tributaries help to manage and reduce flood risk.

It should be noted that land defined as EA Flood Zones 2 and 3 run through the Heywood/Pilsworth and Simister & Bowlee sections of GM Allocation 01.

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

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

Interventions to improve the condition of the mossland ‘rides’, and efforts to restore ditches and field boundaries in the mosslands to improve grassland biodiversity would be recommended.

To avoid drying and erosion, review the conservation and management of those areas which form part of SBIs and LNRs to ensure improvement of the key aspects for designation. There may be opportunities to enhance the areas of moss woodland within the surrounding greenbelt. 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 SBIs of Hollins Vale, Hollins Plantation and Pilsworth across the M66 should be explored.

Hollins Vale LNR would benefit from habitat specific management practices relating to the primary function of a farmland reserve supported by areas of woodland and wetland habitat.

Connectivity and green linkages could be realised both within the reserve and along the M66 corridor and onto the Pilsworth SBI to create a contiguous habitat network.

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.

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.

The parkland landscape would support woodland management practices to maintain longevity of broadleaved woodland stock. Selective and sensitive clearance, tree works and re-stocking should be considered to enhance the parkland setting and create robust habitat networks both within and outwith the park.

Due to the proximity of EA Flood Zones 2 and 3, any future GI enhancements could seek to enhance the ecological and hydrological beneficial features within the area of retained green

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

belt by combining flood risk reduction with green infrastructure improvements. The opportunity exists to improve flood risk management by working with the EA to explore river corridor management opportunities through SuDS and water storage.

Existing baseline

Landscape and visual

The GMCA Landscape Character Assessment (2018) advises that the sense of separation the landscape provides between distinct settlements is retained.

The GMCA Landscape Character Assessment (2018) also suggests the restoration and enhancement of deteriorating farmland including additional, species-rich hedgerow planting to fill gaps and replace post and wire fencing and reintroduce hedgerow trees where appropriate.

A further element for discussion from the GMCA Landscape Character Assessment (2018) 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.

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

Landscape and visual

It will be strategically important to create a number of new Green Wedges and Green Buffers to prevent settlement coalescence should the combined GM Allocation 01 Northern Gateway be developed.

This should be achieved both within the GM Allocations, and within the adjacent Green Belt at existing and proposed urban fringes, along key field boundaries and the existing transport (M62, M66, M60) and river corridors (Parr Brook, Hollins Brook, Brightley Brook, Whittle Brook, Castle Brook).

There is particular opportunity to introduce a green wedge in the Green Belt along the Whittle Brook Corridor to the north east between the M62 and Heywood Old Road through reinforcement of the existing landscape structure with a view to enhanced designation status.

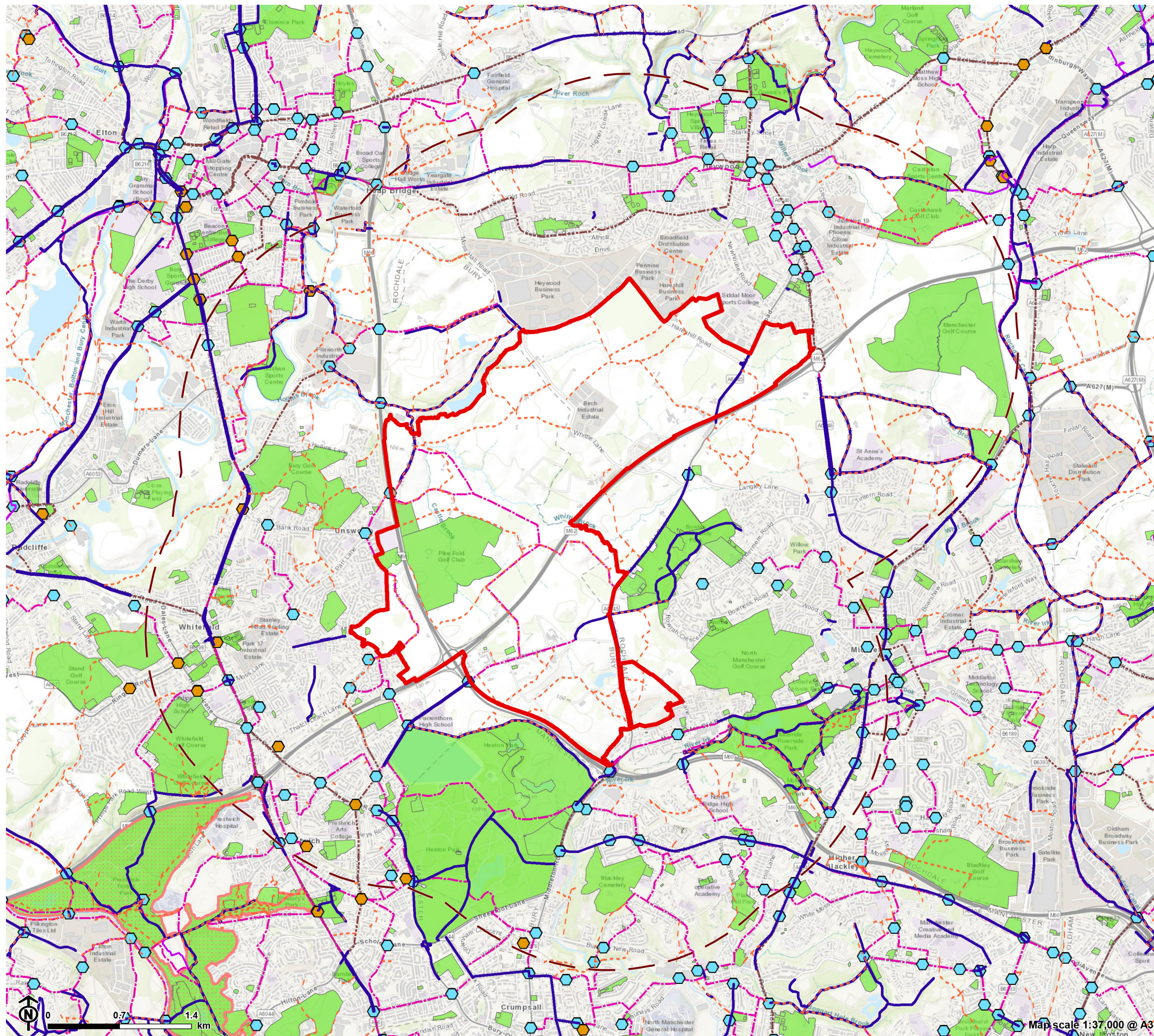
There is an area of low grade agricultural land west of Whittle Brook in Green Belt to the north east of GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield. As with the previous enhancement suggestions, there is opportunity at this location to develop a green wedge which could include the reintroduction of more robust field boundaries in the landscape surrounding Birch Services.

The entire GM Allocation 01 represents a large combined release from the Green Belt. This should be complimented with large scale beneficial enhancements in remaining adjacent Green Belt. One opportunity is the creation of a new Northern Forest on areas of reclaimed land in Green Belt north of GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield. This could create approximately 118 hectares of new habitat and recreational opportunities with direct links to exiting SBIs including the Railway Cutting at Heywood and Pilsworth.

Within this woodland structure there may be opportunity for biomass planting alongside more naturalised woodland.

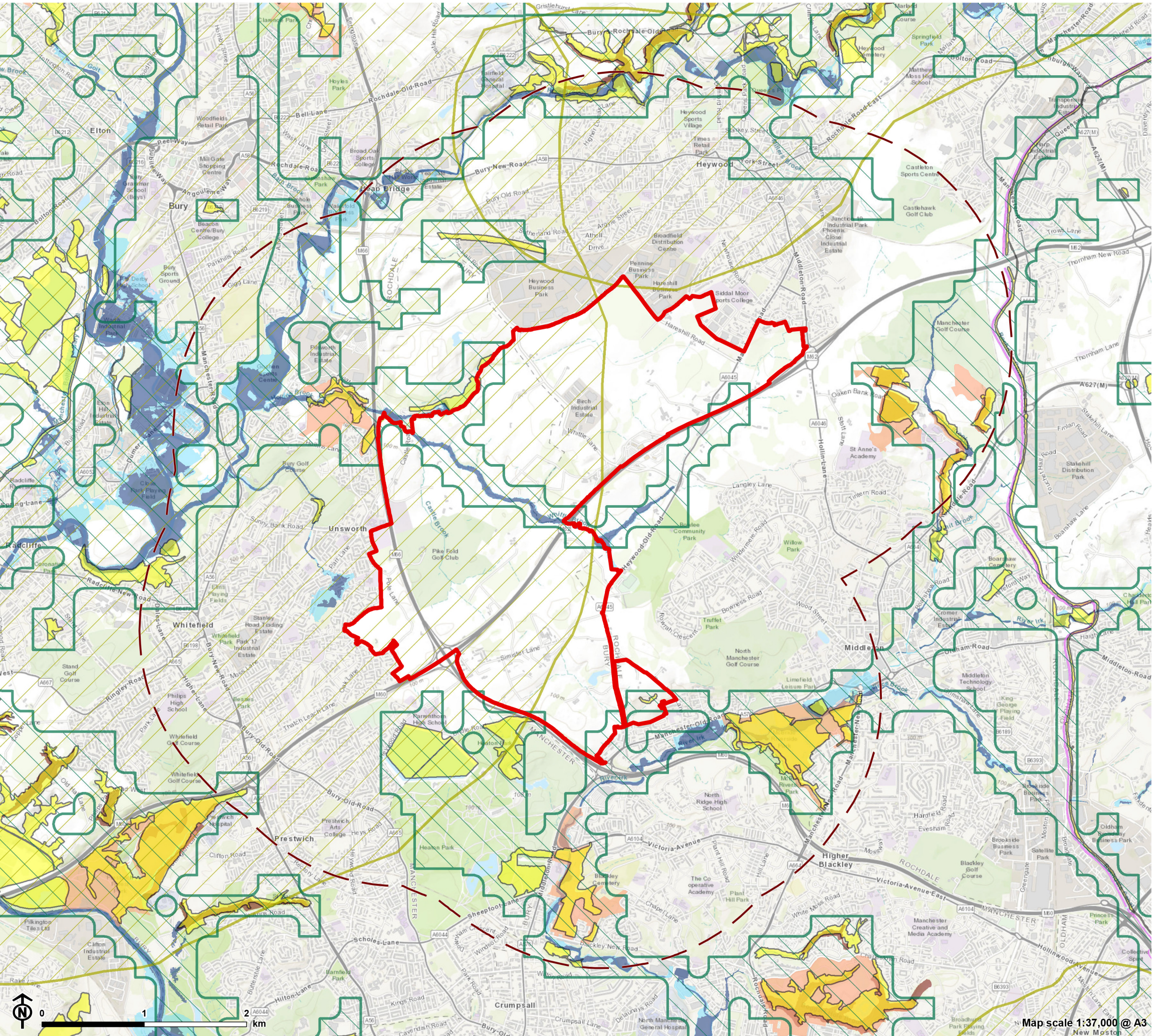
Linking in with the aforementioned interventions, there is also opportunity to expand and enhance existing native planting belts along the M60, in the retained Green Belt south of the GM sub-Allocation adjacent Heaton Park, along the M66 within GM sub-Allocation 1, Whitefield and along the M62 adjacent Whittle Brook north east of GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield.

The existing industrial areas at Birch Industrial Park, within adjacent GM sub-Allocation 01 Heywood / Pilsworth, and Heywood Distribution Park, on the periphery of GM sub-Allocation 01 Heywood / Pilsworth, would benefit from additional green open space and planting buffers to enable a higher degree of landscape integration and separation with any new development.



Access, Sport and Recreation
GM Allocation 1

- 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



**Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual
GM Allocation 1**

- 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. Upgrade the public footpath along Brightley Brook to a multi-user route.
2. Create a new pedestrian footpath in the Green Belt north east of GM sub-Allocation 01 Heywood / Pilsworth to create a local level circular walk.
3. Upgrade surface treatments to create all-weather routes.
4. Enhance pedestrian and vehicle links to football pitches in Heaton Park to increase usability.

Sport and recreation

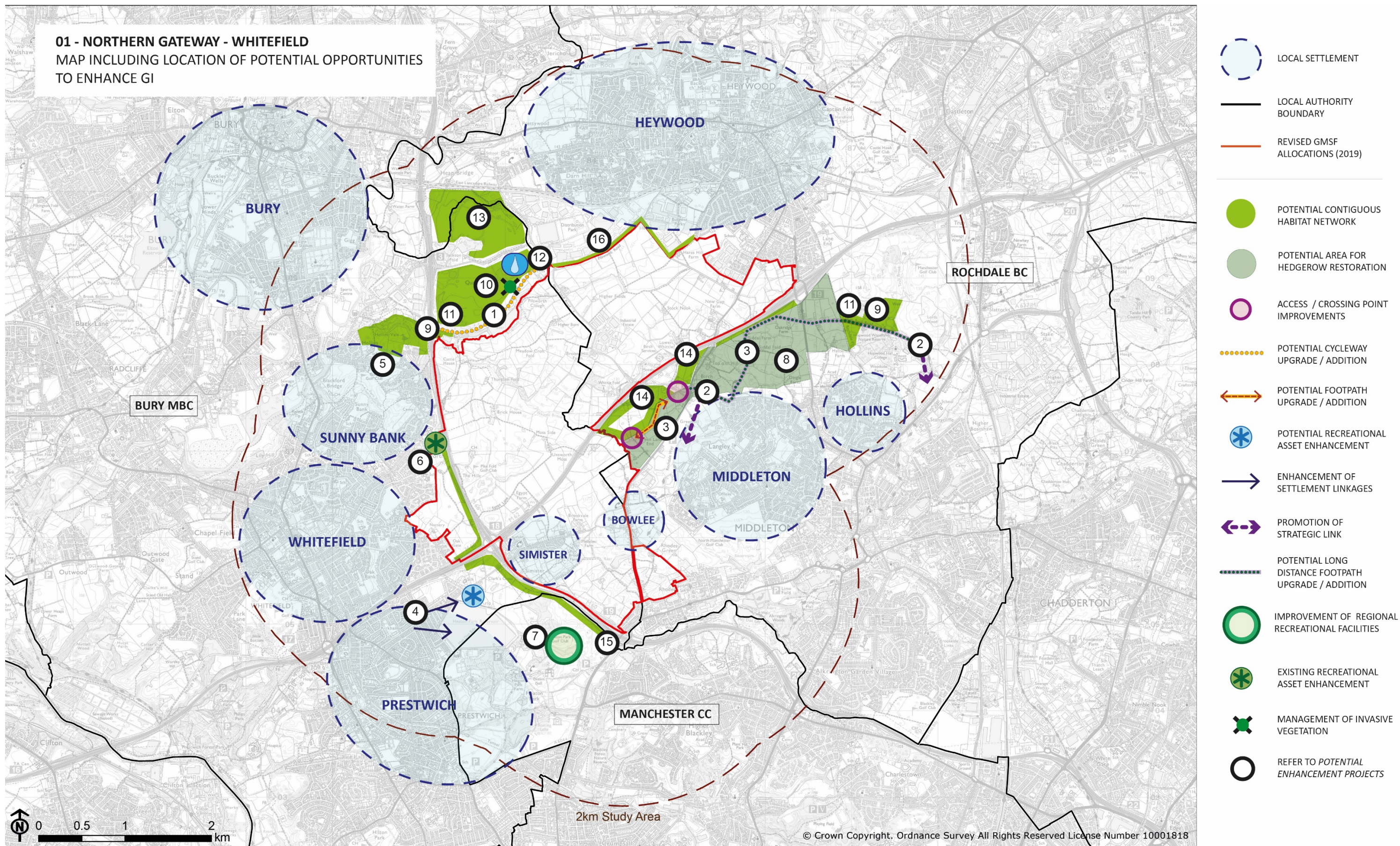
5. Diversify the existing mature planting on at Bury Golf Club to increase biodiversity.
6. Retain and enhance Unsworth Cricket club through improved drainage to reduce the impact from overplay.
7. Enhance sport and recreational provision at Heaton Park.

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

8. Restore ditches and field boundaries within the landscape.
9. Review the conservation and management of areas which form part of SBIs and LNRs to ensure improvement of the key aspects of their designation. Connect the SBIs of Hollins Vale, Hollins Plantation and Pilsworth across the M66.
10. Enhance waterways to ensure the management of invasive species and surrounding vegetation.
11. Support woodland management practices to maintain longevity of broadleaved woodland stock.
12. Enhance the ecological and hydrological beneficial features within the area of retained green belt by combining flood risk reduction with green infrastructure improvements.

Landscape and visual

13. Create a number of new green wedges and green buffers to prevent settlement coalescence.
14. Develop a green wedge which could include the reintroduction of more robust field boundaries in the landscape surrounding Birch Services.
15. Expand and enhance existing native planting belts along the M60. Explore the potential to expand the Northern Forest initiative on areas of reclaimed land on Green Belt north of GM sub-Allocation 01, Whitefield.
16. Establish planting buffers for increased landscape integration at Heywood Distribution Park.

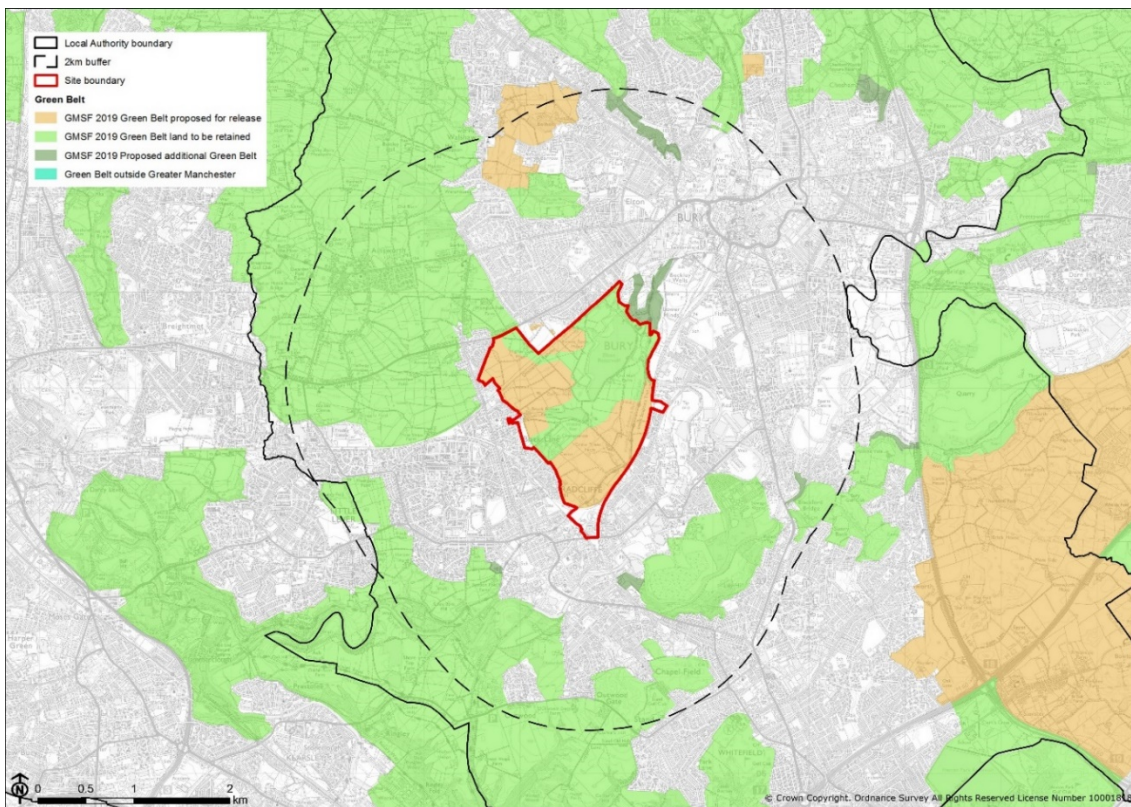


Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

GM Allocation 07, Elton Reservoir



Above: View across the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal (disused)



GM Allocation Area: 251.67 ha

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

Study area definition

GM Allocation 07 is located approximately 2.3km south west of Bury town centre, wholly within the Green Belt and under Bury Council Local Authority. From the revised draft GMSF 2019 three separate areas, approximately 50% of the total GM Allocation is proposed to be released from the Green Belt. These areas are located at the western and southern boundaries of the site at the urban fringes of Elton and Radcliffe, avoiding the central / Northern reservoir area.

Land lying within the retained Green Belt and within 2km of GM Allocation 07, Elton Reservoir will form the focus of GI recommendations / mitigation to enhance the 'beneficial use' of the Green Belt. This includes 3 sites proposed to be added to the Green Belt at Lower Hinds, Radcliffe (Off New Road) and Hollybank Street.

The GM Allocation as a whole (released and retained Green Belt) is bound to the east by the Metrolink line and the River Irwell and to the south and west by Spring Lane and the urban fringe of Radcliffe. The northern fringe is less defined with woodland blocks and the grounds of Cygnet Hospital forming the boundary. The whole allocation encompasses two water bodies; Elton Reservoir and Withins Reservoir surrounded by medium-sized, pastoral fields. East Lancashire Crematorium is situated within the south western quadrant of this GM Allocation, and the disused Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal runs north-south along the eastern section. The majority of GM Allocation 07 is designated protected land under The Bury UDP Policy OL5/2 1997 (Development in River Valleys) or Policy OL5/2 1997 (Development on Other Protected Open Land). According to local planning policy, there is current housing allocation within this GM Allocation (Ref. HL/2326/00 and Ref. HL/2305/00) to the west and directly adjacent the site south of the A58 (Ref. HL/2305/00).

Summary of evidence and policy influencing 'beneficial use' proposals

Published landscape character assessments – Greater Manchester Combined Authority

GM Allocation 07, Elton Reservoir is located within the Urban Fringe Farmland LCT and further defined within LCA 21: Little Lever and Elton Reservoir, as identified within the Greater

Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment, 2018¹. It is one of 14 sites located across all Greater Manchester authorities, identified with similar landscape characteristics. Landscapes associated with the Urban Fringe Farmland LCT have rolling to flat landform (adjacent river floodplains) with variable land use typified by lower grade agricultural dairy farming, horse and sheep grazing on higher ground and pastoral fields on flatter terrain. Wide-scale, often panoramic views are available from elevated land whilst views from lowland areas are more restricted by local level vegetation and development. 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.
- 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

According to the Bury Landscape Character Assessment, 2009² the Elton Reservoir allocation is situated within the Canal and River Corridor LCA. GM Allocation 07 itself is characterised by

¹ Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2018) Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment

² Bury Council (2009) Bury Landscape Character Assessment

its flat, low-lying topography containing a number of small, regular shaped pastoral fields relatively typical of this LCA. Elton and Withins Reservoir dominate the central part of the parcel as a nod to the industrial heritage associated with Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal. The reservoirs and large tracts of surrounding pastoral grassland are designated Sites of Biological Importance. Fragmented hedgerows and the surrounding urban built form restrict longer distance views.

Flood Risk³

The Environment Agency has identified small sections of GM Allocation 07 which are to be retained as Green Belt in the east, proposed Green Belt release in the south and Green Belt additions in the north within Flood Zone 2 and 3 (relating to surface water, fluvial and open water). This presents an opportunity to combine nature based solutions for flood risk reduction with green infrastructure enhancements.

Open Space Assessment Report⁴

The Bury Greenspace Audit assessed the natural and semi-natural green space which encompasses Elton Reservoir itself and land to the north, as 'Poor'. Recommendations for future enhancements in this area include enhancements to this area through improved recreation and access using Section 106 contributions, working with voluntary groups to encourage community ownership, liaison with the Council's Community Safety Team and Greater Manchester Police regarding relevant applications involving new natural greenspace projects.

Existing baseline

Access

A 2km stretch of the Irwell Sculpture Trail passes through GM Allocation 07, Elton Reservoir. This follows Sustrans NCN6 which runs parallel the canal towpath. This is a regional trail

³ The Environment Agency (2018) Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea)

⁴ Bury Council (2015), Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy

extending 53km and passing through Salford, Bury and Rossendale. It is the longest sculpture route in the UK connecting local heritage, the landscape and communities. The trail also provides a positive connection with a host of cultural attractions at a strategic level, and links GM Allocation 06 with Bury town centre.

There is existing visitor access GM Allocation 07, Elton Reservoir from Buller Street along a pot-holed access track adjacent Cygnet Hospital, into a small informal unsurfaced car park.

The A58 is identified as a Severance Line in TfGM's Greater Manchester Bee Network. The area of Green Belt to the north of GM Allocation 07 contains no National Cycle Routes. The A58 is also identified as a Busy Bee Way representing a potential cycle corridor.

A disused railway line dissects the northern part of GM Allocation 07, connecting The River Irwell in the east with the Urban fringe of Radcliffe to the west.

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

Access

Whilst a relatively small section of the trail will be located within the retained Green Belt, the existing elements of the trail within the Green Belt release should also be retained and accommodated within any development proposals. There is an opportunity to create a new footpath to link this existing asset with the local urban population in Redvales with a new access point at Warth Road through the existing underpass and creating a new crossing point over the River Irwell. This would join PRoW 16ST on the other side of the river.

National Cycle Route No. 6 is situated on part of the Irwell Sculpture Trail, and there is opportunity to create local cycle links both east and west within the retained Green Belt and creating a new local level access route. This enhancement would echo the Beelines Vision as discussed within Greater Manchester Bee Network as published by TfGM.

There is also an opportunity to improve recreation links from GM Allocation 07 along the Irwell Sculpture Trail to the proposed addition to the Green Belt at Hollybank Street. Improvements could include signage, surface upgrading and additional seating.

The existing vehicular access to this GM Allocation within the retained Green Belt could be improved to increase visitor numbers to the site. The access track and car park would benefit from resurfacing and prominent entrance signage at Buller Street and on Highways signage on the A58 would improve visitor access.

Settlement linkages could also be improved between Redvales and the retained Green Belt to improve access from the urban fringe to the Green Belt.

Within the wider adjacent Green Belt, there are opportunities to create new cycle routes to the north in retained Green Belt surrounding Ainsworth. The extensive PRoW network, particularly Ref. 18SA, provides potential for upgrading to cycleway standard to offer a significant local-level off-road cycle network. The inclusion of a crossing point on the A58 linking GM Allocation 07 with the Green Belt to the north would be a key consideration.

Conservation and enhancement of the existing disused railway line is a key consideration for retention within development proposals associated with the release of the Green Belt, and in the section which is located within the retained Green Belt. Not only does this feature provide links with the industrial heritage of the landscape, but also a new opportunity for multi-user (cycle, footpath and bridleway) recreational links across the north western boundary of GM Allocation 07 through an existing area of light industry, linking with PRoW 33SA and the wider urban area of Radcliffe to the south west.

Existing baseline

Sport and recreation

Elton Reservoir provides a major recreational facility for the residents of Bury, Bolton and North Manchester. Elton Sailing Club is located at the northern end of the Reservoir and offers both leisure and competitive sailing on the reservoir. Efforts could be made to create stronger links with other sports facilities in the area, such as Radcliffe Leisure Centre, in the southern corner of GM Allocation 07, Radcliffe Cricket Club and Radcliffe Borough Football Club, to offer accessible sports packages to local residents.

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

Sport and recreation

The existing PRow network within the retained Green Belt, the adjacent Green Belt and the proposed Green Belt Addition at Lower Hinds could be enhanced through the introduction of a hierarchy of local level routes. Improvements could, include re-surfacing, access control, way-marking and interpretation to encourage healthy lifestyles and increase use of this green space asset.

There is also scope for a radical review of the agricultural land around the reservoir within the retained Green Belt, to understand the potential for the creation of a regional country park visitor attraction, retaining the identified landscape character and improve the green infrastructure links to the surrounding landscape.

Existing baseline

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

The GM Allocation 07, Elton Reservoir is already host to existing and potential locally designated biodiversity and wildlife sites in the form of the disused Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal, Elton and Withins Reservoir, the River Irwell, Metrolink corridor and a disused railway line. A large part of this feature is within the Proposed Green Belt Release.

The disused Manchester, Bury and Bolton Canal provides a strategic green infrastructure link from Bury into the heart of Salford through GM Allocation 07.

Large tranches of GM Allocation 07 are designated Sites of Biological Importance. In particular Elton Reservoir has been designated for its breeding bird habitat.

GM Allocation 07 is approximately 1km south of Cyrus Ainsworth’s Nurseries & Parkers Lodges SBI, recognised for its Open Water habitat. The reservoir forms part of a network of waterbody ‘stepping stones’, typical of north west England.

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

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

Where the Canal is within the retained element of the Green Belt (eastern boundary), there is potential to enhance habitats through careful planting regimes as identified by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU), typical of this particular habitat and consistent with enhancements of the wider Manchester Canal network.

There is opportunity to link the SBI sites at Elton Reservoir and Daisyfield to the Lower Hinds Green Belt Addition to the north along the River Irwell using site specific habitat enhancement that is reflective of local character, and management of invasive species, particularly Himalayan Balsam. Sensitive design to further biodiversity enhancements (including provision of areas of wildlife refuge away from disturbance) with increased recreational access, education, and potentially also renewable energy sources (e.g. biomass woodland) can be explored.

Elton Reservoir, within the retained Green Belt, provides wildlife and biodiversity value, but also opportunities to enhance recreational provision at both a local and regional level. There is particular opportunity to link the green infrastructure at the reservoir with the [enhanced] semi-natural grassland SBI at Elton Goyt to the east, creating a more functional habitat mosaic. Note that where ecological value, indeed viability, is dependent on habitat being sufficiently free of disturbance (as can be the case for breeding birds, for example), this must be maintained where opportunity for increased access is proposed.

Green infrastructure links should be realised in the Green Belt north of this GM Allocation to create an enhanced habitat mosaic. This would be particularly relevant at the boundary between the SBI and adjoining GM Allocation 09, Walshaw, with an emphasis on a green infrastructure buffer of diverse native species in keeping with those already present on site. Hedgerows and settlement edge vegetation should be retained and strengthened to ensure green infrastructure continuity, and to provide appropriate screening in and around key wildlife features.

Due to the proximity of EA Flood Zones 2 and 3, any future GI enhancements could seek to enhance the ecological and hydrological beneficial features within the area of retained Green

Belt by combining flood risk reduction with green infrastructure improvements. Proposals which manage and reduce surface water flooding could also be explored.

Existing baseline

Landscape and visual

Industrial relicts such as the disused railway line and Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal are key features within the landscape. These features should be retained and enhanced alongside any development proposals.

The archaeology associated with Piecemeal Enclosure, Surveyed Enclosure and Agglomerated Fields as identified within the Greater Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation (2008), should be investigated for preservation in situ or for recording.

The GMCA Landscape Character Assessment (2018) advises woodland creation schemes on areas of low grade agricultural land, including the Northern Forest Initiative.

If development does take place within GM Allocation 07, the landscape will play an important role in maintaining a degree of separation between settlements to prevent coalescence.

Open views across pasture and moor land are currently offered from the Irwell Sculpture Trail / NCN6.

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

Landscape and visual

Within the retained Green Belt in this GM Allocation, there is an opportunity to build on historic and remnant land-use practices adjacent the canal and the reservoirs to maintain lowland hay meadows and neutral/acid pastures as identified within Countryside Stewardship Schemes to the south east of Elton Reservoir.

It is also important that new development does not dilute the strong field patterns associated with this landscape. In particular, the openness and field pattern around Elton Reservoir within

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

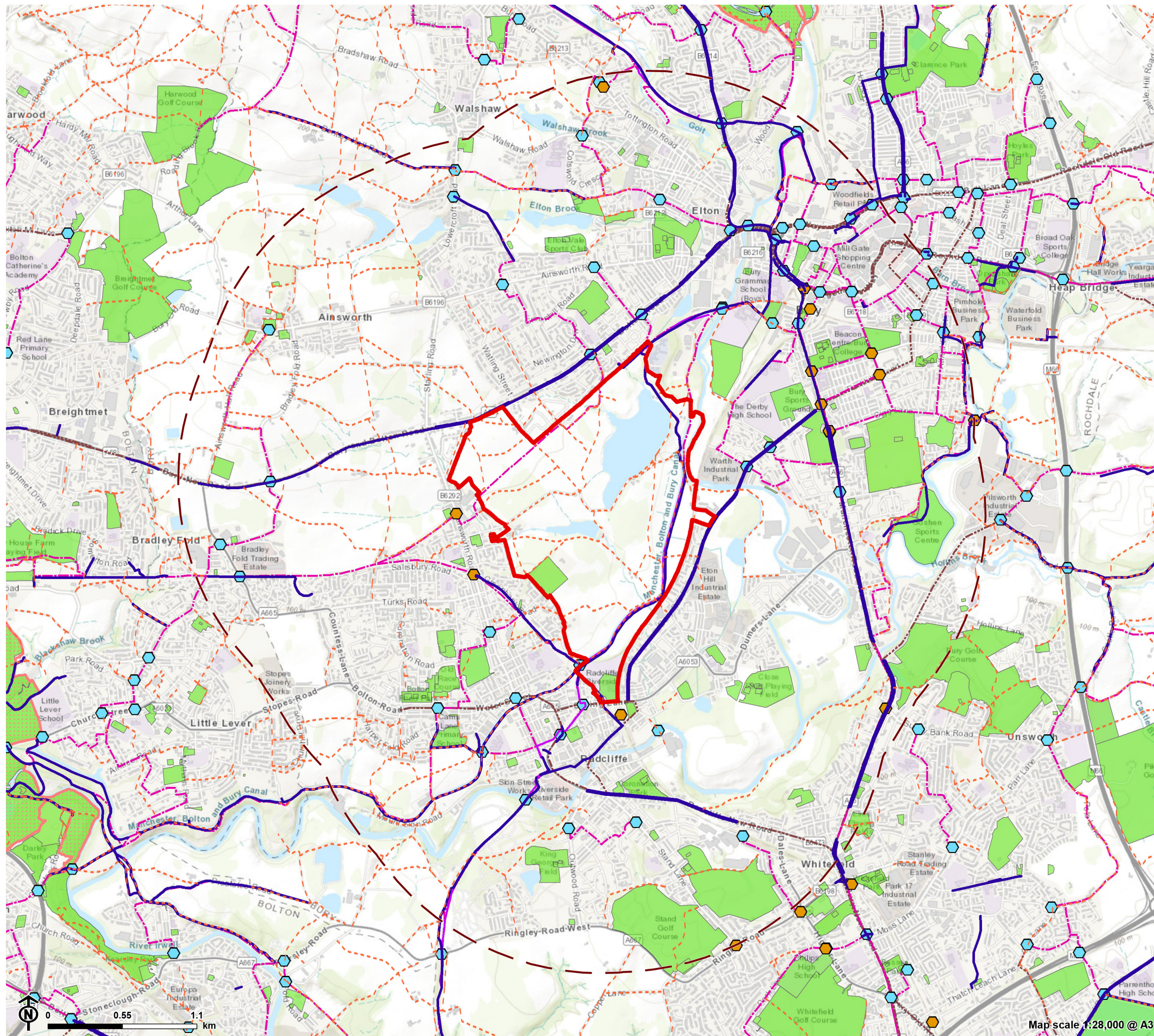
the retained Green Belt and in the adjacent Green Belt to the north west where there is more apparent time-depth associated with the landscape. Such locations should be enhanced with native hedgerow planting and selective hedgerow trees to improve on the species diversity.

There is opportunity to strengthen the links between GM Allocation 07 and the surrounding Green Belt, particularly to the north west, through woodland creation. The agricultural land classification in the Green Belt north of the A58 is poor at Grade 4, with potential to extend the existing woodland infrastructure into fields east of Starling Road and extending Starling Road Reservoir SBI plantation to the west.

Further reinforcement of woodland at Ainsworth Lodge SBI through extensions south and across the A58 Bury and Bolton Road, would start to create additional green infrastructure links adjacent transport corridors and also maintain a degree of separation between any potential new development and the existing urban fringe.

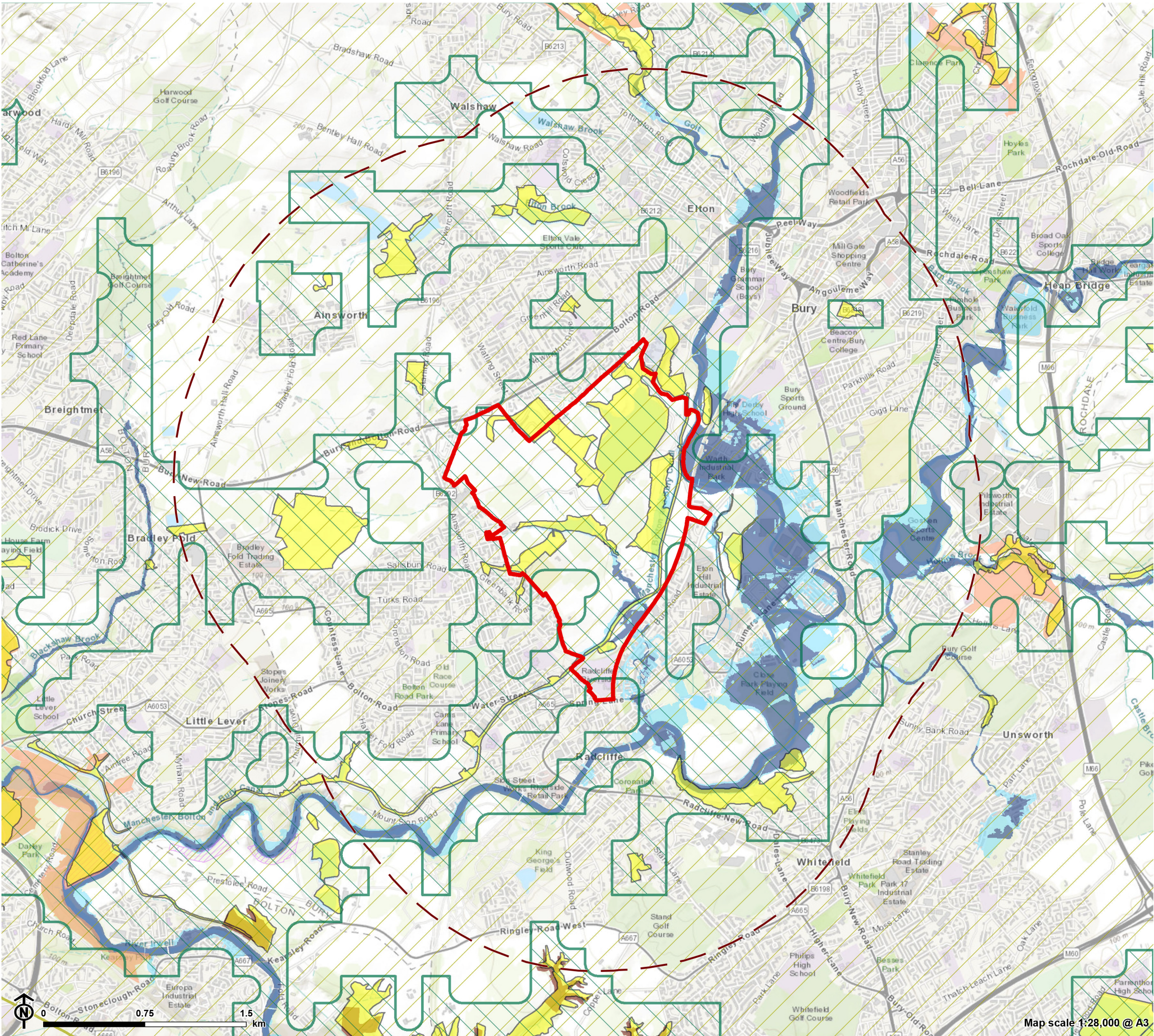
Green buffers and green wedges of native woodland and shrub planting can be utilised at the junction between existing and proposed development, and along transport corridors such as the A58 to provide softer edges to urbanised areas. This could be achieved in particular within the adjacent Green Belt west of GM Allocation 07 around the existing urban fringe of Higher Ainsworth Road to the west and within the areas of GM Allocation 07 in retained Green Belt north east of East Lancashire Crematorium. Planting around the Crematorium should be kept lower in height to maintain the open views towards the East.

There is also potential to create a gateway feature on the A58 linking the narrow section of Green Belt to the North and South. This could form a sculptural installation, local artwork or interpretation signage.



Access, Sport and Recreation
GM Allocation 7

- 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



**Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual
GM Allocation 7**

- 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 1:28,000 @ A3

Potential enhancement projects

Access

1. Retain and accommodate the Irwell Sculpture Trail within development proposals.
2. Introduce access track and car park improvements north of Elton Sailing Club.
3. Settlement linkages could also be improved between Redvales and the retained Green Belt.
4. Upgrade sections of the PRow network to cycleway standard and create a new crossing point on the A58.
5. Create an access point at Warth Road through the existing underpass and new crossing point over the River Irwell.
6. Conserve and enhance the existing disused railway line.

Sport and recreation

7. Enhance the existing PRow network through improvements such as re-surfacing, access control, way-marking and interpretation.
8. Create Elton 'Country Park' including a masterplan to create a regional destination site. Detailed interventions could include informal play, wildlife access provision (hides) and interpretation. Inclusion of planting and management provision to ensure flora and fauna reliant on areas of refuge away from recreational disturbance are generously accommodated.

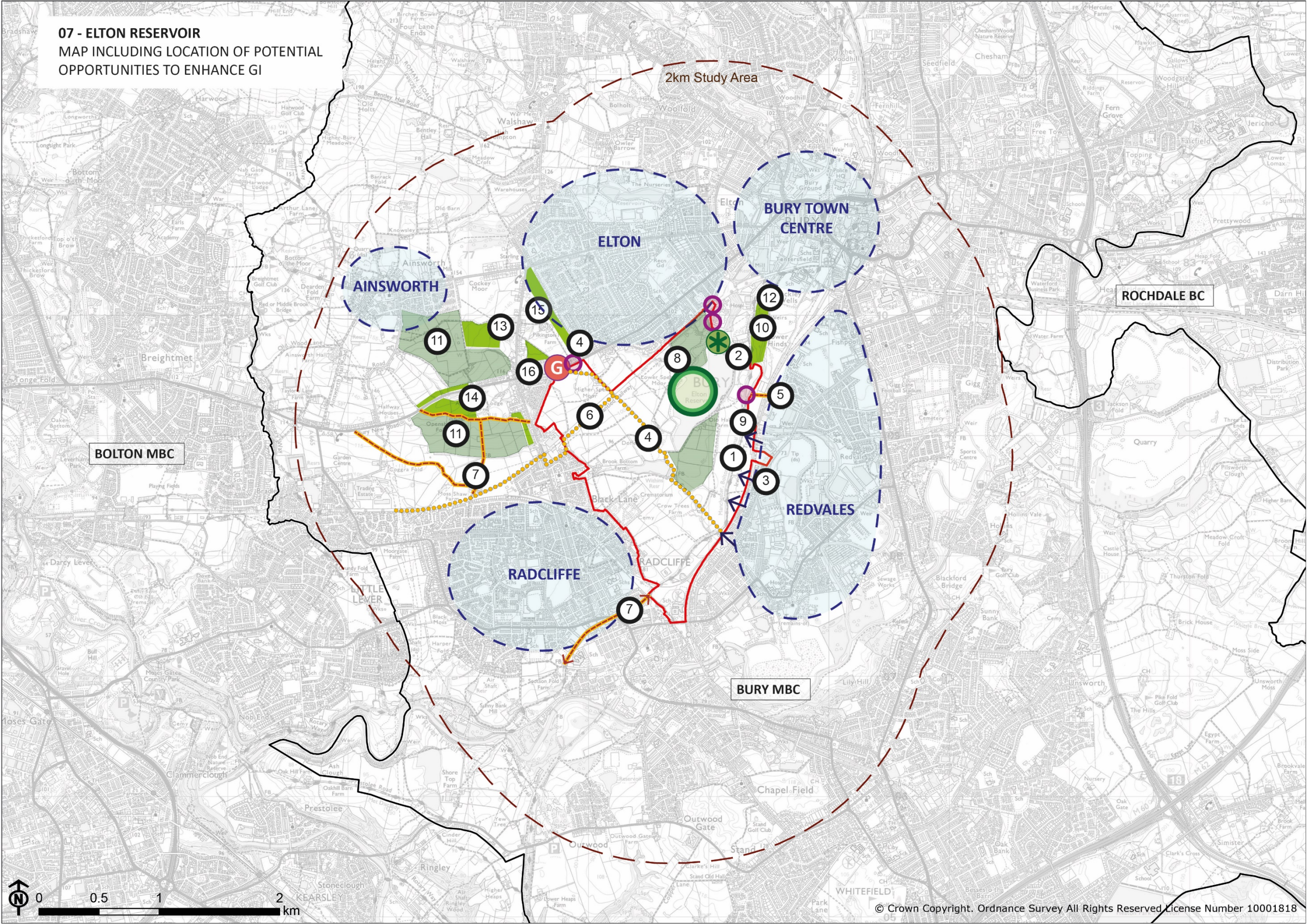
Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

9. Create new 'wetland' habitat adjacent to, and extending from Manchester, Bury and Bolton Canal; together with appropriate planting along this linear corridor.
10. Link the SBI sites at Elton Reservoir and Daisyfield to the Lower Hinds Green Belt Addition to the north along the River Irwell using site specific habitat enhancement. The opportunity also exists to link the green infrastructure at the reservoir with the [enhanced] semi-natural grassland SBI at Elton Goyt to the east, creating a more functional habitat mosaic.

11. Hedgerows and settlement edge vegetation should be retained and strengthened to ensure green infrastructure continuity, and to provide appropriate screening in and around key wildlife features.

Landscape and visual

12. Build on historic and remnant land-use practices adjacent the canal and the reservoirs to maintain lowland hay meadows and neutral/acid pastures. Seek to enhance the ecological and hydrological beneficial features within the area of retained Green Belt by combining flood risk reduction with green infrastructure improvements.
13. Extend existing woodland blocks in Green Belt west and north west of GM Allocation 07.
14. Reinforce woodland at Ainsworth Lodge SBI through extensions south and across the A58 Bury and Bolton Road.
15. Introduce green buffers and green wedges of native woodland and shrub planting at the junction between existing and proposed development, and along transport corridors such as the A58 to provide softer edges to urbanised areas.
16. Create a gateway feature on the A58 linking the narrow section of Green Belt to the North and South.

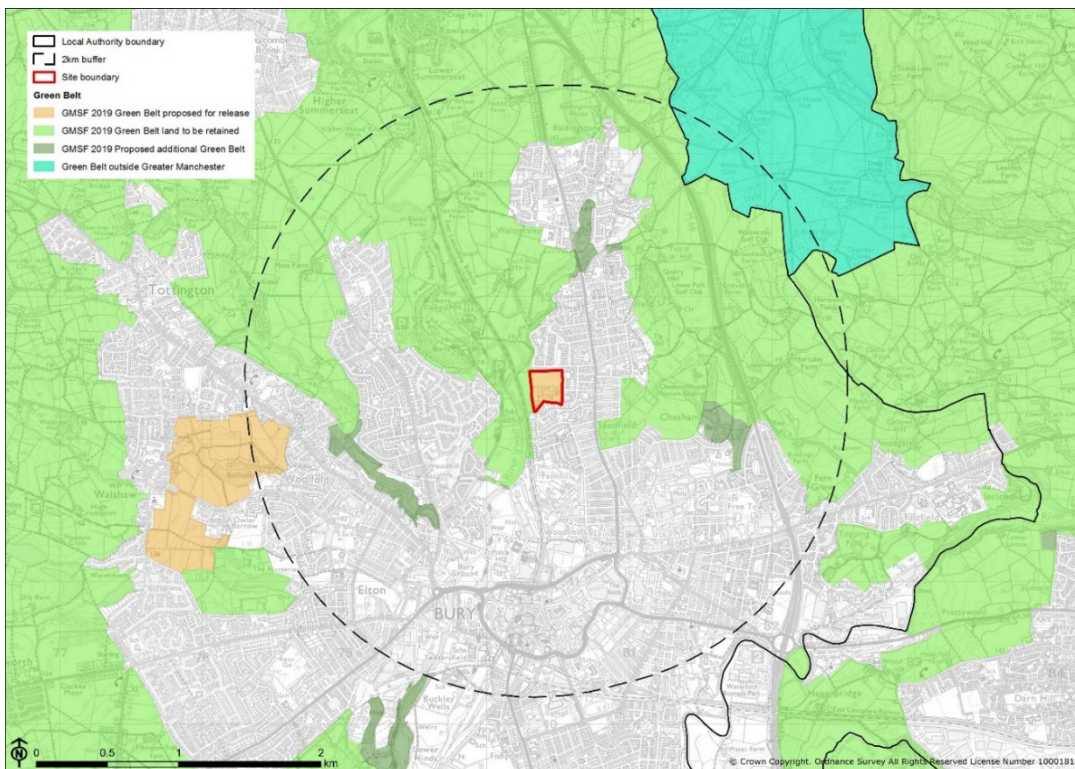


Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

GM Allocation 08, Seedfield



Above: View north west across GM Allocation 08 towards Holcombe Hill and retained Green Belt in the background



GM Allocation Area: 5.15 ha

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

Study area definition

This small, flat parcel is located approximately 1.5km north of Bury town centre, east of the River Irwell and west of the A56 is located within the administrative boundary of Bury Council. The full extent of GM Allocation 8, which lies wholly within the Green Belt, is proposed for release. Seedfield Centre Equipment Store, an NHS facility occupies approximately 50% of GM Allocation 08 with a large area of well-maintained amenity grass located to the north, and deciduous woodland in the southern portion of the site (north of West Drive). The grass area is occupied by five pitches as part of Seedfield Sports Club.

In 2018, the GM Allocation site and an area of woodland to the west were identified for housing development, Draft GMSF Site Allocation OA5, Site Reference HL/2518/00. The parcel is almost fully enclosed by the urban fringe of Chesham on the northern, eastern and southern boundaries with woodland forming part of the River Irwell and preserved East Lancashire Railway corridor to the west.

Land lying within 2km of GM Allocation 08, Seedfield (identified as retained Green Belt) will form the focus of GI recommendations / mitigation to enhance the 'beneficial use' of the Green Belt. There are 3 proposed additions to the Green Belt within 2km of site 08 (Woolford, Pigs Lea Brook 1 and Chesham).

Summary of evidence and policy influencing 'beneficial use' proposals

Published landscape character assessments – Greater Manchester Combined Authority

The southern part of the GM Allocation 08, Seedfield is situated within Incised Urban Fringe Valleys LCT according to the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment, 2018¹. It is further refined into LCA 23: River Irwell (north Bury) and Kirklees. Sites within this LCT exhibit strong geographical characteristics including steep-sided river valleys

¹ Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2018) Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment

upstream, with wider meandering valley floors downstream. Due to the glacial geology, farmland is often lower quality and poorly drained. A significant amount of the land within the valleys is used for recreation creating large tracts of amenity grassland associated with golf course, playing fields and Country Parks. The River Irwell corridor supports a rich Riparian Woodland habitat which creates a strategic biodiversity link through Bury, Salford and into Manchester. Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Area include:

- The protection and enhancement of semi-natural habitats and networks including riparian broadleaved woodland.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, particularly adjacent the Greater Manchester River networks.
- Recreational opportunities should be maintained and enhanced to preserve the high recreational value of the valleys as green fingers through densely populated areas, particularly along public footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes and the various recreational destinations and heritage sites found within the local landscape.

The remainder of the GM Allocation site is not part of the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment, 2018.

Published landscape character assessments – Local level

The Bury Landscape Character Assessment, 2009² identifies GM Allocation 08 within the River Valley LCA. Woodland cover in this area is patchy and confined to the river corridor, on the western boundary of the parcel. GM Allocation 08 itself is representative of the many amenity and recreational uses associated with the LCA.

Policy OL5 / 2 River Valleys³

According to the Bury Unitary Development Plan, 1997, part of the Green Belt to the west of GM Allocation 08, Seedfield is designated under Policy OL5 / 2 River Valleys. This relates directly to

² Bury Council (2009) Bury Landscape Character Assessment

³ Bury Council (1997) Bury Unitary Development Plan

the River Irwell corridor. Bury Council's Policy is to maintain and preserve the open character of the Borough's river valleys.

Policy EN6 / 4 Wildlife Links and Corridors³

Policy EN6 / 4 Wildlife Links and Corridors from the Bury Unitary Development Plan, 1997 relates to the River Irwell west of GM Allocation 08 and correlates with Policy OL5 / 2 River Valleys. The Council will retain, protect and enhance the natural environment of the Borough, particularly in relation to areas of ecological wildlife and geological importance.

Bury Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy⁴

Seedfield Sports Club currently utilise the amenity grass on GM Allocation 08 for football provision. According to the Bury Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy, 2019, the site accommodates one adult, one youth 11v11, one youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitch. The mini 7v7 pitch is standard quality with all remaining pitch types assessed as poor quality. The club is very popular with all pitches played to capacity. Ancillary facilities have also been identified as poor quality.

Open Space Assessment Report⁵

GM Allocation 08 is within the Bury East Township on the border with the Bury West Township. The Bury Greenspace Audit assessed the Outdoor Sport associated with the GM Allocation site as 'Poor'. According to the audit, Bury East has the largest deficiency of natural and semi-natural greenspace in the Borough compared with the standards set for quantity. Whilst the urban character of the Township restricts opportunities to remedy this new provision will be sought via developer contributions where possible. Priorities for the area include new provision of natural / semi-natural greenspace, amenity greenspace and allotments and enhanced provision of natural / semi-natural greenspace. Further action was identified to improve opportunities for physical exercise for young children through the provision of informal play.

Much of the retained Green Belt to the immediate west and north is within Bury West Township which contains some of the Borough's key recreational assets including Burrs Country Park, the

⁴ Bury Council (2019) Bury Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy

⁵ Bury Council (2015) Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy

Kirklees Valley and Bolton and the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal. Priorities for the area are aligned with that of Bury East Township with the addition of Local Nature Reserve designation at Kirklees Valley Phase 2 and a long term development plan for Burrs Country Park.

Burrs Country Park Strategy⁶

Published in 2015, the document sets out the vision to establish a ‘destination park’ and regional attraction which becomes central to the town’s tourism offer. The strategy aims to develop a strong and vibrant visitor economy, whilst also encouraging investment in the park and wider Irwell Valley over a period of 15 years.

Existing baseline

Access

GM Allocation 08 is quite isolated in terms of existing footpath or cycle way infrastructure.

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

Access

Pedestrian and cycle connectivity could be improved along the River Irwell or the preserved East Lancashire Railway, south into Bury town centre and north to Burrs Country Park in the adjacent Green Belt. Opening up access to the River Irwell in this location will have the potential to create local-level leisure and recreation opportunities. Enhancements would include footpath creation, signage and access improvements with links to PROW 154BUR and National Cycle Route 6.

Whilst the River Irwell and East Lancashire Railway create Green Corridor and leisure enhancement opportunities north-south, they also act as a severance between east-west

⁶ Bury Council (2015) Burrs Country Park Strategy (2015-2029)

pedestrian routes. New crossing points could be considered within the adjacent Green Belt south west of GM Allocation 08 linking Woodhill Road Park and the Bury suburbs of Seedfield / Limefield.

Existing baseline

Sport and recreation

Seedfield Sports Club is located within the GM Allocation site.

Pedestrian routeways are limited within proximity to GM Allocation 08.

Sports facilities located within adjacent Green Belt at Clarence Park include tennis courts, football pitches and a bowling green and provide local and regional leisure facilities.

The River Irwell on adjacent Green Belt supports a number of fishing clubs, particularly at Burrs Country Park.

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

Sport and recreation

Provision should be made to move the facility to a suitable location to land within or outwith the adjacent Green Belt. Ideally, this move should be made within 800m to maintain accessibility and could be accommodated within adjacent Green Belt at Clarence Park or Burrs Country Park with improved ancillary facilities.

Walking routes, including signage should be reviewed to link neighbouring open space facilities within the adjacent Green Belt, including Clarence Park to the east, Burrs Country Park to the north and play space at Woodhill Road Park.

The football pitches and bowling green would benefit from enhanced maintenance and remedial work, whilst the tennis courts have the opportunity to be fully refurbished (including floodlighting).

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

The proximity of GM Allocation 08 to this resource could create the opportunity for low-key recreational activities, for example opening up access points on the banks of the River Irwell on adjacent Green Belt near to this GM Allocation.

Existing baseline

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

Kirklees Brook and Chesham Woods are SBIs within adjacent Green Belt east and west of GM Allocation 08, 1.3km and 1km in distance respectively. Both sites are designated for their woodland infrastructure with Kirklees Brook demonstrating additional features including aquatic invertebrates, bats and ponds and small lodges.

Flushes at Springside SBI is designated within the adjacent Green Belt, north west of the GM Allocation site near Banks Farm.

Gorses Quarry SBI designated for Heathland habitat, small ponds, amphibian and aquatic invertebrate communities is within the remaining Green Belt north east of GM Allocation 08.

The River Irwell is also of strategic GMCA Green Infrastructure importance, acting as a green / blue spine through Bury, into Salford and a small part of Manchester.

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

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

Green infrastructure enhancements at these locations within the adjacent Green Belt could include habitat management in conjunction with Greater Manchester Ecology Unit’s recommendations at these locations.

Improvements and enhancements to the flushes at Springside SBI could be made by land management and increased uptake of Agri-environment schemes in the surrounding farmland; increasing the priority habitat (Purple moor grass and Rush Pasture).

Gorses Quarry SBI habitat could be enhanced with careful management with the aim to connect this with the SBI of Chesham Woods. Creating a more continuous corridor for wildlife.

There is potential to enhance the River Irwell Green Corridor in adjacent Green Belt, increasing and improving the green infrastructure network (deciduous woodland) at this location. This is a key step in providing accessible high quality green infrastructure within one of the more urban and densely developed areas within the Bury Borough. In conjunction with the access / recreation opportunities noted above, this has the potential to create a regional multi-functional green infrastructure framework for northern Greater Manchester.

Existing baseline

Landscape and visual

GM Allocation 08, Seedfield has been identified within the 'Institutional' classification, under 'Community Establishment' according to the Greater Manchester Historic Urban Characterisation (2008). There are no historic features of note. The nearest historical feature of significance is the Scheduled Ancient Monument Castlesteads, an iron age/roman settlement and hill fort adjacent Burrs Country Park.

The Landscape Character Assessment (2018) suggests a number of opportunities to enhance green infrastructure in accordance with landscape and visual characteristics typical of the Incised Urban Fringe LCT.

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

Landscape and visual

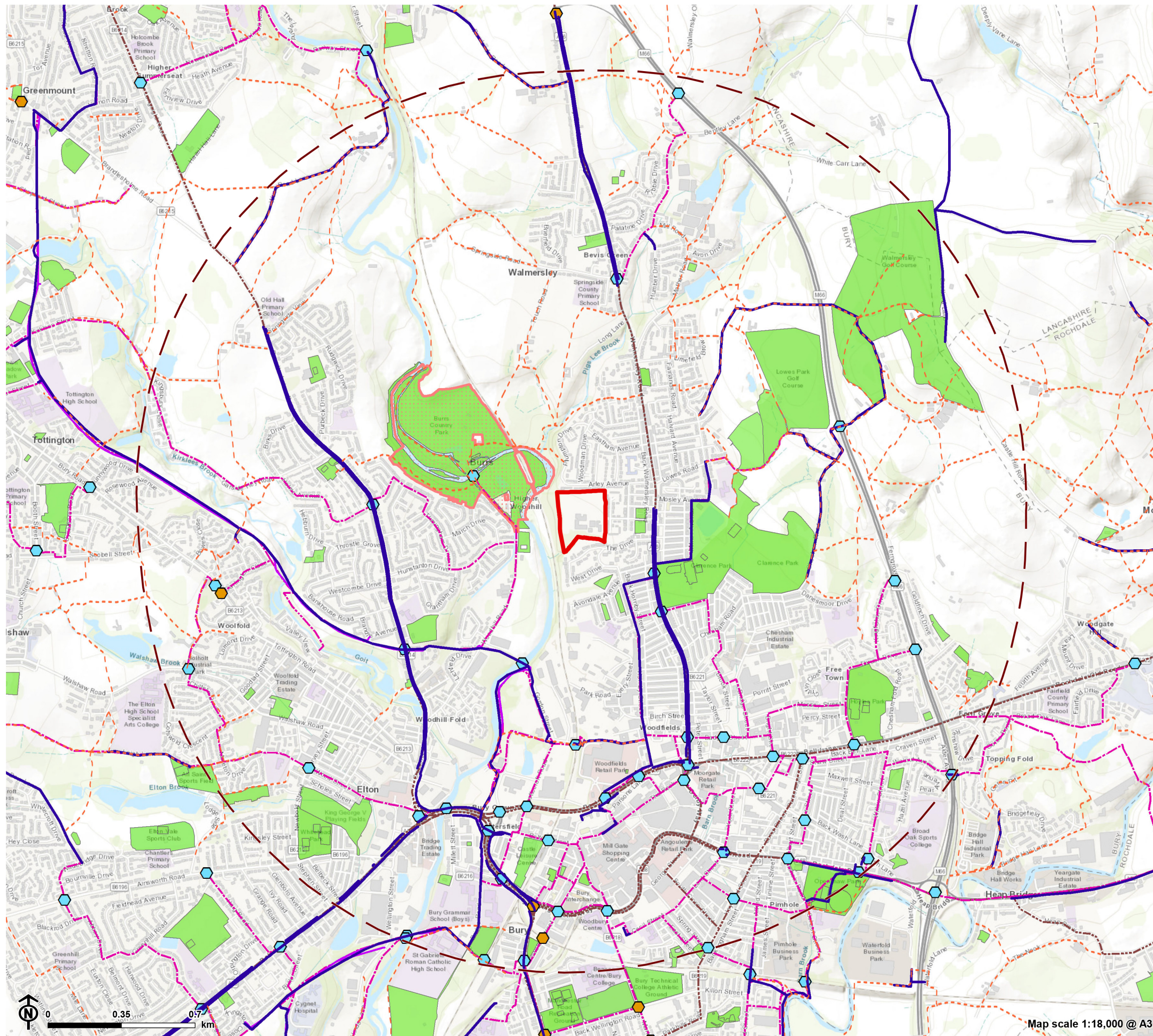
The Castlesteads Scheduled Ancient Monument within the adjacent Green Belt adjacent Burrs Country Park to the north could be enhanced through access improvements, including additional link footpaths to and from PROW 160BUR, interpretation to celebrate the heritage of the site, and additional art work to build upon the legacy of the Irwell Valley Sculpture Trail which runs adjacent the site along PROW 160BUR.

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

Green infrastructure opportunities could include the enhancement of semi-natural habitats and networks including riparian and broadleaved woodland and regenerating habitats typical at Burrs Country Park within the adjacent Green Belt to the north and at Woodhill Brook in proposed addition to the Green Belt at Woolfold to the west. The proposed addition to the Green Belt at Pigs Lea also offers potential for urban fringe enhancements to woodland planting.

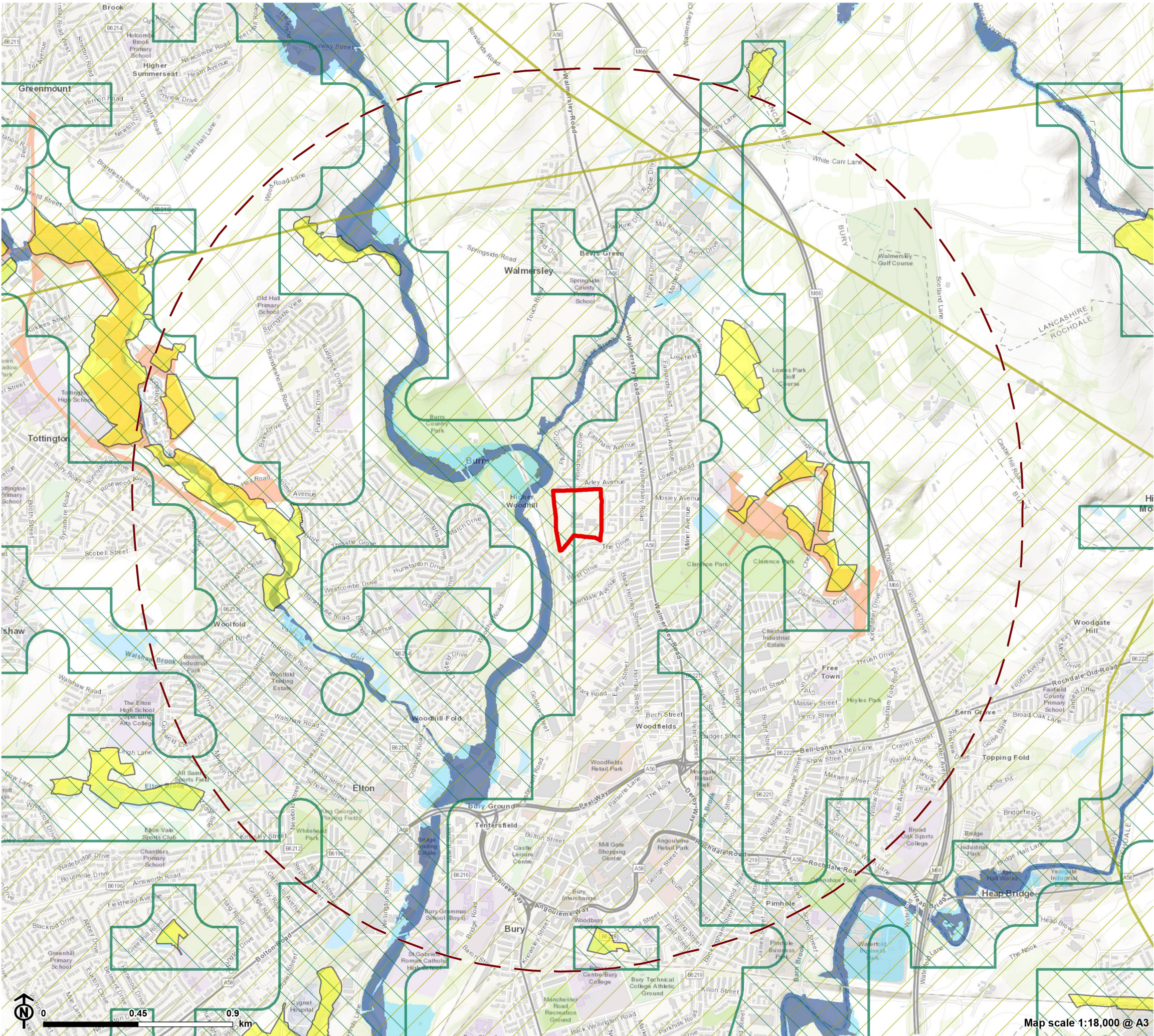
The adjacent Green Belt to the north of GM Allocation 08 and north of Burrs Country Park is of low agricultural value and offers potential for woodland creation schemes based on the Northern Forest Initiative.

The adjacent Green Belt to the west of the GM Allocation site adjacent Brandlesholme Road would benefit from hedgerow enhancements to replace post and wire fencing, breach gaps and enhance species diversity.



Access, Sport and Recreation
GM Allocation 8

- 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



**Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual
GM Allocation 8**

- 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. Improve strategic pedestrian and cycle linkages along the River Irwell or the preserved East Lancashire Railway towards Bury town centre and Burrs Country Park.
2. Improve access and enhance the green corridor of the River Irwell in this location to create local-level leisure and recreation opportunities.
3. Introduce new crossing points within the adjacent Green Belt south west of GM Allocation 08, linking Woodhill Road Park and the Bury suburbs of Seedfield / Limefield.

Sport and recreation

4. Relocate Seedfield Sports Club to a suitable location to land within or outwith the adjacent Green Belt.
5. Walking routes, including signage should be reviewed to link neighbouring open space facilities within the adjacent Green Belt.
6. Refurbish sports facilities at Clarence Park.
7. Create additional recreational activities at Burrs Country Park.

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

8. Incorporate green infrastructure enhancements at existing SBIs, including habitat management in conjunction with Greater Manchester Ecology Unit's recommendations at these locations.

Landscape and visual

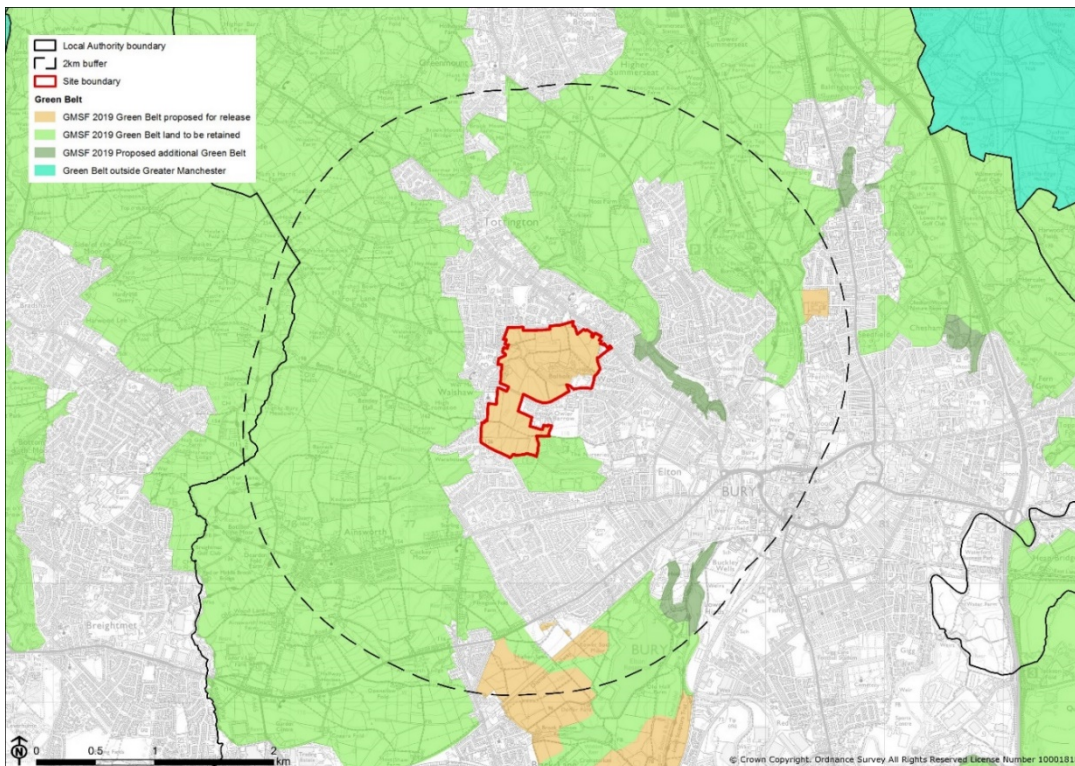
9. Enhance the Castlesteads scheduled monument within the adjacent Green Belt adjacent Burrs Country Park to the north.
10. Enhance semi-natural habitats and networks; including riparian and broadleaved woodland and regenerating habitats typical at Burrs Country Park. Incorporate woodland creation schemes based on the Northern Forest Initiative at Burrs Country Park.
11. Hedgerow restoration at Brandlesholme Road.

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

GM Allocation 09, Walshaw



Above: View from Walshaw Road west across GM Manchester 09 towards Christ Church
Walshaw Parish



GM Allocation Area: 64.13 ha

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

Study area definition

Located on elevated land approximately 2km north west of Bury town Centre, GM Allocation 09, Walshaw is surrounded by the suburbs of Woolfold, Walshaw and Owler Barrow. It is located wholly within the local authority borough of Bury. The gently undulating GM Allocation combines a number of pastures and rough grazing fields enclosed by poor quality hedgerows and post and wire fences. Watercourses and water bodies, including Walshaw Brook and Bolholt Reservoir are key features within the landscape. The boundary is relatively undefined with residential development to the north, east and west and woodland surrounding reservoirs to the south. Walshaw Road dissects the parcel east-west providing a busy transport link between central Bury and outlying settlements to the west. The majority of GM Allocation 09 is located within the Green Belt although a parcel surrounding a small reservoir in the east lies outwith this designation. The entirety of the Green Belt located within the GM Allocation site is proposed for release. An area of brownfield land within the GM Allocation site adjacent Bolholt Reservoir was granted planning permission in 2018 for residential development, Site Reference HL/2826/00.

Land lying within 2km of GM Allocation 09, Walshaw (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 the GM Allocation site at Woolfold to the east and Lower Hinds to the south east.

Summary of evidence and policy influencing 'beneficial use' proposals

Published landscape character assessments – Greater Manchester Combined Authority

GM Allocation 09 Walshaw is located within Urban Fringe Farmland LCT according to the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment, 2018¹. The component Landscape Character Area for GM Allocation 09 is LCA 20: Affetside and Ainsworth. The mainly

¹ Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2018) Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment

pastoral land is characterised by small and medium sized field, forming various patterns from rectilinear to distinctive web shaped originating from Parliamentary enclosure. Field boundaries predominantly comprise gappy, species-poor hedgerows with occasional clumps of hedgerow trees. The open farmland contrasts sharply with adjoining residential and industrial areas, and views are restricted by hedgerows, hedgerow trees and development further enhancing a feeling of enclosure and relative tranquillity. 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.
- 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 09, Walshaw is within the Fringe Industrial Brooks LCA according to the Bury Landscape Character Assessment, 2009². The GM Allocation site is representative of enclosed pasture / grazing land within the fringes of the Bury urban area. The LCA is dominated by a series of small brooks, including Walshaw Brook which runs east-west through the parcel, flowing into Bolholt Reservoir and eastwards, joining with Elton Brook to the south.

² Bury Council (2009) Bury Landscape Character Assessment

Typical of the central and lower parts of this LCA, GM Allocation 09 is almost entirely enclosed by suburban Bury.

Policy EN9 / 1 Special Landscape Area

According to the Bury Unitary Development Plan, 1997³, the western part of GM Allocation 09 is designated a Special Landscape Area (SLA). In areas identified on the Proposals Map as SLA any development which is permitted will be strictly controlled and required to be sympathetic to its surroundings in terms of its visual impact. High standards of design, siting and landscaping will be expected. Unduly obtrusive development will not be permitted in such areas.

Policy EN6 / 4 Wildlife Links and Corridors

Policy EN6 / 4 Wildlife Links and Corridors from the Bury Unitary Development Plan, 1997³ relates to PROW 142BUR/143BUR which runs east-west through GM Allocation 09, linking the urban areas of Walshaw and Elton along historic field boundaries and tracks. The Council will retain, protect and enhance the natural environment of the Borough, particularly in relation to areas of ecological wildlife and geological importance.

Policy RT2 / 1 Recreation and Tourism

Policy RT2 / 1 Recreation and Tourism from the Bury Unitary Development Plan, 1997³ relates to Elton Vale Sports Club. The Council will give favourable consideration to proposals involving the provision of additional recreational facilities throughout the Borough.

Open Space Assessment Report

The Green Belt within 2km of GM Allocation 09 lies within Bury West and Ramsbottom, North Manor and Tottington Townships according to the Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy, 2015⁴. The key priorities for greenspace within these areas includes new and enhanced provision of natural / semi-natural Greenspace, new provision of amenity greenspace and new provision of allotments. There are a number of publicly accessible green and open spaces within the Green Belt, or directly adjoining the Green Belt. The natural and semi-natural greenspace at Dow Lane

³ Bury council (1997) Bury Unitary Development Plan

⁴ Bury Council (2015), Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy

surrounding Elton Brook in Green Belt south east of the GM Allocation site has been rated as Poor. Elton Vale Sports Club and Dow Lane Play Area, also associated with this section of Green Belt have both been afforded a Good rating within the Quality Assessment.

Existing baseline

Access

The local area is relatively well serviced by existing Public Rights of Way, particularly in adjacent Green Belt west of Walshaw.

The existing entrance to the proposed addition to the Green Belt at Woolfold off Brandlesholme Road is untidy and uninviting.

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

Access

There may be opportunity to upgrade and enhance (resurfacing, new access points) the existing footpath network to provide local level recreational facilities. Specific paths which could be upgraded to link with existing and proposed cycle routes and on-road facilities including PRoW 134BUR, 82/83TOT, 86TOT, 80TOT, 87TOT, 89TOT, 132/133BUR. Such upgrades will enable circular walking routes within the Green Belt.

There is further opportunity to enhance routes through on-line resources such as trail guides and route maps to promote healthy lifestyles.

There is opportunity to create a more attractive access point at this location, with opportunities including resurfacing, interpretation and signage and new planting including native tree and native species rich grass planting.

Existing baseline

Sport and recreation

Elton Cricket Club to the east is outwith the Green Belt boundary but offers functionality relating to the purposes of the Green Belt.

Elton Vale Sports Club is located south of Elton Brook within adjacent Green Belt to the west of GM Allocation 09. It offers football, cricket, tennis and rounders sports provision.

Dow Lane Play Area is located off Dow Lane in adjacent Green Belt to the south of GM Allocation 09. It has been assessed as 'Good' within recent Greenspace Audits.

New provision of allotments has been noted within the Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy, 2015. There is an existing small allotment area off Lowercroft Road in adjacent Green Belt west of GM Allocation 09.

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

Sport and recreation

The sports field is already linked to the surrounding locality via a TFGM off-road cycle route and Public Rights of Way (143BUR), although surfacing improvements and the introduction of an off road multi-user route along Elton Brook as mentioned in access enhancements would create more sustainable transport links to this facility.

According to Bury Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy, 2019, there is also enhancement opportunity relating to improvements to drainage on the cricket field to enable all-weather use.

There is opportunity for enhancements at this site to include for floodlighting to tennis courts and enhanced maintenance and remedial work to improve pitch quality in accordance with the findings of the to Bury Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy, 2019⁵.

⁵ Bury Council (2019) Bury Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy

Green infrastructure enhancements could be made to the play area to improve accessible play provision and seating. The GM Allocation site is well connected through local level and PROW links, although surface improvements could be made to ensure increased accessibility to this facility.

The existing allotments off Lowercroft Road could be extended to increase provision within this area.

There may also be the opportunity to create new allotments within the adjacent Green Belt to the west on poor grade agricultural land surrounding Elton Sports Club, creating a more diversified community 'hub'.

Existing baseline

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

GM Allocation 09, Walshaw is immediately adjacent Cyrus Ainsworth's Nurseries & Parkers Lodges SBI, recognised for its Open Water habitat.

Semi-natural habitats are evident within the proposed additions to the Green Belt at Woolfold and Lower Hinds.

Remaining green infrastructure interventions should support other enhancement opportunities in Green Belt adjacent GM Allocation 09.

The biodiversity value of Elton Brook and the associated reservoirs / ponds in adjacent Green Belt is noted.

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

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

Green infrastructure links should be realised in the Green Belt adjacent to GM Allocation 09 to create an enhanced habitat mosaic. This would be particularly relevant at the boundary between the GM Allocation site and the SBI with an emphasis on a green infrastructure buffer of

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

native species in keeping with those already present onsite. Hedgerows and settlement edge vegetation should be retained and strengthened to ensure green infrastructure continuity. Particular enhancement to the hedgerows and existing green infrastructure within GM Allocation 09 should be considered to prevent severance of habitats.

Green infrastructure enhancements at these locations will focus on improving the species diversity and managing invasive species which will assist in creating more robust habitats and link with the adjoining Green Belt.

Enhancements could include vegetation management and replanting species rich hedgerows and tree lines in adjacent footpaths, multi-user routeway improvements or at strategic access points such as Leigh Lane. Inclusion of bat and bird boxes could increase the biodiversity by providing opportunities for species to expand their territory.

There are opportunities to improve the health of still water bodies through the planting of appropriate aquatic and semi-marginal species to increase biodiversity and encourage native species succession. Planting and reinstatement of species rich hedgerows and woodland corridors to connect the fragmented Green Belt of Elton brook with the remaining Green Belt in the west will be crucial to allow species dispersal.

Existing baseline

Landscape and visual

Due to the elevated location of GM Allocation 09, consideration should be given to views of development from the north, particularly from Scobell Street / Church Street and PROW 91TOT. Development should be carefully sited within the existing landform to minimise visual impact for receptors from the north.

The GMCA Landscape Character Assessment 2018 advocates the retention and enhancement of the strong field boundaries associated with the Landscape Character Type.

The remnants of a commercial nursery are evident within the SBI to the east of GM Allocation 09.

The GMCA Landscape Character Assessment (2018) recommends 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.

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

Landscape and visual

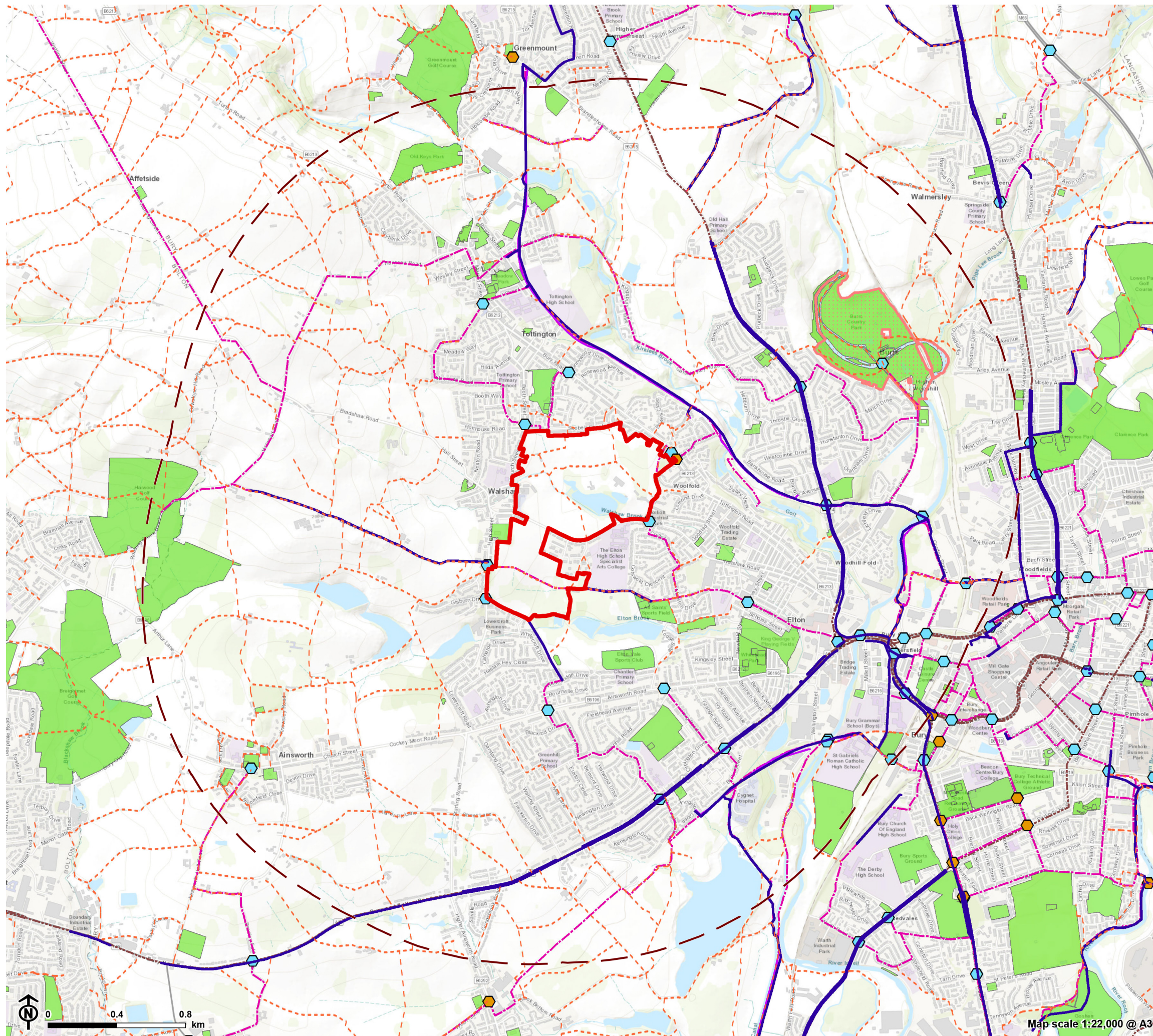
A key part of this strategy will be the retention and enhancement of existing hedgerow boundaries within GM Allocation 09, and where appropriate, the introduction of new species rich hedgerows with hedgerow trees to reinforce the Piecemeal Enclosure historic character of the majority of the GM Allocation site.

The Green Belt to the west of GM Allocation 09 offers large areas of farmland landscape. There are opportunities to enhance and restore the field boundaries in this area particularly around Lowercroft Reservoirs and in the landscape north of Bentley Hall Road, replacing post and wire fences with species rich hedgerows and stone walls at prominent visual locations adjacent minor roads.

There is opportunity at the Cyrus Ainsworth’s Nurseries & Parkers Lodges SBI in adjacent Green Belt to realise some of the heritage of the GM Allocation site. The site is characterised by some very old fruit trees and this area could be enhanced with careful ecological considerations with the aim of developing a community orchard and recreational asset.

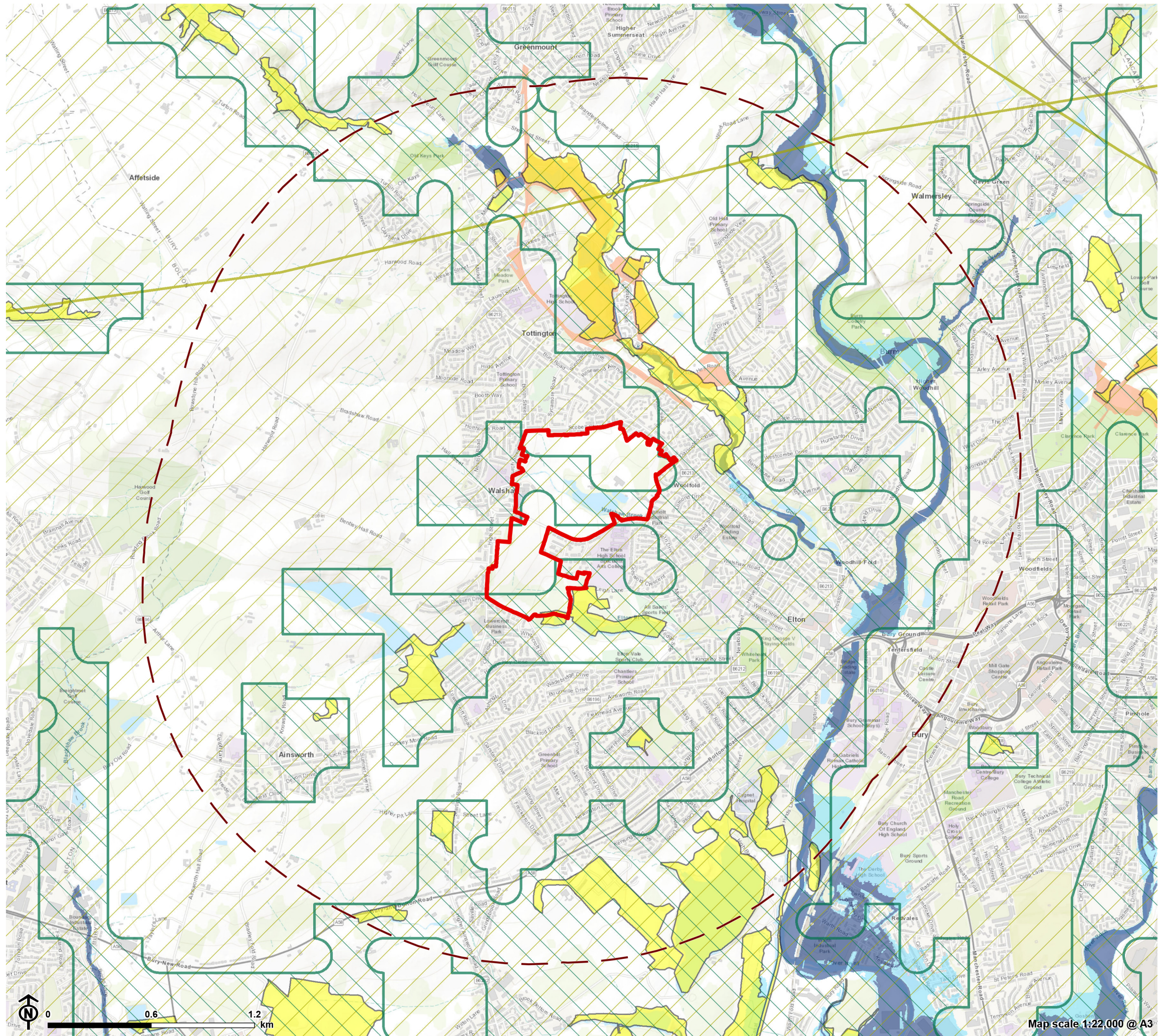
There is opportunity to enhance existing semi-natural greenspace north of Elton Brook in Green Belt to the east of GM Allocation 09.

The proposed Green Belt additions at Woolford and Lower Hinds also offer the potential to restore and reinforce landscape character through the enhancement of existing semi-natural habitats.



Access, Sport and Recreation
GM Allocation 9

- 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



Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual
GM Allocation 9

- 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. Upgrade and enhance (resurfacing, new access points) the existing footpath network to provide local level recreational facilities.
2. Create a more attractive gateway access point at Woolfold through resurfacing, interpretation, signage and new planting.

Sport and recreation

3. Introduce surfacing improvements and an off road multi-user route along Elton Brook.
4. Creation of community recreation space at former Cyrus Ainsworth's Nurseries.
5. Undertake enhancements to Elton Vale Sports Club and Dow Lane Play Area.
6. Enhance allotment provision.

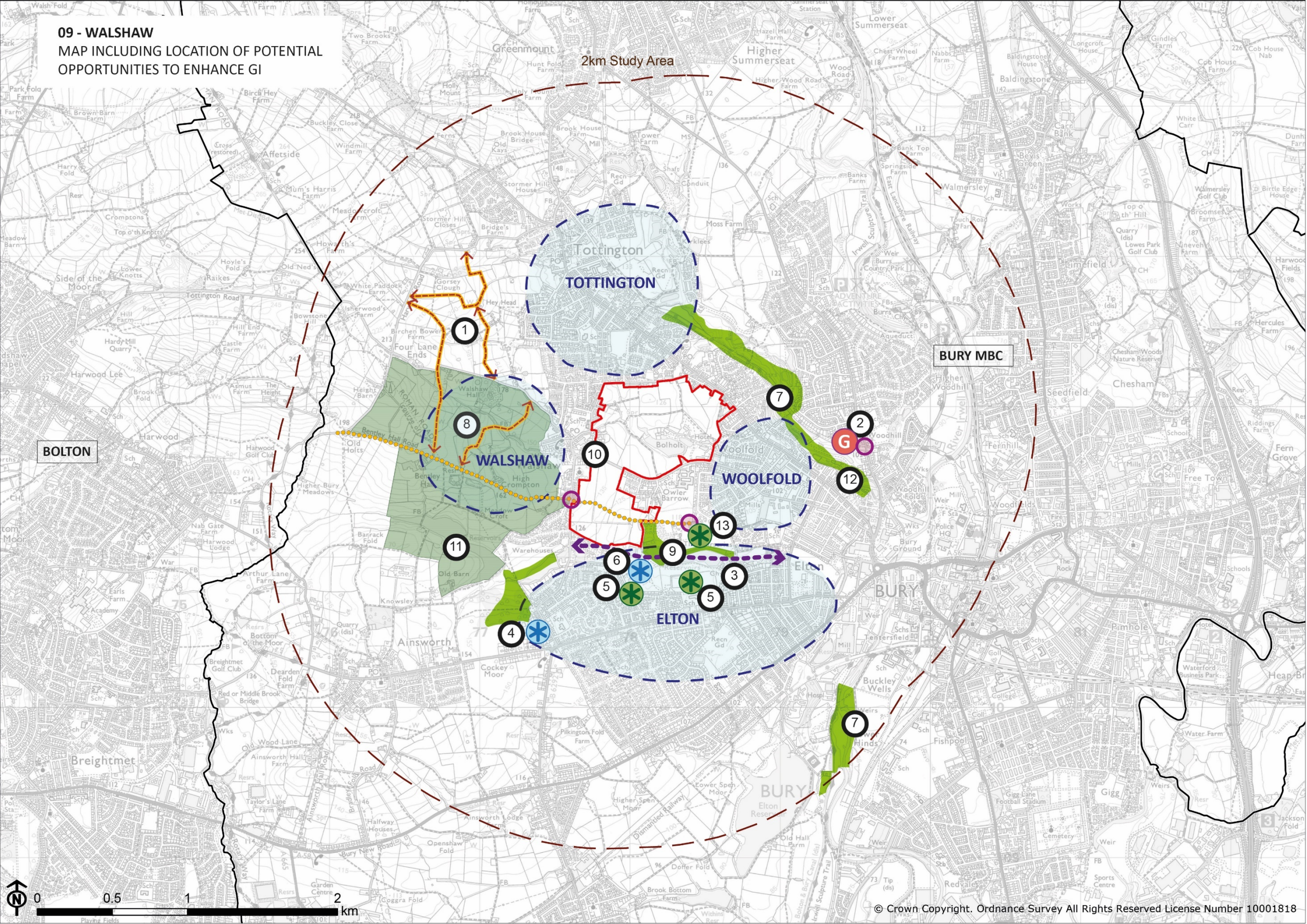
Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

7. Enhance existing habitat mosaics and introduce green infrastructure enhancements at Woolfold and Lower Hinds.
8. Improve vegetation management and reinstate species rich hedgerows parallel adjacent footpaths, multi-user routeway improvements or at strategic access points such as Leigh Lane.
9. Improve the health of still water bodies through the planting of appropriate aquatic and semi-marginal species to increase biodiversity and encourage native species succession and enhance the Cyrus Ainsworth's Nurseries & Parkers Lodges SBI.

Landscape and visual

10. Retention and enhancement of existing hedgerow boundaries within GM Allocation 09 where possible.
11. Enhance and restore the field boundaries in the area around Lowercroft Reservoirs and in the landscape north of Bentley Hall Road, replacing post and wire fences with species rich hedgerows and stone walls.

12. Vegetation management in adjacent natural and semi-natural open space at Woolfold and Lower Hinds, including tree works, replanting and invasive species management.
13. Enhance the existing semi-natural greenspace north of Elton Brook in Green Belt to the east of GM Allocation 09.



- LOCAL SETTLEMENT
- LOCAL AUTHORITY BOUNDARY
- REVISED GMSF ALLOCATIONS (2019)
- POTENTIAL CONTIGUOUS HABITAT NETWORK
- POTENTIAL AREA FOR HEDGEROW RESTORATION
- POTENTIAL UPGRADE / ADDITION
- POTENTIAL CYCLEWAY UPGRADE / ADDITION
- PROMOTION OF STRATEGIC LINK
- ACCESS / CROSSING POINT IMPROVEMENTS
- EXISTING RECREATIONAL ASSET ENHANCEMENT
- POTENTIAL RECREATIONAL ASSET ENHANCEMENT
- POTENTIAL GATEWAY ENHANCEMENT
- REFER TO POTENTIAL ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt