Appendix E

Rochdale

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.

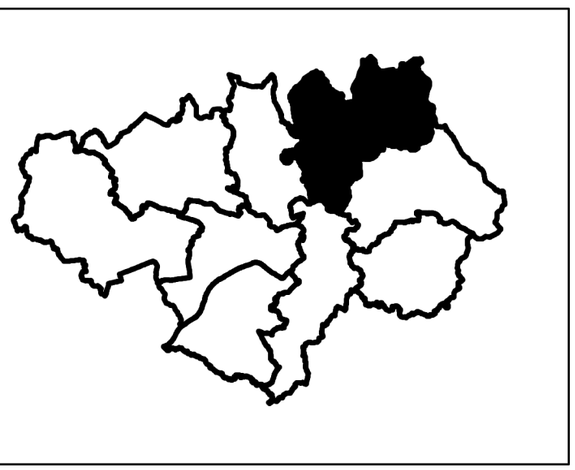
District	LUC Allocation Ref	LUC Allocation Name	GMSF 2020 policy number	2020 GMSF / 2021 PfE Allocation Name	2021 PfE policy number
Cross Boundary	GM1.1	Northern Gateway: Heywood/Pilsworth	GMA1.1	Heywood / Pilsworth (Northern Gateway)	JPA1.1
Cross Boundary	GM1.2	Northern Gateway: Simister/Bowlee	GMA1.2	Simister and Bowlee (Northern Gateway)	JPA1.2
Cross Boundary	GM2	Stakehill	GMA2	Stakehill	JPA2
Cross Boundary	GM3	Kingsway South	Deleted	N/A	N/A
Rochdale	GM23	Bamford / Norden	GMA20	Bamford / Norden	JPA19
Rochdale	GM24	Castleton Sidings	GMA21	Castleton Sidings	JPA20
Rochdale	GM25	Crimble Mill	GMA22	Crimble Mill	JPA21
Rochdale	GM26	Land north of Smithy Bridge	GMA23	Land north of Smithy Bridge	JPA22
Rochdale	GM27	Newhey Quarry	GMA24	Newhey Quarry	JPA23
Rochdale	GM28	Roch Valley	GMA25	Roch Valley	JPA24
Rochdale	GM29	Trows Farm	GMA26	Trows Farm	JPA25

Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study
Greater Manchester Authority

LUC

PfE 2021 Site References: Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council

- Places for Everyone Plan boundary
- Rochdale 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



Map scale 1:77,000 @ A3

CB:Green_C EB:Green_C LUC 11560_002_PfE2021_Site_References_Districts_05/07/2021

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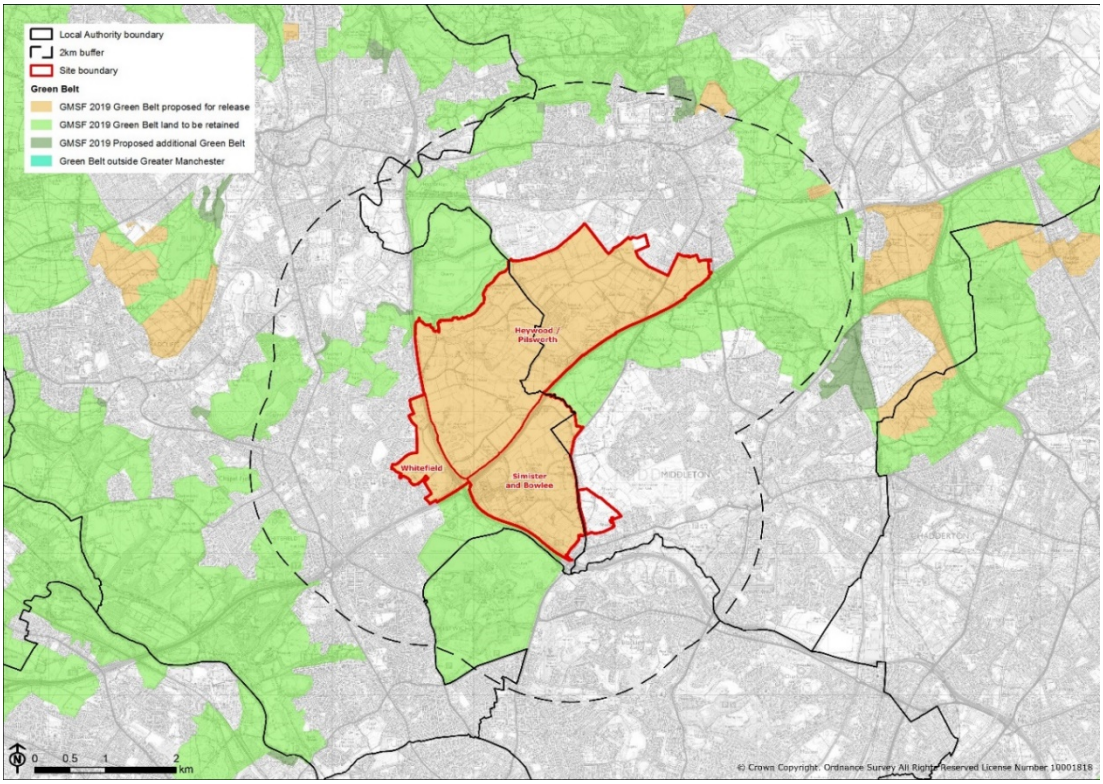
GM Allocation 01, Northern Gateway – Heywood / Pilsworth



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 Authority[1]

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, 2009[2]. 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 Risk[3]

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 Plan[4] 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, 2006[5] 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 Plan[8]

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**Error! Bookmark**

[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 Heywood[9] 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.

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 application16/01399/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.

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).

Manchester Green Belt Harm Assessment
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

LUC

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

0 0.7 1.4 km

Map scale 1:37,000 @ A3

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CB:Green_C EB:Green_C LUC 10713-01_011_Context_Map_Access_Sport_Recreation_New_Template_RevB 25/08/2020
Source: NE, Sustrans, GMCA

Manchester Green Belt Harm Assessment
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

LUC

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

0 1 2 km

Map scale 1:37,000 @ A3

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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 application16/01399/HYBR).

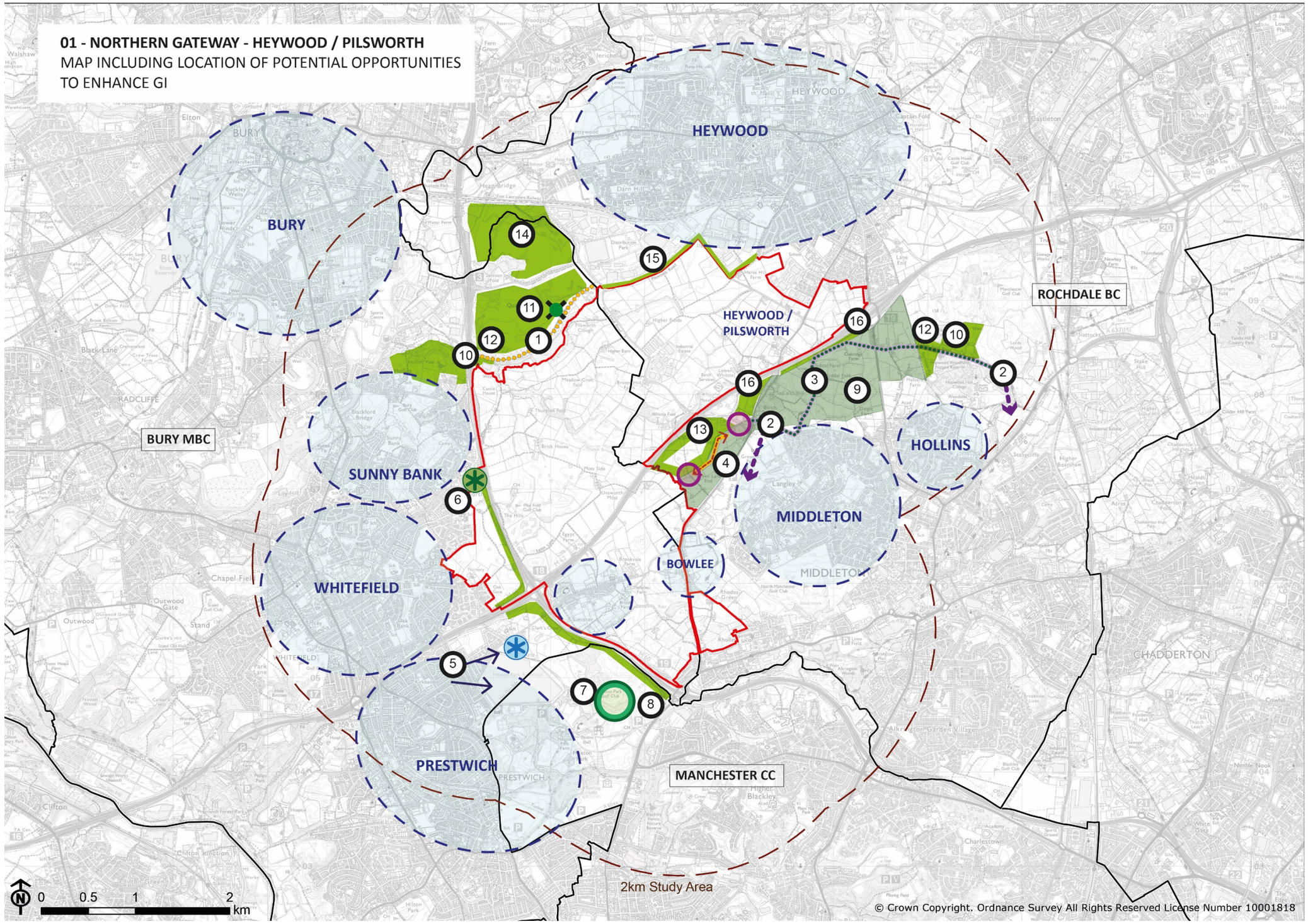
Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

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.

01 - NORTHERN GATEWAY - HEYWOOD / PILSWORTH
MAP INCLUDING LOCATION OF POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE GI



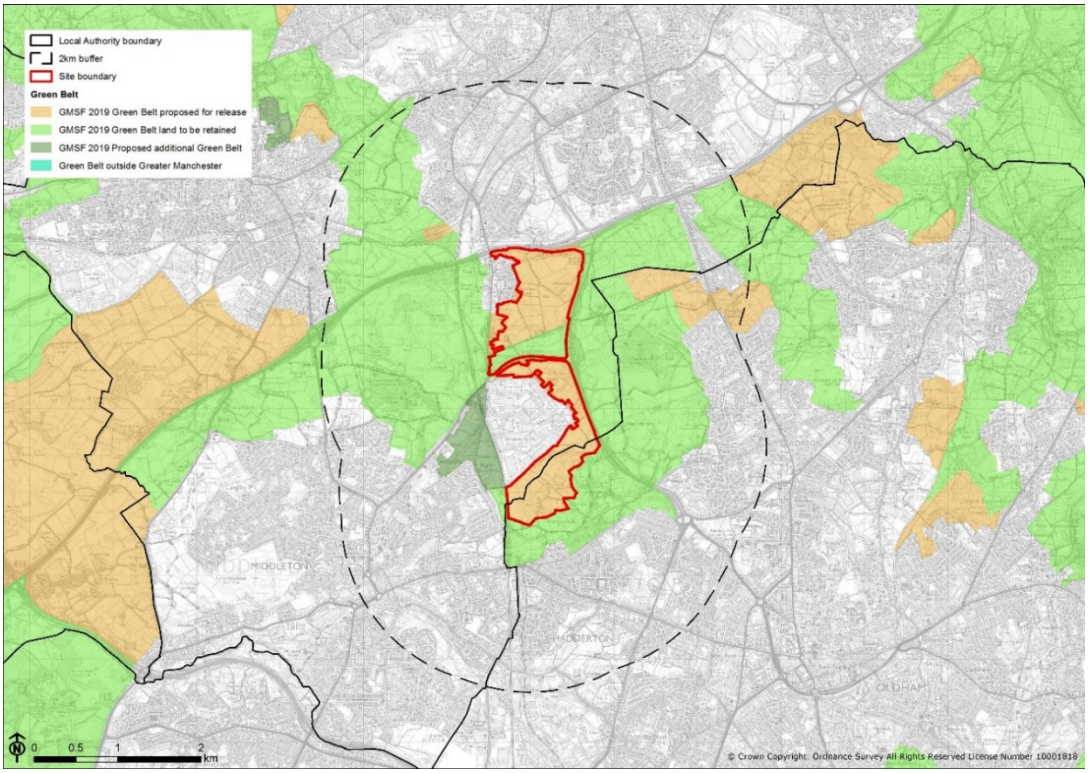
- LOCAL SETTLEMENT
- LOCAL AUTHORITY BOUNDARY
- REVISED GMSF ALLOCATIONS (2019)
- POTENTIAL CONTIGUOUS HABITAT NETWORK
- POTENTIAL AREA FOR HEDGEROW RESTORATION
- ACCESS / CROSSING POINT IMPROVEMENTS
- POTENTIAL CYCLEWAY UPGRADE / ADDITION
- POTENTIAL FOOTPATH UPGRADE / ADDITION
- POTENTIAL RECREATIONAL ASSET ENHANCEMENT
- ENHANCEMENT OF SETTLEMENT LINKAGES
- PROMOTION OF STRATEGIC LINK
- POTENTIAL LONG DISTANCE FOOTPATH UPGRADE / ADDITION
- IMPROVEMENT OF REGIONAL RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
- EXISTING RECREATIONAL ASSET ENHANCEMENT
- MANAGEMENT OF INVASIVE VEGETATION
- REFER TO *POTENTIAL ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS*

Potential Enhancement Opportunities for the Green Belt

GM Allocation 02, Stakehill



Above: View looking north west from Thornham Lane towards Scout Moor Wind Farm



GM Allocation Area: 203.23 ha

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

Study area definition

GM Allocation 02 spans the administrative boundaries of Rochdale MBC and Oldham MBC. With the exception of land lying between the A627(M) and Thornham Lane, the revised draft GMSF 2019 proposes to release Green Belt encompassing the full extent of GM Allocation 02, Stakehill. Land to the West of Stakehill Business Park is identified as an additional site to be added to the Green Belt as part of the revised GMSF.

In addition to land identified as retained green belt within the allocation site itself, retained green belt lying within 2km of GM Allocation 02 as well as the additional site forming part of the revised draft GMSF 2019) will form the focus of GI recommendations / mitigation to enhance the 'beneficial use' of the Green Belt. However, the study will also identify any features of GM Allocation 02 which afford the opportunity to provide additional GI benefits where relevant.

Summary of evidence and policy influencing 'beneficial use' proposals

Published landscape character assessments – Greater Manchester Combined Authority

GM Allocation 02 lies within Urban Fringe Farmland LCT, as defined within the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment (2018)[1]. The Key Characteristics of this LCT include a rolling landscape dissected by narrow steeply sided wooden cloughs and drained by a network of streams. Low grade pasture defined by small-medium sized fields typifies the land use, with a network of road and rail routes forming dominant features within the landscape. The noise of traffic and activity along these routes weakens the sense of rural tranquillity, as does the regular noise of planes overhead in virtue of the proximity to Manchester Airport in the south. A dispersed settlement pattern predominates, with some twentieth century ribbon development evident along road networks.

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

This LCT is further refined into LCA 27: Simister, Slattocks and Heald Green. The Urban Fringe Farmland LCT profile identifies the following guidance and opportunities for landscape enhancement of relevance to the area of retained Green Belt / additional sites lies.

- Protect and where possible 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.
- Strengthen and restore the dry stone wall and hedgerow network……reflecting local characteristics (choice of stone and building style; hedgerow species and management regimes). Encourage the restoration of traditional boundaries where fencing is present.
- Conserve remaining industrial relicts, including disused railway lines, canals, mill buildings…….
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS…..addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). This landscape is part of a number of Greater Manchester's main river valleys.
- 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.
- Conserve key views and intervisibility with the South / West Pennines and Dark Peak foothills, upland fringes and open moorlands.

Published landscape character assessments – Local level

There is no local level published landscape character assessment for Rochdale MBC.

The Oldham Local Development Framework Landscape Character Assessment (2009)[2] divides the open areas of the Borough into a series of LCAs and LCTs following an assessment of special character, distinctiveness and landscape quality. The portion of GM Allocation 02 lying within Oldham MBC is encompassed within LCA 3: Chadderton Rolling Hills, characterised by a rolling landscape of large rectilinear fields and fragmented network of hedgerows. Semi-

[2] Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (2009) Oldham Local Development Framework: Landscape Character Assessment (Final)

improved grassland predominates, with wide panoramic views available over Greater Manchester and the M62 motorway.

Land encompassing GM Allocation 02 is subdivided into LCT 3a Rolling Pasture Land whereby the 'principal landscape objective' involves the retention and strengthening of the distinctive landscape character surrounding the northern edge of the Borough. The LCT is recognised as an important separation zone between the urban boundaries of Oldham and Rochdale.

Open Space Study (Steps One and Two)[3]

The study includes an audit of all accessible open spaces throughout the settlement boundaries of Oldham; indicating priorities for future open space, recreation and sport provision. The southern extent of GM Allocation 02 lies within the Chadderton Analysis Area. A localised assessment of provision, focussing on key deficiencies relevant to the Green Belt within this analysis area is provided below:

- Parks and Gardens – results suggest that the quantity of parks and gardens are evenly distributed across the Borough.
- Natural and Semi Natural Open Space – it was concluded that the overall quality was poor; with key problem areas relating to poor maintenance, litter problems and general mis-use of the areas.
- Amenity green space – Chadderton Analysis Area comprises fewer quality sites than other areas in Oldham.
- Children and Young People – there is deemed to be a shortage across the Borough.
- Outdoor Sports Facilities – improvements are needed to improve the drainage at main pitch sites across the Borough as well as improvements to ancillary accommodation. The provision of outdoor sports facilities is higher in Chadderton Analysis Area than in other areas.

Please note that an update to the current Open Space Study for Oldham MBC is currently emerging. Future interventions should therefore cross-reference and reflect the findings of this review.

[3] Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (2006) Oldham Local Development Framework: Open Space Study (Steps One and Two)

Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan[4]

The report provides an overarching document for biodiversity across Greater Manchester, including Oldham Borough. The aim of the document is to promote the conservation, protection and enhancement of biological diversity in Greater Manchester for current and future generations. Comprised of 13 action plans covering a range of habitats and species occurring in Greater Manchester, the report states that consideration should be given to the promotion of links between habitats and populations to provide an integrated approach to conservation.

Towards a Green Infrastructure Framework for Greater Manchester[5]

Prepared to provide a "route-map" for a Greater Manchester approach to GI planning, the objectives of the report include the identification of priority areas for GI in the City-Region and to advise how GI principles and practice can be incorporated into the overall approach. The document also recommends next steps in the development of a City-Region-wide approach to GI. The following green infrastructure functions and priorities are listed below:

- Flood management function – to improve flood storage of existing greenspaces upstream of urban centres.
- Climate adaptation and mitigation function – to sustain and increase planting within town centres and to ensure doorstep access to significant greenspaces and waterways and ensure such spaces are well managed.
- Ecological framework – to enable the conservation of core biodiversity areas and the conservation of key wildlife corridors.
- Sustainable movement function – to ensure that all regeneration priority areas and areas of lower than average health are served by an accessible movement network.
- Place-making function – priorities include the safeguarding of natural and landscape heritage and to encourage access to greenspaces.

[4] Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (2009) Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan

[5] AGMA and Natural England (2008) Towards a Green Infrastructure Framework for Greater Manchester: Full Report

- River and canal corridor management – to enable multi-user access alongside all waterways and enhancement of biodiversity and flood storage opportunities.
- Supporting urban regeneration – to ensure communities are not deficient in access to greenspace, waterways and a sustainable movement network.
- Community health and enjoyment – priorities include areas of derelict land, areas where there is a deficiency of accessibility to urban green infrastructure and residential areas in urban contexts.

RE/6 Recreational Rights of Way

Saved UDP Policy RE/6[6] (to be replaced by the emerging Allocations Development Plan) relates to the creation of a system of strategic recreational rights of way. Rochdale MBC'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 implementation of high quality links with such routes from urban areas will also be encouraged.

Green Infrastructure Action Plan[7]

Rochdale MBC have undertaken a Green Infrastructure Action Plan for each of their three Townships; Middleton, Pennines and Rochdale. The area of retained Green Belt within 2km of GM Allocation 02 is located within Character Area 1: Rooley and Knowl Moors within the Rochdale Township. Key green infrastructure opportunities which have been identified include:

- Maximise the tourism potential whilst protecting the fragile landscape by improved signposting and interpretation of the landscape, particularly highlighting priority routes connecting Ashworth Moor, Healey Dell LNR & reservoirs with urban neighbourhoods and town centres.
- Ensure that the biodiversity is protected and continues to carry out important recreation and environmental functions such as carbon capture within the peat moorland.

[6] Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (2006) Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan (2001-2016)

[7] Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (2012), Rochdale Green Infrastructure Action Plan

- Explore opportunities to improve woodland management by encouraging the take up of Forestry Commission (FC) grants and Countryside Stewardship by private landowners and promoting Woodland Certification.
- Ensure that partnership working, particularly with Bury MBC, Rossendale BC and UU, maximizes any opportunities for land management to support priority green infrastructure actions including flood risk management, biodiversity and climate change mitigation.
- The report also identifies a range of strategic green infrastructure projects within Rochdale Township to be delivered incrementally from 2012 to 2026. These schemes are linked to development opportunities, area based regeneration and opportunities for external funding. The three strategic delivery projects within Rochdale Township comprise:
- Rochdale Township Greenways Network.
- Growing Greener Neighbourhoods in Rochdale Township.
- Roch Valley River Park.

Oldham i-Tree Eco Project[8]

Oldham MBC have produced an audit and review of the trees within the Borough which highlights the ecosystem services and amenity value of Oldham's trees. The findings outlined below could potentially influence the enhancement of trees and woodlands within the retained Green Belt:

- Alder (Alnus glutinosa), Ash (Fraxinus excelsior) and Larch (Larix spp.) are the most common species located within the rural areas of the Borough.
- There is currently a low proportion of trees with diameters between 45cm and 80cm.
- Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus) is very effective at sequestering carbon: it currently makes up 4.6% of trees in Oldham, but accounts for nearly 20% of carbon sequestration from trees.
- Trees can reduce surface run-off and help prevent flooding. In Oldham, Larch and Sycamore have the greatest influence on the alleviation of surface water run-off.

[8] Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (2016) Valuing Oldham's Urban Forest, Results of the Oldham i-Tree Eco Project

- Parks were shown to be the best land use to contribute to the amenity value of trees.

Existing baseline

Access

A series of PRoW dissect the agricultural land use dividing the settlements of Rochdale, Middleton and Hanging Chadder, broadly following the alignment of field boundary treatments. With the exception of Public Footpath HeyFp143 which forms a linear route connecting Lane End with Oaken Bank Road, the area of agricultural land to the west of the study area and south of the M62 is devoid of PRoW. However, the Rochdale Way forms a circular route on land to the south, encompassing Hopwood Woodlands Nature Reserve, land use at Hopwood Hall College and Woodside Farm.

The area of retained Green Belt also accommodates alignments of long distance footpaths, including the Oldham Way and the Rochdale Way. Forming the southern perimeter of GM Allocation 02 the Oldham Way connects Shaw to Chadderton via Tandle Hill Country Park (Oldham Borough). The route travels south through Tandle Hill Country Park in the east, where it crosses the A627 at Chadderton Heights, before joining the Rochdale Canal at Chadderton Hall Park.

The Rochdale Way follows the linear route of Thornham Old Road linking Hanging Chadder and Middleton, accommodated on overbridge across the A627(M) corridor. Dissecting GM Allocation 02, the route follows the Rochdale Canal south for 400m towards the proposed area of additional Green Belt at Land to the West of Stakehill Business Park. The route then borders the Hopwood Woodlands Nature Reserve and continues south west to complete the circular route of Rochdale Borough.

Major Severance Lines exist on all boundaries of GM Allocation 02, including the A627(M) which divides the GM Allocation itself. The wider study area is also dominated by the infrastructure corridors of the M62, defined as Severance Lines within the Bee Network. To the east, the A627(M) physically separates GM Allocation 02 from the retained Green Belt at Tandle Hill Country Park. To the west, the Calverdale rail line runs broadly parallel the Rochdale Canal and restricts east –west movement. Alongside these major restrictions to permeability, the M62

in the north and the B6195 in the south physically contain the GM Allocation 02 on all boundaries.

The Busy Beeway of the A671 follows the periphery of the existing Green Belt to the east. The study area also encompasses a number of fragmented Beeway routes; including a short section on the B6194 at Burnedge. Running broadly parallel the route of the M62, a Beeway connects the settlement of Trub with Buersil Head via Thornham New Road. Located at the eastern extent of the study area, a Beeway follows the towpath at the Rochdale Canal and runs through Castleton. Stretching from Slattocks to Castleton, the alignment of the A664 also forms a Busy Beeway which provides linkages with the public transport interchange and services within Castleton itself.

The study area encompasses a number of cycle routes recognised by TfGM, albeit somewhat fragmented. An existing route runs immediately south of Stakehill Industrial Estate, dissecting Tandle Hill Country Park and terminating at Tandle Hill Road. The route forms a very rough unpaved surface, suitable for mountain bike use only. A traffic-free cycle route also follows the eastern boundary of Stakehill Industrial Estate towards Thornham Lane. A further mountain bike route extends from this route, following the eastern edge of the Stakehill Industrial Estate and connecting with Thornham Lane.

The towpath of the Rochdale Canal forms a section of NCN 66 at the western extent of the study area.

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

Access

The opportunity exists to improve east-west pedestrian connections across Rochdale Canal. The introduction of local level PRoW to create linkages to the Rochdale Way from the existing settlement edges of Middleton and Hanging Chadder could enhance these access opportunities for both cyclists and pedestrians.

Consideration could be given to the provision of improved crossing points across the corridor of the M62 to enhance connectivity. Further improvements to assess how access could be

improved to reduce the barrier to pedestrian movement across the Calverdale rail line through improved crossing points could also be explored.

Defined as a strategic project within the Rochdale Green Infrastructure Plan[7], the Rochdale Township Greenways Network offers the opportunity to enhance priority commuter routes from the settlement edge and provide links to the NCN 66 at the Rochdale Canal.

The introduction of a coherent and improved interpretation strategy associated with the dense long distance footpath network would improve visitor experience. The proximity of the retained Green Belt to urban fringe at Royton and Shaw, offers the opportunity to develop a waymarked and easily accessible network of circuitous health walks. In addition, the potential exists to improve hard surfacing along Oldham Way in order to upgrade this route to a multi-user network, offering wider links from Shaw to Chadderton. This would be consistent with the recommendations within the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment1 which acknowledges the need to promote multi-user routes to destinations within the landscape.

Highlighted as a potential opportunity for improvement as part of comments sourced from the public on the Bee Network proposals, surfacing improvements at Boarshaw Lane and at Bridleways MidRupp130 and 76 ROYT could be explored in order to enhance the linkages between Royton and Chadderton. Stretching from Thornham Fold to the B6194, the opportunity exists to upgrade Thornham Lane to provide a Beeway connection which crosses the route of the A671 at Hanging Chadder. This extension would connect existing Beeways at Slattocks and Burnedge.

The opportunity exists to upgrade the surfacing along the Rochdale Canal to ensure the route is accessible all year-round. The introduction of access audits across the route could help to identify a programme of site improvements to encourage access for all, ensuring the towpath is well managed and maintained. Improvements along existing Beeway routes could enhance access to Tandle Hill Country Park and Hopwood Woodlands Nature Reserve. Within the Bee Network, there are also additional proposals to insert new crossing points, particularly along the A627 and the A664.

An Approved Comment relating to the Bee Network proposals identifies the opportunity to accommodate improved access through Hopwood Woodlands Nature Reserve and Hopwood Hall College to the south of the study area.

The opportunity exists to address gaps in the continuity of the cycle network recognised by TfGM by upgrading the route connecting Higher Boarshaw to Hanging Chadder. Opportunities

to link this route with the Sustrans route on Broad Lane / Rochdale Road could also be explored. Proposals could be sought to utilise the corridor of the Rochdale Canal as a framework for an active transport network. This includes the identification of pinch points and conflicts within the network in order to ensure that these routes and PRoW are accessible to a range of users.

Currently terminating at Thornham Lane, the extension of the TfGM cycle route running to the east of Stakehill Industrial Estate could provide a connection with the NCN 66 at the Rochdale Canal.

Existing baseline

Sport and recreation

Located approximately 500m east of GM Allocation 02, Tandle Hill Country Park forms a recreational asset within the wider study area. The area provides opportunities for walking, cycling, orienteering, play, bird watching and pond dipping.

Playing fields and allotments adjoin GM Allocation 02, accessed via the A664. The study area also encompasses land defined as allotments or community growing spaces within the proposed additional area of Green Belt at Land to the West of Stakehill Business Park. Playing fields associated with Hopwood Hall College lie approximately 500m west of GM Allocation 02.

Recreational facilities at Chadderton Hall Park are situated at the southern extent of retained Green Belt on the B6195; including tennis courts, playing fields, bowling green and play space.

Golf courses comprise the prominent recreational land use within the area of retained Green Belt. Manchester Golf Course forms a large tract of recreational provision immediately south of the M62. Land to the north of the spur of the Calverdale rail line is also characterised by Castlehawk Golf Club, bordering the northern limit of GM Allocation 24.

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

Sport and recreation

Green Belt enhancement strategies could also look to improve existing visitor facilities at Tandle Hill Country Park. Measures could be implemented to target key problem areas relating to poor maintenance, litter problems and general mis-use of areas; as highlighted within the Open Space Study[3]. Participation in initiatives such as Green Flag Awards could aim to recognise the continued improvement to the landscape management regime at the GM Allocation site.

The introduction of pedestrian gateway features at Public Footpaths 2 ROTY, 3 ROYT, 8 ROYT and MidFp13 could encourage pedestrian access into Tandle Hill Country Park from the urban areas of Royton and Hanging Chadder. The promotion of these access points would supplement the existing vehicular access and car park facilities accessed via Tandle Hill Road.

Improvements to the network of local playing fields at Hopwood Hall College, including the provision of public access at specific times, could also be explored. Proposals could include enhanced access control, way-marking and interpretation to encourage healthy lifestyles and increase usage of the green space assets. Interventions should ensure opportunities for recreation are retained as part of any new development.

The opportunity also exists to establish better routes to play facilities through the provision of sports and recreational facilities as part of the Rochdale Township Greenways Network, as defined within the Rochdale Green Infrastructure Action Plan[7].

The presence of Manchester Golf Course and Castlehawk Golf Club afford the opportunity to offer accessible sports packages to local residents and provide stronger links between existing sports facilities in the area.

Existing baseline

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

SBIs within the retained Green Belt are centred on Tandle Hill Country Park (Oldham Borough) and the corridor of Sudden Brook. Vegetation at Gerrard Wood (Rochdale Borough) is also locally designated as an SBI, located approximately 500m east of the corridor of the A627(M). This woodland acts as a foraging site and refuge area for local wildlife.

The land within GM Allocation 02 proposed for release from the Green Belt is devoid of land designated as a LNR, NNR, SAC or SSSI. The existing woodland tracts are also not ancient in origin.

A network of discrete woodland tracts characterise the area of retained Green Belt to the south of Manchester Golf Club, forming Hopwood Woodlands Local Nature Reserve. Comprising Glade & Oaken Bank Woods (Rochdale Borough) Wood, Hopwood Clough (Rochdale Borough) and Lords Wood (Rochdale Borough); the areas are defined as both SBIs and blocks of ancient woodland.

The corridor of the Rochdale Canal (Scowcroft to Warland) (Rochdale Borough) is recognised as an SBI, SAC and also designated as a SSSI by Natural England. This is located west of GM Allocation 02, within the retained Green Belt.

Areas of retained Green Belt parallel the corridor of the Trub Brook and the River Irk are contained within land defined as EA Flood Zones 2 and 3.

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

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

Wildlife corridors should be promoted and managed in a way that encourages the movement of species to counter the existing fragmentation of habitats, particularly between existing habitat networks at Sudden Brook and Tandle Hill Country Park. In accordance with the recommendations of the Rochdale Green Infrastructure Plan[7], opportunities to improve woodland management by encouraging the take-up of FC grants could also be explored.

Consideration should also be given to the enhancement of connectivity, including the reinstatement and restoration of hedgerows and trees. This would enable the creation of a corridor which helps to limit wildlife contact with the A671, M62 and A627(M).

The opportunity exists to enhance habitat composition through careful planting regimes as identified by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU). This recommendation is also consistent with the management guidance included within the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1].

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. Working in conjunction with the EA, the opportunity exists to improve river corridor flood risk management as well as alleviate surface water flood risk issues. This could be achieved through the use of SuDS and water storage techniques in agreement with landowners and third parties.

Existing baseline

Landscape and visual

As defined by GMEU, Green Infrastructure (2018) networks bordering the Rochdale Canal and Sudden Brook characterise the area of retained Green Belt within the study area. Vegetation parallel Oozewood Clough and within Tandle Hill Country Park is also defined as Green Infrastructure (2018), based on numerous layers of wildlife, habitats and land types.

The wider study area is devoid of areas defined as Green Infrastructure Opportunity Areas (2019), identified by GMCA as areas which exhibit particular potential for the delivery of the Greater Manchester green infrastructure network.

GM Allocation 02 plays an important role as a green barrier preventing the coalescence of the settlements of Royton, Chadderton and Middleton. The extent of retained Green Belt forms a buffer between surrounding residential areas, Stakehill Industrial Estate, A627(M), M62 and Calverdale rail line.

Tandle Hill Country Park offers extensive views across Greater Manchester and towards the Pennine Hills, affording long distance views across areas of moorland, grassland and mixed

woodland plantations. The war memorial at Tandle Hill Country Park also forms a distinctive feature on the skyline in views from the wider study area.

The study area is influenced by a pattern of agricultural Enclosures within the UHLC. Areas of Ornamental, Parkland and Recreational are also contained within the study area, characterised by Manchester Golf Club and Castlehawk Golf Club to the west. Hopwood Hall College is defined as Institutional in the UHLC. Vegetation tracts surround Hopwood Hall, defined as Regenerated Scrub / Woodland.

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

Landscape and visual

The supplementation and enhancement of existing Green Infrastructure (2018) networks associated with Sudden Brook and the Rochdale Canal would provide both landscape and ecological benefits. The opportunity exists to protect and enhance semi-natural habitats and networks, including riparian, broadleaved and ancient woodland tracts bordering these water courses.

Retention of the character of the distinct settlements, minimising any sense of urban encroachment or settlement coalescence, forms a key landscape and visual consideration. The opportunity exists to enhance settlement gateway features along the corridor of the A671. Opportunities to retain the role of the landscape as an undeveloped backdrop to existing development would also be consistent with the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1]. This could be achieved through the enhancement of semi-natural habitats, including woodland tracts and grassland. The supplementation and restoration of woodland and wetland habitats parallel Sudden Brook could also improve the landscape’s role in flood prevention.

The opportunity also exists to deliver large tracts of planting along the M62 corridor through the Northern Forest initiative, providing a significant contribution to containment and visual separation.

Views towards the war memorial at Tandle Hill Country Park should be retained through the appropriate management of vegetation to maintain the distinct visual character of the landscape.

In accordance with the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment1, the introduction of programmes to increase and maintain the pattern of traditional hedgerow field boundaries could be explored. This could be achieved through the replacement of timber post and rail and post and wire fencing with hedgerows or stone walling. This is particularly relevant in the areas of Green Belt to the north of Manchester Golf Course and south of GM Allocation 02 where existing hedges are weak and fragmented.

Due to the proliferation of existing woodland tracts at Hopwood Hall, damage to archaeological remains should be considered.

Manchester Green Belt Harm Assessment
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

LUC

Access, Sport and Recreation
GM Allocation 2

- 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

0 0.6 1.2 km

Map scale 1:31,000 @ A3

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Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

CB:Green_C EB:Green_C LUC 10713-01_011_Context_Map_Access_Sport_Recreation_New_Template_RevB 25/08/2020
Source: NE, Sustrans, GMCA

Manchester Green Belt Harm Assessment
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

LUC

Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual
GM Allocation 2

- 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

0 0.85 1.7 km

Map scale 1:31,000 @ A3

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Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Potential enhancement projects

Access

1. Introduce local level PRoW to create linkages to the Rochdale Way from the existing settlement edges of Middleton and Hanging Chadder to enhance access opportunities for both cyclists and pede¬strians.
2. Provide surfacing improvements at Boarshaw Lane and at Bridleways MidRupp130 and 76 ROYT to enhance the linkages between Royton and Chadderton.
3. Upgrade the surfacing along the Rochdale Canal to ensure the route is accessible all year-round.
4. Accommodate improved access towards Hopwood Woodlands Nature Reserve and Hopwood Hall College.
5. Address gaps in the continuity of the cycle network recognised by TfGM by upgrading the route connecting Higher Boarshaw to Hanging Chadder.
6. Improve east-west pedestrian connections across the Rochdale Canal.

Sport and recreation

7. Improve existing visitor facilities at Tandle Hill Country Park.
8. Introduce pedestrian gateway features at Public Footpaths 2 ROTY, 3 ROYT, 8 ROYT and MidFp13 to encourage pedestrian access into Tandle Hill Country Park from the urban areas of Royton and Hanging Chadder.
9. Improve the network of local playing fields at Hopwood Hall College, including the provision of public access at specific times.
10. Offer accessible sports packages to local residents and provide stronger links between existing private sports facilities in the area.

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

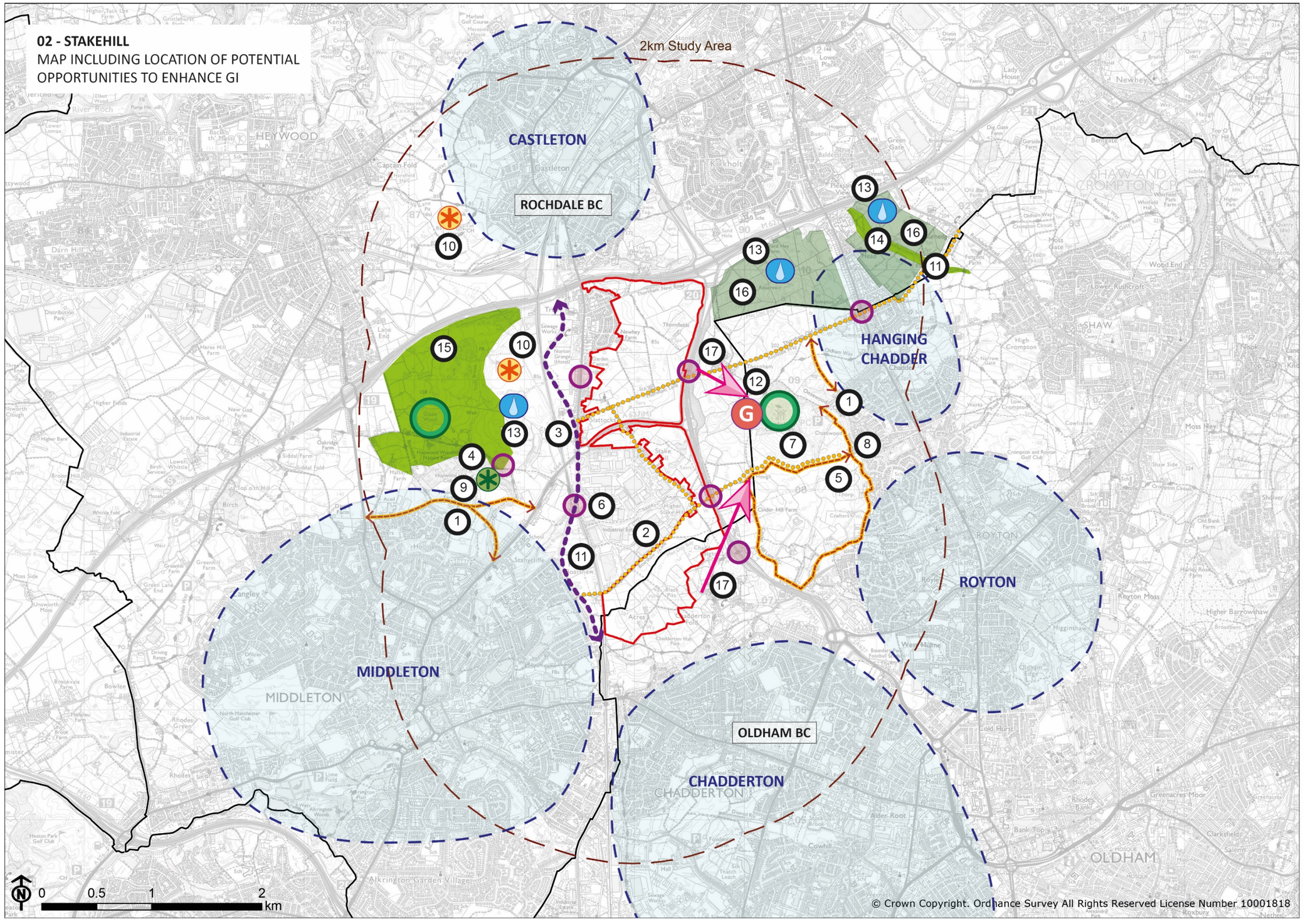
11. Supplement and enhance existing Green Infrastructure (2018) networks associated with Sudden Brook and the Rochdale Canal to provide both landscape and ecological benefits.

12. Promote and manage wildlife corridors in a way that encourages the movement of species to counter the existing fragmentation of habitats, particularly between existing habitat networks at Sudden Brook and Tandle Hill Country Park.
13. Enhance the ecological and hydrological beneficial features within the area of retained Green Belt by combining flood risk reduction (including the alleviation of surface water flood risk issues) with green infrastructure improvements.

Landscape and visual

14. Retain the role of the landscape as an undeveloped backdrop to existing development through the enhancement of semi-natural habitats, including woodland tracts and grassland.
15. Deliver large tracts of planting along the M62 corridor through the Northern Forest initiative, providing a significant contribution to containment and visual separation.
16. Introduce programmes to increase and maintain the pattern of traditional species rich hedgerow field boundaries.
17. Maintain views towards the war memorial at Tandle Hill Country Park through the appropriate management of vegetation.

02 - STAKEHILL
MAP INCLUDING LOCATION OF POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE GI



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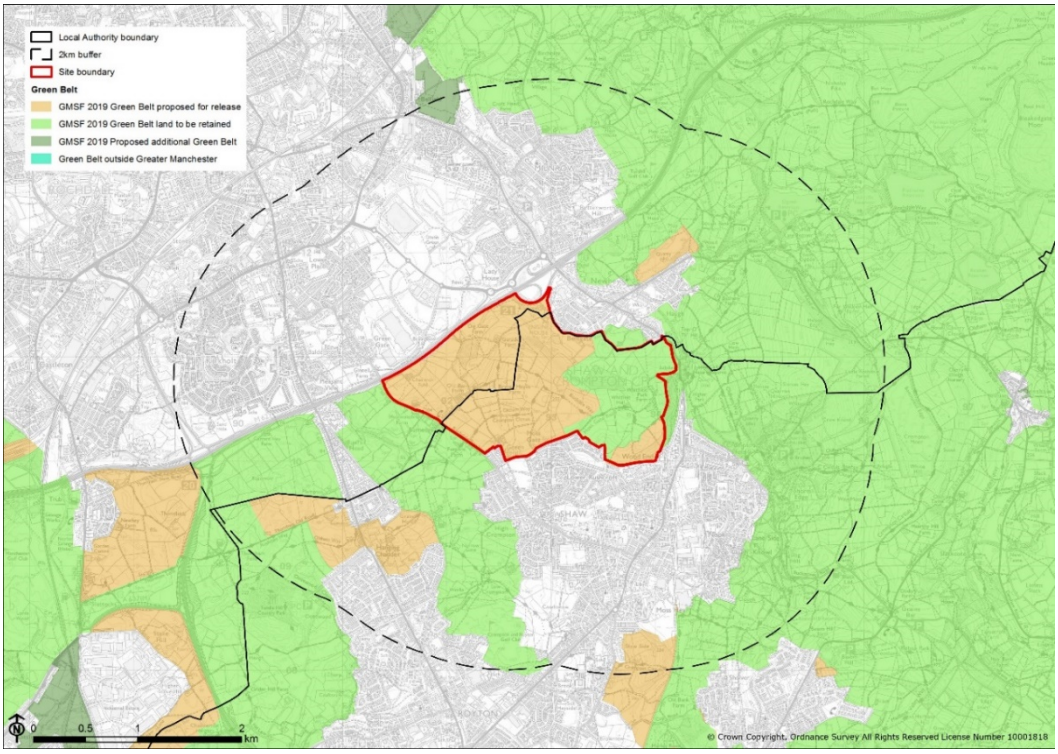
- LOCAL SETTLEMENT
- LOCAL AUTHORITY BOUNDARY
- REVISED GMSF ALLOCATIONS (2019)
- POTENTIAL GATEWAY ENHANCEMENT
- POTENTIAL CONTIGUOUS HABITAT NETWORK
- POTENTIAL AREA FOR EXTRA HEDGEROW RESTORATION
- POTENTIAL FOOTPATH UPGRADE / ADDITION
- POTENTIAL CYCLEWAY UPGRADE / ADDITION
- ACCESS / CROSSING POINT IMPROVEMENTS
- EXISTING RECREATIONAL ASSET ENHANCEMENT
- EXISTING RECREATIONAL ASSET - POTENTIAL FOR ACCESSIBLE SPORTS PACKAGES
- PROMOTION OF STRATEGIC LINK
- IMPROVEMENT OF REGIONAL RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
- POTENTIAL FLOOD STORAGE OPPORTUNITIES
- MAINTAIN LONG DISTANCE VIEWS
- REFER TO *POTENTIAL ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS*

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

GM Allocation 03, Kingsway South



Above: View looking north towards Newhey, with the horizon line punctuated by Crook Hill Wind Farm



GM Allocation Area: 278.69 ha

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

Study area definition

GM Allocation 03, Kingsway South spans the administrative boundaries of Rochdale MBC and Oldham MBC. With the exception of land lying to the east, the revised draft GMSF 2019 proposes to release Green Belt encompassing GM Allocation 03 (Kingsway South). Land at Firgrove Playing Fields is identified as an additional site to be added to the Green Belt as part of the revised GMSF.

Land lying within 2km of the GM Allocation 01, Kingsway South (identified as retained Green Belt as well as the additional site forming part of the revised draft GMSF 2019) will form the focus of GI recommendations / mitigation to enhance the 'beneficial use' of the Green Belt. The study area will also encompass the area of land identified as retained Green Belt within the allocation site itself.

Summary of evidence and policy influencing 'beneficial use' proposals

Published landscape character assessments – Greater Manchester Combined Authority

The GM Allocation 03 lies within Pennine Foothills (West / South Pennines) LCT, as defined within the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment (2018)[1]. Characterised by a strongly rolling and undulating topography punctuated by locally distinctive hills and stream valleys, land use is dominated by semi-improved grassland pastures. The landscape is generally well wooded with masts / pylons and overhead lines providing visual intrusion on the wooded skylines. The foothills also provide an important separation function between distinct urban areas. However, transport infrastructure detracts from the rural qualities and sense of tranquillity within the LCT. The landscape therefore exhibits a variable visual character, with long views across the urban conurbation to the West and South Pennine uplands beyond.

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

This LCT is further refined into LCA 28: Rochdale and Oldham South Pennine Foothills. The Pennine Foothills (West /South Pennines) LCT profile identifies the following guidance and opportunities for landscape enhancement of relevance to the study area.

- Ensure that the sense of separation the landscape provides between distinct settlements is retained.
- Retain the role of the landscape as an undeveloped backdrop to existing development.
- Strengthen the stone wall and hedgerow network, using local gritstone for walls and locally prevalent and climate resilient species for hedges. Any new boundaries should reflect local characteristics, including the planting of a new generation of hedgerow trees.
- Protect areas of semi-natural habitat including woodland, grassland and heathland which are locally designated as SBIs. Seek to enhance these where possible and provide linkages to form robust habitat networks.
- Protect areas of broadleaved woodland (particularly ancient woodland) which provide important semi-natural habitat and create wooded skylines.
- Encourage the natural regeneration of woodland and wetland habitats within valleys to improve their function in flood prevention and preventing diffuse pollution.
- Protect the setting of important heritage assets within the landscape, including conservation areas / listed buildings.
- Retain the important recreational function of the landscape. Seek to improve PRoW to encourage sustainable travel. Join up and promote multi-user routes to major destinations within the landscape, including Hollingworth Country Park and Tandle Hill Country Park.
- Retain the distinct visual character of the landscape, including views to monuments on skylines which form local landmarks, church spires and chimneys.
- Reinforce the structure of the landscape, through strengthening the stone wall and hedgerow network, using local gritstone for walls and locally prevalent and climate resilient species for hedges. Any new boundaries should reflect local characteristics, including the planting of a new generation of hedgerow trees.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off).

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

Published landscape character assessments – Local level

There is no local level published landscape character assessment for Rochdale MBC.

The Oldham Local Development Framework Landscape Character Assessment (2009)[2] divides the open areas of the Borough into a series of LCAs and LCTs following an assessment of special character, distinctiveness and landscape quality. The portion of GM Allocation 03 lying within Oldham MBC is encompassed within LCA 3: Chadderton Rolling Hills, characterised by a rolling landscape of large rectilinear fields and fragmented network of hedgerows. Semi-improved grassland predominates, with wide panoramic views available over Greater Manchester and the M62 motorway.

Land encompassing GM Allocation 03 is subdivided into LCT 3a Rolling Pasture Land whereby the 'principal landscape objective' involves the retention and strengthening of the distinctive landscape character surrounding the northern edge of the Borough. The LCT is recognised as an important separation zone between the urban boundaries of Oldham and Rochdale.

Open Space Study (Steps One and Two)[3]

The study includes an audit of all accessible open spaces throughout the settlement boundaries of Oldham; indicating priorities for future open space, recreation and sport provision. Land located within the administrative boundary of Oldham Borough at GM Allocation 03 is situated within the Shaw and Royton Analysis Area. A localised assessment of provision, focussing on key deficiencies relevant to the Green Belt within this analysis area is provided below:

- Parks and Gardens – results suggest that the quantity of parks and gardens are evenly distributed across the Borough, although there is a higher level of provision in Royton and Shaw Analysis Area.
- Natural and Semi Natural Open Space – it was concluded that the overall quality was poor; with key problem areas relating to poor maintenance, litter problems and general mis-use of the areas.

[2] Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (2009) Oldham Local Development Framework: Landscape Character Assessment (Final)

[3] Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (2006) Oldham Local Development Framework: Open Space Study (Steps One and Two)

- Amenity green space – general quality of sites varies considerably across the Borough.
- Children and Young People – there is deemed to be a shortage across the Borough.
- Outdoor Sports Facilities – improvements are needed to improve the drainage at main pitch sites across the Borough as well as improvements to ancillary accommodation.

Please note that an update to the current Open Space Study for Oldham MBC is currently emerging. Future interventions should therefore cross-reference and reflect the findings of this review.

Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan[4]

The report provides an overarching document for biodiversity across Greater Manchester, including Oldham Borough. The aim of the document is to promote the conservation, protection and enhancement of biological diversity in Greater Manchester for current and future generations. Comprised of 13 action plans covering a range of habitats and species occurring in Greater Manchester, the report states that consideration should be given to the promotion of links between habitats and populations to provide an integrated approach to conservation.

Towards a Green Infrastructure Framework for Greater Manchester[5]

Prepared to provide a “route-map” for a Greater Manchester approach to GI planning, the objectives of the report include the identification of priority areas for GI in the City-Region and to advise how GI principles and practice can be incorporated into the overall approach. The document also recommends next steps in the development of a City-Region-wide approach to GI. The following green infrastructure functions and priorities are listed below:

- Flood management function – to improve flood storage of existing greenspaces upstream of urban centres.

[4] Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (2009) Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan

[5] AGMA and Natural England (2008) Towards a Green Infrastructure Framework for Greater Manchester: Full Report

- Climate adaptation and mitigation function – to sustain and increase planting within town centres and to ensure doorstep access to significant greenspaces and waterways and ensure such spaces are well managed.
- Ecological framework – to enable the conservation of core biodiversity areas and the conservation of key wildlife corridors.
- Sustainable movement function – to ensure that all regeneration priority areas and areas of lower than average health are served by an accessible movement network.
- Place-making function – priorities include the safeguarding of natural and landscape heritage and to encourage access to greenspaces.
- River and canal corridor management – to enable multi-user access alongside all waterways and enhancement of biodiversity and flood storage opportunities.
- Supporting urban regeneration – to ensure communities are not deficient in access to greenspace, waterways and a sustainable movement network.
- Community health and enjoyment – priorities include areas of derelict land, areas where there is a deficiency of accessibility to urban green infrastructure and residential areas in urban contexts.

RE/6 Recreational Rights of Way

Saved UDP Policy RE/6[6] (to be replaced by the emerging Allocations Development Plan) relates to the creation of a system of strategic recreational rights of way. Rochdale MBC'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 implementation of high quality links with such routes from urban areas will also be encouraged.

[6] Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (2006) Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan (2001-2016)

Green Infrastructure Action Plan[7]

Rochdale MBC have undertaken a Green Infrastructure Action Plan for each of their three Townships; Middleton, Pennines and Rochdale. The area of retained Green Belt within 2km of GM Allocation 03 is located within Character Area 1: Rooley and Knowl Moors within the Rochdale Township. Key green infrastructure opportunities which have been identified include:

- Maximise the tourism potential whilst protecting the fragile landscape by improved signposting and interpretation of the landscape, particularly highlighting priority routes connecting Ashworth Moor, Healey Dell LNR & reservoirs with urban neighbourhoods and town centres.
- Ensure that the biodiversity is protected and continues to carry out important recreation and environmental functions such as carbon capture within the peat moorland.
- Explore opportunities to improve woodland management by encouraging the take up of Forestry Commission (FC) grants and Countryside Stewardship by private landowners and promoting Woodland Certification.
- Ensure that partnership working, particularly with Bury MBC, Rossendale BC and UU, maximizes any opportunities for land management to support priority green infrastructure actions including flood risk management, biodiversity and climate change mitigation.

The report also identifies a range of strategic green infrastructure projects within Rochdale Township to be delivered incrementally from 2012 to 2026. These schemes are linked to development opportunities, area based regeneration and opportunities for external funding. The three strategic delivery projects within Rochdale Township comprise:

- Rochdale Township Greenways Network.
- Growing Greener Neighbourhoods in Rochdale Township.
- Roch Valley River Park.

[7] Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (2012), Rochdale Green Infrastructure Action Plan

Oldham i-Tree Eco Project[8]

Oldham MBC have produced an audit and review of the trees within the Borough which highlights the ecosystem services and amenity value of Oldham's trees. The findings outlined below could potentially influence the enhancement of trees and woodlands within the retained Green Belt:

- Alder (Alnus glutinosa), Ash (Fraxinus excelsior) and Larch (Larix spp.) are the most common species located within the rural areas of the Borough.
- There is currently a low proportion of trees with diameters between 45cm and 80cm.
- Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus) is very effective at sequestering carbon: it currently makes up 4.6% of trees in Oldham, but accounts for nearly 20% of carbon sequestration from trees.
- Trees can reduce surface run-off and help prevent flooding. In Oldham, Larch and Sycamore have the greatest influence on the alleviation of surface water run-off.
- Parks were shown to be the best land use to contribute to the amenity value of trees.

Existing baseline

Access

A series of PRoW dissect the agricultural land use dividing the settlements of Milnrow and Shaw / Royton, broadly following the alignment of field boundary treatments. Permeability across the corridor of the M62 towards Milnrow is provided by a series of underpasses and overbridges accommodating the routes of RocFFp34, MilFp336, MilFp358, MilFp360 and MilRupp405.

Crossing GM Allocation 03 both the Oldham Way and the Rochdale Way occupy the area of retained Green Belt to the south of the M62. These routes provide links from Chadderton in the west before diverging to the south east of Newhey. The area of retained Green Belt to the east

[8] Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (2016) Valuing Oldham's Urban Forest, Results of the Oldham i-Tree Eco Project

also encompasses the alignment of the Crompton Circuit long distance footpath, crossing land to the north of Brushes Clough Reservoir and Crompton Fold.

The wider study area is dominated by the infrastructure corridors of the A627 (M), A640, A663, M62 and the Oldham to Rochdale Metrolink Line; defined as Severance Lines within the Bee Network. The alignment of the A671 also dissects the area of retained Green Belt broadly north-south within the wider study area. This route forms a Busy Beeway and will require a higher level of design intervention to improve cycling and walking.

The study area encompasses a number of Beeway routes; including a short section on the B6194 at Burnedge. Running broadly parallel the route of the M62, a Beeway also connects the settlement of Trub with Buersil Head via Thornham New Road. Accommodated on Bridleway MilBp137 and parallel a section of the Oldham and Rochdale Metrolink Line, a Beeway links the settlements of Newhey and Milnrow. The carriageway of Tunshill Lane also provides a link from the eastern extent of Milnrow to the overbridge crossing the M62 at Tunshill Farm.

The study area encompasses a number of cycle routes recognised by TfGM, albeit somewhat fragmented. A short section of the NCN link on the B6194 forms the western border of GM Allocation 03 and provides an on-road connection to Milnrow. The route from Water Lane towards the A640 via an underbridge at the M62 provides a traffic-free route connecting Milnrow and Newhey. This route is described as comprising a very rough unpaved surface, suitable for mountain bike use only. A short section of Bridleway MilBP136 is also defined as a cycle network recognised by TfGM.

Land at the western extent of the study area includes an on-road TfGM cycle route following the alignment of the A671. This route connects with Thornham Old Road with wider linkages afforded to Tandle Hill Country Park (in Oldham). In addition, the eastern extent of the study area encompasses traffic-free cycle networks crossing the open moorland, including a route which runs south from Tunshill Lane towards Piethorne Reservoir.

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

Access

The introduction of a coherent and improved interpretation strategy associated with the dense long distance footpath networks would improve visitor experience. The proximity of the retained Green Belt to the urban fringe at Milnrow and Shaw also offers the opportunity to develop a waymarked and easily accessible network of circuitous health walks.

The potential exists to improve hard surfacing along Oldham Way in order to upgrade this route to a multi-user network, offering wider links from Shaw to Chadderton. This would be consistent with the recommendations within the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment1 which acknowledges the need to promote multi-user routes to destinations within the landscape.

The sections of Oldham Way and Rochdale Way which cross the boundary of GM Allocation 03 should be diverted as part of any development proposals in order to retain local level user routes.

Stretching from Thornham Fold to the B6194, the opportunity exists to upgrade Thornham Lane to provide a Beeway connection which crosses the route of the A671 at Hanging Chadder. This extension would connect existing Beeways at Slattocks and Burnedge. The requirement to connect Burnedge with High Crompton is also noted as an ‘approved comment’ by TfGM. The introduction of a Beeway linkage, connecting the route of Tunshill Lane with Ogden Reservoir would also enhance recreational links from the settlement edge.

Highlighted as a potential opportunity for improvement as part of comments sourced from the public on the Bee Network proposals, the introduction of a Beeway running parallel the Oldham and Rochdale Metrolink Line would afford off road cycle access avoiding the A663. However, a degree of segregation would be required from fast-moving trams.

The opportunity exists to address gaps in the continuity of the cycle network recognised by TfGM by upgrading the route of Ogden Lane / Lane Bottom at Higher Ogden to create a strategic cycle route linking Milnrow to Denshaw. Accommodated within underbridge at the M62,

access improvements to Public Footpath MilRupp405 would also aid in the enhancement of north-south connections.

The introduction of multi-user routes and surfacing improvements on Thornham Old Road and Pit Lane offer the potential to create wider cycle links from Tandle Hill Country Park towards Hanging Chadder and Burnedge. The retention and potential upgrade of PRoW within GM Allocation 03 itself would afford a long distance cycle route with connections towards Newhey and Denshaw.

Existing baseline

Sport and recreation

Located approximately 2.2km south west of GM Allocation 03, Tandle Hill Country Park lies just beyond the extent of the study area.

Tunshill Golf Course (Rochdale) occupies an area of retained Green Belt bordering the corridor of the M62 at the eastern extent of Milnrow. A playing field at Butterworth Hall lies immediately west of this land use. The area of retained Green Belt separating the settlements of Royton and Shaw also encompasses Crompton and Royton Golf Club.

Milnrow Memorial Park comprises a play space, bowling green, skateboard area and woodland walk at the north western limit of Newhey. The park incorporates a war memorial centred on a circular path network. The area of retained Green Belt also encompasses Dun Wood Park which lies parallel the carriageway of the A663 within the wider study area.

The study area encompasses two areas of land defined as allotments or community growing spaces, centred on the alignment of Rochdale Road at Burnedge and Green Hill. In addition, the cemeteries at Ogden Lane as well as the religious grounds at St. Thomas' Church are defined as sites within the OS Open Greenspace Site dataset.

The eastern extent of the study area is characterised by Ogden Reservoir, managed by United Utilities and forming a wider network of reservoirs within the Piethorne Valley. These waterbodies provide opportunities for walking, angling and water sports.

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

Sport and recreation

Green Belt enhancement strategies could also look to improve access at Tandle Hill Country Park, providing connections from the existing settlement edge. The introduction of pedestrian gateway features at Public Footpaths 2 ROTY, 3 ROYT, 8 ROYT and MidFp13 could encourage pedestrian access into Tandle Hill Country Park from these routes.

The presence of Tunshill Golf Course and Crompton and Royton Golf Club afford the opportunity to offer accessible sports packages to local residents.

Continued participation in initiatives such as the Green Flag Awards would promote the high environmental standards of the recreational areas and landscape management regime at Milnrow Memorial Park. Green Belt enhancement strategies could also look to improve existing facilities; diversifying the recreational offer to attract an increasing number of visitors.

The recreational potential of the Piethorne Valley reservoirs could be promoted through the enhancement of recreational routes and signposting from the settlement edges of Milnrow and Newhey.

Existing baseline

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

SBIs within the retained Green Belt are centred on Tandle Hill Country Park (Oldham Borough) and the corridor of Sudden Brook (East - Oldham Borough and West – Rochdale Borough). Vegetation at Gerrard Wood (Rochdale Borough) is also locally designated as an SBI, located approximately 500m east of the corridor of the A627(M).

Heathland and bog habitat parallel the A640 at Crompton Moor (North – Rochdale Borough and South – Oldham Borough) is designated as an SBI and characterises the landscape of the wider study area. Comprised predominantly of plantation woodland, land defined as Piethorne

Reservoirs and Plantations (Rochdale Borough) SBI typifies the land use within the Piethorne Valley.

The 2.0km study area is devoid of NNR, LNR and ancient woodland. The extensive tracts of land forming the South Pennine Moors are also located beyond the eastern extent of the study area.

Areas of retained Green Belt parallel the River Beal at Newhey are contained within land defined as EA Flood Zones 2 and 3.

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

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

Wildlife corridors should be promoted and managed in a way that encourages the movement of species to counter the existing fragmentation of habitats, particularly between existing habitat networks at Sudden Brook and Tandle Hill Country Park. The opportunity exists to enhance habitat composition through careful planting regimes as identified by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU). This recommendation is also consistent with the management guidance included within the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1].

The opportunity also exists to enhance existing green infrastructure networks within the enclosed upland fringes. This could be achieved through the creation of new native woodland tracts to connect with existing plantation woodland, providing a contiguous habitat network. Improved woodland management regimes, including the take-up of FC grants, could also be explored. Consideration should be given to the protection and where possible enhancement of the tracts of heather moorland and blanket bog associated with the upland landscape. This could include a comprehensive review of the management plan for the area, ensuring a consistency with the overall management approach.

Due to the proximity of EA Flood Zones 2 and 3 at the River Beal, 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. Working in conjunction with the EA, the opportunity exists to improve river corridor flood risk management as well as alleviate surface water flood risk issues. This could be achieved

through the use of SuDS and water storage techniques in agreement with landowners and third parties.

Existing baseline

Landscape and visual

The area of retained Green Belt within the wider study area plays a partial role in the prevention of settlement coalescence between Hanging Chadder, Shaw and Newhey. However, the route of the M62 forms a physical barrier separating Rochdale from these settlements.

As defined by GMEU, the Green Infrastructure (2018) network bordering Sudden Brook is encompassed within the area of retained Green Belt. The Piethorne Valley also forms a corridor of Green Infrastructure (2018) based on numerous layers of wildlife, habitats and land types. The eastern fringes of the study area are contained within the South Pennine Moors Green Infrastructure Opportunity Area (2019). The area is identified as having particular potential for the delivery of improvements to the Greater Manchester green infrastructure network.

In addition, vegetation parallel Oozewood Clough and within Tandle Hill Country Park is defined as Green Infrastructure (2018), based on numerous layers of wildlife, habitats and land types.

As defined by the UHLC, Enclosed Land forms the predominant land use within the study area. Defined as Piecemeal in size and origin, the land use is characterised by an irregular field pattern where boundaries follow natural features. These areas are interspersed with land defined as Water Bodies, Woodland and Residential. Unenclosed Land typifies the area at the eastern extent of the study area, associated with the South Pennine Moors.

The study area affords long distance views and wider intervisibility with the South Pennine Moors to the east. The wider moorland landscape provides an attractive setting and forms a green infrastructure asset at the Greater Manchester scale through the provision of recreational access, biodiversity benefits and carbon / rainwater storage in peat.

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

Landscape and visual

Retention of the character of the distinct settlements, minimising any sense of urban encroachment or settlement coalescence, forms a key landscape and visual consideration. Opportunities to retain the role of the landscape as an undeveloped backdrop to existing development would also be consistent with the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1]. This could be achieved through the enhancement of semi-natural habitats, including woodland tracts and grassland, particularly parallel the M62 corridor. The supplementation and restoration of woodland and wetland habitats parallel Sudden Brook and at the various springs at Burnedge could also improve the landscape’s role in flood prevention.

Opportunities to reinforce the contrast between the well wooded setting of the reservoirs within the Piethorne Valley and the upper moorland beyond could be explored. The network of semi-natural habitats within the upland fringe should also be conserved. The supplementation and enhancement of existing Green Infrastructure (2018) networks would provide both landscape and ecological benefits. The opportunity exists to protect and enhance semi-natural habitats and networks, including riparian, broadleaved and ancient woodland tracts bordering these water courses and the various springs to the east of the study area.

In accordance with the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1], the introduction of programmes to increase and maintain the pattern of traditional hedgerow field boundaries could be explored. This could be achieved through the replacement of timber post and rail and post and wire fencing with hedgerows or stone walling at the settlement edges.

The opportunity exists to enhance the landscape around the Piethorne Valley reservoirs. This could be delivered through the restructuring of existing plantation woodland, establishment of small scale scrub and woodland as well as the diversification of associated grassland or heathland areas.

The adoption of appropriate flood management schemes also offers the opportunity of delivering water storage, habitat creation or flood management functions. Due to the implications for flood risk downstream, the opportunity exists to encourage the natural

regeneration of woodland and wetland habitats at the moorland fringes in order to slow the water flow towards the Piethorne Valley below.

Manchester Green Belt Harm Assessment
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

LUC

Access, Sport and Recreation
GM Allocation 3

- Site boundary
- Site boundary - 2km buffer

Access

- Public right of way
- National Trail
- Sustrans route
- TfGM cycle route
- Bee network - crossing point
- Bee network - beeway
- Bee network - busy beeway

Sport and Recreation

- Open green space
- Country park

0 0.5 1 km

Map scale 1:26,000 @ A3

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Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

CB:Green_C EB:Green_C LUC 10713-01_011_Context_Map_Access_Sport_Recreation_New_Template_RevB 25/08/2020
Source: NE, Sustrans, GMCA

Manchester Green Belt Harm Assessment
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

LUC

Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual
GM Allocation 3

- 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

0 0.7 1.4 km

Map scale 1:26,000 @ A3

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2020
Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Potential enhancement projects

Access

1. Introduce a coherent and improved interpretation strategy associated with the dense long distance footpath network in order to improve visitor experience, including a waymarked and easily accessible network of circuitous health walks.
2. Improve hard surfacing along Oldham Way in order to upgrade this route to a multi-user network, offering wider links from Shaw to Hanging Chadder.
3. Divert the sections of the Oldham Way and the Rochdale Way as part of any development proposals within GM Allocation 03 in order to retain local level user routes.
4. Upgrade Thornham Lane to provide a Beeway connection which crosses the route of the A671 at Hanging Chadder.
5. Implement access improvements to Public Footpath MilRupp405 to aid in the enhancement of north-south connections.
6. Introduce a Beeway linkage, connecting the route of Tunshill Lane with Ogden Reservoir.
7. Establish a Beeway running parallel the Oldham and Rochdale Metrolink Line to afford off road cycle access avoiding the A663.
8. Address gaps in the continuity of the cycle network recognised by TfGM by upgrading the route of Ogden Lane / Lane Bottom at Higher Ogden to create a strategic cycle route linking Milnrow to Denshaw.
9. Introduce multi-user routes and surfacing improvements on Thornham Old Road and Pit Lane, offering the potential to create wider cycle links from Tandle Hill Country Park towards Hanging Chadder and Burnedge.

Sport and recreation

10. Offer accessible sports packages at Tunshill Golf Course and Crompton and Royton Golf Club to local residents.
11. Continue to participate in initiatives such as the Green Flag Awards to promote the high environmental standards of the recreational areas and landscape management regime at Milnrow Memorial Park.

12. Promote the recreational potential of the Piethorne Valley reservoirs through the enhancement of recreational routes and signposting from the settlement edges of Milnrow and Newhey.
13. Improve access and visitor facilities at Tandle Hill Country Park, providing connections from the existing settlement edge.

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

14. Enhance the ecological and hydrological beneficial features within the area of retained Green Belt by combining flood risk reduction (including the alleviation of surface water flood risk issues) with green infrastructure improvements.
15. Promote and manage wildlife corridors in a way that encourages the movement of species to counter the existing fragmentation of habitats, particularly between existing habitat networks at Sudden Brook and Tandle Hill Country Park.

Landscape and visual

16. Enhance existing green infrastructure networks within the enclosed upland fringes through the creation of new native woodland tracts to connect with existing plantation woodland.
17. The contrast between the well wooded setting of the reservoirs within the Piethorne Valley and the upper moorland beyond could be reinforced.
18. Introduce programmes to increase and maintain the pattern of traditional species rich hedgerow field boundaries.
19. Consider incorporating green roof schemes, such as green roof bus stops, in the surrounding urban landscape to compensate for loss of vegetation.

03 - KINGSWAY SOUTH
MAP INCLUDING LOCATION OF POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE GI

2km Study Area

ROCHDALE BC

ROCHDALE

NEWHEY

BUERSIL HEAD

HANGING CHADDER

SHAW

OLDHAM MBC

0 0.5 1 2 km

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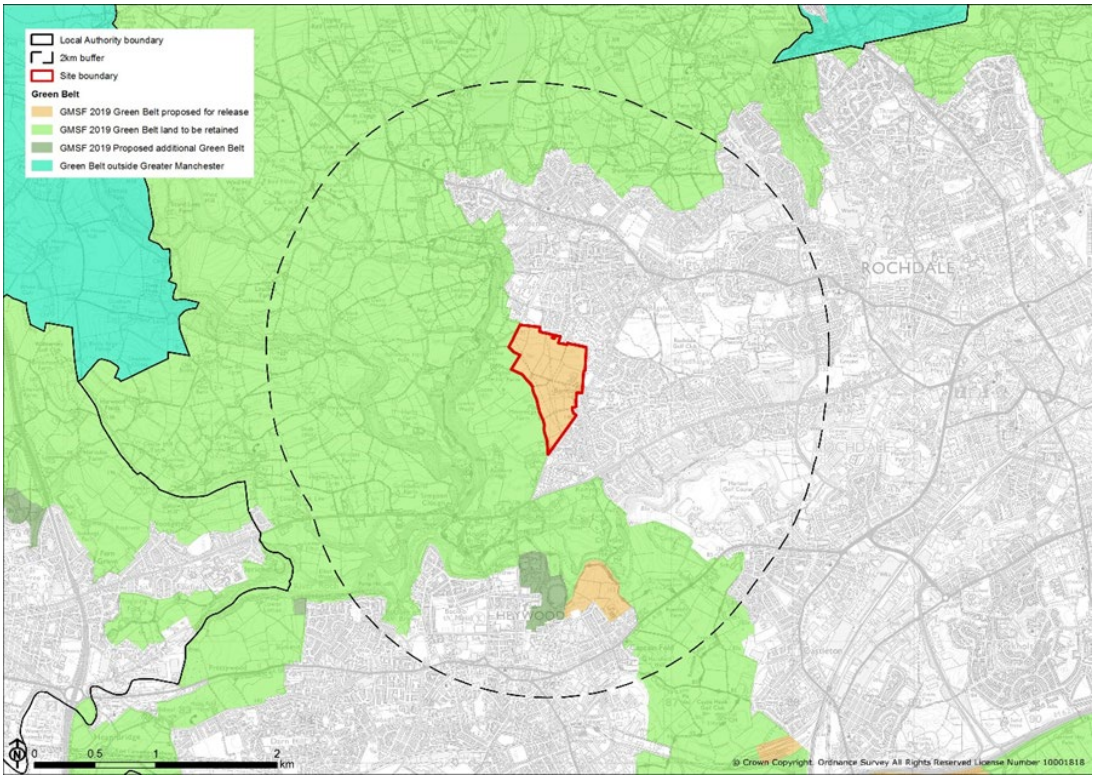
- LOCAL SETTLEMENT
- LOCAL AUTHORITY BOUNDARY
- REVISED GMSF ALLOCATIONS (2019)
- POTENTIAL CONTIGUOUS HABITAT NETWORK
- POTENTIAL AREA FOR EXTRA HEDGEROW RESTORATION
- POTENTIAL FOOTPATH UPGRADE / ADDITION
- POTENTIAL CYCLEWAY UPGRADE / ADDITION
- ACCESS / CROSSING POINT IMPROVEMENTS
- POTENTIAL RECREATIONAL ASSET ENHANCEMENT
- EXISTING RECREATIONAL ASSET - POTENTIAL FOR ACCESSIBLE SPORTS PACKAGES
- PROMOTION OF STRATEGIC LINK
- POTENTIAL LONG DISTANCE FOOTPATH UPGRADE / ADDITION
- IMPROVEMENT OF REGIONAL RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
- POTENTIAL FLOOD STORAGE OPPORTUNITIES
- POTENTIAL GATEWAY ENHANCEMENT
- REFER TO *POTENTIAL ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS*

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

GM Allocation 23, Bamford / Norden



Above: View looking north across pastoral land use from Bridleway HeyBp104



GM Allocation Area: 35.06 ha

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

Study area definition

Lying within the administrative boundary of Rochdale MBC, the revised draft GMSF 2019 proposes to release Green Belt encompassing the full extent of GM Allocation 23, Bamford / Norden. Located within 2km of GM Allocation 23 itself, Land at Queens Park (Heywood) is identified as an additional site to be added to the Green Belt as part of the revised GMSF.

Urban land use at Bamford adjoins GM Allocation 23 to the north and east. Land lying within 2km of the GM Allocation site (identified as retained Green Belt or an additional site forming part of the revised draft GMSF 2019) will form the focus of GI recommendations / mitigation to enhance the 'beneficial use' of the Green Belt. However, the study will also identify any features of GM Allocation 23 which afford the opportunity to provide additional GI benefits where relevant.

Summary of evidence and policy influencing 'beneficial use' proposals

Published landscape character assessments – Greater Manchester Combined Authority

GM Allocation 23 lies within Pennine Foothills (West / South Pennines) LCT, as defined within the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment (2018)[1]. Characterised by a strongly rolling and undulating topography punctuated by locally distinctive hills and stream valleys, land use is dominated by semi-improved grassland pastures. The landscape is generally well wooded with masts / pylons and overhead lines providing visual intrusion on the wooded skylines. The foothills also provide an important separation function between distinct urban areas. However, transport infrastructure detracts from the rural qualities and sense of tranquillity within the LCT. The landscape therefore exhibits a variable visual character, with long views across the urban conurbation to the West and South Pennine uplands beyond.

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

This LCT is further refined into LCA 24: Knowl and Rooley Moors, Fringes and Foothills. The Pennine Foothills (West /South Pennines) LCT profile identifies the following guidance and opportunities for landscape enhancement of relevance to the study area.

- Ensure that the sense of separation the landscape provides between distinct settlements is retained.
- Retain the role of the landscape as an undeveloped backdrop to existing development.
- Strengthen the stone wall and hedgerow network, using local gritstone for walls and locally prevalent and climate resilient species for hedges. Any new boundaries should reflect local characteristics, including the planting of a new generation of hedgerow trees.
- Protect areas of semi-natural habitat including woodland, grassland and heathland which are locally designated as SBIs. Seek to enhance these where possible and provide linkages to form robust habitat networks.
- Protect areas of broadleaved woodland (particularly ancient woodland) which provide important semi-natural habitat and create wooded skylines.
- Encourage the natural regeneration of woodland and wetland habitats within valleys to improve their function in flood prevention and preventing diffuse pollution.
- Protect the setting of important heritage assets within the landscape, including conservation areas / listed buildings.
- Retain the important recreational function of the landscape. Seek to improve PRoW to encourage sustainable travel. Join up and promote multi-user routes to major destinations within the landscape, including Hollingworth Country Park and Tandle Hill Country Park.
- Retain the distinct visual character of the landscape, including views to monuments on skylines which form local landmarks, church spires and chimneys.
- Reinforce the structure of the landscape, through strengthening the stone wall and hedgerow network, using local gritstone for walls and locally prevalent and climate resilient species for hedges. Any new boundaries should reflect local characteristics, including the planting of a new generation of hedgerow trees.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off).

Published landscape character assessments – Local level

There is no local level published landscape character assessment for Rochdale MBC.

RE/6 Recreational Rights of Way

Saved UDP Policy RE/6[2] (to be replaced by the emerging Allocations Development Plan) relates to the creation of a system of strategic recreational rights of way. Rochdale MBC'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 implementation of high-quality links with such routes from urban areas will also be encouraged.

Green Infrastructure Action Plan[3]

Rochdale MBC have undertaken a Green Infrastructure Action Plan for each of their three Townships; Middleton, Pennines and Rochdale. The area of retained Green Belt within 2km of GM Allocation 23 is located within Character Area 1: Rooley and Knowl Moors within the Rochdale Township. Key green infrastructure opportunities which have been identified include:

- Maximise the tourism potential whilst protecting the fragile landscape by improved signposting and interpretation of the landscape, particularly highlighting priority routes connecting Ashworth Moor, Healey Dell LNR & reservoirs with urban neighbourhoods and town centres.
- Ensure that the biodiversity is protected and continues to carry out important recreation and environmental functions such as carbon capture within the peat moorland.
- Explore opportunities to improve woodland management by encouraging the take up of Forestry Commission (FC) grants and Countryside Stewardship by private landowners and promoting Woodland Certification.

[2] Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (2006) Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan (2001-2016)

[3] Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (2012), Rochdale Green Infrastructure Action Plan

- Ensure that partnership working, particularly with Bury MBC, Rossendale BC and UU, maximizes any opportunities for land management to support priority green infrastructure actions including flood risk management, biodiversity and climate change mitigation.

The report also identifies a range of strategic green infrastructure projects within Rochdale Township to be delivered incrementally from 2012 to 2026. These schemes are linked to development opportunities, area based regeneration and opportunities for external funding. The three strategic delivery projects within Rochdale Township comprise:

- Rochdale Township Greenways Network.
- Growing Greener Neighbourhoods in Rochdale Township.
- Roch Valley River Park.

Existing baseline

Access

The long distance footpath of the Rochdale Way dissects the landscape of the study area, running broadly parallel the meandering corridors of the River Roch and Naden Brook. The route then moves west towards Open Access Land at Ashworth Moor and Knowl Moor. A dense network of PRoW, including Public Footpaths RocERupp42 and RocEFp39, provide linkages with this long distance route from the settlement edge of Norden. Public Footpath HeyFp57 and Bridleway HeyBp60 also radiate southwards from the B6222 offering connections from Kenyon Fold. However, linkages from Bamford are limited to Bridleway HeyBp104 due to the steep and densely wooded valley sides of Naden Brook.

The northern extent of the study area is characterised by a network of PRoW which cross the landscape to the south of Open Access Land at Hunger Hill and Mount Etna, offering wider linkages to the Pennine Bridleway.

Dissecting the area of retained Green Belt east-west, the corridor of the B6222 is defined as a Severance Line in virtue of its perceived barrier to pedestrian movement. In addition, the wider study area encompasses Severance Lines identified by the meandering corridor of the River Roch and the section of the A680 which radiates from the western settlement edge of Rochdale.

Beeway routes within the area of retained Green Belt are limited to a proposed route forming the perimeter of the existing Bamford / Norden settlement edge. The access lies at the north eastern extent of GM Allocation 23. The junction of Queens Park Road and the B6222 is described as a Busy Beeway, judged to require a higher level of design intervention to improve cycling and walking. The section of the A680 adjoining Bagslate Moor Road is also defined as a Busy Beeway, albeit located beyond the extent of retained or proposed Green Belt.

The southern extent of the study area accommodates a short section of the on-road NCN link which connects the settlements of Castleton and Captain Fold to NCN 66, as promoted by Sustrans. Bridleway HeyBp104 which borders GM Allocation 23 is recognised by TfGM as a local cycle route.

The route of the B6222 forms a fragmented cycle network, connecting Rochdale with Bury's eastern limit. A number of short cycle routes promoted by TfGM radiate to the south towards Heywood from the B6222. Accommodated on Bridleways HeyBp111 and HeyBp41, a local cycle network connects Ashworth Road and Birtle Road and offers wider linkages to the retained Green Belt to the west of the study area.

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

Access

The opportunity exists to enhance the provision of local PRoW from the settlement fringe of Bamford, including the enhancement of links towards the Ashworth Valley via the Rochdale Way. The steep topography of the Naden Brook also offers the potential to improve access opportunities as well as the integration of natural play features due to the proximity of Rochdale.

The introduction of a coherent and improved interpretation strategy associated with the Rochdale Way long distance footpath network would improve visitor experience. In addition, the proximity of the retained Green Belt to Rochdale's urban fringe offers the opportunity to develop a waymarked and easily accessible network of circuitous health walks.

Highlighted as a potential opportunity for improvement as part of comments sourced from the public on the Bee Network proposals, the potential exits to create a wider connection between Bury and Rochdale which follows the route of the River Roch. The lack of Beeway networks

within the study area also offers the opportunity to enhance existing recreational linkages between Heywood and Rochdale, occupied within retained Green Belt which currently divides the settlements.

Consideration could also be given to the provision of enhanced links to Queen's Park, lying within an additional site to be added to the Green Belt as part of the revised GMSF. Opportunities to create linkages with Crimble Mill and the Rochdale Way are also noted.

The opportunity exists to address gaps in the continuity of cycle networks through the extension of existing routes at the B6222 to provide long distance routes stretching from the urban fringes of Heywood to Woodhouse Lane. Lying to the east of Greenbooth Reservoir, the alignment of Woodhouse Lane would provide wider linkages to the Pennine Bridleway. Consideration could also be given to the proposed extension and continuity of existing cycle routes which currently converge at the carriageway of the B6222.

Proposals could also be sought to utilise the valley of the River Roch as a framework for an active transport network. This includes the identification of pinch points and conflicts within the network in order to ensure that these routes and PRoW are accessible to a range of users.

Existing baseline

Sport and recreation

Queen's Park occupies an area of proposed additional Green Belt, comprised of a bowling green, tennis court and multiple play spaces. Formerly part of the Heywood Hall estate, the park sits on a plateau falling to the north and east of the valley of the River Roch. Heywood Cricket Club adjoins the park to the south.

Heywood Cemetery occupies the sloping valley sides to the north of the A58.

Located within the area of proposed Green Belt release, GM Allocation 23 encompasses playing fields and land use at Bamford Fieldhouse Cricket Club. The south western boundary of the GM Allocation site also adjoins tennis courts and a playing field to the north of Bamford Chapel.

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors.

Dense tracts of vegetation, defined as ancient woodland and SBIs, parallel Naden Brook and Cheesden Brook characterise the area of retained Green Belt to the west of GM Allocation 23. Tracts of ancient woodland parallel the meandering course of the River Roch, including Plumpton Wood and sections of Springfield Wood and Meadowcroft Wood are also defined as SBIs by GMEU.

Tracts of woodland to the north of the A680, including Doctor Dam & Holt Wood and Fardoe & Naden Woods, form areas of SBIs lying within close proximity to Greenbooth Reservoir.

The lake at Queen's Park is recognised as an SBI by virtue of its habitat value for breeding birds.

The study area is devoid of land designated as LNRs, NNRs, SACs or SSSIs.

Areas of retained Green Belt parallel the corridors and of the River Roch, Naden Brook and Cheesden Brook, including large areas at Queen's Park, are contained within land defined as EA Flood Zones 2 and 3. Land at Greenbooth Reservoir is also encompassed within these datasets.

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

Sport and recreation

Continued participation in initiatives such as the Green Flag Awards would promote the high environmental standards of the recreational areas and landscape management regime at Queen's Park. Green Belt enhancement strategies could also look to improve existing facilities; diversifying the recreational offer to attract an increasing number of visitors.

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors.

The proliferation of ancient woodland tracts along the corridors of the River Roch and Naden Brook offers the potential to enhance habitat linkages, balancing the promotion of access and recreation with the need for managing the landscape for wildlife.

The Roch Valley forms a Green Infrastructure Opportunity Area (2019) and the potential exists to implement proposals for habitat improvement and the development of a less fragmented network of woodland along the valley. The strategy could be delivered through specific land

management projects, flood risk management or the development of regeneration projects. This recommendation is also consistent with the management guidance included within the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1].

Opportunities to deliver the Pennine Edge Forest in Rochdale borough with partners such as Manchester City of Trees should also be explored.

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.

Existing baseline

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

Dense tracts of vegetation, defined as ancient woodland and SBIs, parallel Naden Brook and Cheesden Brook characterise the area of retained Green Belt to the west of GM Allocation 23. Tracts of ancient woodland parallel the meandering course of the River Roch, including Plumpton Wood and sections of Springfield Wood and Meadowcroft Wood are also defined as SBIs by GMEU.

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

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

The proliferation of ancient woodland tracts along the corridors of the River Roch and Naden Brook offers the potential to enhance habitat linkages, balancing the promotion of access and recreation with the need for managing the landscape for wildlife.

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Opportunities to deliver the Pennine Edge Forest in Rochdale borough with partners such as Manchester City of Trees should also be explored.

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.

Existing baseline

Landscape and visual

Running through the South Pennines, the River Roch provides key recreational, amenity and flood risk management functions. As defined by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU), the River Roch and its tributaries form corridors of Green Infrastructure (2018) based on numerous layers of wildlife, habitats and land types. The wider study area is also characterised by Green Infrastructure Opportunity Areas (2019) at the River Roch. The area is identified as having particular potential for the delivery of improvements to the Greater Manchester green infrastructure network.

Lying at the existing settlement fringe, GM Allocation 23 does not play a role in the prevention of settlement coalescence. However, the GM Allocation site does act as an undeveloped backdrop due to the proximity of the river valleys of Naden Brook and the River Roch.

The study area is influenced by a pattern of agricultural Enclosures within the UHLC. These areas are interspersed with land defined as Woodland and Ornamental, Parkland & Recreational. The settlement edges of Rochdale and Heywood lie within the Residential land type.

Areas of retained Green Belt parallel the corridors and of the River Roch, Naden Brook and Cheesden Brook, including large areas at Queen's Park, are contained within land defined as EA Flood Zones 2 and 3. Land at Greenbooth Reservoir is also encompassed within these datasets.

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

Landscape and visual

The adoption of appropriate flood management at the River Roch offer the opportunity of delivering water storage, habitat creation or flood management functions. Due to the implications for flood risk downstream, the opportunity exists to encourage the natural regeneration of woodland and wetland habitats at the moorland fringes in order to slow the water flow towards the River Roch below.

As identified within the Rochdale Green Infrastructure Action Plan3, the development of the Roch Valley River Park forms a strategic objective of the South Pennine landscape. The opportunity exists to integrate coordinated signage, routes and interpretation to built and natural heritage assets. The development of the Roch Valley Trail is also identified as a key proposal forming part of the Roch Valley River Park. The scheme aims to deliver linkages between existing reservoir walks and the promotion of connections with local attractions within the South Pennines landscape.

Opportunities to retain the role of the valley landscape as an undeveloped backdrop to existing development at Norden and Rochdale would be consistent with the Greater Manchester

published landscape character assessment[1]. This could be achieved through the enhancement of semi-natural habitats, including woodland tracts and grassland.

In accordance with the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1], the introduction of programmes to increase and maintain the pattern of traditional hedgerow field boundaries and stone walling could be explored. This could be achieved through the replacement of timber post and rail and post and wire fencing with hedgerows or stone walling.

The opportunity exists to improve flood risk management by working with the EA to explore river corridor management opportunities through SuDS and water storage.

The enhancement of green infrastructure assets parallel to the River Roch and Naden Brook will also help the area to adapt to the impacts of climate change and may provide opportunities for sustainable wood biomass in the future.

Manchester Green Belt Harm Assessment
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

LUC

Access, Sport and Recreation
GM Allocation 23

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

0 0.4 0.8 km

Map scale 1:21,000 @ A3

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CB:Green_C EB:Green_C LUC 10713-01_011_Context_Map_Access_Sport_Recreation_New_Template_RevB 25/08/2020
Source: NE, Sustrans, GMCA

Manchester Green Belt Harm Assessment
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

LUC

Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual
GM Allocation 23

- 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

0 0.55 1.1 km

Map scale 1:21,000 @ A3

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Potential enhancement projects

Access

1. Enhance the provision of local circuitous PRoW from the settlement fringe of Bamford, including the enhancement of links towards the Ashworth Valley via the Rochdale Way.
2. Improve access opportunities parallel the Naden Brook as well as the integration of natural play features.
3. Introduce a coherent and improved interpretation strategy associated with the Rochdale Way long distance footpath network to improve visitor experience.
4. Provide enhanced pedestrian links to Queen's Park.
5. Create a wider multi-user connection between Bury and Rochdale which follows the route of the River Roch. Utilise the valley of the River Roch as a framework for an active transport network.
6. Address gaps in the continuity of cycle networks through the extension of existing routes at the B6222 to provide long distance routes stretching from the urban fringes of Heywood to Woodhouse Lane.

Sport and recreation

7. Continue to participate in initiatives such as the Green Flag Awards to promote the high environmental standards of the recreational areas and landscape management regime at Queen's Park.

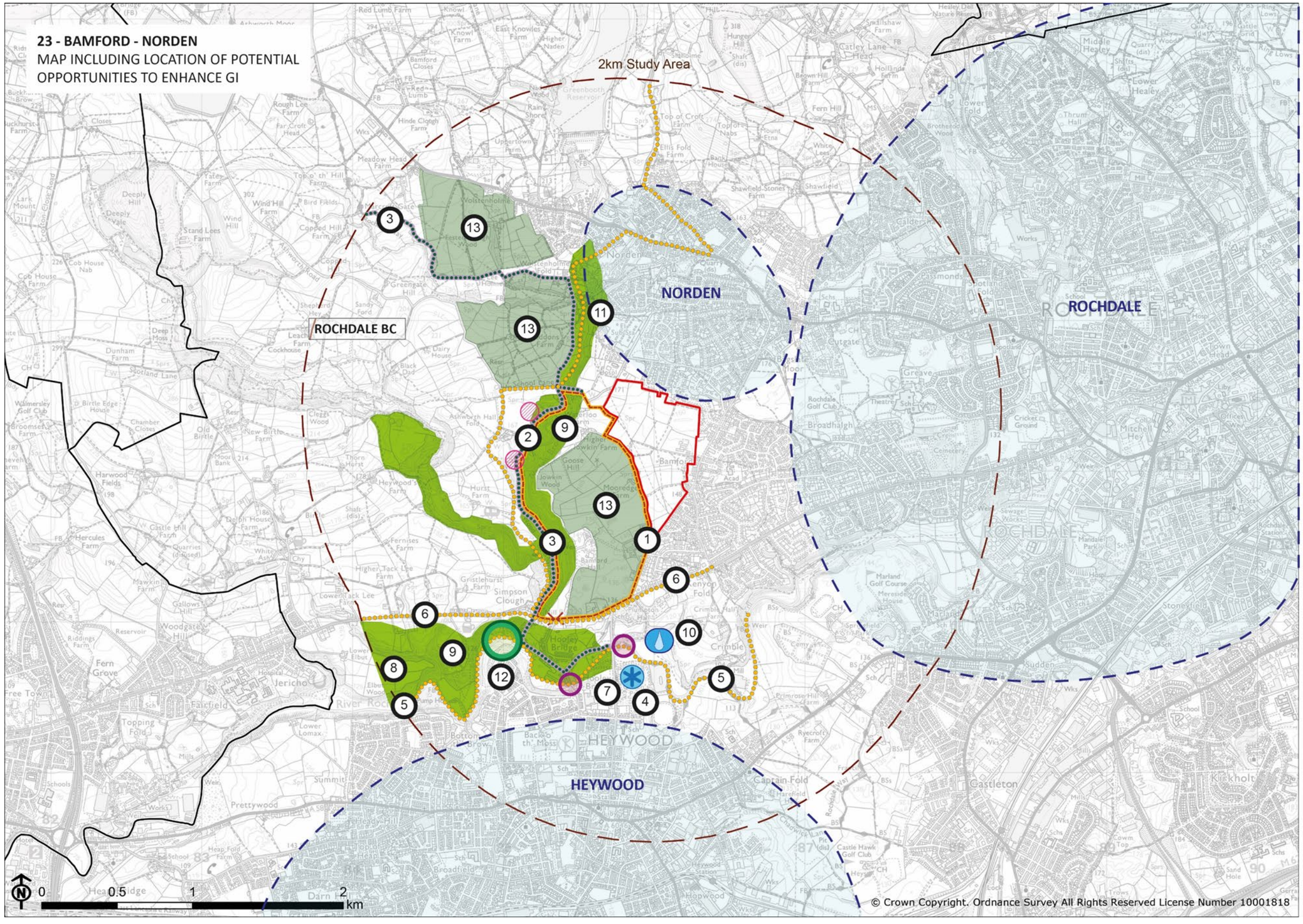
Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

8. Explore the potential to deliver the Pennine Edge Forest in Rochdale borough with partners such as Manchester City of Trees.
9. Enhance habitat linkages along the River Roch and Naden Brook, balancing the promotion of access and recreation with the need for managing the landscape for wildlife. Develop a less fragmented network of woodland along the valley of the River Roch.
10. 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

11. Retain the role of the valley landscape as an undeveloped backdrop to existing development at Norden and Rochdale through the enhancement of semi-natural habitats, including woodland tracts and grassland.
12. Develop the Roch Valley River Park, a strategic objective of the South Pennine landscape.
13. Introduce programmes to increase and maintain the pattern of traditional species rich hedgerow field boundaries and stone walling.

23 - BAMFORD - NORDEN
MAP INCLUDING LOCATION OF POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE GI



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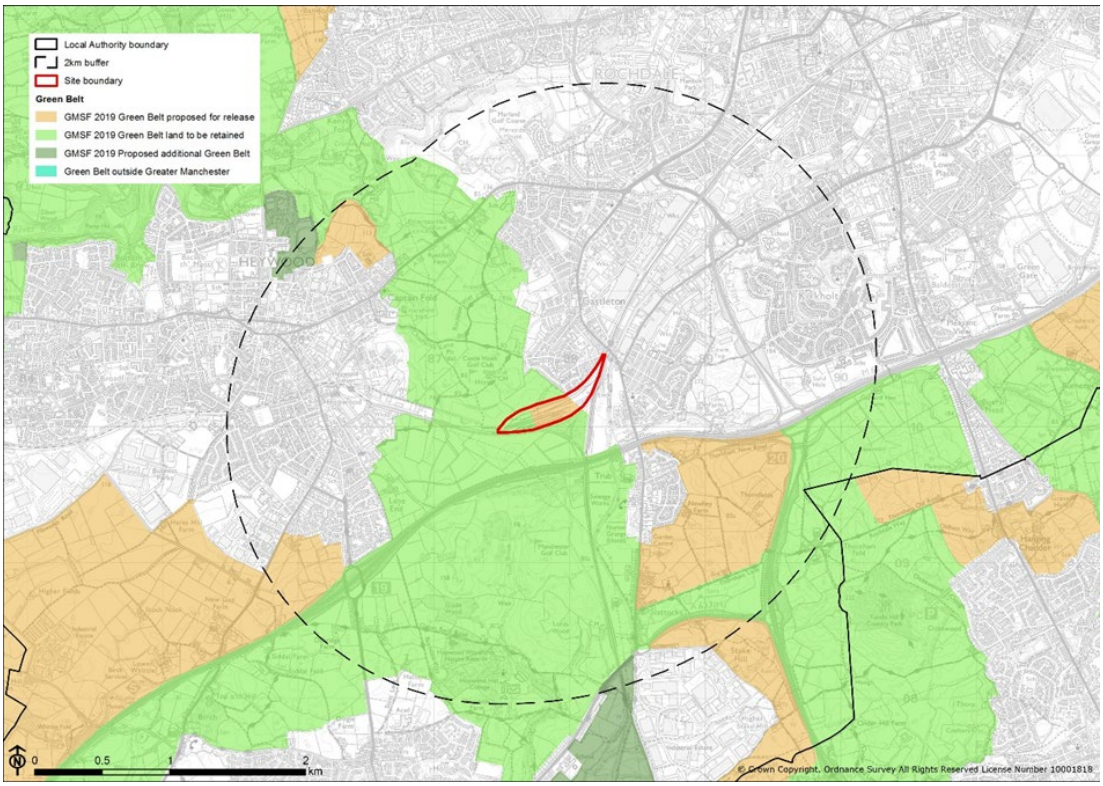
- LOCAL SETTLEMENT
- LOCAL AUTHORITY BOUNDARY
- REVISED GMSF ALLOCATIONS (2019)
- POTENTIAL CONTIGUOUS HABITAT NETWORK
- POTENTIAL AREA FOR HEDGEROW RESTORATION
- POTENTIAL FOOTPATH UPGRADE / ADDITION
- POTENTIAL CYCLEWAY UPGRADE / ADDITION
- ACCESS / CROSSING POINT IMPROVEMENTS
- POTENTIAL RECREATIONAL ASSET ENHANCEMENT
- IMPROVEMENT OF REGIONAL RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
- POTENTIAL FLOOD STORAGE OPPORTUNITIES
- INTEGRATION OF NATURAL PLAY
- POTENTIAL LONG DISTANCE FOOTPATH UPGRADE / ADDITION
- REFER TO *POTENTIAL ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS*

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

GM Allocation 24, Castleton Sidings



Above: View looking south from Public Footpath RocFFp22 towards GM Allocation 24



GM Allocation Area: 11.54 ha

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

Study area definition

The revised draft GMSF 2019 proposes to release the central section of Green Belt within GM Allocation 24, Castleton Sidings. Land at Queens Park (Heywood) and Land to the West of Stakehill Business Park are identified as additional sites to be added to the Green Belt as part of the revised GMSF.

Land lying within 2km of the GM Allocation site (identified as retained Green Belt as well as the additional sites forming part of the revised draft GMSF 2019) will form the focus of GI recommendations / mitigation to enhance the 'beneficial use' of the Green Belt. This includes land identified as retained Green Belt within the western extent of the allocation site itself.

Summary of evidence and policy influencing 'beneficial use' proposals

Published landscape character assessments – Greater Manchester Combined Authority

The southern extent of GM Allocation 24 lies within Urban Fringe Farmland LCT, as defined within the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment (2018)[1]. The Key Characteristics of this LCT include a rolling landscape dissected by narrow steeply sided wooden cloughs and drained by a network of streams. Low grade pasture defined by small-medium sized fields typifies the land use, with a network of road and rail routes forming dominant features within the landscape. The noise of traffic and activity along these routes weakens the sense of rural tranquillity, as does the regular noise of planes overhead in virtue of the proximity to Manchester Airport in the south. A dispersed settlement pattern predominates, with some twentieth century ribbon development evident along road networks. The northern limit of GM Allocation 24 is classified as Urban within the published landscape character assessment for Greater Manchester[1].

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

This LCT is further refined into LCA 27: Simister, Slattocks and Heald Green. The Urban Fringe Farmland LCT profile identifies the following guidance and opportunities for landscape enhancement of relevance to the area of retained Green Belt / additional sites lies.

- Protect and where possible 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.
- Strengthen and restore the dry stone wall and hedgerow network […] reflecting local characteristics (choice of stone and building style; hedgerow species and management regimes). Encourage the restoration of traditional boundaries where fencing is present.
- Conserve remaining industrial relicts, including disused railway lines, canals, mill buildings.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS […] addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). This landscape is part of a number of Greater Manchester's main river valleys.
- 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.
- Conserve key views and intervisibility with the South / West Pennines and Dark Peak foothills, upland fringes and open moorlands.

Published landscape character assessments – Local level

There is no local level published landscape character assessment for Rochdale MBC.

RE/6 Recreational Rights of Way

Saved UDP Policy RE/6[2] (to be replaced by the emerging Allocations Development Plan) relates to the creation of a system of strategic recreational rights of way. Rochdale MBC'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

[2] Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (2006) Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan (2001-2016)

region. The implementation of high-quality links with such routes from urban areas will also be encouraged.

Green Infrastructure Action Plan[3]

GM Allocation 24 does not lie within land included within Green Infrastructure Action Plans produced for each of the three Townships (Middleton, Pennines and Rochdale) as identified by Rochdale MBC.

Existing baseline

Access

The Rochdale Way dissects the area of retained Green Belt to the north of the M62, emerging from the urban edge of Hopwood at Park Street. The route crosses the spur of the Calverdale rail line before moving north towards the north western extent of Castleton. The carriageway of Chadwick Lane accommodates the route of Bridleway HeyBp65 which also offers wider connections between the western fringes of Castleton and Captain Fold which is centred on the A58. In addition, Public Footpath HeyFp68 provides a direct connection from the Rochdale Way to the Junction 19 Industrial Park.

With the exception of Public Footpath HeyFp143 which forms a linear route connecting Lane End with Oaken Bank Road, the area of agricultural land to the south of the M62 is devoid of PRoW. However, the Rochdale Way forms a circular route on land to the south, encompassing Hopwood Woodlands Nature Reserve, land use at Hopwood Hall College and Woodside Farm.

A series of road corridors dissect the area of retained Green Belt separating the settlements of Heywood and Castleton. These routes, including the A58 and the M62, are defined as Severance Lines in virtue of their perceived barrier to pedestrian movement. The Calverdale rail line and the spur connecting this route to the East Lancashire Railway (heritage rail line) also form Severance Lines, as defined by TfGM.

[3] Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (2012), Rochdale Township Green Infrastructure Action Plan

Beeway routes within the area of retained Green Belt include a route connecting the settlements of Hopwood and Castleton, via Junction 19 Industrial Park. The towpath of the Rochdale Canal and the section of the Rochdale Way to the north of Hollins are also defined as Beeways, representing direct routes between existing crossing points.

The A58 is described as a Busy Beeways, judged to require a higher level of design intervention to improve cycling and walking.

NCN 66 forms the towpath of Rochdale Canal, running broadly parallel the route of the Calverdale rail line within the study area. An on road NCN link is also provided by the route of Chadwick Lane, connecting the settlements of Castleton and Captain Fold.

The Rochdale Way forms an existing multi-user route on land at the southern extent of the study area. Land to the north of the A58 encompasses traffic-free cycle networks at Crimble Mill, including a route traversing the River Roch.

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

Access

The opportunity exists to improve east-west pedestrian connections from Heywood to Castleton, on land currently dominated by the infrastructure corridors of the M62 and the Calverdale rail line. The introduction of local level PRoW to create linkages to the Rochdale Way from the existing settlement edge would also enhance access opportunities for both cyclists and pedestrians.

Consideration could be given to the provision of improved crossing points across the corridor of the M62 to enhance connectivity and enable the establishment of a PRoW network on islanded land to the east of Lane End and at Manchester Golf Club. Further improvements to reduce the barrier to pedestrian movement across the Calverdale rail line through improved crossing points could also be explored.

Proposals aimed to improve the signage of routes and wider interpretation of the landscape within the wider countryside could also be adopted.

Highlighted as a potential opportunity for improvement as part of comments sourced from the public on the Bee Network proposals, the potential exists to create a wider connection between Rochdale and Heywood broadly following the route of the A58.

An Approved Comment relating to the Bee Network proposals identifies the opportunity to accommodate improved access / gateway features through Hopwood Woodlands Nature Reserve and Hopwood Hall College to the south of the study area.

Consideration could also be given to upgrades to the surfacing as part of the Rochdale Canal to ensure continuous multi-user access.

The opportunity exists to address gaps in the continuity of cycle networks through the extension of existing routes at the A58 to provide strategic east-west multi-user routes, between Castleton and Heywood. Proposed GI enhancements could also involve the provision of improved access points across the corridors of the M62 and spur of the Calverdale rail line.

Proposals could also be sought to utilise the valley of the River Roch and the corridor of the Rochdale Canal as a framework for an active transport network. This includes the identification of pinch points and conflicts within the network in order to ensure that these routes and PRoW are accessible to a range of users.

Existing baseline

Sport and recreation

Golf courses form the prominent recreational land use within the area of retained Green Belt. Manchester Golf Course forms a large tract of recreational provision immediately south of the M62. Land to the north of the spur of the Calverdale rail line is also characterised by Castlehawk Golf Club, bordering the northern limit of GM Allocation 24.

Castleton Sports Centre and an area of allotments / community growing spaces border Castlehawk Golf Club to the north, accessed via Chadwick Lane. Playing fields associated with Hopwood Hall College lie to the north of the A664 at the study area's southern limit.

Heywood Cemetery occupies the sloping valley sides to the north of the A58.

The study area lies within close proximity to the East Lancashire Railway, a heritage line running between Heywood and Rawtenstall.

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

Sport and recreation

The presence of Manchester Golf Course, Castleton Sports Centre and Castlehawk Golf Club afford the opportunity to offer accessible sports packages to local residents and provide stronger links between existing sports facilities in the area.

Improvements to the network of local playing fields at Hopwood Hall College, including the provision of public access at specific times, could also be explored. Proposals could include enhanced access control, way-marking and interpretation to encourage healthy lifestyles and increase usage of the green space assets.

The opportunity exists to promote pedestrian access to the recreational asset at the East Lancashire Railway (Heywood Station) from the surrounding settlements of Heywood and Castleton.

Existing baseline

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

A network of discrete woodland tracts characterise the area of retained Green Belt to the south of Manchester Golf Club, forming Hopwood Woodlands Local Nature Reserve. Comprising Oaken Bank Wood, Glade Wood, Hopwood Clough and Lords Wood; the areas are defined as both SBIs and blocks of ancient woodland. The corridor of the Rochdale Canal (Scowcroft to Warland) is also recognised as an SBI, SAC and also designated as a SSSI by Natural England.

Located at the north western extent of the study area, the Roch Valley provides a rich network of habitats, albeit largely fragmented due to the presence of built development such as Crimble Mill.

Areas of retained Green Belt parallel the corridor of the Trub Brook and the River Roch 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.

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

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

The western extent of GM Allocation 24 is due to be retained as Green Belt and improved as an area of open space with enhanced biodiversity.

Strengthening of woodland tracts at Hopwood Woodlands Nature Reserve could enhance ecological connectivity in the wider area, reducing habitat fragmentation. The opportunity exists to enhance habitat composition through careful planting regimes as identified by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU). This recommendation is also consistent with the management guidance included within the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1].

In addition, proposals which address the spread of invasive species within the Roch Valley through careful monitoring and management where possible could be explored.

The Roch Valley forms a Green Infrastructure Opportunity Area (2019) and the potential exists to implement proposals for habitat improvement and the development of a less fragmented network of woodland along the valley. The strategy could be delivered through specific land management projects, flood risk management or the development of regeneration projects. This recommendation is also consistent with the management guidance included within the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1].

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.

Existing baseline

Landscape and visual

GM Allocation 24 and the corridor of the River Roch play a partial role in the prevention of settlement coalescence between Heywood and Castleton.

Running through the South Pennines, the River Roch provides key recreational, amenity and flood risk management functions. As defined by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU), the River Roch and its tributaries form corridors of Green Infrastructure (2018) based on numerous layers of wildlife, habitats and land types. The wider study area is also characterised by Green Infrastructure Opportunity Areas (2019) at the River Roch. The area is identified as having particular potential for the delivery of improvements to the Greater Manchester green infrastructure network.

The study area is influenced by a pattern of agricultural Enclosures within the UHLC. These areas are interspersed with land defined as Woodland and Residential. Ornamental, Parkland and Recreational Land also typifies the study area due to the proliferation of golf courses.

Areas of retained Green Belt parallel the corridor of the Trub Brook and the River Roch 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.

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

Landscape and visual

Retention of the character of the distinct settlements, minimising any sense of urban encroachment or settlement coalescence, forms a key landscape and visual consideration. Opportunities to retain the role of the valley landscape as an undeveloped backdrop to existing development at Heywood and Castleton would also be consistent with the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1]. This could be achieved through the enhancement of semi-natural habitats, including woodland tracts and grassland.

The adoption of appropriate flood management at the River Roch offer the opportunity of delivering water storage, habitat creation or flood management functions. Due to the implications for flood risk downstream, the opportunity exists to encourage the natural regeneration of woodland and wetland habitats at the moorland fringes in order to slow the water flow towards the River Roch below.

As identified within the Pennines Green Infrastructure Action Plan3, the development of the Roch Valley River Park forms a strategic objective of the South Pennine landscape. The opportunity exists to integrate coordinated signage, routes and interpretation to built and natural heritage assets. The development of the Roch Valley Trail is also identified as a key proposal forming part of the Roch Valley River Park. The scheme aims to deliver linkages between existing reservoir walks and the promotion of connections with local attractions within the South Pennines landscape.

In accordance with the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment1, the introduction of programmes to increase and maintain the pattern of traditional hedgerow field boundaries and stone walling could be explored. This could be achieved through the replacement of timber post and rail and post and wire fencing with hedgerows or stone walling. This is particularly relevant in the areas of Green Belt to the north of Manchester Golf Course and south of GM Allocation 24 where existing hedges are weak and fragmented.

The opportunity exists to improve flood risk management by working with the EA to explore river corridor management opportunities through SuDS and water storage.

The enhancement of the green infrastructure assets parallel the River Roch will help the area to adapt to the impacts of climate change and may provide opportunities for sustainable wood biomass in the future.

Manchester Green Belt Harm Assessment
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

LUC

Access, Sport and Recreation
GM Allocation 24

- 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

0 0.35 0.7 km

Map scale 1:19,000 @ A3

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Source: NE, Sustrans, GMCA

Manchester Green Belt Harm Assessment
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

LUC

Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual
GM Allocation 24

- 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

0 0.5 1 km

Map scale 1:19,000 @ A3

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Potential enhancement projects

Access

1. Improve east-west pedestrian connections from Heywood to Castleton, on land currently dominated by the infrastructure corridors of the M62 and the Calverdale rail line.
2. Introduce local level PRoW to create linkages to the Rochdale Way from the existing settlement edge to enhance access opportunities for both cyclists and pedestrians.
3. Improve the signage of routes and wider interpretation of the landscape within the wider countryside.
4. Accommodate improved access through Hopwood Woodlands Nature Reserve and Hopwood Hall College to the south of the study area.
5. Provide improved crossing points across the corridor of the M62 to enhance connectivity and enable the establishment of a PRoW network on islanded land to the east of Lane End and at Manchester Golf Club.
6. Address gaps in the continuity of cycle networks through the extension of existing routes at the A58 to provide strategic east-west multi-user routes, between Castleton and Heywood.
7. Utilise the corridor of the Rochdale Canal as a framework for an active transport network.

Sport and recreation

8. Offer accessible sports packages to local residents and provide stronger links between existing sports facilities in the area.
9. Improve the network of local playing fields at Hopwood Hall College, allowing public access at specific times.
10. Promote pedestrian access to the recreational asset at the East Lancashire Railway (Heywood Station) from the surrounding settlements of Heywood and Castleton.

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

11. Address the spread of invasive species within the Roch Valley through careful monitoring and management where possible.

12. Encourage the natural regeneration of woodland and wetland habitats at the moorland fringes in order to slow the water flow towards the River Roch below.
13. Strengthen woodland tracts to enhance ecological connectivity in the wider area, reducing habitat fragmentation. This should incorporate the replacement of trees and species rich hedgerows lost. Planting regimes to strengthen woodland tracts should incorporate a diverse range of species.
14. 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

15. Develop the Roch Valley River Park as a strategic objective.
16. Introduce a programme to increase and maintain the pattern of traditional hedgerow field boundaries and stone walling within the landscape.

24 - CASTLETON SIDINGS
MAP INCLUDING LOCATION OF POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE GI

ROCHDALE
2km Study Area
ROCHDALE BC
HEYWOOD
CASTLETON

LOCAL SETTLEMENT
LOCAL AUTHORITY BOUNDARY
REVISED GMSF ALLOCATIONS (2019)
POTENTIAL CONTIGUOUS HABITAT NETWORK
POTENTIAL AREA FOR HEDGEROW RESTORATION
POTENTIAL FOOTPATH UPGRADE / ADDITION
POTENTIAL CYCLEWAY UPGRADE / ADDITION
ACCESS / CROSSING POINT IMPROVEMENTS
EXISTING RECREATIONAL ASSET - POTENTIAL FOR ACCESSIBLE SPORTS PACKAGES
POTENTIAL RECREATIONAL ASSET ENHANCEMENT
PROMOTION OF STRATEGIC LINK
POTENTIAL GATEWAY ENHANCEMENT
IMPROVEMENT OF REGIONAL RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
POTENTIAL FLOOD STORAGE OPPORTUNITIES
POTENTIAL MANAGEMENT OF INVASIVE SPECIES
REFER TO *POTENTIAL ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS*

0 0.5 1 2 km

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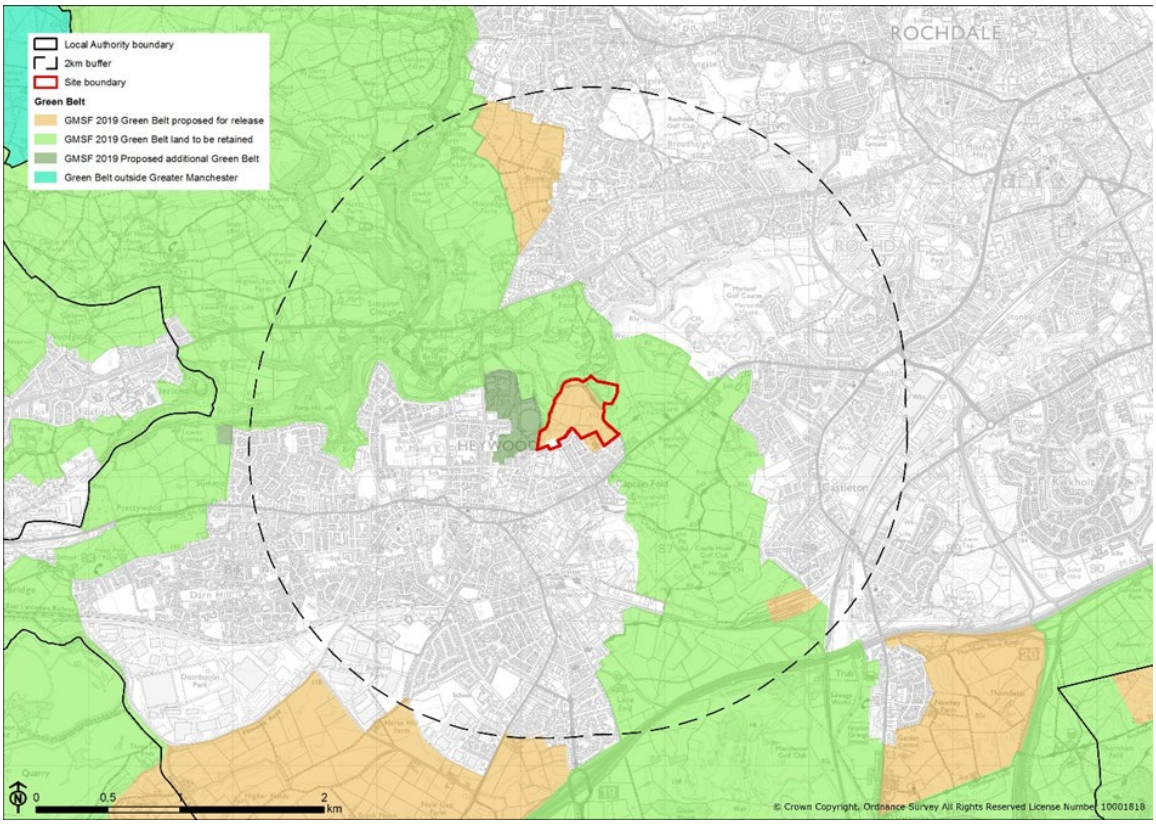
Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

GM Allocation 25, Crimble Mill



Above: View looking north east from Woodland Road towards Crimble Mill



GM Allocation Area: 16.81 ha

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

Study area definition

With the exception of land at Crimble Mill to the east of the River Roch, the revised draft GMSF 2019 proposes to release Green Belt encompassing the full extent of GM Allocation 25, Crimble Mill. Adjoining GM Allocation 25 at its western boundary, Land at Queens Park (Heywood) is identified as an additional site to be added to the Green Belt as part of the revised GMSF.

Land lying within 2km of the GM Allocation site (identified as retained Green Belt as well as the additional site forming part of the revised draft GMSF 2019) will form the focus of GI recommendations / mitigation to enhance the 'beneficial use' of the Green Belt. This also includes land identified as retained Green Belt at the north eastern extent of the allocation site itself.

Summary of evidence and policy influencing 'beneficial use' proposals

Published landscape character assessments – Greater Manchester Combined Authority

GM Allocation 25 lies within Incised Urban Fringe Valleys LCT, as defined within the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment (2018)[1]. The LCT comprises typically narrow, incised valleys cutting through rolling hills which include the Pennine and Dark Peak foothills. Largely wooded with a natural character, the valleys are bordered by riparian woodland with banks of dense broadleaved vegetation. Views are predominantly contained by these steep valley sides with woodland and areas of parkland, creating important wildlife corridors between densely populated urban areas. Small to medium pastoral fields on the valley sides contrast with areas of wet grassland and scrub centred on the valley floor. Recreational land use forms a 'key characteristic' of the LCT, consisting of amenity grassland associated with golf courses, playing fields and country parks. Numerous long distance footpaths and cycle routes also run through the valleys and along canals. Although major transport infrastructure

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

severs the visual unity of the valley landscape, these areas have a long industrial heritage as a power source for the nineteenth and twentieth century cotton industry.

This LCT is further refined into LCA 25: River Roch, wholly encompassing GM Allocation 25 itself. The Incised Urban Fringe Valleys LCT profile identifies the following guidance and opportunities for landscape enhancement of relevance to the retained Green Belt / additional site.

- Protect and where possible enhance semi-natural habitats and networks, including riparian, broadleaved and ancient woodland, wet grasslands, meadows and regenerating habitats on former industrial land.
- Strengthen the dry stone wall network, reflecting local building styles and materials. Any new boundaries should also reflect local characteristics.
- Hedgerows should be preserved and enhanced […]. New hedgerow planting should be encouraged where it has been removed and replaced by post and wire fencing.
- Avoid the felling of any significant areas of woodland to maintain the contained and secluded character of the valleys and to retain the existing screening of the urban edge.
- Explore opportunities to further develop post-industrial and reclaimed sites […] for habitat creation with possible links with The Northern Forest Initiative.
- Conserve remaining industrial relicts, including historic mill buildings, canals and railway lines.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). This is of particular importance as the LCT covers many of Greater Manchester's main river valleys.
- Encourage woodland creation schemes on areas of low grade agricultural land, including through the Northern Forest Initiative.
- Conserve key views and intervisibility with the South/West Pennines and Dark Peak foothills, upland fringes and open moorlands.
- Recreational opportunities should be maintained and enhanced in order to preserve the high recreational value of the valleys as green fingers through densely populated areas. Opportunities should be sought to strengthen the links between valleys along public

footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes and the various recreational destinations and heritage sites fund within the landscape.

- Formal recognition should be sought for recreational routes with possible extensions of existing long-distance routes or the formation of new ones.

Published landscape character assessments – Local level

There is no local level published landscape character assessment for Rochdale MBC.

RE/6 Recreational Rights of Way

Saved UDP Policy RE/6[2] (to be replaced by the emerging Allocations Development Plan) relates to the creation of a system of strategic recreational rights of way. Rochdale MBC'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 implementation of high quality links with such routes from urban areas will also be encouraged.

Green Infrastructure Action Plan[3]

GM Allocation 25 does not lie within land included within Green Infrastructure Action Plans produced for each of the three Townships (Middleton, Pennines and Rochdale) as identified by Rochdale MBC.

Existing baseline

Access

The route of the Rochdale Way dissects the landscape of the study area, running broadly parallel the meandering corridors of the River Roch and Naden Brook. Located south of the A58, the route also crosses agricultural land separating Heywood and Castleton. A limited

[2] Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (2006) Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan (2001-2016)

[3] Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (2012), Rochdale Township Green Infrastructure Action Plan

number of local PRoW provide linkages with this long distance route from the settlement edge of Heywood. However, Public Footpath HeyFp57 and Bridleway HeyBp60 radiate southwards from the B6222 offering connections from Kenyon Fold.

The carriageway of Chadwick Lane accommodates the route of Bridleway HeyBp65 which offers wider connections between the western fringes of Castleton and Captain Fold. In addition, Public Footpath HeyFp68 provides a direct connection from the Rochdale Way to the Junction 19 Industrial Park. However, the steep and densely wooded valley sides of Naden Brook restrict PRoW connections from Bamford and the western extent of Rochdale.

Dissecting the area of retained Green Belt east-west, the corridor of the B6222 is defined as a Severance Line in virtue of its perceived barrier to pedestrian movement. In addition, the wider study area encompasses Severance Lines identified by the meandering corridor of the River Roch and the A58 which connects the settlements of Rochdale and Heywood.

Beeway routes within the area of retained Green Belt are limited to a proposed route forming the perimeter of the existing Bamford / Norden settlement edge and an informal track connecting Hopwood and Castleton. The A58 and the junction of Queens Park Road and the B6222 are described as Busy Beeways, judged to require a higher level of design intervention to improve cycling and walking. The section of the A680 adjoining Bagslate Moor Road is also defined as a Busy Beeway, albeit located beyond the extent of retained or proposed Green Belt.

An on-road NCN link provided by the route of Chadwick Lane connects the settlements of Castleton and Captain Fold to NCN 66, as promoted by Sustrans.

Land to the north of the A58 encompasses traffic-free cycle networks at Crimble Mill, including a route traversing the River Roch. Recognised by TfGM, the existing network of cycle routes provide linkages between the A58 and the B6222. A route running to the north of Norden Road also provides a wider connection to School Lane at the northern extent of the study area.

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

Access

The opportunity exists to improve east-west pedestrian connections from Heywood to Castleton though the introduction of local level PRoW. These routes could afford linkages to the Rochdale Way from the existing settlement edge and enhance access opportunities for both cyclists and

pedestrians. The potential also exists to improve access and the provision of local PRoW from the settlement fringes of Heywood and Bamford.

The introduction of a coherent and improved interpretation strategy associated with the Rochdale Way long distance footpath network would improve visitor experience. In addition, the proximity of the retained Green Belt to Rochdale's urban fringe offers the opportunity to develop a waymarked and easily accessible network of circuitous health walks.

Highlighted as a potential opportunity for improvement as part of comments sourced from the public on the Bee Network proposals, the potential exits to create a wider connection between Bury and Rochdale which follows the route of the River Roch. The potential also exists to increase the number of Beeway networks within the study area to enhance existing recreational linkages between Heywood and Rochdale.

Consideration could also be given to the provision of high quality links to Queen's Park, lying within an additional site to be added to the Green Belt as part of the revised GMSF. Opportunities to create linkages with Crimble Mill and the Rochdale Way are also noted.

The opportunity exists to address gaps in the continuity of cycle networks through the extension of existing routes at the A58 to provide strategic east-west multi-user routes between Castleton and Heywood. Consideration could also be given to the proposed extension and continuity of existing cycle routes which currently converge at the carriageway of the B6222.

Proposed GI enhancements could also involve the provision of improved access points across the corridor of the M62.

Proposals could also be sought to utilise the valley of the River Roch as a framework for an active transport network. This includes the identification of pinch points and conflicts within the network in order to ensure that these routes and PRoW are accessible to a range of users.

Existing baseline

Sport and recreation

Queen's Park occupies an area of proposed additional Green Belt, comprised of a bowling green, tennis court and multiple play spaces. Formerly part of the Heywood Hall estate, the park sits on a plateau falling to the north and east of the valley of the River Roch. Heywood Cricket Club adjoins the park to the south.

Land to the north of the spur of the Calverdale rail line is characterised by Castlehawk Golf Club, bordering the western fringes of Castleton. Castleton Sports Centre and an area of allotments / community growing spaces border this golf course, accessed via Chadwick Lane.

Heywood Cemetery occupies the sloping valley sides to the north of the A58.

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors.

Tracts of ancient woodland parallel the meandering course of the River Roch, including Plumpton Wood and sections of Springfield Wood and Meadowcroft Wood are defined as SBIs by GMEU. The lake at Queen's Park is also recognised as an SBI by virtue of its habitat value for breeding birds.

Dense tracts of vegetation, defined as ancient woodland and SBIs, parallel Naden Brook and the Ashworth Valley characterise the area of retained Green Belt at the north western extent of the study area. The corridor of the Rochdale Canal (Scowcroft to Warland) is defined as an SBI, SAC and also designated as a SSSI by Natural England.

Areas of retained Green Belt parallel the corridor of the River Roch, including large areas at Queen's Park, are contained within land defined as EA Flood Zones 2 and 3.

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

Sport and recreation

Continued participation in initiatives such as the Green Flag Awards would promote the high environmental standards of the recreational areas and landscape management regime at Queen's Park. Green Belt enhancement strategies could also look to improve existing facilities; diversifying the recreational offer to attract an increasing number of visitors.

The presence of private recreational assets (Castlehawk Golf Club and Castleton Sports Centre) affords the opportunity to offer accessible sports packages to local residents.

Existing baseline

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

Tracts of ancient woodland parallel the meandering course of the River Roch, including Plumpton Wood and sections of Springfield Wood and Meadowcroft Wood are defined as SBIs by GMEU. The lake at Queen's Park is also recognised as an SBI by virtue of its habitat value for breeding birds.

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Areas of retained Green Belt parallel the corridor of the River Roch, including large areas at Queen's Park, are contained within land defined as EA Flood Zones 2 and 3.

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

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

The proliferation of ancient woodland tracts along the corridors of the River Roch and Naden Brook offers the potential to enhance habitat linkages, balancing the promotion of access and recreation with the need for managing the landscape for wildlife.

The Roch Valley forms a Green Infrastructure Opportunity Area (2019) and the potential exists to implement proposals for habitat improvement and the development of a less fragmented network of woodland along the valley. The strategy could be delivered through specific land management projects, flood risk management or the development of regeneration projects. This recommendation is also consistent with the management guidance included within the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1].

Opportunities to deliver the Pennine Edge Forest in Rochdale borough with partners such as Manchester City of Trees should also be explored.

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.

Existing baseline

Landscape and visual

GM Allocation 25 and the corridor of the River Roch play a partial role in the prevention of settlement coalescence between Heywood and Rochdale.

Running through the South Pennines, the River Roch provides key recreational, amenity and flood risk management functions. As defined by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU), the River Roch and its tributaries form corridors of Green Infrastructure (2018) based on numerous layers of wildlife, habitats and land types. The wider study area is also characterised by Green Infrastructure Opportunity Areas (2019) at the River Roch. The area is identified as having particular potential for the delivery of improvements to the Greater Manchester green infrastructure network.

Running through the South Pennines, the River Roch provides key recreational, amenity and flood risk management functions. As defined by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU), the River Roch and its tributaries form corridors of Green Infrastructure (2018) based on numerous layers of wildlife, habitats and land types. The wider study area is also characterised by Green Infrastructure Opportunity Areas (2019) at the River Roch. The area is identified as having particular potential for the delivery of improvements to the Greater Manchester green infrastructure network.

The study area is influenced by a pattern of agricultural Enclosures within the UHLC. These areas are interspersed with land defined as Woodland and Residential. Ornamental, Parkland and Recreational Land also typifies the study area due to the proliferation of golf courses.

Areas of retained Green Belt parallel the corridor of the River Roch, including large areas at Queen’s Park, are contained within land defined as EA Flood Zones 2 and 3.

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

Landscape and visual

Retention of the character of the distinct settlements, minimising any sense of urban encroachment or settlement coalescence, forms a key landscape and visual consideration. Opportunities to retain the role of the valley landscape as an undeveloped backdrop to existing development at Heywood and Rochdale would also be consistent with the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1]. This could be achieved through the enhancement of semi-natural habitats, including woodland tracts and grassland.

The adoption of appropriate flood management at the River Roch offer the opportunity of delivering water storage, habitat creation or flood management functions. Due to the implications for flood risk downstream, the opportunity exists to encourage the natural regeneration of woodland and wetland habitats at the moorland fringes in order to slow the water flow towards the River Roch below.

As identified within the Pennines Green Infrastructure Action Plan3, the development of the Roch Valley River Park forms a strategic objective of the South Pennine landscape. The opportunity exists to integrate coordinated signage, routes and interpretation to built and natural heritage assets. The development of the Roch Valley Trail is also identified as a key proposal forming part of the Roch Valley River Park. The scheme aims to deliver linkages between existing reservoir walks and the promotion of connections with local attractions within the South Pennines landscape.

In accordance with the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1], the introduction of programmes to increase and maintain the pattern of traditional hedgerow field boundaries and stone walling could be explored. This could be achieved through the replacement of timber post and rail and post and wire fencing with hedgerows or stone walling.

The opportunity exists to improve flood risk management by working with the EA to explore river corridor management opportunities through SuDS and water storage.

The enhancement of green infrastructure assets parallel the River Roch will also help the area to adapt to the impacts of climate change and may provide opportunities for sustainable wood biomass in the future.

Manchester Green Belt Harm Assessment
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

LUC

Access, Sport and Recreation
GM Allocation 25

- 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

0 0.35 0.7 km

Map scale 1:19,000 @ A3

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Manchester Green Belt Harm Assessment
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

LUC

Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual
GM Allocation 25

- 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

0 0.5 1 km

Map scale 1:19,000 @ A3

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Potential enhancement projects

Access

1. Improve east-west pedestrian connections from Heywood to Castleton though the introduction of local level PRoW.
2. Introduce a coherent and improved interpretation strategy associated with the Rochdale Way long distance footpath network to improve visitor experience.
3. Create a wider connection between Bury and Rochdale which follows the route of the River Roch.
4. Provide high quality pedestrian links to Queen's Park from the settlement fringe.
5. Address gaps in the continuity of cycle networks through the extension of existing routes at the A58 to provide strategic east-west multi-user routes between Castleton and Heywood. Address gaps in the continuity of cycle networks through the extension of existing routes at the B6222 to provide long distance routes stretching from the urban fringes of Heywood to Woodhouse Lane.
6. Provide improved access points across the corridor of the M62.
7. Utilise the valley of the River Roch as a framework for an active transport network.

Sport and recreation

8. Continue to participate in initiatives such as the Green Flag Awards to promote the high environmental standards of the recreational areas and landscape management regime at Queen's Park.
9. Offer local people accessible sports packages to private recreational assets within the study area.

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

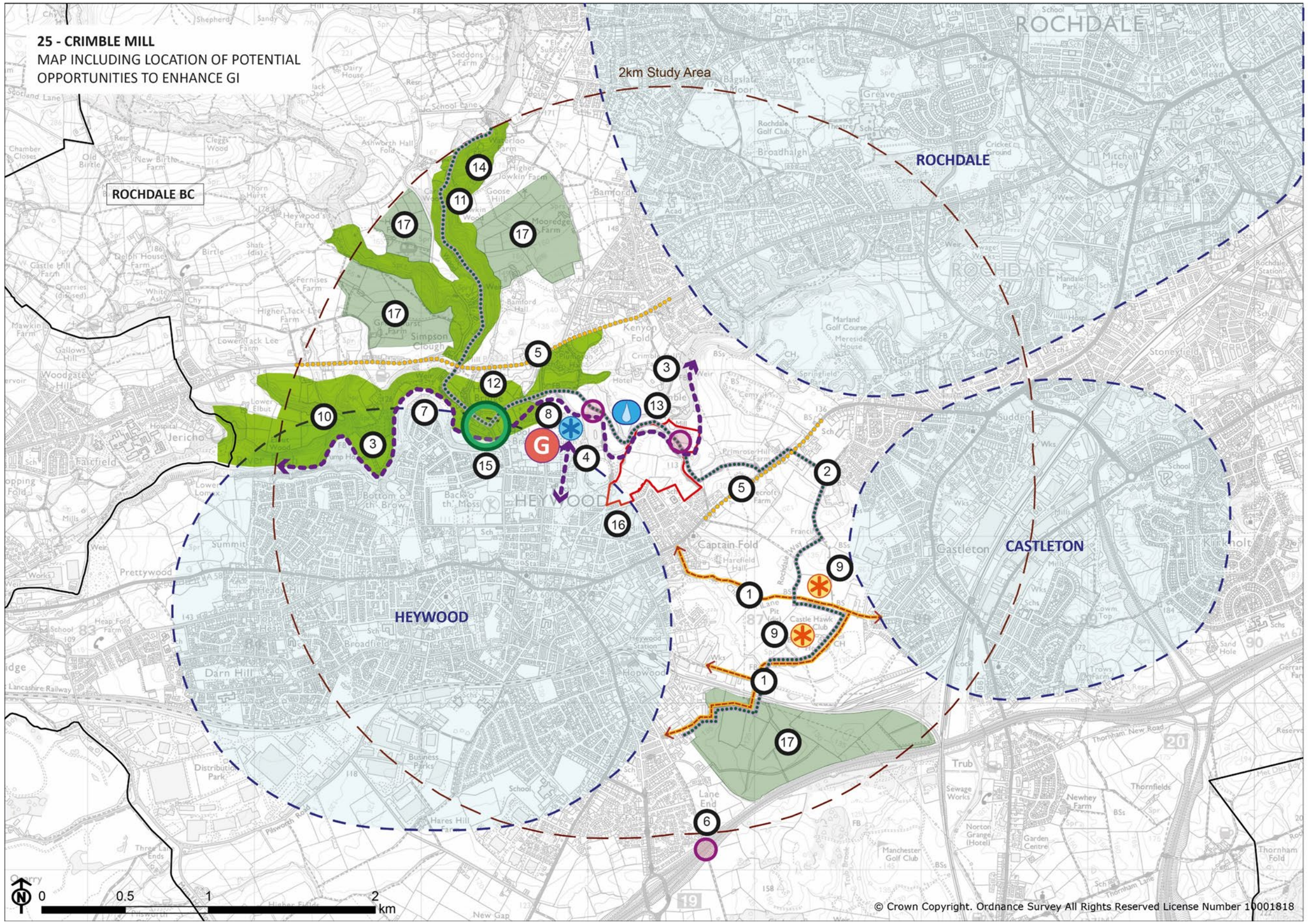
10. Explore the potential to deliver the Pennine Edge Forest in Rochdale borough with partners such as Manchester City of Trees.

11. Enhance habitat linkages along the River Roch and Naden Brook, balancing the promotion of access and recreation with the need for managing the landscape for wildlife. The opportunity also exists to integrate natural play features. Implement proposals for habitat improvement and the development of a less fragmented network of woodland along the Roch Valley.
12. Enhance semi-natural habitats, including woodland tracts and grassland to minimise any sense of urban encroachment.
13. Enhance the ecological and hydrological beneficial features within the area of retained green belt by combining flood risk reduction with green infrastructure improvements. Adopt appropriate flood management at the River Roch, offering the opportunity for the delivery of water storage, habitat creation or flood management functions. Improve flood risk management by working with the EA to explore river corridor management opportunities through SuDS and water storage.

Landscape and visual

14. Encourage the natural regeneration of woodland and wetland habitats at the moorland fringes in order to slow the water flow towards the River Roch below.
15. Develop proposals for the Roch Valley River Park, forming a strategic objective of the South Pennine landscape.
16. Consider incorporating green roof schemes, such as green roof bus stops, in the surrounding urban landscape to compensate for loss of vegetation.
17. Maintain and enhance the traditional pattern of species rich hedgerow field boundaries within the wider landscape, including in urban areas.

25 - CRIMBLE MILL
MAP INCLUDING LOCATION OF POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE GI



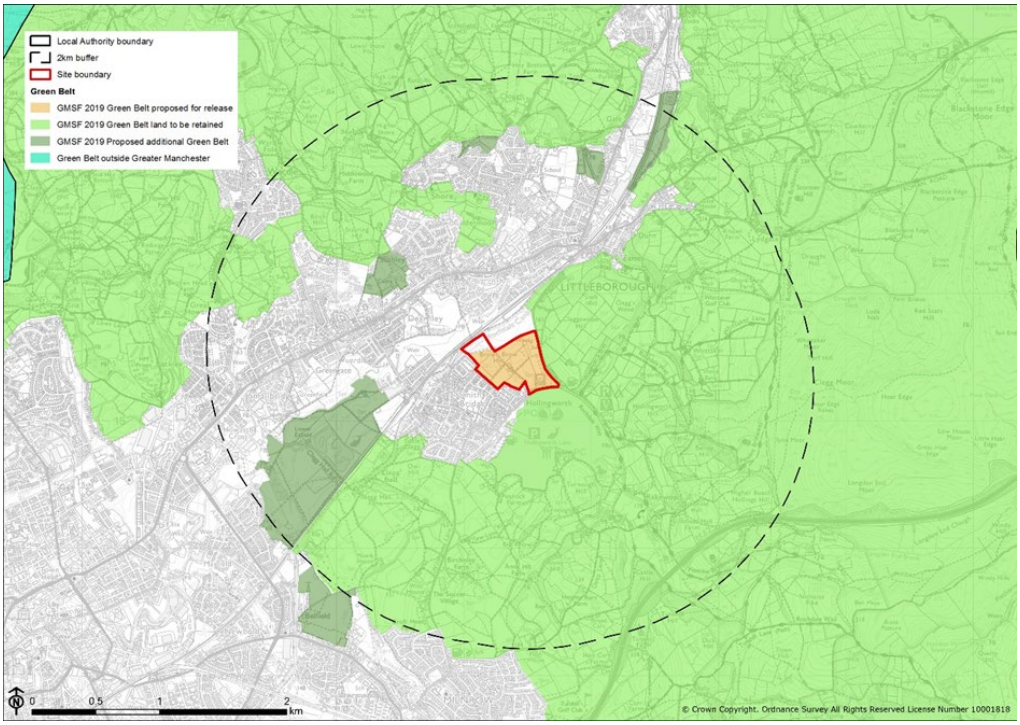
- LOCAL SETTLEMENT
- LOCAL AUTHORITY BOUNDARY
- REVISED GMSF ALLOCATIONS (2019)
- POTENTIAL GATEWAY ENHANCEMENT
- POTENTIAL CONTIGUOUS HABITAT NETWORK
- POTENTIAL AREA FOR HEDGEROW RESTORATION
- POTENTIAL FOOTPATH UPGRADE / ADDITION
- POTENTIAL CYCLEWAY UPGRADE / ADDITION
- ACCESS / CROSSING POINT IMPROVEMENTS
- POTENTIAL RECREATIONAL ASSET ENHANCEMENT
- EXISTING RECREATIONAL ASSET - POTENTIAL FOR ACCESSIBLE SPORTS PACKAGES
- PROMOTION OF STRATEGIC LINK
- IMPROVEMENT OF REGIONAL RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
- POTENTIAL FLOOD STORAGE OPPORTUNITIES
- POTENTIAL LONG DISTANCE FOOTPATH UPGRADE / ADDITION
- REFER TO *POTENTIAL ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS*

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

GM Allocation 26, Land North of Smithy Bridge



Above: View looking north south from the B6225 with views available to Brown Brow Hill and the pond within GM Allocation 26



GM Allocation Area: 20.38 ha

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

Study area definition

With the exception of land running parallel the Rochdale Canal, the revised draft GMSF 2019 proposes to release Green Belt encompassing the full extent of GM Allocation 26, Land North of Smithy Bridge. Located within 2km of GM Allocation 26 itself, Land within the Roch Valley (Smallbridge), Land north of St. Andrew's Church (Dearnley), Land North of Shore (Littleborough), Land at Townhouse Brook (Littleborough) and Land Between the Railway Line and Rochdale Canal (Littleborough) are identified as additional sites to be added to the Green Belt as part of the revised GMSF.

Land lying within 2km of the GM Allocation site (identified as retained Green Belt as well as the additional sites forming part of the revised draft GMSF 2019) will form the focus of GI recommendations / mitigation to enhance the 'beneficial use' of the Green Belt. However, the study will also identify any features of GM Allocation 26 which afford the opportunity to provide additional GI benefits where relevant.

Summary of evidence and policy influencing 'beneficial use' proposals

Published landscape character assessments – Greater Manchester Combined Authority

GM Allocation 26 lies within Pennine Foothills (West / South Pennines) LCT, as defined within the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment (2018)[1]. Characterised by a strongly rolling and undulating topography punctuated by locally distinctive hills and stream valleys, land use is dominated by semi-improved grassland pastures. The landscape is generally well wooded with masts / pylons and overhead lines providing visual intrusion on the wooded skylines. The foothills also provide an important separation function between distinct urban areas. However, transport infrastructure detracts from the rural qualities and sense of tranquillity within the LCT. The landscape therefore exhibits a variable visual

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

character, with long views across the urban conurbation to the West and South Pennine uplands beyond.

This LCT is further refined into LCA 28: Rochdale and Oldham South Pennine Foothills, characterised by complex landform and prominent ridgelines which are highly prominent from existing urban areas. The surrounding uplands of the LCA provide an undeveloped setting to surrounding settlement.

The Pennine Foothills (West / South Pennines) LCT profile identifies the following guidance and opportunities for landscape enhancement of relevance to the study area.

- Ensure that the sense of separation the landscape provides between distinct settlements is retained.
- Retain the role of the landscape as an undeveloped backdrop to existing development.
- Strengthen the stone wall and hedgerow network, using local gritstone for walls and locally prevalent and climate resilient species for hedges. Any new boundaries should reflect local characteristics, including the planting of a new generation of hedgerow trees.
- Protect areas of semi-natural habitat including woodland, grassland and heathland which are locally designated as SBIs. Seek to enhance these where possible and provide linkages to form robust habitat networks.
- Protect areas of broadleaved woodland (particularly ancient woodland) which provide important semi-natural habitat and create wooded skylines.
- Encourage the natural regeneration of woodland and wetland habitats within valleys to improve their function in flood prevention and preventing diffuse pollution.
- Protect the setting of important heritage assets within the landscape, including conservation areas / listed buildings.
- Retain the important recreational function of the landscape. Seek to improve PRoW to encourage sustainable travel. Join up and promote multi-user routes to major destinations within the landscape, including Hollingworth Country Park and Tandle Hill Country Park.
- Retain the distinct visual character of the landscape, including views to monuments on skylines which form local landmarks, church spires and chimneys.
- Reinforce the structure of the landscape, through strengthening the stone wall and hedgerow network, using local gritstone for walls and locally prevalent and climate resilient

species for hedges. Any new boundaries should reflect local characteristics, including the planting of a new generation of hedgerow trees.

- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off).

Published landscape character assessments – Local level

There is no local level published landscape character assessment for Rochdale MBC.

RE/6 Recreational Rights of Way

Saved UDP Policy RE/6[2] (to be replaced by the emerging Allocations Development Plan) relates to the creation of a system of strategic recreational rights of way. Rochdale MBC'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 implementation of high quality links with such routes from urban areas will also be encouraged.

Green Infrastructure Action Plan[3]

Rochdale MBC have undertaken a Green Infrastructure Action Plan for each of their three Townships; Middleton, Pennines and Rochdale. The area of retained Green Belt within 2km of GM Allocation 26 is located within Character Area 3: Roch Valley Corridor within the Pennines Township. Key green infrastructure opportunities which have been identified include:

- Develop a comprehensive approach to maximising green infrastructure benefits through area regeneration and appropriate development opportunities.
- Develop the Roch Valley River Park linking to the rest of the Borough and beyond with coordinated signage, routes and interpretation of the landscape including built and natural heritage.

[2] Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (2006) Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan (2001-2016)

[3] Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (2012), Pennines Green Infrastructure Action Plan

- Improve the number of functions performed by existing green spaces, particularly maximising opportunities for the management of flood risk, biodiversity and recreation.
- Ensure that the areas tourism potential is developed without compromising its existing facilities, infrastructure and management if the public realm.
- Explore opportunities for biodiversity improvements along the Roch Valley, particularly where it meets the River Beal and improve woodland management by encouraging take-up of FC grants and promoting Woodland Certification.
- Ensure that opportunities to support flood risk management through use, adaptation and creation of green infrastructure will support management of fluvial and other flood risks, such as from surface water through appropriate flood storage or sustainable urban drainage assets. Work with the Environment Agency, UU and other stakeholders such as developers to achieve this where required.

The report also identifies range of strategic green infrastructure projects, including the Roch Valley River Park. The scheme involves the creation of a major landscape destination for recreation and tourism, stretching from the South Pennine Moors, along the Roch Valley and beyond to the Irwell River Park in Salford. Key proposals for the Roch Valley River Park involve the delivery of the Roch Valley Trail, landscape enhancements within the Roch-Irwell corridor and identification of opportunities for flood risk management.

Existing baseline

Access

The landscape of the study area is crossed by a number of long distance routes; including the Rochdale Way, the Weighver's Way and the Pennine Bridleway. A network of local PRoW also cross the agricultural landscape and moorland slopes, providing connections to these long distance routes from the routes of minor roads or the settlement edge of Littleborough.

Occupying the alignment of access tracks or running parallel hedgerow field boundaries, the landscape to the east of GM Allocation 26 is crossed a number of PRoW offering wider linkages to the moorland landscape at Clegg Moor. However, locally elevated locations at Cleggswood Hill and Hollingworth Hill are devoid of PRoW access.

Located at the northern extent of the study area, Bridleways LitBp82 and LitBp101 offer wider connections from Shore towards Open Access Land at High Lee Slack. The route of Weighver's Way also links residential properties at Clough to the adjoining moorland landscape at Ratcliffe Hill.

As defined within the Greater Manchester Bee Network, GM Allocation 26 is bordered to the east and south by the Severance Line of the B6225. The Severance Lines of Wildhouse Lane and Blackstone Edge Old Road also cross the retained Green Belt within the wider study area. The route of the Caldervale Metrolink line dissects the study area broadly south west to north east and is described as a barrier to pedestrians and cyclists from both the natural and built environment.

Both the River Roch and the Rochdale Canal are defined as Beeways as part of the wider Bee Network. Emerging from the eastern extent of Milnrow, the area of Green Belt also accommodates a short section of Beeway towards Tunshill Farm. The area of retained Green Belt is currently devoid of routes defined as Busy Beeways, as defined by TfGM.

Stretching along the towpath of the Rochdale Canal, NCN 66 affords a traffic-free route connecting the settlements of Milnrow, Smithy Bridge and Littleborough. The study area also encompasses an extensive network of cycle routes promoted by TfGM. Located to the east of the study area, the Pennine Bridleway at Clegg Moor offers wider linkages to Hollingworth Lake. The northern extent of the study area also includes sections of cycle network which radiate from the settlement edges of Shore and Wardle to the wider moorland beyond.

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

Access

Surfacing improvements and upgrades to the PRoW network offer the opportunity to create traffic-free multi-user recreational routes. The proximity of residential development within Milnrow, Smithy Bridge and Littleborough also offers the opportunity to promote these routes for recreational and health benefits, including the provision of a new long-distance route connecting Milnrow, Hollingworth Lake Country Park and Littleborough.

Consideration could also be given to the development of well waymarked and easy to use network of circular 'health' walks on the urban fringe. Upgrading works to Public Footpaths

LitFp441, LitFp445, LitFp446 and LitFp449 which border Hollingworth Lake afford the opportunity to create a circular cycling route at this location.

Currently offering links to Open Access Land at the moorland fringe of the South Pennines from Littleborough and the eastern extent of Rochdale, Green Belt enhancements could look to improve access control to ensure accessibility of the existing PRoW network. Access audits could be introduced in order to identify a programme of site improvements to encourage access for all. The Pennines Green Infrastructure Action Plan[3] also recognises the need to improve the coordination of signage and interpretation of the landscape within the wider countryside.

The increased provision of dedicated access routes to Hollingworth Lake are highlighted as potential opportunities for improvement as part of comments sourced from the public on the Bee Network proposals. The requirement for enhanced segregation of pedestrians and vehicles on Lake Bank is also noted.

An Approved Comment as part of the Bee Network proposals requests that consideration is given to the provision of a dedicated cycle lane on Wildhouse Lane as this route forms a direct route from Milnrow to Hollingworth Lake. Alternatively, the potential exists to extend the existing Beeway which currently terminates at Tunshill Farm, expanding the route northwards towards Smithy Bridge.

The lack of lighting provision and varying condition of the surfacing along the Rochdale Canal offers the opportunity to upgrade this route to ensure multi-user access along the towpath.

The Pennines Green Infrastructure Action Plan[3] outlines the requirement to improve active transport links between urban areas and the countryside by utilising river valleys, Rochdale Canal and NCN 66. The opportunity exists to promote improved cycling provision at Hollingworth Lake Country Park, including linkages with existing cycle routes on the B6225 and Skye Road. The extension of these routes could enable long distance connections to the moorland south of the M62. Improvements to Rakewood Road and Hollingworth Road could include segregated multi-user delineation of the carriageway to improve traffic management. multi-user circular routes to the east of GM Allocation 26, accommodating pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders.

The opportunity exists to maximise pedestrian access to Hollingworth Country Park from the Manchester Metrolink stations at Newhey and Milnrow.

Existing baseline

Sport and recreation

Recreational provision within the study area is dominated by Hollingworth Lake Country Park, located within the foothills of Blackstone Edge to the east of Smithy Bridge. The site comprises a visitor centre, network of walking routes and picnic areas. The Water Activity Centre on Lake Bank also offers a number of water sports whilst forming the base of Hollingworth Lake Sailing Club and Hollingworth Lake Rowing Club.

Whittaker Golf Club occupies the undulating landscape to the south east of Littleborough. Land to the east of Wildhouse Lane also encompasses Hollingworth Leisure Park / Soccer Village as well as a picnic site west of Birchinley Farm.

Bound to the west by the Calverdale rail line and to the east by the Rochdale Canal, the proposed area of additional Green Belt includes a bowling green and playing field at the north eastern extent of the study area.

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

Sport and recreation

The reduction of tourism pressure on Hollingworth Lake is recognised as a strategic objective within the Visit Pennines initiative outlined within the Pennines Green Infrastructure Action Plan3. The development of a signage strategy and coordination of routes for different user groups could help to relieve pressure on areas immediately around Hollingworth Lake. This strategy could also help promote routes to other areas within the South Pennines landscape, including the network of reservoirs located within the Piethorne Valley.

In addition, the management plan for Hollingworth Lake Country Park could be reviewed in order to provide additional visitor facilities. The introduction of pedestrian gateway features to encourage pedestrian access into the site from the urban areas of Milnrow, Smithy Bridge and Littleborough could also be explored. Greenspace improvements could also be further enhanced with amenity facilities such as picnic benches and litter bins to improve the overall recreational value of the country park.

The presence of Whittaker Golf Club and Hollingworth Leisure Park afford the opportunity to offer accessible sports packages to local residents and provide stronger links between existing sports facilities in the area.

Improvements to the network of local playing fields within the study area could be explored. This could include enhanced access control, way-marking and interpretation to encourage healthy lifestyles and increase usage of the green space assets.

Existing baseline

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

Encompassing the landscape at Clegg Moor and Blackstone Edge, the wider study area includes extensive tracts of land included within the South Pennine Moors (North / South) SBI. Much of this land is also encompassed within the South Pennine Moors SSSI designation and is characterised by predominantly heath and bog habitat. The linear corridor of Rochdale Canal is also jointly recognised as a Grade A SBI, one of county importance, and a SSSI due to the proliferation of floating water plantain. In addition, the availability of breeding bird habitat dictates that Hollingworth Lake is identified as a Grade B SBI, one of district importance.

The study area comprises tracts of ancient woodland at the settlement edge of Littleborough, including Ealees Wood and land immediately south of Weighver's Way at Gale.

Areas of retained Green Belt parallel the corridor of the River Roch, Ealees Brook and the Rochdale Canal are contained within land defined as EA Flood Zones 2 and 3.

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

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

Proposals should seek to safeguard the moorland landscape at the eastern extent of the study area. The delineation of clear marked routes through the moors could help to protect the fragile moorland ecology from erosion by users. The opportunity also exists to collaborate with partners to promote integrated upland management on behalf of land managers.

Proposals for habitat improvement and creation could aim to develop a more integrated network of biodiversity improvements along the Roch Valley. This could be achieved through specific land management and habitat creation projects, including the increased take-up of FC grants. The potential also exists for the Roch Valley to support a flood risk management resource through the provision of enhanced flood storage within the river corridor north of Littleborough.

The Roch Valley forms a Green Infrastructure Opportunity Area (2019) and the potential exists to implement proposals for habitat improvement and the development of a less fragmented network of woodland along the valley. The strategy could be delivered through specific land management projects, flood risk management or the development of regeneration projects. This recommendation is also consistent with the management guidance included within the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment1. The extent of key invasive non-native species along the River Roch should be determined, including a strategy for their management and monitoring.

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.

Existing baseline

Landscape and visual

The study area affords long distance views and wider intervisibility with the South Pennine Moors to the east. The wider moorland landscape provides an attractive setting and forms a green infrastructure asset at the Greater Manchester scale through the provision of recreational access, biodiversity benefits and carbon / rainwater storage in peat.

Running through the South Pennines, the River Roch provides key recreational, amenity and flood risk management functions. As defined by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU), the River Roch and its tributaries form corridors of Green Infrastructure (2018) based on numerous layers of wildlife, habitats and land types. The wider study area is also characterised by Green Infrastructure Opportunity Areas (2019) at the South Pennine Moors, West Pennine Moors and Hollingworth Lake. The area is identified as having particular potential for the delivery of improvements to the Greater Manchester green infrastructure network.

As defined by the UHLC, Enclosed Land forms the predominant land use within the study area. These areas are interspersed with land defined as Water Bodies, Woodland and Residential. Unenclosed Land typifies the area at the eastern extent of the study area, associated with the South Pennine Moors.

The study area is influenced by a pattern of agricultural Enclosures within the UHLC. These areas are interspersed with land defined as Woodland and Residential. Ornamental, Parkland and Recreational Land also typifies the study area due to the proliferation of golf courses.

Areas of retained Green Belt parallel the corridor of the River Roch, Ealees Brook and the Rochdale Canal are contained within land defined as EA Flood Zones 2 and 3.

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

Landscape and visual

The opportunity exists to enhance the landscape around at the fringes of the South Pennines. Opportunities to retain the role of the landscape as an undeveloped backdrop to existing development would also be consistent with the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1].

The adoption of appropriate flood management schemes also offers the opportunity of delivering water storage, habitat creation or flood management functions. Due to the implications for flood risk downstream, the opportunity exists to encourage the natural regeneration of woodland and wetland habitats at the moorland fringes and along river corridors in order to slow the water flow towards the River Roch below.

As identified within the Pennines Green Infrastructure Action Plan3, the development of the Roch Valley River Park forms a strategic objective. The opportunity exists to integrate coordinated signage, routes and interpretation to built and natural heritage assets. The development of the Roch Valley Trail is also identified as a key proposal forming part of the Roch Valley River Park. The scheme aims to deliver linkages between existing reservoir walks and the promotion of connections with local attractions within the South Pennines landscape. The potential also exists to establish a South Pennine ‘Regional’ park within the landscape of the study area.

The River Roch corridor also plays a role in the prevention of settlement coalescence, separating Smithy Bridge from settlements centred on the A58. GI enhancements should aim to retain this division through the supplementation of woodland bordering the watercourse to create a network of contiguous vegetation coverage.

Due to the proximity of urban areas, the opportunity exists to incorporate green roof schemes, such as green roof bus shelters, to compensate for the loss of vegetation.

Preservation and reinstatement of hedgerows should be encouraged to aid habitat enhancement and visual containment within the study area. In accordance with the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment1, opportunities to restore and maintain the distinctive network of drystone walling within the landscape could also be considered.

In accordance with the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1], the introduction of programmes to increase and maintain the pattern of traditional hedgerow field boundaries and stone walling could be explored. This could be achieved through the replacement of timber post and rail and post and wire fencing with hedgerows or stone walling.

The opportunity exists to improve flood risk management by working with the EA to explore river corridor management opportunities through SuDS and water storage.

The enhancement of the green infrastructure assets parallel the River Roch will help the area to adapt to the impacts of climate change and may provide opportunities for sustainable wood biomass in the future.

Manchester Green Belt Harm Assessment
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

LUC

Access, Sport and Recreation
GM Allocation 26

- Site boundary
- Site boundary - 2km buffer

Access

- Public right of way
- National Trail
- Sustrans route
- TfGM cycle route
- Bee network - crossing point
- Bee network - beeway
- Bee network - busy beeway

Sport and Recreation

- Open green space
- Country park

Map scale 1:19,000 @ A3

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Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

CB:Green_C EB:Green_C LUC 10713-01_011_Context_Map_Access_Sport_Recreation_New_Template_RevB 25/08/2020
Source: NE, Sustrans, GMCA

Manchester Green Belt Harm Assessment
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

LUC

Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual
GM Allocation 26

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

0 0.5 1 km

Map scale 1:19,000 @ A3

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2020
Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Potential enhancement projects

Access

1. Introduce a new long-distance route connecting Milnrow, Hollingworth Lake Country Park and Littleborough.
2. Develop a well waymarked and easy to use network of circular ‘health’ walks on the urban fringe. Upgrading works to Public Footpaths LitFp441, LitFp445, LitFp446 and LitFp449 which border Hollingworth Lake afford the opportunity to create a circular walking route at this location.
3. Introduce access audits in order to identify a programme of site improvements to encourage access for all and improve the coordination of signage and interpretation of the landscape within the wider countryside.
4. Upgrade the lighting provision and surfacing along the Rochdale Canal, ensuring multi-user access along the towpath.
5. Introduce segregated multi-user delineation of the carriageway at Rakewood Road and Hollingworth Road to improve traffic management.
6. Increase the provision of dedicated access routes to Hollingworth Lake from the urban fringe, including enhanced segregation of pedestrians and vehicles on Lake Bank.
7. Improve active transport links between urban areas and the countryside by utilising river valleys, Rochdale Canal and NCN 66.

Sport and recreation

8. Develop a signage strategy and coordination of routes for different user groups to relieve pressure on areas immediately around Hollingworth Lake.
9. Offer accessible sports packages to local residents and provide stronger links between existing sports facilities in the area.
10. Improve the network of local playing fields within the study area. This could include enhanced access control, way-marking and interpretation to encourage healthy lifestyles and increase usage of the green space assets.

11. Review the management plan for Hollingworth Lake Country Park in order to provide additional visitor facilities. Introduce pedestrian gateway features to encourage access into the site from the urban areas of Milnrow, Smithy Bridge and Littleborough.

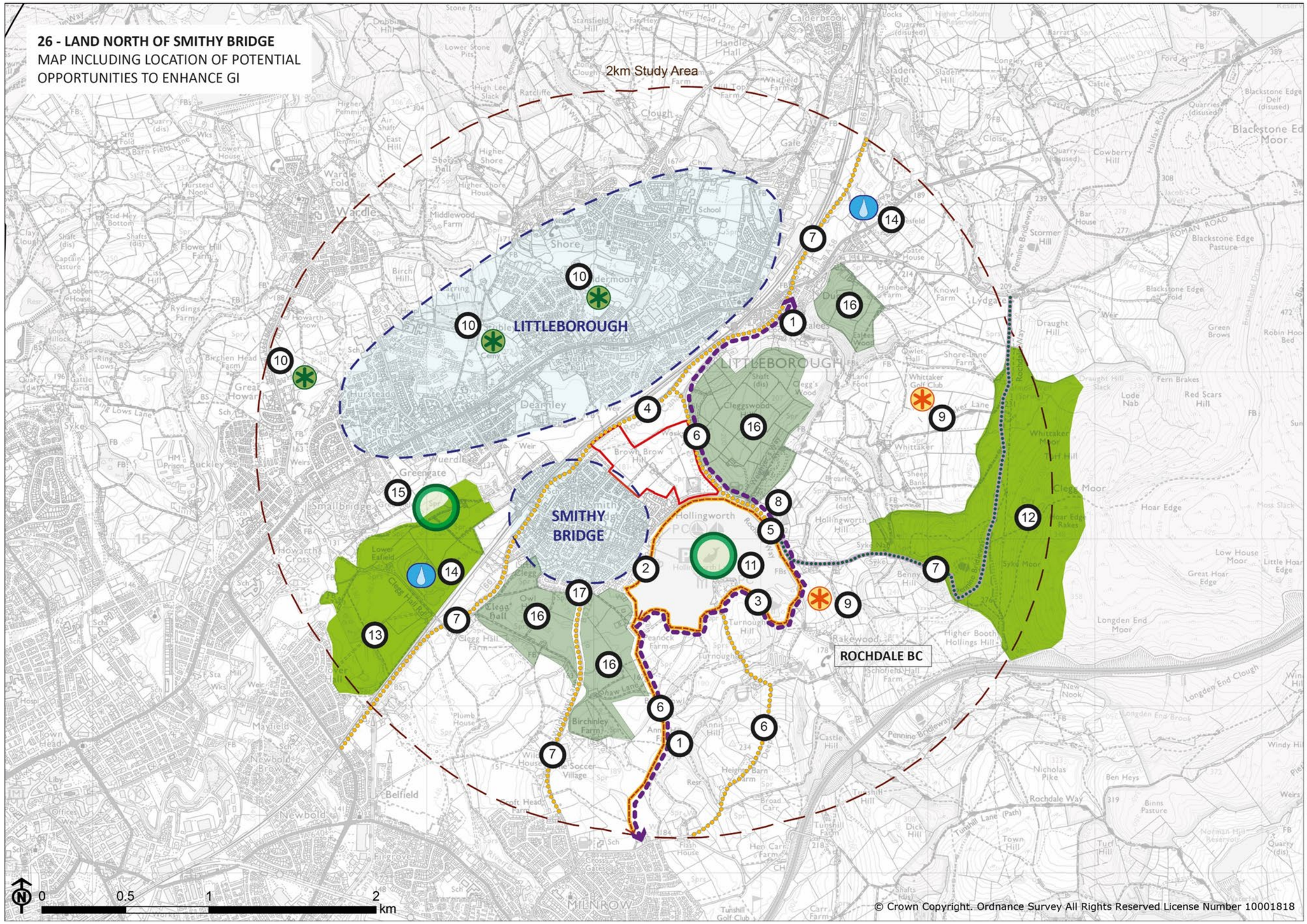
Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

12. Encourage the natural regeneration of woodland and wetland habitats at the moorland fringes in order to slow the water flow towards the River Roch below. Safeguard the moorland landscape at the eastern extent of the study area through the delineation of clear marked routes to protect the fragile moorland ecology from erosion by users.
13. Develop a more integrated network of biodiversity improvements along the Roch Valley. This could be achieved through specific land management and habitat creation projects, including the increased take-up of FC grants. Implement proposals for habitat improvement and the development of a less fragmented network of woodland along the valley. The strategy could be delivered through specific land management projects, flood risk management or the development of regeneration projects.
14. 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

15. Develop the Roch Valley River Park as a strategic objective. The potential also exists to establish a South Pennine ‘Regional’ park within the landscape of the study area.
16. Preserve and reinstate species rich hedgerows to aid habitat enhancement and visual containment within the study area.
17. Consider incorporating green roof schemes, such as green roof bus stops, in the wider urban landscape to compensate for any loss of vegetation.

26 - LAND NORTH OF SMITHY BRIDGE
MAP INCLUDING LOCATION OF POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE GI

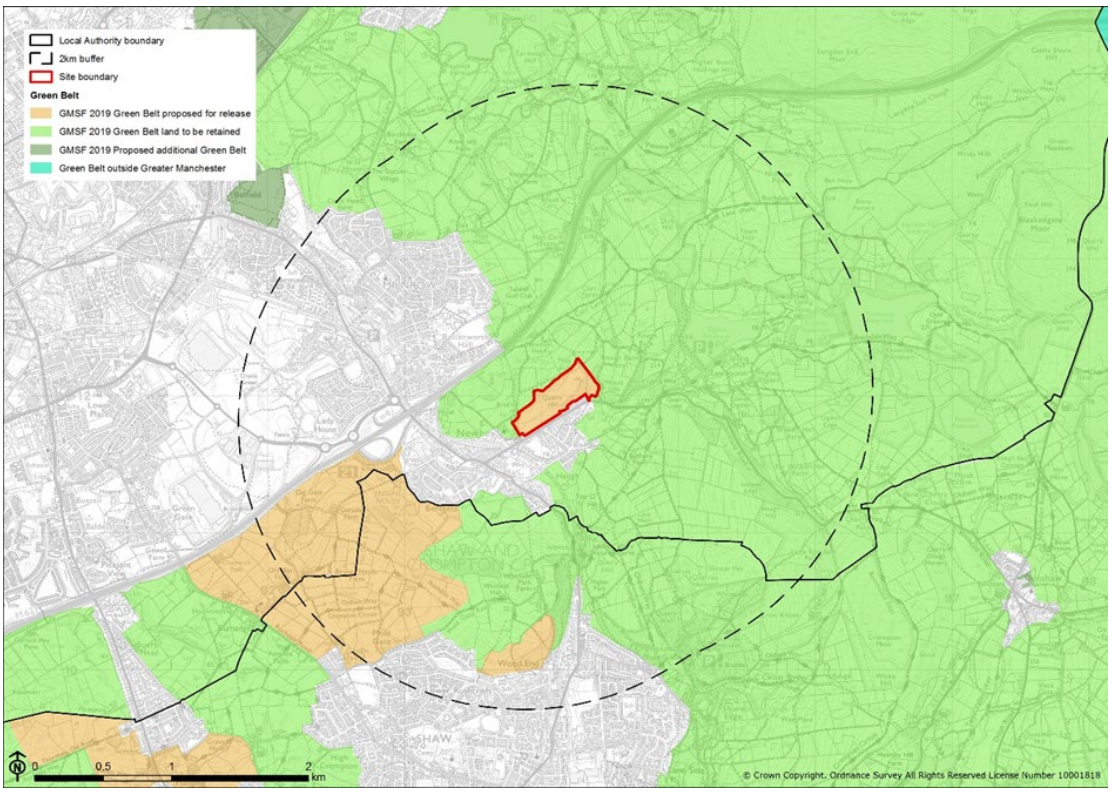


- LOCAL SETTLEMENT
- LOCAL AUTHORITY BOUNDARY
- REVISED GMSF ALLOCATIONS (2019)
- POTENTIAL CONTIGUOUS HABITAT NETWORK
- POTENTIAL AREA FOR HEDGEROW RESTORATION
- POTENTIAL FOOTPATH UPGRADE / ADDITION
- POTENTIAL CYCLEWAY UPGRADE / ADDITION
- EXISTING RECREATIONAL ASSET ENHANCEMENT
- ACCESS / CROSSING POINT IMPROVEMENTS
- PROMOTION OF STRATEGIC LINK
- EXISTING RECREATIONAL ASSET - POTENTIAL FOR ACCESSIBLE SPORTS PACKAGES
- IMPROVEMENT OF REGIONAL RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
- POTENTIAL FLOOD STORAGE OPPORTUNITIES
- POTENTIAL LONG DISTANCE FOOTPATH UPGRADE / ADDITION
- REFER TO *POTENTIAL ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS*

GM Allocation 27, Newhey Quarry



Above: View looking south from Public Footpath MilFp125 towards GM Allocation 27 and the settlement of Newhey



GM Allocation Area: 13.60 ha

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt

Study area definition

Lying within the administrative boundary of Rochdale MBC, the revised draft GMSF 2019 proposes to release Green Belt encompassing the full extent of GM Allocation 27, Newhey Quarry. The 2km study area is devoid of additional sites to be added to the Green Belt as part of the revised GMSF.

Urban land use at Newhey adjoins GM Allocation 27 to the south and the settlement edge of Milnrow lies approximately 350 north west of the GM Allocation site itself. Land lying within 2km of the GM Allocation sites (identified as retained Green Belt) will form the focus of GI recommendations / mitigation to enhance the 'beneficial use' of the Green Belt. However, the study will also identify any features of GM Allocation 27 which afford the opportunity to provide additional GI benefits where relevant.

Summary of evidence and policy influencing 'beneficial use' proposals

Published landscape character assessments – Greater Manchester Combined Authority

GM Allocation 27 lies within Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (West / South Pennines) LCT, as defined within the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment (2018)[1]. The Key Characteristics of this LCT include an elevated upland landscape typified by unenclosed open moorland utilised for rough grazing. The landscape comprises a rich mosaic of upland habitats, although woodland is sparse on the unenclosed uplands. A sparsely settled character predominates, characterised by traditional millstone grit stone-built farms, dispersed cottages and historic villages. Panoramic views are afforded by the high elevation of the landscape resulting in a degree of intervisibility with the Dark Peak moorlands of the Peak District National Park.

This LCT is further refined into LCA 29: Rough Hill to Brun Moor, wholly encompassing GM Allocation 27 itself.

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

The Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (West / South Pennines) LCT profile identifies the following guidance and opportunities for landscape enhancement of relevance to the area of retained Green Belt.

- Protect and where possible enhance the valued mosaic of semi-natural habitats, including internationally designated areas of heather moorland, blanket bog, acid grassland and wet and dry heathland. Conserve semi-natural habitats within the upland fringe including broadleaved woodland, species rich grassland and wetlands.
- Seek to restore the landscape structure of the enclosed upland fringe areas through the ongoing maintenance of the distinctive gritstone walls and the restoration of areas which have been damaged or deteriorated.
- Ensure that any required road upgrades are in-keeping with the existing character of the narrow tracks and lanes.
- Ensure the visual character of the landscape is retained. Protect long, uninterrupted views from higher ground over the mill settlements in the valleys below, and Greater Manchester communities beyond.
- Conserve and protect the setting of valued heritage features, including the Scheduled remains at Blackstone Edge Moor, Castleshaw and Knott Hill, Smithills Hall and Park and Garden, historic villages and numerous historic buildings including churches and country houses.
- Retain the important recreation function of the landscape, which is important both locally and to the wider region.
- Protect the overriding rural, remote characteristics of the landscape. Ensure that the traditional management of the landscape continues, part sheep grazing.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology and subsequent knock-on effects, such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off which may impact on nearby major rivers including the River Tame, River Roch and River Tonge.

Published landscape character assessments – Local level

There is no local level published landscape character assessment for Rochdale MBC.

RE/6 Recreational Rights of Way

Saved UDP Policy RE/6[2] (to be replaced by the emerging Allocations Development Plan) relates to the creation of a system of strategic recreational rights of way. Rochdale MBC'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 implementation of high quality links with such routes from urban areas will also be encouraged.

Green Infrastructure Action Plan[3]

Rochdale MBC have undertaken a Green Infrastructure Action Plan for each of their three Townships; Middleton, Pennines and Rochdale. The area of retained Green Belt within 2km of GM Allocation 27 is located within Character Area 1: Piethorne Valley within the Pennines Township. Key green infrastructure opportunities which have been identified include:

- Maximise the tourism potential of the watershed as a gateway to the South Pennines whilst protecting the fragile landscape.
- Ensure that the biodiversity is protected and continues to carry out important recreation and biodiversity functions such as carbon capture within the peat moorland.
- Improve the signposting of destinations and interpretation of the landscape.
- Ensure that partnership working, particularly with Pennine Prospects, Oldham MBC and UU maximise any opportunities for land management to support priority green infrastructure actions including flood risk management, biodiversity and climate change mitigation.
- Explore opportunities to improve woodland management by encouraging take-up of Forestry Commission (FC) grants and promoting Woodland Certification.

The report also identifies range of strategic green infrastructure projects, including the Pennine Greenways Network, to be delivered during the period from 2012 to 2026. The scheme proposes a high quality access network to enable communities and visitors to access the surrounding South Pennine Moors. The key proposal for delivering the Pennines Greenway Network within Character Area 1: Piethorne Valley involves the expansion of the tourism

[2] Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (2006) Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan (2001-2016)

[3] Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (2012), Pennines Green Infrastructure Action Plan

potential of the valley as a gateway to the South Pennines whilst protecting the fragile landscape.

Existing baseline

Access

The undulating landscape is dissected by a network of PRoW which largely follow the routes of local roads or field boundary treatments. A number of these routes radiate from the settlement edge of Newhey, including MilBp132 on Church Street and MilFp389 on Bethany Lane. Sitting at the foot of the South Pennines, elevated views are afforded towards Newhey from Public Footpath MilFp125 at Moy Hill and the route of Bridleway MilBp368.

Located on the wider valley sides of the River Beal, the alignment of the Rochdale Way also offers views towards Newhey and the corridor of the M62 to the north. The route runs from the carriageway of the A663 within the area of retained Green Belt towards Ogden Reservoir, via the A640. Bordering Kitcliffe Reservoir and Piethorne Reservoir, the Rochdale Way moves west towards Dick Hill / Tunshill Hill and the corridor of the M62.The wider study area also encompasses the Oldham Way and the Crompton Circuit, converging at the Jubilee Colliery Nature Reserve.

The infrastructure corridors of the M62, A640 and the Oldham and Rochdale Metrolink Line are identified as Severance Lines within the Bee Network. The alignment of Huddersfield Road also forms the southern extent of GM Allocation 27 and creates a barrier to the movement of pedestrians and cyclists.

Accommodated on Bridleway MilBp137 and parallel a section of the Oldham and Rochdale Metrolink Line, a Beeway connects the settlements of Newhey and Milnrow. The carriageway of Tunshill Lane also provides a link from the eastern extent of Milnrow to the overbridge crossing the M62 at Tunshill Farm. Sections of the B6225 in Milnrow and the A663 within Shaw are defined as Busy Beeways by TfGM, albeit located beyond the boundary of retained Green Belt. These routes or corridors are identified as requiring a higher level of design intervention to improve cycling and walking.

The area of retained Green Belt is devoid of cycle networks promoted by Sustrans; including NCN routes, NCN links and regional routes. However, links between Milnrow and Newhey are afforded by a traffic-free route from Water Lane towards the A640 via an underbridge at the

M62. The route is described as comprising a very rough unpaved surface, suitable for mountain bike use only. A short section of Bridleway MilBP136 is also defined as a cycle network recognised by TfGM.

The eastern extent of the study area encompasses traffic-free cycle routes crossing the open moorland, including a route which runs south from Tunshill Lane towards Piethorne Reservoir.

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

Access

The proximity of the retained Green Belt to Newhey and the urban fringe of Milnrow offer the opportunity to develop a waymarked and easily accessible network of circuitous health walks. In addition, the potential exists to improve the condition of surfacing on PRoW to ensure multi-user access within the wider study area. This would be consistent with the recommendations within the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1] which acknowledges the need to promote multi-user routes to destinations within the landscape. The Pennines Green Infrastructure Action Plan3 also recognises the need to improve the coordination of signage and interpretation of the landscape within the wider countryside.

Enhancements could also consider the improvement of existing access points across the route of the M62 to address the variable condition of Public Footpaths MilFp165, MilRupp404 and MilRupp405. Stretching from Butterworth Hall at Milnrow to Dick Hill, the opportunity exists to recognise the route of Carr Lane / Tunshill lane as a promoted walk, forming a wider connection to the Rochdale Way.

Highlighted as a potential opportunity for improvement as part of comments sourced from the public on the Bee Network proposals, the introduction of a Beeway running parallel the Oldham and Rochdale Metrolink Line would afford off road cycle access avoiding the A663. However, a degree of segregation would be required from fast-moving trams.

The opportunity also exists to extend the existing Beeway which currently terminates at Tunshill Farm, expanding the route northwards towards Hollingworth Lake. Consideration could be given to the upgrade of existing PRoW crossing both Annis Hill and Turnough Hill, providing a multi-user access route from Milnrow towards the recreational asset of Hollingworth Lake. The

introduction of a south eastern Beeway linkage, connecting the route of Tunshill Lane with Ogden Reservoir would also enhance recreational links from the settlement edge.

The potential exists to improve connections between Newhey and Milnrow through the extension of fragmented sections of the existing cycle network. Upgrades to Bridleway MilBp136 to afford cycle way access beneath the M62 and onwards towards Newhey would provide enhanced links between these settlements. Opportunities to upgrade the routes of MilFp389, MilFp385 and 30 CROMP to multi-user networks to offer links towards Crompton Fold could also be explored.

Future enhancements could also consider how access could be improved to reduce the barrier to cyclists / pedestrian movement on the A640. The potential exists to link the existing cycle network which currently terminates on the A640 with a further section at Lower Ogden.

Existing baseline

Sport and recreation

Tunshill Golf Course occupies an area of retained Green Belt bordering the corridor of the M62 at eastern extent of Milnrow. A playing field at Butterworth Hall lies immediately west of this land use.

Lying approximately 500m west of GM Allocation 27, Milnrow Memorial Park comprises a play space, bowling green, skateboard area and woodland walk. The park also incorporates a war memorial centred on a circular path network. The area of retained Green Belt also encompasses Dun Wood Park which lies parallel the carriageway of the A663 within the wider study area.

In addition, the cemeteries at Ogden Lane as well as the religious grounds at St. Thomas' Church are defined as sites within the OS Open Greenspace Site dataset.

The eastern extent of the study area is characterised by several reservoirs managed by United Utilities. Located to the north of the Rochdale Way, the Piethorne Reservoir lies upstream of both the Kitcliffe and Ogden Reservoirs. These waterbodies provide opportunities for walking, angling ad water sports.

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

Sport and recreation

The presence of Tunshill Golf Course, a private recreational asset, affords the opportunity to offer accessible sports packages to local residents within Milnrow and Newhey.

Continued participation in initiatives such as the Green Flag Awards would promote the high environmental standards of the recreational areas and landscape management regime at Milnrow Memorial Park. Green Belt enhancement strategies could also look to improve existing facilities; diversifying the recreational offer to attract an increasing number of visitors.

The Pennines Green Infrastructure Action Plan[3] proposes to maximise the tourism potential of the Piethorne Valley as a gateway to the South Pennines, whilst protecting the fragile landscape. The report proposes that a balance should be sought between retention of the quiet character of the South Pennine landscape with the need to reduce tourism pressure on Hollingworth Lake. The ‘Visit Pennines’ strategic project also identifies the requirement to enhance the gateway to the South Pennines to widen the visitor offer within the landscape.

The recreational potential of the Piethorne Valley reservoirs could also be promoted through the enhancement of recreational routes and signposting from the settlement edges of Milnrow and Newhey.

Existing baseline

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

Comprised predominantly of plantation woodland, land defined as Piethorne Reservoirs and Plantations SBI characterises the land use within the Piethorne Valley. Heathland and bog habitat parallel the A640 at Crompton Moor is also designated as an SBI and characterises the landscape of the wider study area.

The 2.0km study area is devoid of NNR, LNR and ancient woodland. The extensive tracts of land forming the South Pennine Moors are also located beyond the eastern extent of the study area.

Areas of retained Green Belt parallel Piethorne Brook are contained within land defined as EA Flood Zones 2 and 3.

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

Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

The opportunity exists to enhance existing green infrastructure networks within the enclosed upland fringes. This could be achieved through the creation of new native woodland tracts to connect with existing plantation woodland, providing a contiguous habitat network. Improved woodland management regimes, including the take-up of FC grants, could also be explored.

Consideration should also be given to the protection and where possible enhancement of the tracts of heather moorland and blanket bog associated with the upland landscape. This could include a comprehensive review of the management plan for the area, ensuring a consistency with the overall management approach. Pennine Prospects could be approached to help promote integrated upland management with land managers, in accordance with the recommendations outlined within the Pennines Green Infrastructure Action Plan[3].

Due to the proximity of EA Flood Zones 2 and 3 at Piethorne Brook, 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. 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 study area affords long distance views and wider intervisibility with the South Pennine Moors to the east. The wider moorland landscape provides an attractive setting and forms a green infrastructure asset at the Greater Manchester scale through the provision of recreational access, biodiversity benefits and carbon / rainwater storage in peat.

As defined by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU), the Piethorne Valley forms a corridor of Green Infrastructure (2018) based on numerous layers of wildlife, habitats and land types. The eastern fringes of the study area are also encompassed within South Pennine Moors Green Infrastructure Opportunity Area (2019). The area is identified as having particular potential for the delivery of improvements to the Greater Manchester green infrastructure network.

As defined by the UHLC, Enclosed Land forms the predominant land use within the study area. These areas are interspersed with land defined as Water Bodies, Woodland and Residential. Unenclosed Land typifies the area at the eastern extent of the study area, associated with the South Pennine Moors.

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

Landscape and visual

The opportunity exists to enhance the landscape around the Piethorne Valley reservoirs. This could be delivered through the restructuring of existing plantation woodland, establishment of small scale scrub and woodland as well as the diversification of associated grassland or heathland areas.

The adoption of appropriate flood management schemes also offers the opportunity of delivering water storage, habitat creation or flood management functions. Due to the implications for flood risk downstream, the opportunity exists to encourage the natural regeneration of woodland and wetland habitats at the moorland fringes in order to slow the water flow towards the Piethorne Valley below.

Opportunities to reinforce the contrast between the well wooded setting of the reservoirs within the Piethorne Valley and the upper moorland beyond could be explored. The network of semi-natural habitats within the upland fringe should also be conserved.

The preservation and reinstatement of hedgerows should be encouraged to aid habitat enhancement and visual containment within the study area. In accordance with the Greater Manchester published landscape character assessment[1], opportunities to restore and maintain the distinctive network of drystone walling within the landscape could also be considered.

Manchester Green Belt Harm Assessment
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

LUC

Access, Sport and Recreation
GM Allocation 27

- Site boundary
- Site boundary - 2km buffer

Access

- Public right of way
- National Trail
- Sustrans route
- TfGM cycle route
- Bee network - crossing point
- Bee network - beeway
- Bee network - busy beeway

Sport and Recreation

- Open green space
- Country park

0 0.35 0.7 km

Map scale 1:19,000 @ A3

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Manchester Green Belt Harm Assessment
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

LUC

Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual
GM Allocation 27

- 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

0 0.5 1 km

Map scale 1:19,000 @ A3

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Potential enhancement projects

Access

1. Develop a waymarked and easily accessible network of circuitous health walks.
2. Improve the condition of surfacing on PRoW to ensure multi-user access within the wider study area.
3. Extend the existing Beeway which currently terminates at Tunshill Farm, expanding the route northwards towards Hollingworth Lake.
4. Improve existing access points across the route of the M62 to address the variable condition of Public Footpaths MilFp165, MilRupp404 and MilRupp405.
5. Upgrade the existing PRoW crossing both Annis Hill and Turnough Hill, providing a multi-user access route from Milnrow towards the recreational asset of Hollingworth Lake.
6. Introduce a south eastern Beeway linkage, connecting the route of Tunshill Lane with Ogden Reservoir would also enhance recreational links from the settlement edge.
7. Upgrade the routes of MilFp389, MilFp385 and 30 CROMP to multi-user networks to offer links towards Crompton Fold.
8. Introduce a Beeway running parallel to the Oldham and Rochdale Metrolink Line, affording off road cycle access avoiding the A663.
9. Improve connections between Newhey and Milnrow through the extension of fragmented sections of the existing cycle network. Upgrades to Bridleway MilBp136 to afford cycle way access beneath the M62 and onwards towards Newhey would provide enhanced links between these settlements.

Sport and recreation

10. Offer local residents accessible sports packages to private recreational assets.
11. Continue to participate in initiatives such as the Green Flag Awards to promote the high environmental standards of the recreational areas and landscape management regime at Milnrow Memorial Park.
12. Enhance recreational routes and signposting to the Piethorne Valley from the settlement edges of Milnrow and Newhey.

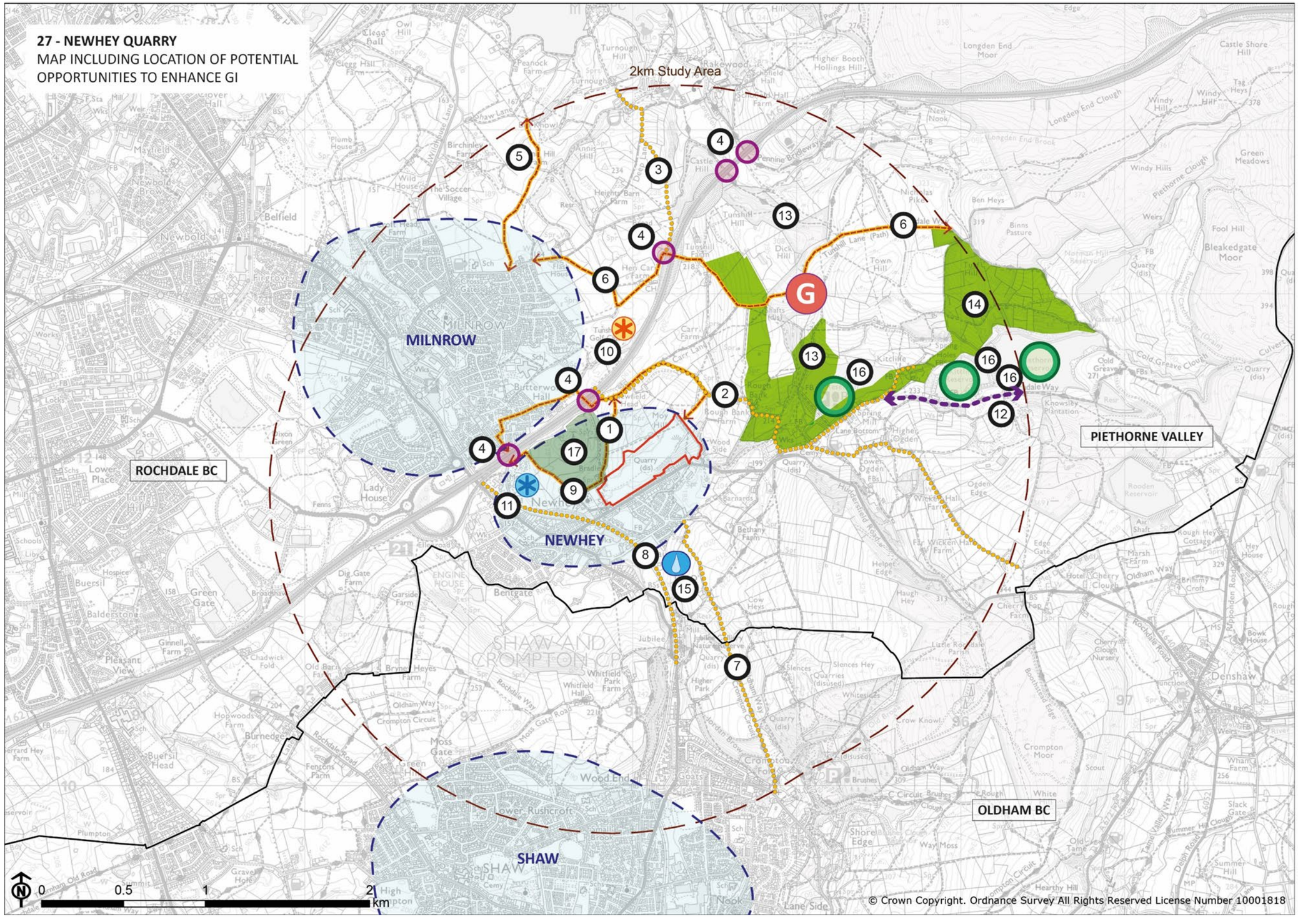
Biodiversity and wildlife corridors

13. Protect and enhance semi-natural habitats and networks, including riparian, broadleaved and ancient woodland tracts bordering water courses within the South Pennine Moors.
14. Protect and where possible enhance the tracts of heather moorland and blanket bog associated with the upland landscape. This could include a comprehensive review of the management plan for the area.

Landscape and visual

15. Improve flood risk management by working with the EA to explore river corridor management opportunities through SuDS and water storage.
16. Enhance the landscape around the Piethorne Valley reservoirs. This could be delivered through the restructuring and interconnection of the existing plantation woodlands around the reservoirs. Establishment of small-scale scrub and woodland as well as the diversification of associated grassland or heathland areas.
17. Preserve and reinstate species rich hedgerows to aid habitat enhancement and visual containment within the study area.

27 - NEWHEY QUARRY
MAP INCLUDING LOCATION OF POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE GI



- LOCAL SETTLEMENT
- LOCAL AUTHORITY BOUNDARY
- REVISED GMSF ALLOCATIONS (2019)
- POTENTIAL CONTIGUOUS HABITAT NETWORK
- POTENTIAL AREA FOR HEDGEROW RESTORATION
- POTENTIAL FOOTPATH UPGRADE / ADDITION
- POTENTIAL CYCLEWAY UPGRADE / ADDITION
- ACCESS / CROSSING POINT IMPROVEMENTS
- EXISTING RECREATIONAL ASSET - POTENTIAL FOR ACCESSIBLE SPORTS PACKAGES
- IMPROVEMENT OF REGIONAL RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
- POTENTIAL FLOOD STORAGE OPPORTUNITIES
- POTENTIAL RECREATIONAL ASSET ENHANCEMENT
- PROMOTION OF STRATEGIC LINK
- REFER TO *POTENTIAL ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS*

Potential Enhancement Opportunities
for the Green Belt