



Salford City Council

Landscape Character Assessment
September 2007

Preface

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إذا احتجت للمساعدة في فهم هذه النشرة , برجاء الاتصال بفريق المساواة في مجلس سالفورد,
هاتف رقم 0161 793 3536

এই পুস্তিকাটি বোঝার জন্য যদি আপনার সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হয় তাহলে সেলফোর্টে কাউন্সিলের ইকুয়ালিটি টিমের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করুন টেলিফোন নম্বর 0161 793 3536

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જો આ લીફલેટ સમજવા મોટ તમને મદદની જરૂરત હોય, કૃપો કરી ઇક્વાલિટીજ ટીમ સર્વોર્ડ કાઉન્સિલનો ટેલિફોન નમ્બર 0161 793 3536 પર સંપર્ક કરો.

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਲੀਫਲੈਟ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਿਚ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰਤ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਲਫੋਰਡ ਕੌਂਸਲ (Salford council) ਵਿਚ ਇਕੁਅਲਿਟੀ ਟੀਮ (Equalities Team) ਨਾਲ ਫੋਨ ਨੰਬਰ 0161 793 3536 'ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

اگر آپ کو اس لیف لیٹ کے سمجھنے میں مدد کی ضرورت ہو تو براہ کرم اکیوئٹی ٹیم کو سلفورڈ کونسل سے اس ٹیلی فون نمبر 0161 793 3536 پر رابطہ قائم کر سکتے ہیں۔

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1 Introduction

Need to recognise importance of landscape

- 1.1** Landscape is about the relationship between people and place and is influenced by both natural (e.g. geology, climate, soils, flora and fauna) and cultural (e.g. historic and current land use, enclosure) elements. In February 2006 the UK government signed the European Landscape Convention. This means that the government now officially recognises that landscape is an essential component of people's surroundings, an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage and a foundation of their identity. This recognition now requires integration of landscape into regional, planning, environmental, agricultural, social and economic policies and a commitment to the establishment of policies aimed at the protection, management and planning of landscapes.

Approach to undertaking a Landscape Character Assessment

- 1.2** Given that one of the guiding principles of sustainable development (which now underpins government policies) is to base policy on "sound science", government agencies since the 1990s have been developing a standardised approach known as "Landscape Character Assessment", which can be used to identify what gives a locality its own sense of place and makes it different from other areas, and what conditions should be set for new development and change. Government agencies (i.e. Natural England (formerly Countryside Agency and English Nature) and English Heritage) have also been developing a standardised approach to identify and monitor how landscapes are changing, and have undertaken a national consultation exercise applying an indicator of change to a range of components that make up a landscape (i.e. Settlement and Development, Trees and Woodland, Agriculture, Semi natural habitats, Rivers and coastal, Boundary Features and Historic features).

Proposed Landscape Character Assessment for Salford

- 1.3** Salford has now undertaken its own local Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) with a view to providing an evidence base that can be used in line with regional planning guidance and in support of a number of local level policy documents. At a regional level Draft RSS Policy EM1, which requires an integrated approach to protecting and enhancing environmental assets, indicates that plans and proposals should deliver that approach based upon "detailed landscape character assessments and strategies" in the context of the "North West Joint Character Area Map". At a local level it will underpin the forthcoming Salford Core Strategy and help in preparing the proposed Biodiversity Strategy. Such a LCA will also help in being able to respond to the future elements of the consultation process referred to in Para 1.2 above.

2 Process of Landscape Character Assessment

Methodology for Landscape Character Assessment

- 2.1 Based on the approach set out in guidance (Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland produced by the Countryside Agency (2002)), LCA consists of 2 key stages.
- 2.2 The first stage involves identifying the scope of the study, reviewing the information available, carrying out a field survey and finally, classifying the landscape into different types and providing a clear description of those types. Although this first stage inevitably involves some element of subjectivity, it is mainly an objective process.
- 2.3 The second stage is far more subjective in requiring judgements to be made on what action should be undertaken with regard to the different landscape types. The requirements of the European Landscape Convention make it clear that landscape quality objectives should be framed after public consultation, and that the policies should be aimed at protecting, managing and/or planning the landscape.

National Landscape Character Assessment

- 2.4 In 1996, the former Countryside Commission and English Nature with support from English Heritage produced "The Character of England" Map, which covered the whole country. This was accompanied by descriptions of 159 landscape character areas, together with identification of the influences determining the character areas and some of the main pressures for change within those areas. Salford was identified as being covered by 4 national landscape character areas (i.e. Manchester Pennine Fringe, Manchester Conurbation, Mersey Valley and Lancashire Coal Measures). (See Appendix 1 for detailed descriptions of these areas).

3 Methodology

Scope

- 3.1** Landscape extends beyond the countryside and includes urban areas. However, given the complexity of the urban area in Salford and the large number of regeneration initiatives within it (for each of which separate design “Visions” have already been developed), it was decided that this Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) in Salford would adopt the general approach advocated in the guidance referred to in Para 2.1 above and focus on the more rural and urban fringe areas of the city.

First Stage of Assessment

- 3.2** The first stage of the landscape character assessment has therefore identified the extent of the more rural and urban fringe areas of the city, reviewed existing information and undertaken field surveys as necessary. From this initial work, the landscape has been classified into the main types of landscape character, and broad descriptions have been provided for those broad types. The broad types have then subdivided, and detailed descriptions prepared for those sub areas.

Second Stage of Assessment

- 3.3** Following the first stage of work referred to in Para 3.2 above, broad landscape quality objectives and policies were prepared for the sub areas, in line with the guidance (in Para 2.1). It is these draft policy guidelines (see Sections 8, 9, 10 and 11) that are currently the subject of this public consultation. These guidelines may need to be reviewed following preparation of the Salford Core Strategy (adoption estimated November 2010).

4 Landscape Character Classifications and Descriptions: Rural Mosslands

Rural Mosslands: Chat Moss

4.1 Classification: Rural Mossland (located within JCA 50 Mersey Valley)

The rural mosslands in Salford are centred on Chat Moss and are bounded by the Bridgewater Canal to the north, the M60 to the east, Irlam and Cadishead to the south, the River Glaze to the southwest and the outskirts of Astley Green to the west and includes Worsley, Irlam, Cadishead and Little Woolden Mosses (see Map 1).

Overall Landscape Character

4.2 Key Features:

- Low lying, flat topography associated with reclaimed former lowland peat bogs allows extensive views
- A wide network of deep drainage ditches alongside the private roads and between the larger fields results in a simple ordered landscape
- The dominant arable agricultural land use with large scale fields on the rich peat soils provides an air of prosperity
- The relative lack of built development is in striking contrast to the adjoining urban areas

Geology, Topography and Drainage

4.3 The rural mosslands are defined by their largely low-lying (between 0 and 30 metres), low relief topography (see Map 5). They are underlain by Triassic sandstone, which is covered by boulder clay, with pockets of sand and gravel. During the early post-glacial period, peat began to form in a number of poorly drained hollows over the boulder clay. As the layers of peat built up and overtopped the depressions in which they originated, the peat spread out and eventually coalesced to form one extensive peat bog (see Maps 6 and 7). Locally these bogs became known as “mosslands” – hence the name Chat Moss. The origins of the bog in a number of different hollows, has resulted in considerable variation in the depths of peat across Chat Moss. In places it can be as little as 0.6 metres deep, and in others as great as 6.5 metres. Immediately to the west of Chat Moss the peat deposits give way to the alluvial sand and gravel deposits along the valley of the River Glaze. Overall drainage is westwards and southwards via a number of small streams that flow towards the shallow valley of the River Glaze and the Manchester Ship Canal respectively.

Agricultural Land Quality

4.4 The peat soils of Chat Moss, which have been drained and fertilised, have been identified by the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) as being of the highest quality (Grade 1) for agricultural use (see Map 8 and Appendix 2 for extent and relevant definition respectively). Where the peat soils give way to the River Glaze they become slightly poorer in quality and are classified as Grade 2. Where peat soils underlie Botany Bay Wood and the peat extraction sites they have been identified as being Grade 5.

Biodiversity

- 4.5** The original peat bogs were very rich in wildlife and formed what in the twentieth century were defined as lowland raised bog habitat. However, the vast majority of that has been lost (see Historical Influences section below) and all that remains in Salford are a very few small patches. Despite that the unfertilised peat remaining within the peat extraction sites is considered to represent a significant opportunity for the re-creation of bog habitat in an area where it was previously a major feature, if a suitable depth and quality of peat can be retained on completion of peat extraction. Indeed, a small restored area on the side of one peat extraction site already supports a small area of bog vegetation and has been identified as a Site of Biological Importance (SBI) receiving some protection under local planning guidance.
- 4.6** Apart from bog habitat there are some areas of birch and scrub woodland that have developed naturally from the seed bank within the soils. Elsewhere some woods have been planted (e.g. Botany Bay Wood) for forestry and game) and others (e.g. New Moss Wood) for public access and amenity value. The majority of these woodland areas on the moss have been identified as SBIs mainly for the birds that they support. However, although the 2 largest woods are managed none of the smaller woods are believed to be.
- 4.7** Although not necessarily a specific habitat in its own right (although arable field margins are identified as a UK Priority Habitat), the agricultural land on the rural mosslands, with their extensive network of deep drainage ditches, occasional trees and hedges around farmsteads and wetter patches where the field drainage is poor supports a wide range of farmland birds. The Chat Moss area is considered by ecologists to be the best lowland area in Greater Manchester for supporting farmland birds. Because of the recent substantial decline in farmland bird numbers (both nationally and locally) there is concern that positive action is needed to help support the birds on the moss. To that end the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group are making contact with the farmers to see whether they would be willing to enter into Environmental Stewardship Scheme.

Broad Historical Influences

- 4.8** Studies have revealed some evidence that during Mesolithic times (Stone Age) there was human activity on the fringes of the moss. What little evidence that is available, suggests that there may have been some deliberate burning of vegetation on the fringes of the peat that was beginning to form at that time in a number of poorly drained hollows. The burning may have been designed to keep the area open, and attractive to game and grazing animals, which would then have been hunted. However the impact was minimal, and in later centuries the peat bog continued to expand. The very unstable nature of the moss deterred the early development of settlements and roads, but there was some small scale cutting of peat for use as domestic fuel.

Landscape Character Classifications and Descriptions: Rural Mosslands

- 4.9** The first major reclamation of the mosslands in the Salford area took place on Worsley Moss in the eighteenth century but most reclamation occurred in the nineteenth century, with one key impetus being construction of the Liverpool to Manchester railway line (opened 1830). The first stage in the reclamation of the bog to create farmland generally took the form of digging a network of drainage ditches of varying depths. Once the peat was dry enough, marl (excavated from deposits located outside the mossland areas) and/or night soil (sewage from adjoining urban areas) was then spread on it to provide enrichment and fertilisation. The application of marl was required in order to combat the natural acidity of the peat soils. Because of their water holding properties, the peat soils not only require a network of deep perimeter ditches, but also networks of in-field sub surface drains. Shrinkage and wastage of the peat soils tends to disrupt these sub surface drains, and over time they can become ineffective if not repaired.
- 4.10** Despite their intensive drainage requirements, the peat soils proved excellent for growing a variety of salad/horticultural crops and vegetables (especially on the southern parts of the moss). As a result up until the late 1940s the typical farm size was around 16 hectares, mechanisation was limited and labour input was high. Following the 1940s the increasing mechanisation and advances in the development of non-organic fertilisers and weed killers resulted in increased yields and quality of produce.
- 4.11** However the changes in food retailing from the 1950s onwards had a devastating effect on the network of small horticultural producers on the moss. Initially the early supermarkets would buy fresh produce from the wholesale markets supplied by the small horticultural producers. The supermarkets found however that achieving a consistent supply of produce of uniform size and quality (especially appearance) throughout the year was not always straightforward. The achievement of such standards requires significant investment in facilities such as pack houses, cold stores, and transport, which was beyond the resources of most small-scale growers on the moss. Therefore, as in other parts of the UK, the supermarkets started to look elsewhere (including from abroad) for more consistent suppliers and as a result virtually all, small horticultural businesses on the moss had ceased by the end of the twentieth century.
- 4.12** Reclamation of the majority of the former peat bog has resulted in relatively few semi natural habitats remaining on Chat Moss (see Biodiversity Section above) but those that remain (or have been re-created) together with much of the farmland itself are very valuable for the biodiversity that they support.
- 4.13** The historical pattern of reclamation of Chat Moss has resulted in the development of 2 slightly different landscape character areas, which are described more fully below.

Rural Mosslands Sub Area 1: Northern Chat Moss

- 4.14** This Sub Area is bounded, by the Bridgewater Canal to the north, the M60 to the east, Liverpool to Manchester railway line to the south and Astley Green and Whitehead landfill to the west (See Map 1).
- 4.15** Key Features Additional to Overall Area
- The raised embankment of the Bridgewater Canal prevents views of the urban areas to the north, from the mosslands, and thereby adds to the sense of remoteness
 - Four grass covered, domed landforms adjacent to the canal and delineating former landfill sites, introduce a note of artificiality to an otherwise “natural” scene

Landscape Character Classifications and Descriptions: Rural Mosslands

- Vehicular access along lengthy rough farmland tracks to a few isolated farmsteads adds to the rural atmosphere and sense of isolation from urban areas
- Large scale open views across the farmland in the vicinity of Botany Bay Wood are foreshortened and softened by extensive woodlands, tree belts and hedges
- A strip of woodland screens the Liverpool to Manchester railway line which crosses the area on a level with the surrounding mossland
- The snaking line of Shaw Brook is lost against the background of Botany Bay Wood
- A sparse network of straight drainage ditches crosses the farmland and dissects Botany Bay Wood
- Some livestock farming adds diversity to the rural scene
- A large flat mineral extraction site occupies the south western corner of area

Specific Historical and Cultural Influences

Prehistoric and Roman Times

- 4.16** Studies during the 1990s have found a number of Neolithic worked flints and cherts on the Astley Moss East peat extraction site. These studies also suggested that the use of fire by early settlers, together with a rising water table at that time may have prevented the regeneration of trees and encouraged the spread of peat. A human skull dating from Roman times was also found on the same site.

Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

- 4.17** The first attempts at major reclamation of this area began in the mid eighteenth century when the Duke of Bridgewater tipped waste materials from his nearby Worsley coalmines on it. Later Botany Bay Wood was planted.
- 4.18** During the nineteenth century the mossland reclamation continued and the area was developed for farming, hunting and shooting. Vicars Hall, Malkins Wood and Moss House Farms were constructed along with 2 gamekeeper cottages and an extensive network of tracks. The intersections of some of the tracks (e.g. at crossing points on “the Avenue” running west to east through the centre of the area) were planted with small semi circular plantations. Other tracks linking Botany Bay Wood with Hollins and Bittern Pits Woods were planted with tree belts, and others with hedgerows. Where the presence of clay outliers in the shallower peat layers to the west of the area allowed, some ponds were constructed.
- 4.19** In addition to the development of the farming and game estate, the nineteenth century, also saw an area to the west of Botany Bay Wood, being developed as a peat extraction site in order to provide peat litter for the stabling of animals.

Twentieth Century

- 4.20** The Astley Green colliery lying in Wigan MBC and immediately to the north west of Sub Area 1 opened early in the century. Over time the deep coal mining became uneconomic, and was replaced with opencast coal working which took place to the south of the Bridgewater Canal and impinged on the edge of Sub Area 1. Towards the middle of the century, an area to the south of the canal was utilised for 3 landfill sites and later in the century the Whitehead landfill was developed on the site of the former opencast workings.

Landscape Character Classifications and Descriptions: Rural Mosslands

- 4.21** In terms of the farming and hunting estate covering the majority of the sub area, the landowning family left Worsley during the economic depression of the inter-war years and management declined. Subsequently the farmland was let to tenant farmers and game shooting continued. Later however the Vicars Hall Farm buildings were lost as a result of one of the 3 landfill sites previously referred to) and management of the woodlands, tree belts and hedgerows declined.
- 4.22** During the mid 1960s, the construction of the Eccles/Stretford by-pass (previously M62, then M63 and later M60) motorways resulted in the further visual and physical isolation of the main part of the estate from Worsley to the east. Following a further change in ownership of the estate in the late 1980s, some management of Botany Bay Wood took place with the help of public grants. The main work involved the extensive clearance of invasive rhododendron species, re-planting of some felled areas and a small area of new planting. However, given the presence of a large heronry within a central part of the wood, not all the rhododendron scrub was cleared.

Landscape Description for Sub Area 1: Northern Chat Moss

- 4.23** The past history of much of this area as a private estate, the current lack of any public access (i.e. no adopted roads, public bridleways or public footpaths) and the presence of very little built development (i.e. only Malkins Wood, Moss House and Grange Farms and 2 disused cottages only accessible along very rough tracks) has resulted in a calm simple rural landscape in striking contrast to the busy complex landscape of the adjoining urban areas of the city. Only to the east and southeast of the Sub Area does the noise and visual presence of the motorway network intrude, where the M62 emerges from its cutting and joins with the M60 in a major interchange.
- 4.24** Today the main type of farming is arable with some livestock. The fields are large (typically 20 hectares in size) and uniform in shape reflecting their reclamation on an organised basis. In a number of places they are bordered by wide deep drainage ditches (although these are fewer in number than in Sub Area 2 because of the seventeenth century tipping of mining spoil as referred to above). A few large drainage ditches are also found within Botany Bay Wood. In addition, to the south of this wood, there are a large number of shallower, narrower and closely packed ditches, which are generally covered in dense birch scrub and rhododendrons. The only other water features are Whitehead Brook to the west, the meandering Shaw Brook (which forms the northern boundary of Botany Bay Wood for much of its length), and a few ponds located in the vicinity of Rawsons in the Nook, Malkins Wood Farm and Keepers Cottage. The ponds occur where the peat deposits have given way to boulder clay. One or two are fringed and overshadowed by mature trees and scrub.
- 4.25** The nucleated building groups (of nineteenth century dwellings of weathered dark red brick and other buildings of modern pre fabricated construction) are generally well screened with mature woodland/shrubs from views across the farmland. However, although the main farmhouses and modern buildings appear to be in good condition there are a couple of derelict cottages near Malkins Wood Farm. Outside the grouped buildings, views across the farmland especially to the north of the area are large in scale. However, to the south of the sub area they are for the most part relatively enclosed. This enclosure is achieved by the foreshortening of views to the north by Bittern Pits and Hollins Woods and the wooded embankment of the Bridgewater Canal, to the south by the substantial block of Botany Bay Wood and woodland along the railway line, and elsewhere by the hedgerows and tree belts along some of the main tracks.

4.26 On the eastern edge of the former private estate and to the east of Botany Bay Wood just south of the canal, lies a reed bed treatment scheme made up of 3 reed covered ponds. The site is bounded by modern fencing which visually intrudes to some extent into the rural scene. To the west of the former private estate are 2 areas that have been affected by mineral workings. These are the Whitehead Landfill site (an area of coal recovery and landfill located on former opencast workings) and the Astley Moss East peat extraction site. The Whitehead site is substantially raised above the level of the surrounding land. The Astley Moss East site however is flat and because of the method of peat extraction (i.e. milling across the whole site), lacks vegetation and is mainly dark brown in colour.

Key Factors Affecting Change

- Salford UDP Green Belt, Agriculture and Mosslands Policies
- Restoration of the mineral extraction site can act as part of a mossland heartland aimed at restoring lowland raised bog habitat to an area where it was previously a key landscape feature
- Development of a Mossland Vision promoting 4 different land use zones can be used to guide future development across whole of Chat Moss
- Pressure for recreational development within and adjoining the woodland could affect the extent of farming within this sub area

Rural Mosslands Sub Area 2: Southern Chat Moss

4.27 This Sub Area is bounded by the Liverpool to Manchester railway line to the north, Barton/Peel Green to the east, Irlam and Cadishead to the south and the Glaze Brook to the west (see Map 1).

4.28 Key Features Additional to Overall Area

- A large scale landscape with open views gives a sense of rural remoteness in striking contrast with the adjoining urban areas of the city
- A strip of woodland screens the Liverpool to Manchester railway line which crosses the area on a level with the surrounding mossland
- Long private roads and rough tracks are laid out as a rectilinear network alongside some of the deep drainage ditches
- Apart from grouped farm dwellings and buildings along the main private roads and a line of pylons, there is a lack of built development
- The M62 runs mainly in a shallow cutting and has little visual but significant noise impact on the rural atmosphere
- The mainly small isolated straight edged blocks of unmanaged woodland stand isolated in extensive arable fields
- Two large flat dark mineral extraction sites offer exposed open views

Specific Historical and Cultural Influences

4.29 As with that part of Chat Moss adjoining Worsley, Boothstown and Astley Green, early settlers avoided the moss, although there are remains of an Iron Age/Roman site located just to the north of Great Woollen Hall on the side of the Glaze Brook valley, to the west of Chat Moss.

Landscape Character Classifications and Descriptions: Rural Mosslands

4.30 Attempts at reclamation of the moss within Sub Area 2 were started in the early nineteenth century by a group of private individuals who leased the land from the local landed gentry. The outcomes of these early attempts were of mixed success. However construction of the Liverpool to Manchester railway line in the late 1820s certainly acted as a spur to later reclamation efforts. It provided a means of transporting farm produce grown on the moss to urban areas and later it also provided an additional (the Manchester Ship Canal was also used) means of carrying night soil (sewage) from the early cities out to reclaim the southern part of the moss.

Landscape Description for Sub Area 2: Southern Chat Moss

4.31 Reclamation of the original lowland raised bog has resulted in a large-scale flat landscape of predominantly arable farmland. An extensive network of broad, deep drainage ditches, typically border the large (10 – 20 hectare) square fertile fields. As with Sub Area 1, the uniform size and shape of the fields reflects the past reclamation of the mossland on an organised basis. Despite the great fertility of the soils, in some places the mix of wheat, barley, potato and oil seed rape crops, has given way to turf production and more recently to hobby farming (e.g. keeping of horses and llamas). The changing colours and textures of the different crops, and the varying extent of ruderal vegetation (tall weeds and shrubs) along the ditch network at different times of the year, provides visual diversity and varying levels of visual enclosure in the landscape. In the winter the landscape can appear more open, whereas in the summer it can be considerably more enclosed.

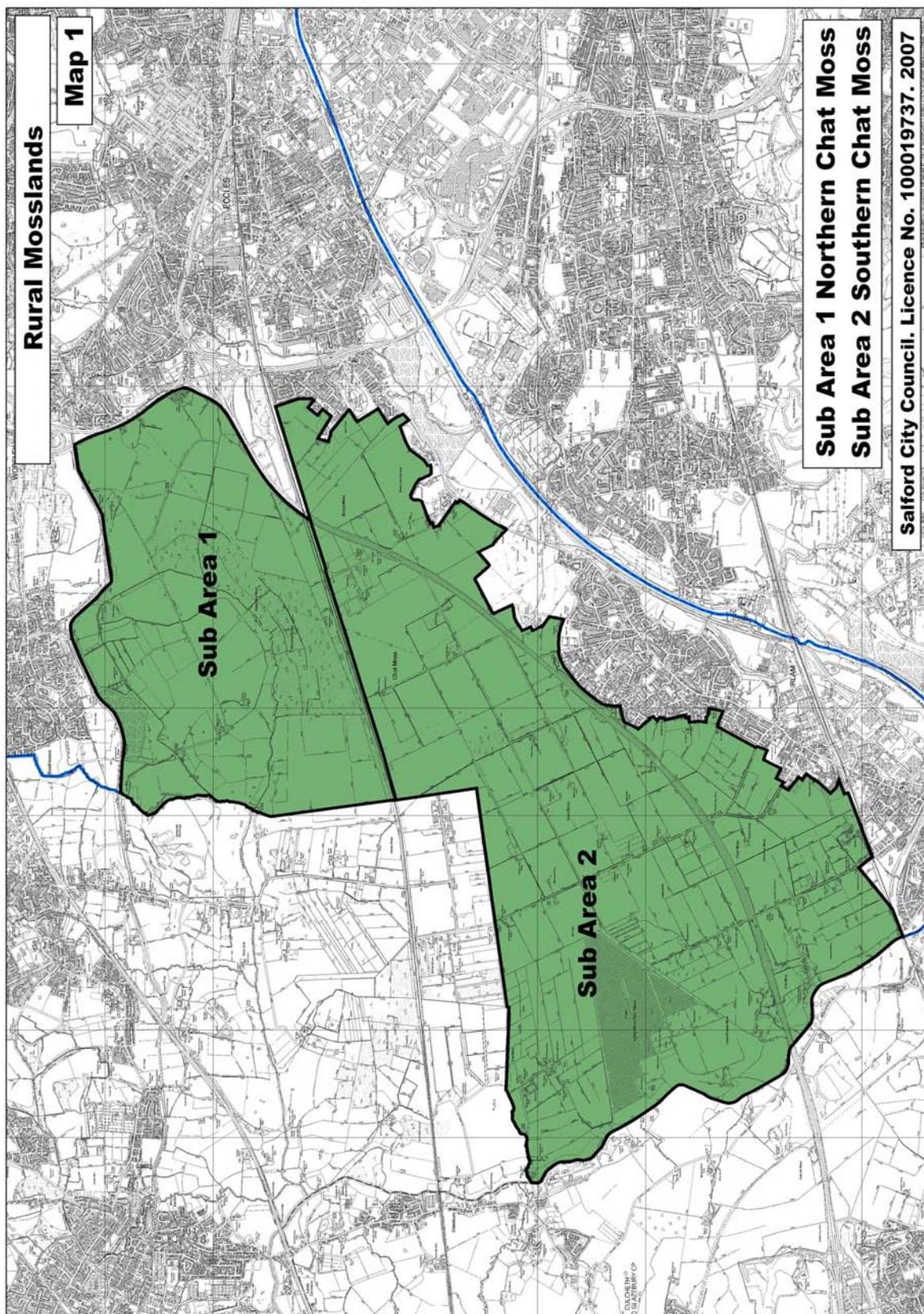
4.32 Other visual interest within the fields is provided, by a few scattered trees, which have been allowed to grow at the side of some of the main drainage ditches and by small areas of birch scrub, which have developed where the internal field drainage is poor. Between some fields there are also a few blocks of woodland. One or two of the woods are relatively small in scale (10 hectares) but another is considerably larger (20 hectares). The smaller woods have developed naturally from the seed bank within the peat, whilst much of the larger wood has been planted.

4.33 The layout of the majority of the main drainage ditches on a grid pattern has had a major impact on the arrangement of the roads and tracks. There are 5 private narrow roads, which cross the mossland in a generally north to south direction. However only one of these is a through route, which leads to a level crossing over the Liverpool to Manchester railway line in Wigan, and eventually goes to Astley Green. Another similar private road runs east to west and intersects with 4 of the north to south roads. In addition, a series of rough tracks intersect with the roads. All the roads and tracks are in a very poor condition. This may be due to the differential settlement of the underlying peat soils, a lack of maintenance and the fact that they are in private ownership. The M62 motorway crosses the southern part of Sub Area 2 mainly in a cutting, which eventually passes under the Liverpool – Manchester Railway to leave the eastern side of the sub area. There are no links between the M62 and the private road network with the roads being carried across the motorway on 5 road bridges. A number of the private roads and tracks are designated as public rights of way (with the majority being footpaths and only one bridleway). Another more natural footpath follows the irregular edge of the shallow valley of the River Glaze. This is carried over the motorway on a pedestrian footbridge.

- 4.34** Built development within the mossland is mainly located directly adjacent to, but spaced out along the roads. It consists of late nineteenth/early twentieth century farmhouses with different types/style/age (e.g. corrugated tin and modular concrete) of agricultural storage buildings sited close by to form small farmsteads. In places the farmsteads are screened by hedges, (often composed of exotic shrubs such as laurel and leylandii), but in others they remain exposed to views across the farmland. Although most farmsteads remain in agricultural use there are signs of other activities taking place. For example there are buildings for the storage of turf and scaffolding equipment, and a number of small paddocks associated with equestrian activities. In addition, there are one or two other dwellings (e.g. twentieth century bungalows, residential caravan, wooden chalet), which appear unrelated to the farms. On the southern edge of the sub area in the Barton Moss area some built development visually impinges on the landscape.
- 4.35** In addition to the farmland there are 3 peat extraction sites, which have never been reclaimed for agricultural use. Two of these are large in scale (i.e. 100 hectares) while the third is only 8 ha. The method of extraction on all the sites is by milling. The working of the whole surface of both the larger sites means that they are seen as rather exposed and lacking in interest in visual terms. The smaller site however is not fully worked and its western side supports naturally regenerating birch scrub, heather and mollinia grass.
- 4.36** The lack of good public through roads giving access to properties on the moss, together with the lack of built development, means that there is little traffic. In addition, although there is continual noise from the motorway, its visual impact is virtually non-existent because of its setting mainly in a cutting. Despite the lack of traffic and generally quiet, calm atmosphere over much of the moss (especially away from the motorway), there appears to be little general public use for example of the extensive network of public footpaths. This is possibly due to the predominantly vast exposed open views over much of the farmland.

Key Factors Affecting Change

- Salford UDP Green Belt, Agriculture and Mosslands Policies
- Restoration of one mineral extraction site to lowland raised bog habitat can act as part of a mossland heartland aimed at restoring lowland raised bog habitat to an area where it was previously a key landscape feature
- Development of Mossland Vision promoting 4 different land use zones can guide future development across whole of Chat Moss
- Change of ownership from one large-scale owner to a number of smaller owners in some places threatens future maintenance of large in field drainage systems by the introduction of small scale plots/different land uses unrelated to the wider drainage systems
- Continued fly tipping and off road motorcycling pressures from Cadishead and Irlam
- Continued poor maintenance of private roads and lack of publicly adopted roads



Map 4.1 Rural Mosslands



Picture 4.1 Rural Mosslands : Horse paddocks are becoming common on Southern Chat Moss.

5 Landscape Character Classifications and Descriptions: Urban Mosslands

Urban Mosslands: Linnyslaw, Clifton and Wardley Mosses

5.1 Classification: Urban Mossland (located within JCA 56 Lancashire Coal Measures and JCA 55 Manchester Conurbation)

This former mossland area is bounded to the north by the settlements of Kearsley and Clifton, to the east by Wardley and Swinton, to the south by the A6 Manchester to Horwich road and to the west by Walkden. It covers the former Clifton, Wardley and Linnyslaw Mosses (see Map 2).

Landscape Character

5.2 Key Features:

- Flat topography associated with former lowland raised bog, which was reclaimed for farmland allows reasonably open views where not interrupted by the motorway
- Dominated by the noise of the very busy M60, M61 and M62 motorway interchange running through its centre
- The relative lack of buildings is in contrast to the adjoining more densely developed urban areas
- The pattern of large fields is now partly scarred by past mining activities and disused farmland

Geology, Topography and Drainage

5.3 The eastern half of the city is characterised by a ridge of high land running from Walkden in the northwest, down to Pendleton in the southeast (see Map 5). On the southwest side of the northern end of this ridge, where the slope was gentle and where past drainage was impeded, a lowland peat bog developed during post-glacial times. This relatively shallow bog (with peat depths ranging from 1.5 to 2 metres) extended for some 2.5 to 3 miles from Walkden in the west, to Wardley/Swinton in the east and overlay Coal Measures, which include mudstones, siltstones and sandstones (see Maps 6 and 7).

Agricultural Land Quality

5.4 The majority of peat soils of this former mossland area have been identified by DEFRA as being of Grade 3 in quality (see Map 8 and Appendix 2 for extent and definitions respectively). However, there is a fringe of lower quality Grade 4 soils along their southern edge.

Biodiversity

5.5 As with the rural mosslands the original bog would also have been very important for wildlife but none of that habitat now remains. To the north of the M60 however there is a small area of Clifton Moss, which has naturally regenerated into scrub and is important for birds. This is identified as a SBI. In addition where the former colliery has previously been planted with woodland and there are one or two hedges these also provide some benefit for wildlife.

- 5.6** In addition, to the south of the M60 there are water, small woodland and grassland areas within Blackleach Country Park, as a result of which the park has been identified as a Site of Biological Importance and designated as a Local Nature Reserve. In addition, the scrub that is forming on the disused farmland, together with 2 ponds and a small planted woodland also have some biodiversity value.

Historical and Cultural Influences

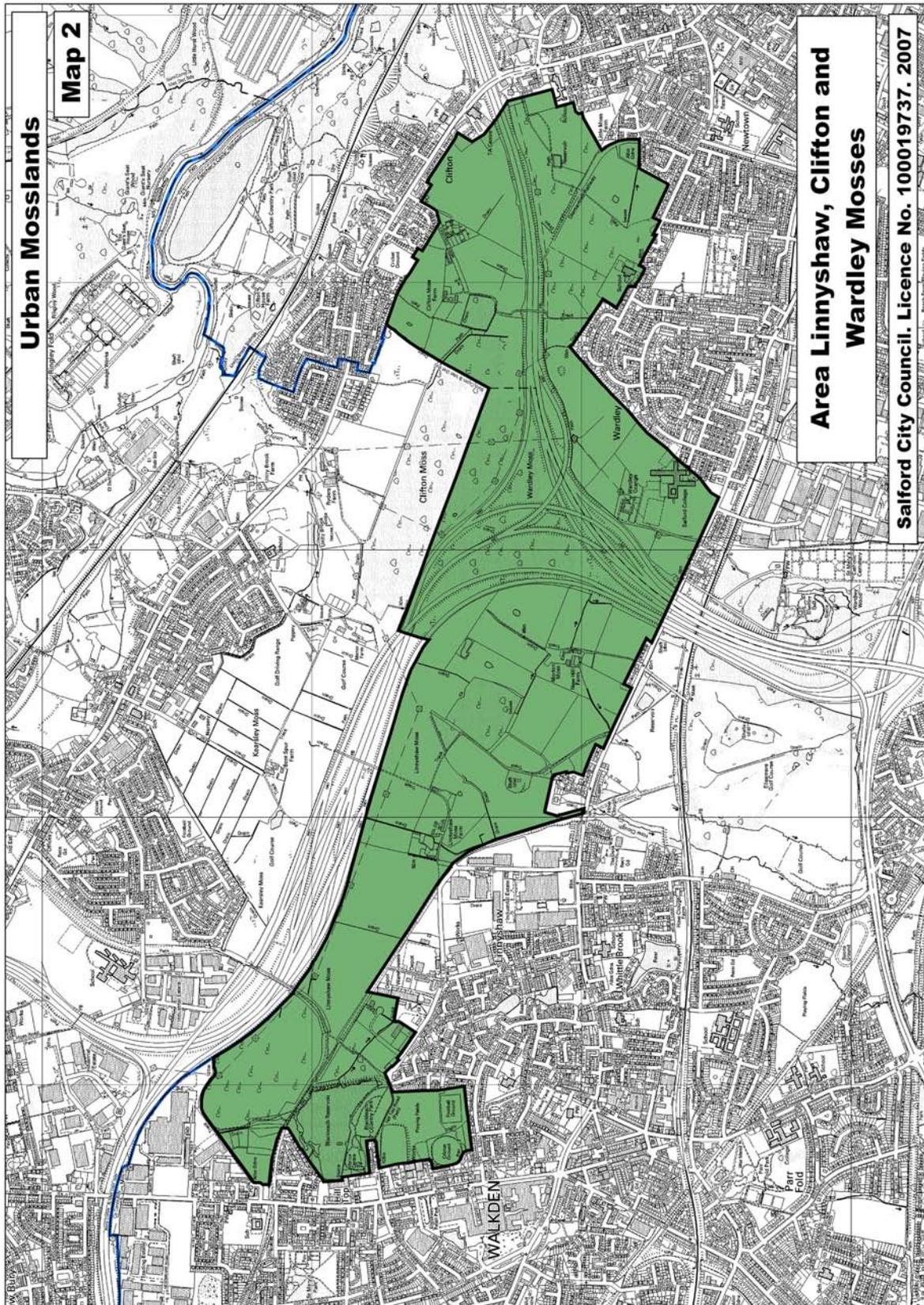
- 5.7** According to old maps, by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century some small-scale reclamation (shown by the presence of small irregular shaped fields) had taken place on the edges of the moss in the Wardley area. Here some of the overlying peat had been cleared to reveal underlying sand deposits, which are recorded on old maps as sand pits.
- 5.8** By the mid nineteenth century, several small-scale coal pits had been developed on the fringes of the moss, together with the Moss and Spindle Point Collieries near Kearsley, and the Clifton Moss Colliery further east. This probably indicates that the coal deposits that were located within the high ridge were fairly close to the surface and therefore relatively easy to get at. At this time, one of the Blackleach reservoirs to the northeast of Walkden had also been constructed across the peat deposits at the western end of the moss.
- 5.9** By the end of the nineteenth century, the presence of a regular layout of large fields bounded by drainage ditches demonstrates that the whole moss had been reclaimed. By this time the Clifton and Kearsley Colliery had also opened on the side of the A6 Manchester to Horwich road, and the Linnyslaw Colliery had opened on the south side of the moss. Mineral railway lines to serve the Clifton and Kearsley Colliery had also been constructed along the northern fringe of the moss, and other mineral lines crossing its western end connected with Linnyslaw Colliery and an additional reservoir that had been constructed at Blackleach.
- 5.10** However by 1910, the Clifton Moss Colliery had closed and the central section of the moss appears to have been mainly in agricultural use. Despite the agricultural use, by 1930 another mineral railway line had been constructed northeast from Linnyslaw Colliery and then eastwards through the centre of the moss to link with the cotton mill at Newtown near Swinton.
- 5.11** The gradual closure of the collieries in the 1950s and 1960s led to the their sites and the associated network of mineral railway lines being abandoned. In the early 1970s the area of open land offered by this former mossland was utilised for the construction of the extensive interchange between the M60, M61 and M62 motorways. Some of the adjoining land was also used for the tipping of spoil from the motorway construction works.
- 5.12** In the 1990s the council (with the help of public grants) undertook a programme of reclamation of the area around the remaining reservoir at Blackleach and some of the former mineral lines. This led to the development of Blackleach Country Park and reclamation of the former mineral line connecting Linnyslaw Colliery with Blackleach reservoir to provide a strategic off road recreation route, which could be used by walkers and cyclists.

Landscape Description for Urban Mosslands: Linnyslaw, Clifton and Wardley Mosses

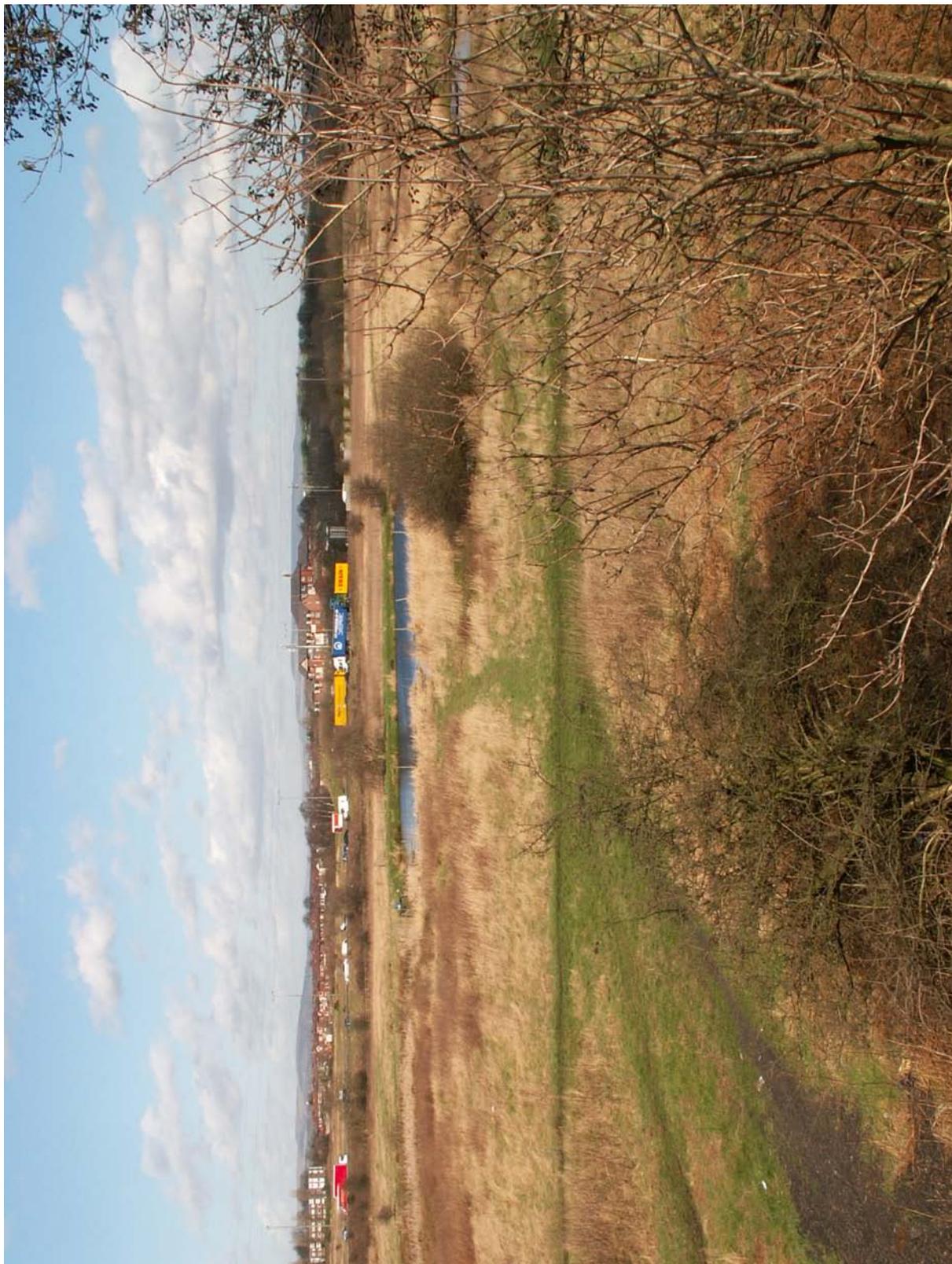
- 5.13** The whole character of this area is dominated by the views and noise of the M60/M61 motorway interchange, which straddles the central section of this former moss. In the east of the area, the M60/M62 runs partly in a shallow cutting and partly on a low embankment. As it goes west and south and joins the M61, both the main motorway carriageways and slip roads have been raised on higher embankments and concrete pillars in order to cross the A6.
- 5.14** To the north of the motorway interchange the open land in Salford is bordered by the motorway along its southern edge and by housing on the A666. This area consists of farmland, some unmanaged woodland (planted around the site of the former Clifton Moss Colliery pithead and shafts) and an area of mainly birch scrub directly alongside the motorway. The farmland is mainly bounded by patchy post and wire fencing, although there are a few unmanaged hedgerows. The land is used for the grazing of livestock. The farmland to the east appears to be of poorer quality than that to the west and near Clifton Moss Farm some land is covered by heaps of scrap metal/old farm machinery and piles of mixed straw/manure (possibly arising from stables). The only built development consists of a row of terraced cottages, a group of farm buildings, wooden huts on an area of allotments and some electricity pylons. However, there are clear views across some fields of the adjoining residential development along the A666. Access is possible between the fields via 2 public footpaths, which lead to a footbridge across the motorway. Vehicular access to the farm/cottages is via a potholed rough track, which is partially constructed of setts.
- 5.15** To the southeast of the motorway interchange is an area made up of extensive used/disused farmland, former school playing fields and a very small area of allotments. Much of the disused farmland is covered in rough grassland, and scattered areas of scrub. A few bushes and trees mark the former field boundaries on the disused farmland, whereas post and wire fences and managed hedges mark them on the still used farmland. Within the disused farmland area to the north of the old railway embankment is a former reservoir used for fishing, and there is a smaller water body within the land to the south of the embankment. The only built developments are the farm type buildings set out around a square at Wardley Grange and a line of electricity pylons alongside the motorway. An area of hard standing around the Wardley Grange buildings is used for caravan storage. A number of public footpaths cross the area, and one leads to the footbridge over the motorway. In addition to the formal paths are a number of other clear desire lines and the area appears well used by dog walkers. The only vehicular access route into the area is the track leading to Wardley Grange.
- 5.16** To the southwest of the motorway interchange is an area of mixed farmland and a country park centred on a former reservoir. The line of a former mineral railway extends from the country park along the southern edge of the farmland and has been reclaimed to form an off road recreational cycle track and walkway. The majority of farmland to the east is used for rearing stock and as a stud farm although some is disused. Within the centre of the farmland is a large block of woodland, which is located just north of the former Linnyslaw Colliery pithead buildings.

Key Factors Affecting Change

- Salford UDP Green Belt, Agriculture, Recreation and Wildlife Corridor policies



Map 5.1 Urban Mosslands



Picture 5.1 Urban Mosslands : The M60 interrupts views from the disused farmland of Wardley Moss

6 Landscape Character Classifications and Descriptions: Urban Fringe Lowland

Urban Fringe Lowland

- 6.1** Classification: Urban Fringe Lowland (western section located within JCA 56 Lancashire Coal Measures and eastern section within JCA 55 Manchester Conurbation)
- 6.2** This landscape type is made up of 3 large loosely connected blocks of predominantly open land, which break up the built development of west Salford (see Map 3).

Overall Landscape Character

- 6.3** Key Features:
- The predominantly open land and relatively few buildings provide a relaxing visual contrast to the more densely developed adjoining urban areas
 - The deciduous woodland still occupying the How, Wardley and Worsley Woods Cloughs and the slopes around and above the Worsley Hall garden centre provide a seasonally changing scene
 - The continual roar of traffic and bold artificial lines and materials of 2 major road interchanges dominate 2 of the sub areas

Geology, Topography and Drainage

- 6.4** As with the other eastern parts of the city, the main blocks of open land making up this urban fringe lowland are composed of layers of glacial sands and clays, which overlie coal measure rocks such as mudstones, siltstones and sandstones (see Maps 6 and 7). Given their location on the south-facing slope of a ridge, these lowland areas are crossed by a number of small streams, which emerge just below the top of the ridge (at around 80 metres) and have cut narrow valleys running generally north to south down the face of the slope.

Agricultural Land Quality

- 6.5** The farm land adjoining the A6 has been classified as Grade 4 by DEFRA, whilst that throughout the remainder of the 3 sub areas (see below) are classified as Grade 3. There is no more detailed breakdown available, which would have allowed the identification of any Grade 3a land (which would have qualified as Best and Most Fertile). (See Map 8 and Appendix 2 for relevant definition respectively)

Biodiversity

- 6.6** The narrow streams and wooded slopes of the How, Wardley and Worsley Woods Cloughs are very important in biodiversity terms and have been identified as Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs). The woodland blocks to the south of the Worsley Old Hall Golf complex and Middle Wood to the south of the A572 have also been identified as SBIs. There is also a narrow band of wet woodland, together with an extensive lake within Worsley Woods. Both these habitats are UK Priorities, as is the lake within Middle Wood. All of these receive some protection through planning policies. Other small ponds that are of general benefit to wildlife occur on the 3 golf courses to be found within the lowland.

Broad Historical Influences

- 6.7** In early times the south facing slope occupied by these sub areas was probably heavily wooded, and appears to have been avoided by the early main road, which kept to the top of the ridge. The more minor roads tended to drop down at right angles from the top of the ridge
- 6.8** The later more specific historical influences have led to the development of 3 distinct sub areas, which are described more fully in the sections below.

Urban Fringe Lowland Sub Area 1: Middle Wood Wedge

- 6.9** This corridor of open land is bounded to the north by the A580, to the east by the A575 and M60, to the south by a section of the Bridgewater Canal and to the west by Boothstown.
- 6.10** Key Features Additional to Other Sub Areas:
- A large golf course occupies the higher south facing slopes between the A580 and A572, and is visually secluded from adjoining urban areas by wooded edges
 - A wooded area lying at the foot of the ridge partially screens views southwards from the A572
 - An area of disused arable farmland lies adjacent to the canal and allows extensive views northwards to the wooded slopes of the ridge in the distance
 - A narrow wooded belt along the canal embankment screens/prevents some views both north and south

Specific Historic Influences

- 6.11** This sub area contains Worsley Old Hall, the original seat of the lords of Worsley Manor, and as a result its historical development was heavily linked to the fortunes of that land owning family. A key member of that family in the eighteenth century was the third Duke of Bridgewater, who was largely responsible for construction of the Bridgewater Canal which has been so important to Worsley's development.
- 6.12** That section of the canal to the south of the sub area was opened in 1795 and was the final length to be completed. Mid nineteenth century maps show a narrow strip of woodland to the west of the Old Hall (believed to date from 1550) and a block of woodland to the south of the road to Boothstown (later the A572). By the end of the nineteenth century however further woodland and parkland had been created around both Worsley Old (to the north of the Boothstown road) and the elaborately brick built Worsley New Hall (constructed to the south of the Boothstown road).
- 6.13** However, following decline of the private estate during the inter war years of the twentieth century, the New Hall was demolished leaving only some of its gardens and outbuildings remaining.

Landscape Description Sub Area1: Middle Wood Wedge

- 6.14** At the highest point of this sub area adjoining the busy A580, the traffic noise is continuous for much of the day. However, the visual impact of the road is screened to views from within the golf course, by the gradual downward slope of the land and the tree/shrub planting along the road and edges of the golf course. Views of the A572 are in turn screened by the significant woodland blocks of the former parkland remaining around the Worsley Old Hall complex of buildings.

Landscape Character Classifications and Descriptions: Urban Fringe Lowland

6.15 To the south of the A572, the land slopes gently down towards the canal, and is occupied by a garden centre (based around the outbuildings of the demolished Worsley New Hall), a woodland incorporating a lake, the former garden/parkland area of the former hall and extensive areas of disused arable farmland.

6.16 Much of this sub area is calm and rural in atmosphere, with only one access road to the garden centre penetrating the 2 main blocks of open land. There are extensive open views across the former farmland, not only of the former hall gardens/parkland but also the wooded slopes around the golf complex.

Key Factors Affecting Change

- Salford UDP Green Belt, Local Nature Conservation Sites and Wildlife Corridor policies
- The Bridgewater Way project for improving the canal environment

Urban Fringe Lowland Sub Area 2: Worsley Woods Wedge

6.17 This very irregular shaped Sub Area is bounded to the north by the A580/Roe Green, to the east by Swinton, to the south by Eccles/Bridgewater Canal and to the west by Worsley.

6.18 Key Features Additional to Overall Area

- Extensive woodland clothes the sides of the Kempnough and Worsley Brooks and offers an attractive setting for footpath users along the valleys
- The Kempnough Brook valley has been dammed to form Old Warke Dam, which adds visual diversity to a mainly woodland setting
- Good quality farmland lies between the valleys of the 2 brooks and to the south of Worsley Road but is mainly obscured by adjoining residential development from nearby roads
- The small golf course occupying the south eastern corner of the sub area contributes to the overall openness of the sub area
- A secondary school and care home lie to the north and south of Worsley Road respectively and thereby block views of the open land behind to road users
- The southeast to northwest wooded reclaimed former railway line provides a visually attractive recreation route for walkers and cyclists
- The canal section again provides variety and adds a sense of tranquillity to the overall area

Specific Historic Influences

6.19 The adjacent section of the Bridgewater Canal was constructed during the mid eighteenth century and water from the Worsley Brook was used to help provide a water supply for it. After the death of the Duke of Bridgewater, the Worsley estate (including Worsley Woods) passed to the Ellesmere family. In the 1850s the woods and stream valleys in Worsley were developed for hunting and shooting. When the Ellesmere family finally left the area during the inter war years of the twentieth century, management of the woods and valleys declined. Later after a public campaign the woods were bought and transferred to local authority ownership. Since then they have been opened up for extensive public access.

Landscape Description Sub Area 2: Worsley Woods Wedge

- 6.20** Between Greenleach Lane and Worsley Drive, a number of streams meander across the lowland through narrow valleys, the sides of which are covered in deciduous woodland. One of the streams has been dammed to form a previously extensive lake, which is gradually becoming silted up. The build up of silt is also causing some upstream flooding and the development of wet woodland on either side of the watercourse. Between the stream valleys is fertile farmland on the fringes of which are a few buildings. The M60 motorway spans the woods and farmland on a raised embankment. The line of a former mineral railway line, which has been reclaimed to form a strategic off road foot and cycle path (i.e. Roe Green Looptline) runs alongside and forms the eastern boundary of the area. There is an extensive network of paths through the woodland and along the valleys, which is well used by members of the public.
- 6.21** To the south of Worsley Drive the sub area is bisected by the line of the now well wooded former mineral railway (see above) and is made up of farmland and the site of a former miniature golf course located alongside the wooded embankment of the Bridgewater Canal. The farmland is divided into several small irregularly shaped fields, one of which contains a large pond (possibly a former marl pit). The disused golf course site supports a range of both individual and groups of trees, and is crossed by a network of informal paths. To the east of the Looptline is another golf course, this time in active use and supporting a number of lines and groups of mature trees.

Key Factors Affecting Change

- Salford UDP Worsley Greenway, Agricultural Land, Recreation and Local Nature Conservation Sites, Ancient Monument policies
- The Coal Authority project for cleaning the canal water
- The Bridgewater Way project for improving the canal environment
- Potential nomination of section of canal as World Heritage Site

Urban Fringe Lowland Sub Area 3: Wardley Woods Wedge

- 6.22** This corridor of open land is bounded to the north by the A6, to the east by Wardley Grange and the industrial estate, to the south by Egerton Park/Roe Green and to the west by the outskirts of Walkden/Linnyshaw (see Map 3).
- 6.23** Key Features Additional to Overall Area
- The rough fields used for grazing and the small reservoir that line the southern side of the A6 soften views southwards for road users
 - Main Manchester to Wigan railway line cuts across the northern part of the corridor but occupying a deep cutting has little visual impact
 - An extensive golf course occupies the reclaimed site of former Bridgewater colliery but is visually screened by adjacent residential properties and fringing tree belts
 - The Wardley Grange Ancient Monument lies hidden between the motorway and the St Mary's Catholic Cemetery and is screened and enclosed in woodland

Specific Historical Influences

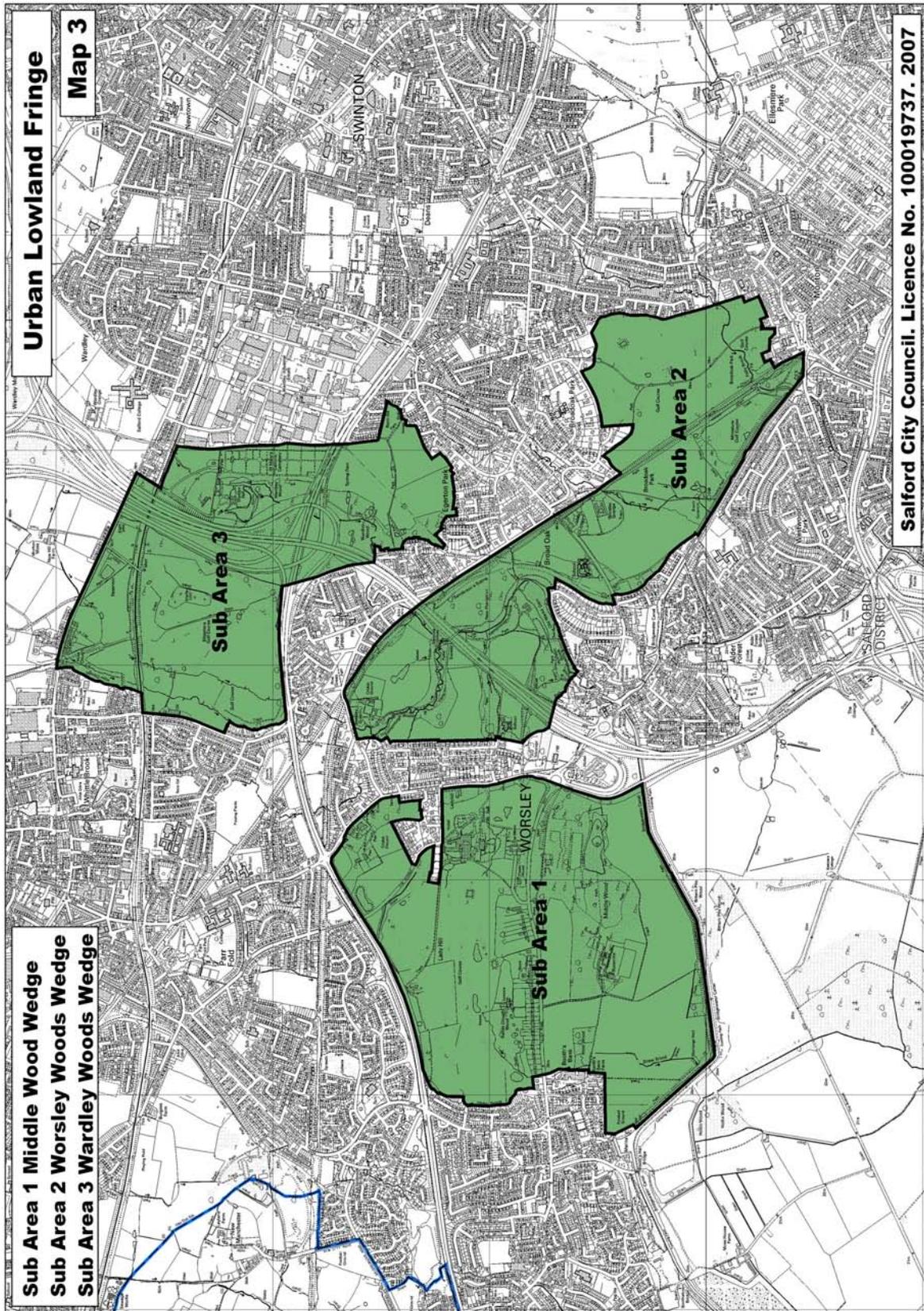
- 6.24** By the mid nineteenth century, old maps show that the majority of the woodland had been cleared, except for that lining the sides of How Clough and the 2 streams that flowed down either side of the ancient Wardley Hall site. One of these streams had also been dammed to create 2 small reservoirs. Between How Clough and the Wardley Hall cloughs, the land was characterised by a number of large scale tree lined fields and on the south side of Wardley Lane were a handful of coal pits and the Wardley Colliery.
- 6.25** Towards the end of the nineteenth century the Manchester to Wigan railway line had been constructed in a cutting running west to east across this sub area. At the beginning of the twentieth century old maps show a new colliery (Bridgewater Colliery) located to the south of the Manchester to Wigan railway and linked to the Linnyslaw Colliery to the north of the A6 by a mineral railway line. The site of the former Wardley Colliery had been cleared and was being used as a “ventilation station” perhaps in connection with the new colliery.
- 6.26** As explained above, the gradual closure of the local collieries in the 1950s/1960s led to the abandonment of their sites. In the case of the Bridgewater Colliery, the site was developed as a golf course, which was later severed from Wardley/Swinton to the east, by construction of the M60 and its interchange with the A580 East Lancashire Road.

Landscape Description Sub Area 3: Wardley Woods Wedge

- 6.27** This Sub Area is itself cut in two by the presence of the motorway. To the west of the motorway, and north of the Manchester to Wigan railway line there is some farmland used for stock grazing, several terraced houses fronting the A6, a small reservoir used for fishing and a deciduous woodland on the sides of a small stream. Other areas of woodland occur around the reservoir, adjacent to the motorway and on the sides of the railway cutting. Footpaths lead through How Clough and along the southern edge of the fields near the railway line.
- 6.28** A large golf course lies to the west of the motorway and south of the railway line, and is characterised by strips of woodland and lines of trees, separating the fairways. A further narrow strip of woodland lies between the eastern side of the golf course and the motorway. Two streams (one of which flows through How Clough as referred to above) run from north to south across the western side of the golf course.
- 6.29** To the east of the motorway and north of the A580 road, lies Wardley Grange (a scheduled Ancient Monument relating to a moat and a medieval hall (Grade 1 Listed) and its gardens) and St Mary’s Catholic Cemetery. The moat has been extended to the west and south of the hall, to create a small lake. Both the hall and moat are surrounded with woodland, which extends to the edge of the motorway slip road.
- 6.30** To the south of the A580 road lies a further small area of woodland, 3 fields and a small recreation ground. These are bordered to the west by the motorway and on their other sides by housing. An informal network of paths extends into the woodland and between the fields.
- 6.31** Given the presence of the motorway all parts of Sub Area 3 are dominated by motorway noise.

Key Factors Affecting Change

- Salford UDP Green Belt, Local Nature Conservation Sites, Wildlife Corridor and Ancient Monument policies
- Potential location for a mine groundwater monitoring station to the south of How Clough



Map 6.1 Urban Lowland Fringe



Picture 6.1 Urban Fringe Lowland : The screening woodlands of the Middle Wood wedge.

7 Landscape Character Classifications and Descriptions: Urban River Valley

Urban River Valley

- 7.1** Classification: Urban River Valley (located within JCA 55 Manchester Conurbation and JCA 56 Lancashire Coal Measures)
- 7.2** The river Irwell in Salford lies to the east of the city on a broad northwest to southeast alignment. Its northern section (from Agecroft Bridge to Clifton Country Park) forms the boundary between Bury and Salford, whilst its southern stretch falls completely within the city.

Overall Landscape Character

7.3 Key Features

- Medium scale and U shaped valley
- Major corridor of principally open land along the valley which is constrained and sometimes encroached on by urban development

Geology, Topography and Drainage

- 7.4** Within Salford the river valley falls from around 40 metres AOD at its northern end within Salford down to below 20 metres through its lower reaches (see Map 5). Its valley is underlain by Carboniferous and Permo-Triassic rocks (mainly sandstones, mudstone and siltstone), which have both been subject to folding and faulting. Following the Ice Age the river was naturally diverted westwards and southwards to a new channel around deep glacial deposits (including diamicton, sand and gravel) to form its current course. It is this diversion, which has led to the exposure of the coal bearing rocks and their superficial cover of glacial deposits in the river channel in the northern section of the valley (see Maps 6 and 7). In the southern section of the valley, the river has developed extensive meanders. Because of the previous movement of the rocks a major fault runs down the valley. A number of tributary streams enter the northern section of the valley via a series of narrow, steep sided valleys. The southern section of the valley within Salford represents part of the river's natural flood basin.

Agricultural Land Quality

- 7.5** Apart from 2 or 3 fields of relatively poor quality (Grade 4) land in Clifton Country Park, no other land in the valley is classified as agricultural by the Department for Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) (see Map 8 and Appendix 2 for extent and definition respectively).

Biodiversity

- 7.6** There are extensive areas of good quality woodland within the northern (Sub Area 1) and southern (Sub Area 3) sections of the valley, which have been identified as Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) and designated as part of 2 Local Nature Reserves. There is also some woodland cover within Pendlebury Newlands sub area. Much of this is of more recent origin having been planted over former landfill sites and a former sewage works. Despite being younger in age however, it is still of much general benefit to wildlife.

Landscape Character Classifications and Descriptions: Urban River Valley

- 7.7** Clifton Country Park also has a large lake (originally formed from gravel extraction) with some fringing reed beds, which has been identified as eutrophic standing water. This is one of the priority habitats identified in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. In terms of other water habitats, there is an area of marsh/swamp within sub area 3 and the river itself. The river although having only reasonable water quality (which is gradually improving) and generally poor bank side vegetation, is also important for birds and bats. The lake in the country park, the lower section of the river and the marsh/swamp have all been identified as SBIs.
- 7.8** A key feature of the Pendlebury Newlands sub area is an extensive block of lowland heath which occupies part of the valley sides, and which seems to have escaped past industrial activity.
- 7.9** The only areas of reasonably good quality grassland are the areas of unimproved acidic and neutral grassland to be found on part of the lower valley side and floor within sub area 3. The grassland on the valley side is included within an SBI. Within the Pendlebury Newlands sub area 2, some of the open land around the prison was originally planted as wildflower meadows designed to enhance its biodiversity value.
- 7.10** All the habitats throughout the 3 sub areas are collectively thought to represent a very important wildlife corridor helping to bring biodiversity right into the centre of a major conurbation.

Broad Historical Influences

- 7.11** In early times the valley was probably heavily wooded, with only small clearings created by man's activities. Early settlement would have avoided the valley floor and kept to the higher land on either side of the valley and around the river's main crossing points. From medieval times there would have been small-scale mining and further clearance of woodland. However the major influences on the valley arose from the start of the industrial revolution and the associated increase and movement of population. With the spread of urban development, extensive areas of the river's flood plain were utilised for a range of urban land uses. In addition new river crossings were constructed.

Urban River Valley Sub Area 1: Clifton Corridor

- 7.12** That section of the valley lying within the JCA 56 Lancashire Coal Measures character area, stretches from the Bolton/Salford boundary south-eastwards down to the M60 motorway, and is bounded to the northeast by the river itself and to the southwest by the urban area of Clifton.

Specific Landscape Character

- 7.13** Key Features Additional to Overall Valley Area
- Secluded enclosed character even though adjacent to urban area
 - River is mainly hidden from view running in a deep narrow rocky channel below the riverbank plateau
 - Narrow side valleys drop steeply down to the main valley floor and add to a sense of visual anticipation
 - Woodland covers much of the floor and tributary valleys and gives a real sense of being in a rural area
 - A large lake bordered by trees is perched on the plateau above the river and adds great visual interest

- The few buildings and lack of vehicular access routes along the valley floor adds to the sense of tranquillity although this is marred by the roar of traffic using the motorway high above the valley floor
- Footpaths enter the main valley along tributary valleys and more strategic recreational routes run along the river bank plateau providing users with good access to this secluded quiet area

Specific Historical and Cultural Influences

- 7.14** The presence of the coal bearing rocks and the narrow rocky channel cut by the river were a major influence on the location of the first coal mining activities in this part of the valley in the early eighteenth century, with adits excavated from the rocky riverbanks allowing relatively easy access to the coal deposits. Later when one of the first deep mine shafts was sunk here, the original means of withdrawing water from the workings was by horsepower. However, when the workings became flooded in the mid eighteenth century, the fall of the river through the nearby rocky stretch of the valley, was used by James Brindley (famous early engineer) as water-power to help drain the mine workings. The Fletcher's Canal was also constructed to transport the coal southwards down the valley.
- 7.15** In the 1830s the Manchester to Bolton railway line was constructed along the side of the ridge to the west of the valley. This effectively severed this stretch of the valley from Clifton lying on the ridge to the west, and made vehicular access to it very difficult. A railway track was later constructed southwards from the Wet Earth Colliery to connect with the nearby Manchester to Bolton line further southwards down the valley.
- 7.16** Following cessation of the mining activities in the 1920s, the buildings became derelict and the area was gradually taken over by the natural regeneration of woodland, which obscured the remains of the mine workings and the line of the Fletcher's Canal. In the mid twentieth century sand and gravel was excavated from the plateau adjoining the river to help with construction of the nearby M62 (now M60) motorway. This left a large lake perched on the plateau above the main river channel. At present vehicular access is only possible to this stretch of the valley along 2 routes. The first is from Clifton on the ridge to the west, via a private road, which runs down one of the steep side valleys and under a narrow and relatively low stone bridge. The second is from a private road, which runs from the Clifton industrial area (see Irwell Valley Sub Area 2), under the motorway to a former industrial waste tip.
- 7.17** Given the seclusion of the area, its woodland and lake, and the importance of the former mine workings in industrial archaeological terms, the area was developed as Clifton Country Park in the last decades of the twentieth century. A recreational network of footpaths now runs along the side valleys, and more strategic paths along the valley bottom. These give access to the Bolton section of the valley to the north and a pedestrian footbridge over the river provides links into Bury.

Landscape Description for Sub Area 1: Clifton Corridor

- 7.18** The valley through Sub Area 1 is relatively broad and defined to the west by very steep slopes. These have been eroded by a series of tributary streams, which run down the slopes and meander across the valley floor. The floor through this stretch of the valley is actually a plateau some 10 metres above the river itself, which runs in a deep gorge cut through red sandstone Permian rocks. Glacial deposits overlie the plateau and have been partially extracted to form an extensive lake. The only urban development is 2 buildings (a modern visitor centre and a privately owned farm), a surfaced access road / car park and electricity pylons and transmission lines.

Landscape Character Classifications and Descriptions: Urban River Valley

7.19 Extensive mature deciduous woodland covers the sides of the tributary valleys and the main valley slopes, and merges with more on the valley floor itself. The only open areas are 3 small fields (bounded by post and wire fences), open informal grassland adjoining the main footpath down to the lake and more informal large glades within the woodland occupying the eastern end of the country park. The artificially raised site of a former industrial landfill at the eastern end of the park has been reclaimed in the last decade, with a mix of woodland species on its sides and more open grassland across its surface.

7.20 The lack of urban development, the extensive woodland, the lake, the small fields and the other sporadic open areas all contribute to an intimate, calm and enclosed character for the majority of this area. Apart from across the lake, the fields, informal grassland and woodland glades, most views from the network of paths throughout the country park are foreshortened and/or enclosed by mature woodland. Given the extent and enclosing nature of the woodland cover, views of the pylons and overhead lines are relatively limited and therefore their impact is minimised. Although forming the northeast boundary to the country park, the visual impact of the river on the park is also very limited. Because it runs in a gorge and trees fringe the footpath along its bank, views of the river are only possible in glimpses through the trees. However one feature, which does impinge on the character at the eastern end of the park, is the elevated section of the M60 motorway, which is supported by concrete pillars across the river and its riverbank path. Although the traffic noise from the M60 is virtually constant throughout the day, its impact is lessened to some degree by the tree cover on the land alongside it. This means that clear views of the motorway are only possible from the riverside path, which runs underneath the concrete pillars.

7.21 Factors Affecting Change

- Salford UDP Green Belt, Recreation and Environmental Policies
- Location within a core forest area of the Red Rose community forest
- Location within potential joint Regional Park with Bury/Bolton
- Urban River Valley Sub Area 2: Pendlebury Newlands Corridor

7.22 This section of the valley lies within the JCA 55 Manchester Conurbation and stretches from the M62/M60 in the north down to Agecroft Road in Pendlebury in the south. It is bounded to the east, by the river itself and to the west by Clifton Green and Pendlebury.

Specific Landscape Character

7.23 Key Features Additional to Overall Urban Valley

- River runs in a deep channel through a relatively wide U shaped valley
- The tributary streams to the river run in culverts and often the space above them and between the tributary valley sides has been utilised for landfill
- An extensive industrial area occupies part of the plateau above the river
- Three transport routes run generally northwest to southeast through the sub area
- A series of large open sites previously occupied by land uses requiring extensive areas (landfills, sewage works, coal mines, power station, sand extraction), are now either in process of reclamation or are to be reclaimed

Specific Historical and Cultural Influences

- 7.24** From the start of the industrial revolution in the mid seventeenth century, greater urban pressures were put on the valley. Transport routes such as the Fletcher, and Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canals were constructed in the late eighteenth century along the bottom of the valley. The latter canal was built to support not only the early coal mining industry in the north of the valley at Wet Earth Colliery (see Irwell Valley Sub Area 1) and at Botany Bay Wood Colliery (which had opened on the steep valley side in the current Clifton Green area), but also mines further up the valley in Bury and Bolton. The canal was carried across the river on a high stone aqueduct. The Botany Bay Wood colliery appears to have had a relatively short life, and had closed by the early nineteenth century.
- 7.25** The Manchester to Bolton railway line (which opened in 1838) was constructed on a significant embankment and effectively severed the open land on the valley floor. Later as mining techniques improved and coal could be worked at greater depths, the presence of the coal bearing rocks under this stretch of the valley also resulted in the development of 2 new collieries (Clifton Hall opened 1838, and Newtown 1875), and new industries (e.g. a number of brickworks, sand extraction) to support them. The establishment of the collieries and their associated industries resulted in a network of tramways, small reservoirs and other infrastructure around the different pitheads. Later still the Manchester to Wigan railway line opened in 1887.
- 7.26** Despite the presence of the railways, collieries and other industries, at the beginning of the twentieth century there were still a number of farms and open fields occupying the land between them. Gradually however, further heavy industrial uses, including a power station, a coal washing plant and pulverised fuel ash plant were attracted to the area along Agecroft Road, Pendlebury. In addition, given the continuing increase in population, much of the open land between the Newtown colliery and the Manchester to Bolton railway line was used for the construction of large areas of local authority housing which now makes up the Clifton Green area.
- 7.27** By the later decades of the twentieth century, the majority of the heavy industries were either in decline, or had already ceased. This left major opportunities to reclaim the open land provided by the cleared industrial sites, to provide recreation uses for the adjoining residential areas. The site of the former Clifton Hall colliery is being reclaimed through the provision of a landfill for industrial waste, which will then be covered with soil and grass, and opened up for public access. The pulverised fuel ash plant has been reclaimed with some landfill (this time arising from construction of the eastern section of the M60), and also housing on the Agecroft Road frontage. While the power station site has been reclaimed partly for a new prison, and partly for informal open space use, other open land in the valley previously crossed by some of the early tramways and used for the disposal of household waste is/has been reclaimed for the future development of new recreational uses.

Landscape Description for Sub Area 2: Pendlebury Newlands Corridor

- 7.28** The landscape of this section of the valley is very mixed due to the types and arrangement of the uses, which occupy it. However, although a range of built development occupies parts of its sides and floor, the main form of the valley is still discernible. To the west it is delineated by steep slopes (seen on Rakes Lane and Agecroft Road), which drop from around 45 metres at their highest point, down to 30 metres on the valley floor. In the Clifton Green area the line of these slopes is broken by the tributary valley of the Slack Brook, which is now occupied by a series of reclaimed former landfill sites developed over the watercourse, which has been put in a culvert. These reclaimed sites and the adjoining undeveloped steep valley slopes, together provide extensive areas of open land and offer panoramic views both across and down the valley.
- 7.29** On the valley floor itself, the land cover is composed of a series of loosely linked large-scale open land sites, which fit around “islands” of built development and between the main Manchester to Bolton railway line and the disused Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal (MBB Canal), which both cross the valley floor in a northwest to southeast direction.
- 7.30** At its northern end, the valley is crossed from west to east by an elevated section of the M60 motorway. The large scale, straight lines and monochrome colours of the motorway obviously dominate views from the open spaces alongside it. Where the motorway crosses the river on concrete pillars, glimpses of that section of the valley to the north of the motorway are possible. However, where the motorway meets the valley sides and the pillars give way to concrete walls all views northwards are blocked.
- 7.31** The middle section of the valley floor is occupied by the Clifton Junction industrial area, which sits immediately adjacent to the river and is separated from Clifton Green by the Manchester to Bolton railway line, which here runs in a cutting at the foot of the valley side. The industrial area is composed of a mix of older and new generally 1 to 2 storey premises, which in part straddle a section of the former MBB Canal still in water and to the north of which the river runs in a rocky gorge. Either side of the industrial area are green open spaces, one of which arises from reclamation of a former sewage works. Along the busy unkempt Lumns Lane to the south of Clifton Junction are 2 further large scale landfill sites, one of which is directly alongside and rises very steeply from the lane, the other of which is set back from the road. On the upper part of the valley slopes are extensive areas of heather, acid grassland and woodland, which collectively mask the site of past industrial activity.
- 7.32** At its southern end, the valley is crossed from west to east by the A6044, Agecroft Road, which provides an at level river crossing and together with a series of minor roads on its northern side serves very different types of development. These, range from industrial premises, offices, an electrical transformer station, a modern housing estate and a modern prison. All these developments occupy discrete sites and are separated from each other by fingers of landscaped open land.
- 7.33** Generally the river has little impact on this section of the valley, being only visible from the open land immediately alongside it. The river here is broad and snakes from the northwest to southeast, initially through a rocky channel alongside the Clifton Junction industrial area, and then through softer fluvial glacial deposits as it approaches the bridge on Agecroft Road.

Factors Affecting Change

- Salford UDP Green Belt, Recreation and Environmental Policies
- Location within Newlands / Lower Irwell Valley Improvement Area (LIVIA)

- Proposed relocation of Civic Amenity site
- Location within potential joint Regional Park with Bury/Bolton

Urban River Valley Sub Area 3: Kersal Corridor

7.34 This section of the valley lies within the JCA 55 Manchester Conurbation and stretches from The Crescent in the south up to Agecroft Road in the north. It is bounded to the east by the settlements of Lower and Higher Broughton, and Kersal and to the west by the settlements of Pendleton and Charlestown, and the Manchester to Bolton railway line.

Specific Landscape Character

7.35 Key Features Additional to Overall Urban Valley

- River meanders through a broad flood plain lying at around 30 metres AOD
- There are few tributaries to the main river
- A series of extensive open land sites along the valley floor are occupied by a range of formal (public parks, playing fields) and informal recreation uses, and a cemetery
- Large areas of residential development have spilled into the river's floodplain, and in parts of Lower Kersal, Higher and Lower Broughton, and Charlestown, extend right to the river bank
- One of the playing field sites has been enclosed with earth bunds to provide a flood storage basin

Specific Historical and Cultural Influences

7.36 This stretch of the valley has been less affected by industrial uses than the other more northerly sections of the valley. In the mid nineteenth century, large tree lined fields still occupied land to the west of the current Littleton Road, the Kersal Dale area, and the area of the present day university/David Lewis playing fields. The open land within the northern meander of the river at Castle Irwell had also been used for a time (1847 – 67) as a horse racing circuit. There were also some small-scale industrial uses, such as a bleach works' reservoir to the north of the Irwell at the Crescent, and a dye works' reservoir within the Castle Irwell meander, but the impact of these on the overall valley would have been minimal.

7.37 By the end of the nineteenth century, the 2 previously mentioned reservoirs were still present, the Peel Park recreation ground off the Crescent had been developed and the dwellings of Lower Broughton had been built up to the river's edge. However, the other open land and fields at Littleton Road, Kersal Dale and Castle Irwell still remained. The relatively rural character of the valley's remaining open land seems to have been seen as favourable for the location of some recreation uses. These included an early 9-hole golf course in Kersal Dale (established 1896) and later the re-establishment of a horse racing circuit within the extensive meander of the river at Castle Irwell.

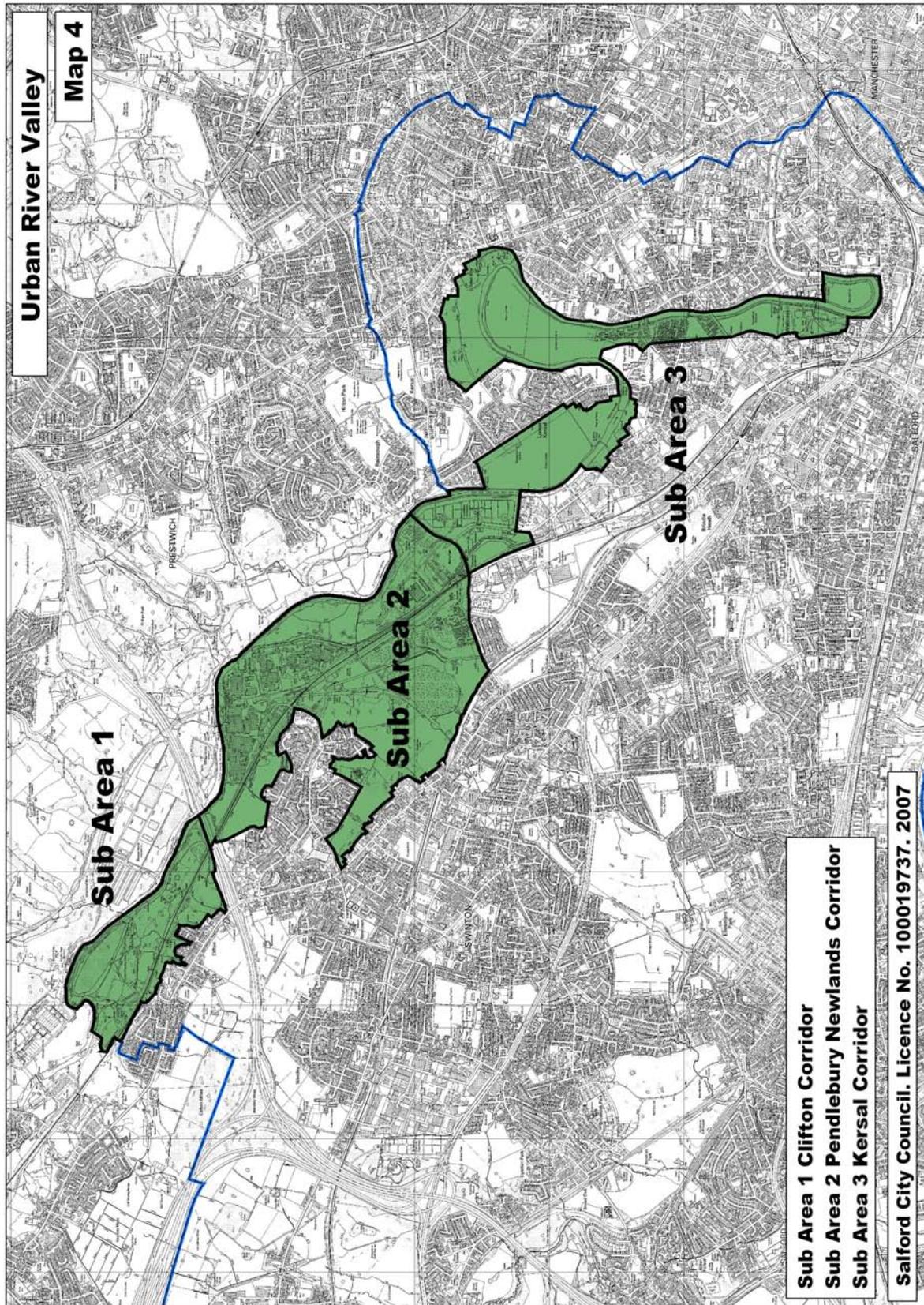
7.38 During the twentieth century, although the use for horse racing and golf ceased development within the river's floodplain continued, with the construction of large areas of local authority housing in Lower Kersal, and the Salford university students' village at the southern end of Castle Irwell. However, the contribution the recreational open land sites along the valley can make as part of a strategic recreational corridor based on the Irwell valley and extending from the heart of the Greater Manchester conurbation out to Bolton and Bury has long been recognised.

Landscape Description for Sub Area 3: Kersal Corridor

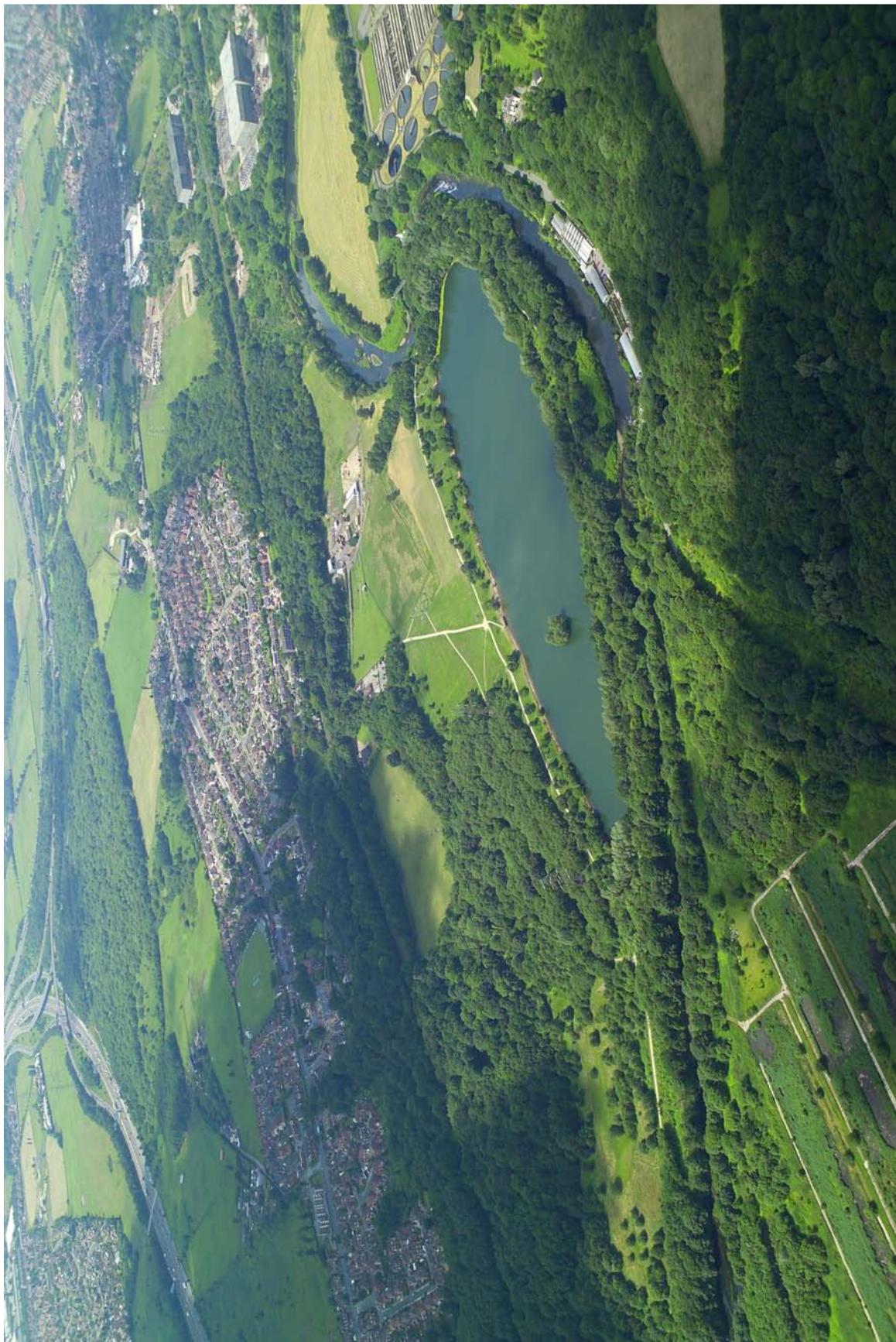
7.39 The river slowly meanders through the thick fluvial-glacial deposits of its broad flat flood plain and in the Kersal Dale area, is eroding its northern bank. This has resulted in the loss of some trees. However the site of a previous landslip (along a geological fault separating Higher Broughton on the plateau above the river from the valley floor) is covered in mixed woodland, much of which originated from the former gardens that were lost in the landslip but some of which has regenerated naturally. This woodland sweeps westwards from the landslip to cover the steep valley sides below Kersal. On the valley floor below the woodland are areas of acidic grassland and marsh. Elsewhere mixed twentieth century development (primarily housing) occupies the flood plain right to the river bank but in many places the valley floor remains open and has been used to provide a mix of recreation uses (including playing fields and informal open space) and a cemetery. Some edges of the recreation sites and the strategic footpath along the riverside have been landscaped with trees and shrubs. Where this is well established it helps to contain views along the river. Elsewhere views are much more open and what enclosure there is, is provided by the adjoining urban development.

Factors Affecting Change

- Salford UDP Environmental Policies
- Location within potential joint Regional Park with Bury/Bolton
- Potential location for new flood storage basin to help address climate change issues



Map 7.1 Urban River Valley



Picture 7.1 Urban River Valley : The enclosed riverside setting of Clifton Country Park

8 Landscape Policy Guidance: Rural Mosslands

Policy Objectives and Guidance

Rural Mosslands Sub Area 1: Northern Chat Moss (Map 1)

1 Conserve and enhance the simple rural landscape

Any new development (e.g. provided as part of farm diversification or essential facilities for sport and outdoor recreation) needs to be sympathetic to the rural landscape and especially the sense of wooded enclosure around Botany Bay Wood. The rural landscape will also be enhanced by restoration of the current mineral extraction site (see Points 4 and 5 below).

Guidelines:

- Where possible any new built development should be located close to existing buildings, so as not to fragment and/or detract from the openness of the landscape
- Any new development should be sited so as to retain as many of the existing ditches and trees/hedges as possible
- New planting with locally native trees and shrubs should be used to screen new built development where possible and appropriate (but see Point 5 Mossland Heartland requirement below)
- Provision (i.e. through a management plan and resources to implement it) should be made for the future management of any new landscaping in order to retain its role as a screen (see also Point 3 biodiversity requirements below)

2 Create appropriate public access opportunities

Given the complete lack of any public access to Sub Area 1, it would be appropriate to provide some access to it (e.g. linking with opportunities provided by restoration of the Whitehead landfill site and improvement of access along the canal under the Bridgewater Way project) for the benefit of local communities.

Guidelines:

- New public access provision to appropriate parts of Sub Area 1 should be supported
- New public access could be through use of permissive access agreements rather than establishment of public rights of way if thought more appropriate

3 Conserve existing and enhance biodiversity interest

Some of the characteristics of the arable farming on Chat Moss are particularly important for farmland birds. In addition the ponds, woodland blocks, hedges and mossland ditches along the large field boundaries provide important areas of biodiversity value. New development as part of farm diversification or essential facilities for outdoor recreation may offer opportunities to improve the biodiversity interest of existing farmland and/or woodland.

Guidelines:

- Management of the existing ponds, hedges, woodland blocks and ditches for ecological benefits should be sought where appropriate
- Provision of year round habitat for birds should be sought where appropriate
- New landscaping should use locally native trees and shrubs and be linked to other areas of semi natural habitat where possible and appropriate
- Provision (i.e. through a management plan and resources to implement it) should be made for the future management of any new landscaping to ensure its long term survival for the benefit of biodiversity

4 Restore an area of Lowland Raised Bog

Chat Moss was formerly an extensive area of natural habitat known as lowland raised bog, which is now extremely scarce. The best conditions for restoring such a habitat within reasonable timescales are on areas of the right type and depth of in situ peat. Therefore the best opportunities to restore it within reasonable timescales, in an area where it was formerly a key landscape characteristic, are when restoration of 2 of the current mineral extraction sites takes place. One of these (Astley Moss East) lies within Sub Area 1, has planning approval for peat, sand and gravel extraction and lies within the Mossland Heartland (shown on Salford UDP Proposals Map).

Guidelines:

- Restoration of the peat soils remaining on the Astley Moss East site to lowland raised bog using the latest available technical guidance
- Restoration of adjoining south west corner of scrub in Botany Bay Wood to lowland raised bog taking account of the latest available technical guidance
- Restore the sand/gravel workings to habitat compatible to lowland raised bog (will include a lake)

5 Conserve the restored lowland raised bog and other habitat

The future viability of the restored mineral extraction site (part of Mossland Heartland) and the adjoining southwest section of Botany Bay Wood will need to be ensured through appropriate management of the site itself and the land adjoining it.

Guidelines:

- Provision (i.e. through a management plan and resources to implement it) should be made for the future management of the lowland raised bog following its restoration
- Management of, and development on, the land adjoining the restored lowland raised bog should not result (e.g. through woodland planting) in the lowering of water tables underlying that area
- Management of, and development on, the land adjoining the restored lowland raised bog should not result in the provision of an alkaline or nutrient rich water supply to that area

Rural Mosslands Sub Area 2: Southern Chat Moss (see Map 1)**1 Conserve and enhance the rural landscape**

Any new development (e.g. provided as part of farm diversification or essential facilities for sport and outdoor recreation) needs to be sympathetic to the rural landscape. The rural landscape will be further enhanced by restoration of the current peat extraction site (see point 3 below).

Guidelines:

- Where possible any new built development should be sited close to existing buildings, so as not to fragment and/or detract from the openness of the landscape
- Where possible any new built development should retain the existing drainage ditches
- New linear planting with locally native trees and shrubs should be used to screen new built development (e.g. residential, recreational and/or agricultural) both on the fringes of Irlam and Cadishead, and around existing farmsteads (but see Point 4 Mossland Heartland requirement below)
- New landscape planting should be linked to existing semi natural habitats wherever possible (but see Point 4 Mossland Heartland requirement below)
- Provision (i.e. through a management plan and resources to implement it) should be made for the future management of any new landscaping
- New blocks of woodland are not thought appropriate to the mossland landscape

2 Conserve and enhance public access to the area

There is an extensive network of public footpaths across this sub area but there is only one public bridleway. It is thought that this network should be protected and enhanced.

Guidelines:

- Existing public access could be enhanced through provision of signage and interpretation features
- Provision of additional public access may be appropriate

3 Conserve and enhance the biodiversity interest of the area

Some of the characteristics of the arable farming on Chat Moss are particularly important for farmland birds. In addition the ponds, woodland blocks, hedges and mossland ditches along the large field boundaries provide important areas of biodiversity value in an otherwise open and exposed landscape. New development as part of farm diversification or essential facilities for outdoor recreation may offer opportunities to improve the biodiversity interest of existing farmland and/or woodland.

Guidelines:

- Management of the existing hedges, woodland blocks and ditches for ecological benefits should be sought where appropriate
- Provision of year round habitat for birds should be sought where appropriate

4 Restore an area of Lowland Raised Bog

Chat Moss was formerly an extensive area of natural habitat known as lowland raised bog, which is now extremely scarce. The best conditions for restoring such a habitat within reasonable timescales are on areas of the right type and depth of in situ peat. Therefore the best opportunities to restore it within reasonable timescales, in an area where it was formerly a key landscape characteristic, are when restoration of 2 of current peat extraction sites (one of which i.e. Twelve Yards Road lies within Sub Area2) takes place.

Guidelines:

- Restoration of the peat soils remaining on the Twelve Yards Road site to lowland raised bog using the latest available technical guidance

5 Conserve the area of restored Lowland Raised Bog

The future viability of the restored lowland raised bog (part of UDP Mossland Heartland) will need to be ensured.

Guidelines:

- Provision (i.e. through a management plan and resources to implement it) should be made for the future management of the lowland raised bog (part of Mossland Heartland) following its restoration
- Management of, and development on, the land adjoining the lowland raised bog should not result (e.g. through mineral extraction and/or woodland planting) in the lowering of water tables underlying the bog
- Management of, and development on, the land adjoining the heartland and the south western section of Botany Bay Wood should not result in the provision of an alkaline or nutrient rich water supply to these areas

9 Landscape Policy Guidance: Urban Mosslands

Policy Objectives and Guidance

Urban Mosslands: Linnyslaw, Wardley and Clifton Mosses (Map 2)

1 Restore and enhance the remaining rural landscape

Any new development approved as part of farm diversification or outdoor recreation needs to be sympathetic to the mainly open rural character of the area. In addition, it would be appropriate to seek to reduce the visual (and to lesser extent the noise) impact of the motorway interchange that straddles these mosses, and the visual impact of existing built development adjoining the area. It would also be appropriate to enhance the general landscape.

Guidelines:

- New planting with locally native trees and shrubs to screen the motorway and views of development adjoining the area should be encouraged
- New planting with locally native trees and shrubs may also be appropriate to enhance the general landscape of the area
- Any new development within the area should be sited close to existing buildings or on the fringes of the area, so as not to fragment or detract from the openness of the area
- New planting with locally native trees and shrubs should be used to screen any new built development (also see requirement under Point 3 below with respect to siting of new habitats)
- Provision (i.e. through a management plan and resources to implement it) should be made for the future management of any new landscaping in order to retain its role as a screen

2 Conserve and enhance public access and provide new informal recreational provision

Although crossed by a number of apparently well-used rights of way and informal desire lines it is thought the area would benefit from improvements to existing paths and recreation routes and the provision of appropriate well managed informal public recreation facilities appropriate in green belt.

Guidelines:

- Opportunities to develop appropriate new, recreational facilities which maintain the undeveloped rural character of the area should be supported (also see siting requirements under Point 1 above)
- Opportunities to enhance existing, and develop appropriate new recreational routes within the area should be sought where appropriate

3 Enhance existing and create new areas of biodiversity interest

The area has a number of features of benefit to biodiversity and offers significant opportunities to make greater provision for biodiversity potentially as part of any farm diversification development and/or new facilities essential for sport and outdoor recreational developments

Guidelines:

- Management of the existing water bodies, hedges, and woods for ecological benefits should be sought where appropriate
- Any new planting provided in relation to Point 1 above should be linked to existing semi natural habitats wherever possible
- Provision (i.e. through a management plan and resources to implement it) should be made for the future management of any new landscaping in order to retain its benefits to biodiversity

10 Landscape Policy Guidance: Urban Fringe Lowland

Policy Objectives and Guidance

Urban Fringe Lowland Sub Area 1: Middle Wood Wedge (Map 3)

1 Conserve and enhance the mainly rural character

Any new development approved as part of farm diversification and/ or facilities essential for sport and outdoor recreation (in line with UDP Green Belt policy) should be sympathetic to the mainly open rural character of the area.

Guidelines:

- Any new development within the area should be sited close to existing buildings or on the fringes of area
- New planting with locally native trees and shrubs should be used to screen any new built development (also see requirement under Point 3 below with respect to the siting of new habitats)
- Provision (i.e. through a management plan and resources to implement it) should be made for the future management of any new landscaping in order to retain its role as a screen

2 Conserve and enhance public access

Although crossed by a number of public and concessionary paths, it is thought that the area would benefit from improvements to existing paths.

Guidelines:

- Opportunities to enhance existing (e.g. through signage and interpretation), should be sought

3 Enhance existing and create new biodiversity interest

The area has a number of features of benefit to biodiversity and offers some opportunities to make greater provision as part of any new recreational developments and/or farm diversification.

Guidelines:

- Management of the existing water bodies, hedges, woods for ecological benefits should be sought

Landscape Policy Guidance: Urban Fringe Lowland

- Any new planting provided in relation to Point 1 above should be linked to existing semi natural habitats wherever possible
- Provision (i.e. through a management plan and resources to implement it) should be made for the future management of any new landscaping in order to retain its benefits to biodiversity

Urban Fringe Lowland Sub Area 2: Worsley Woods Wedge (Map 3)

1 Conserve the mainly rural character

The Worsley Woods Wedge provides an attractive landscape setting for the settlements of Worsley, Roe Green and Beesley Green, and contains a number of important landscape features (e.g. Bridgewater Canal, Old Warke Dam), which need to be protected.

Guidelines:

- Any new development within the area should be sited close to existing buildings or on the fringes of area, so as not to fragment or encroach on the openness and continuity of the wedge
- New planting with locally native trees and shrubs should be used to screen any new built development (also see requirement under Point 3 below with respect to the siting of new habitats)
- Provision (i.e. through a management plan and resources to implement it) should be made for the future management of any new landscaping in order to retain its role as a screen

2 Enhance existing public access and provide new informal recreational provision

The Worsley Woods Wedge provides amenity open space, recreational land and facilities. Much of the area (e.g. Worsley Woods and Roe Green Loopline) is owned and managed by Salford City Council. Parts of the area may benefit from informal recreation appropriate to UDP Worsley Greenway policy.

Guidelines:

- Opportunities to develop appropriate new, recreational facilities which maintain the undeveloped rural character of the area should be supported (also see siting requirements under Point 1 above)
- Opportunities to enhance existing, and develop appropriate new recreational routes within the area should be sought

3 Enhance existing and create new biodiversity interest as part of any new recreational developments

The Worsley Woods Wedge already has a number of features of benefit (e.g. Worsley Woods has been designated as a Local Nature Reserve) to biodiversity and offers significant opportunities to make greater provision.

Guidelines:

- Management of the existing water bodies, hedges, woods for ecological benefits should be encouraged
- Any new planting provided in relation to Point 1 above should be linked to existing semi natural habitats wherever possible
- Provision (i.e. through a management plan and resources to implement it) should be made for the future management of any new landscaping in order to retain its benefits to biodiversity
- Implementation of the Worsley Woods Local Nature Reserve Management Plan

Urban Fringe Lowland Sub Area3: Wardley Woods Wedge (Map 3)**1 Conserve and enhance the rural character**

Any new development approved as part of farm diversification and/ or facilities essential for sport and outdoor recreation should be sympathetic to the mainly open rural character of the area.

Guidelines:

- Any new development within the area should be sited close to existing buildings or on the fringes of area
- New planting with locally native trees and shrubs should be used to screen any new built development (also see requirement under Point 3 below with respect to the siting of new habitats)
- Provision (i.e. through a management plan and resources to implement it) should be made for the future management of any new landscaping in order to retain its role as a screen

2 Enhance existing public access and provide new informal recreational provision

Although crossed by a number of apparently well used rights of way and informal desire lines it is thought the Wardley Woods area in particular would benefit from improvements to existing paths and recreation routes and possibly the provision of appropriate well managed informal public recreation facilities appropriate to UDP Green Belt policy .

Guidelines:

- New recreational facilities which maintain the undeveloped rural character of the area should be supported (also see siting requirements under Point 1 above)
- Opportunities to enhance existing, and develop appropriate new recreational routes within the area should be sought

3 Enhance existing and create new biodiversity interest

The area has a number of features of benefit to biodiversity and offers significant opportunities to make greater provision as part of any new recreational developments and/or farm diversification (in line with UDP Green Belt policy).

Guidelines:

- Management of the existing water bodies, hedges, woods for ecological benefits should be sought
- Any new planting provided in relation to Point 1 above should be linked to existing semi natural habitats wherever possible
- Provision (i.e. through a management plan and resources to implement it) should be made for the future management of any new landscaping in order to retain its benefits to biodiversity

11 Landscape Policy Guidance: Urban River Valley

Policy Objectives and Guidance

Irwell Valley Sub Area 1: Clifton Corridor (Map 4)

1 Conserve and enhance the current rural character of the area

The majority of this area is made up of Clifton Country Park, which is owned and managed by Salford City Council. This enables the development and management of the area to be carefully controlled in line with UDP Green Belt policy.

Guidelines:

- Any new built development should be sited close to existing development, so as not to encroach on the rural character of the country park
- Any new built development should be screened with locally native plants and shrubs where appropriate (see also point 3 requirements below)

2 Enhance public recreation facilities within the country park

In the future there may be opportunities to enhance recreational facilities (including access routes) with any future development of a Regional Park within the wider Croal and Irwell Valleys. (For guidance on new built recreational facilities see Point 1 above).

Guidelines:

- Opportunities to enhance existing, and develop appropriate new, recreational facilities which maintain the undeveloped rural character of the park should be sought
- Opportunities to enhance existing, and develop appropriate new recreational routes along the valley outside the country park should be sought

3 Conserve and enhance the existing mosaic of semi natural habitats

The Country Park has been declared as a Local Nature Reserve. However, without intervention, natural succession of plant species would take place resulting in drying out of the wetlands and scrub (arising from woodland species) colonising the grasslands. If left long enough this would result in the whole site being dominated by woodland. Therefore direct management is needed to ensure a range of semi natural habitats is maintained in future.

Guidelines:

- Implementation of the Local Nature Reserve Management Plan, which will include the following measures
 - Management of the woodland will include coppicing, selective thinning, removal of some non native species and planting with woodland wildflowers
 - Management of the wetlands will include removal of encroaching species

Urban River Valley Sub Area 2: Pendlebury Newlands Corridor (Map 4)**1 Create an improved image for the area**

Sub Area 2 is part of the Lower Irwell Valley Improvement Area (LIVIA), which is receiving funding under the Newlands project. The project aims to contribute towards the regional development agency's aspirations of inspiring economic renaissance and creating a better living and working environment.

Guidelines:

- Implementation of a mix of remediation works, landscape improvements and informal recreation provision using Newlands funding
- Remediation of contamination "hotspots" through importation of soil
- Establishment of community woodland
- Engagement of local communities
- Proactive management of social issues that arise on site
- Contributions to business renewal and housing regeneration initiatives

2 Create a natural woodland setting in contrast to the area's past industrial use and the adjoining urban areas

The Forestry Commission is now responsible for the management of the majority of open land within this area, and together with Groundwork Manchester, has produced a Forest Design Plan (December 2005) based on the aspirations of local stakeholders. The Forest Design Plan has subdivided Sub Area 2 into 11 Compartments and has provided a range of different planting mixes for the proposed woodland areas in 3 of the compartments.

Guidelines:

- Provision of effective long term woodland environments
- Use of amenity woodland (i.e. mix of native and more colourful species) on Biffa landfill, Robin Hood Sidings and adjacent to Clifton Junction industrial area, to enhance existing planting and provide attractive and eye catching views from adjacent M60 motorway and road corridors
- Use of structural motorway corridor planting (with species chosen for colour, architectural interest and year round impact) on the land next to the Clifton industrial area, in order to draw views from motorway into LIVIA site

3 Create a range of recreational activities within the area

The Forest Design Plan explains that the Newlands project is seen as a great opportunity to improve public access and build “a green bridge” between the communities of Swinton and Prestwich by creating a major linear park on both sides of the River Irwell” (i.e. within Salford and Bury).

Guidelines:

- Creation of new access routes from residential and industrial areas into the Lower Irwell Valley Improvement Area
- Creation of network of surfaced and informal multi user paths throughout the area
- Fishing improvements at Queensmere reservoir
- Provision of a number of small scale publicly accessible informal recreation facilities
- Provision of reed beds (to be agreed with Coal Authority)

4 Enhance the biodiversity value of the area

The Forest Design Plan has not proposed any woodland planting for that compartment is proposing the following measures for management of the 2 SBIs to the west of Lumns Lane.

Guidelines:

- Provision of low intensity management to allow natural regeneration of some species (e.g. birch)
- Retention of an open heath habitat
- Importation of sandy material and introduction of heather species

Urban River Valley Sub Area 3: Kersal Dale Corridor (Map 4)

1 Conserve and enhance the existing open landscape as far as possible

It would be appropriate to retain the relatively informal landscape, and to ensure that any new development approved as being appropriate to this Key Recreation Area/future Regional Park is sympathetic to open character of this area. It is accepted that future construction of a flood basin within the northern meander of the river would impinge to some degree on views across the river.

Guidelines:

- Any new development (excluding the potential new flood storage basin) within the area should be sited close to existing buildings or on the fringes of area, so as not to fragment or encroach on its openness, or prevent its effectiveness in contributing to flood mitigation measures
- New planting with locally native trees and shrubs should be used to screen any new built development where appropriate (also see requirement under Point 3 below with respect to the siting of new habitats)
- Provision (i.e. through a management plan and resources to implement it) should be made for the future management of any new landscaping in order to retain its role as a screen

2 Enhance existing public access and provide new open land recreational uses

In the future there may be opportunities to enhance recreational facilities (including access routes) with any future development of a Regional Park within the wider Croal and Irwell Valleys.

Guidelines:

- Appropriate new, recreational facilities which maintain the undeveloped open character of the area should be supported
- Opportunities to enhance existing, and develop appropriate new recreational routes along the valley should be sought

3 Enhance the biodiversity value of the area

The Kersal Dale area has been declared as a Local Nature Reserve and a management plan prepared for it. Construction of a future flood basin and development of a Regional Park may offer further opportunities to enhance the biodiversity value of this sub area.

Guidelines:

- Implementation of the Kersal Dale Local Nature Reserve Management Plan
- Opportunities for management of other existing habitats should be sought where appropriate
- Opportunities for the provision of new habitats should be sought where appropriate
- Any new planting provided in relation to Point 1 above should be linked to existing semi natural habitats wherever possible
- Provision (i.e. through a management plan and resources to implement it) should be made for the future management of any new landscaping/habitats in order to retain their benefits to biodiversity

12 Potential Future Policy Directions

Salford Core Strategy

12.1 The council is currently undertaking a review of its land use policies in line with requirements of its Local Development Scheme. This scheme requires the production of a Core Strategy. The timescale for production of the Core Strategy being November 2006 to November 2010.

- Amongst some of the main provisions of the Core Strategy are:
- A long term spatial vision for the city (up to 2026), and the overall strategy for delivering that vision
- Identification of the overall level of different types of development that it is envisaged for the city up to 2026
- Provision of a broad vision and strategy for individual parts of the city, identifying the key issues in each

12.2 It is envisaged that the work in developing a new long term spatial vision for the city will potentially lead to the modification of some elements of the landscape policy guidance contained in sections 8 to 11 of this Landscape Character Assessment. This may especially be the case if additional measures to mitigate and adapt in relation to climate change are included within the spatial vision (see Para 12.4 below). The areas likely to be most affected are the Rural Mosslands if a new spatial vision for Chat Moss (see below) is adopted and for the Urban River Valley (see below) if a new Regional Park is developed.

Climate Change

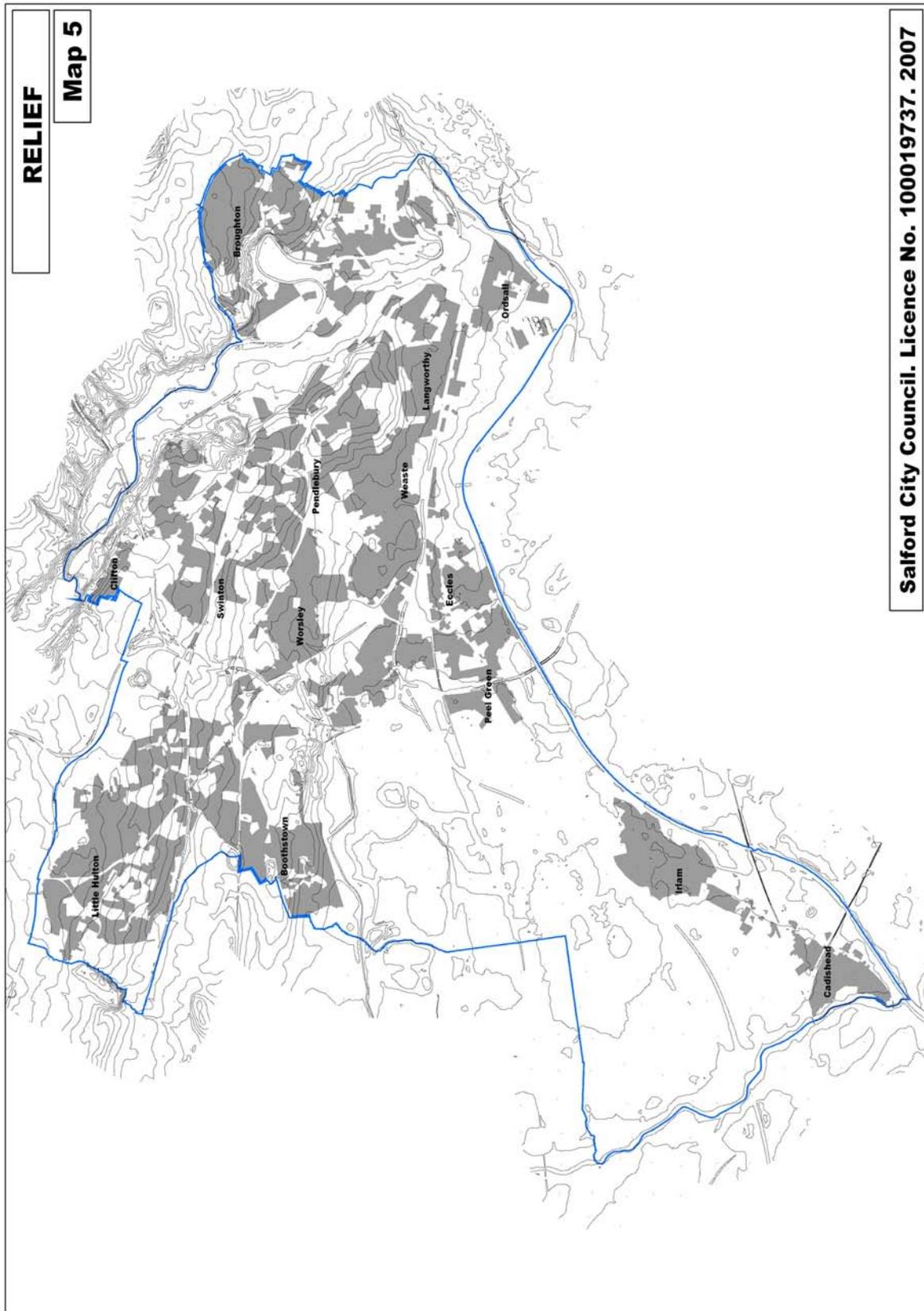
12.3 It is probably fair to say that there is a growing consensus that climate change is with us. National and regional research is indicating that in the north west of England, climate change is expected to follow the basic pattern of hotter, drier summers (characterised by greater frequency of very hot days, heat waves, heavy downpours and storms) and warmer, wetter winters (with significant reductions in snowfall and very few days of freezing weather). Acceptance that climate change is happening will mean that future policies relating to Salford's new spatial vision are likely to include both measures to mitigate against adding to future change, and to adapt to the change that is now considered inevitable. It is possible that future mitigation measures that might affect Salford's future landscape could be seeking use of at least part of the rural mosslands as a carbon sink, whilst future mitigation measures might include provision of more areas of semi natural habitats to create linkages between existing areas and so allow for potential future species movements as the climate changes.

Chat Moss Vision

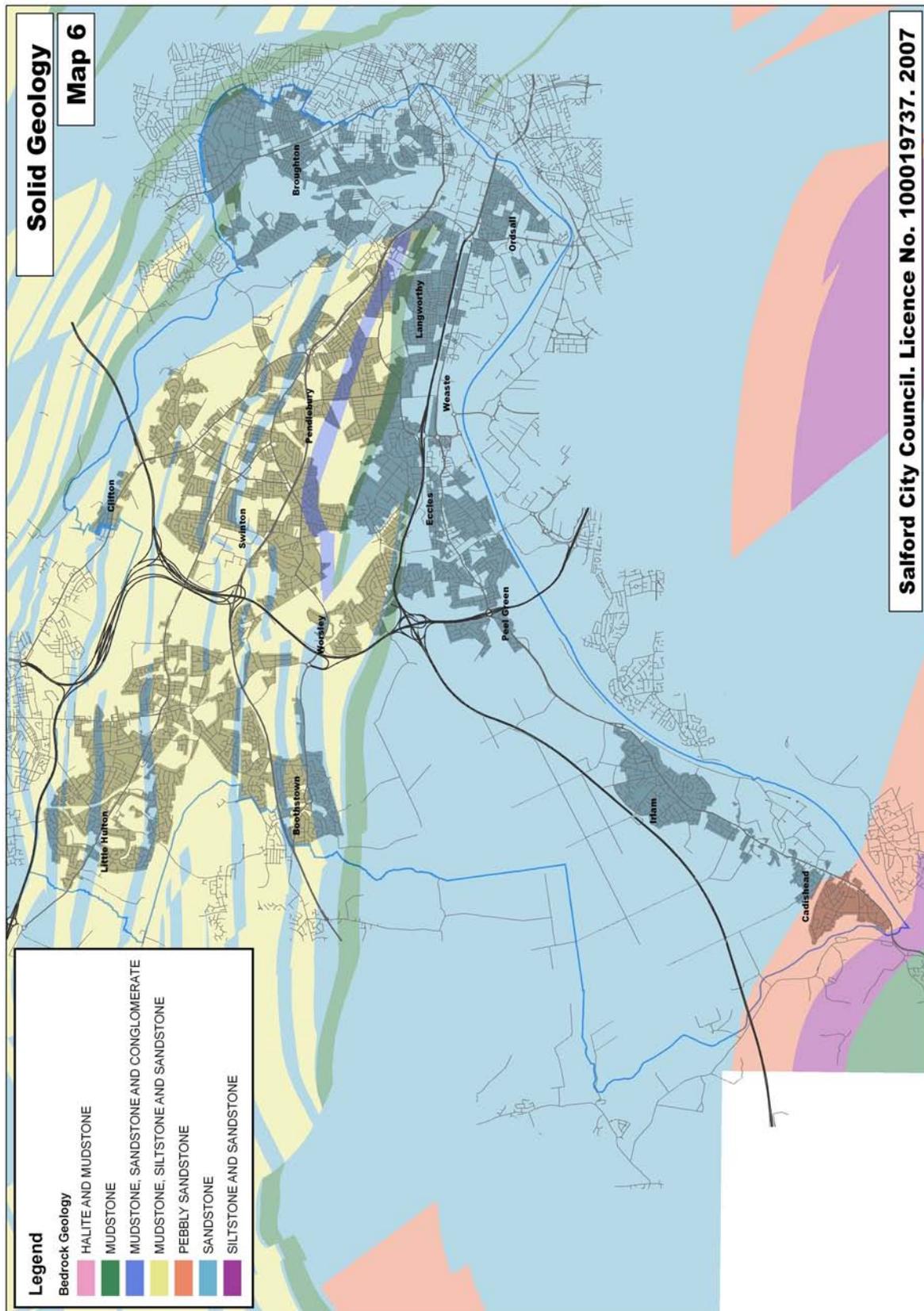
12.4 The council is also a partner in a project that involves investigating the potential of Chat Moss (and other adjacent mosslands in Wigan and Warrington), to help fulfil enhanced roles with respect to agriculture, recreation and biodiversity. Consultants have prepared a Draft Vision for Chat Moss. This vision (with some potential modifications to take account both of climate change mitigation and adaptation guidance) will be the subject of future public consultation as part of the Core Strategy. If adopted that modified Draft Vision would have implications for example for the extent of a restored area of lowland raised bog (at present it is restricted to 2 peat extraction sites as shown by the UDP Mosslands Heartland).

Potential Croal Irwell Valley Regional Park

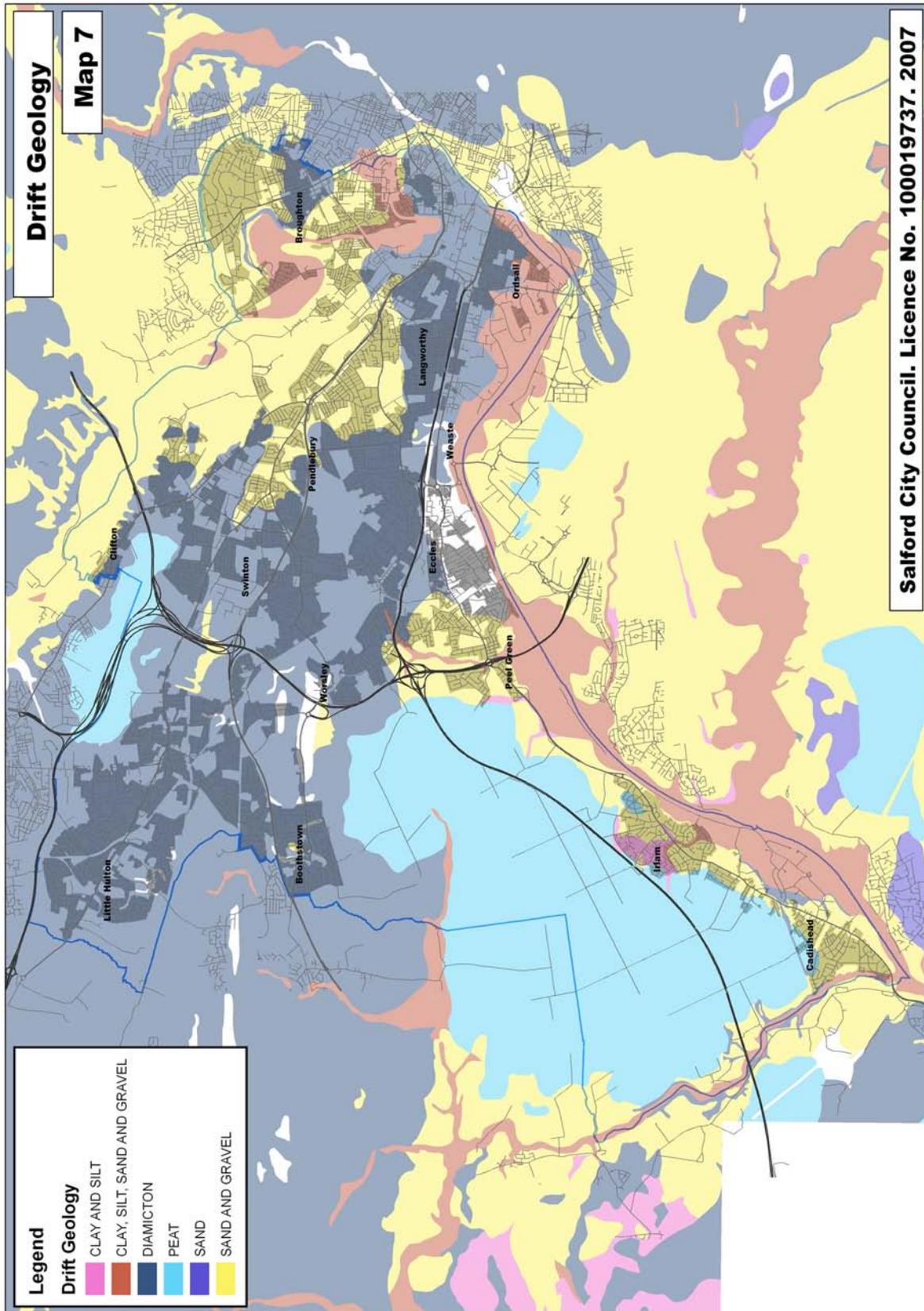
- 12.5** A further project that the council is involved with relates to the Irwell Valley. This is the potential Regional Park, which would cover all that section of the Urban River Valley in Salford. The urban river valley has already been allocated as the potential location for a second flood storage basin and may also be subject to additional flood mitigation measures in the light of climate change.



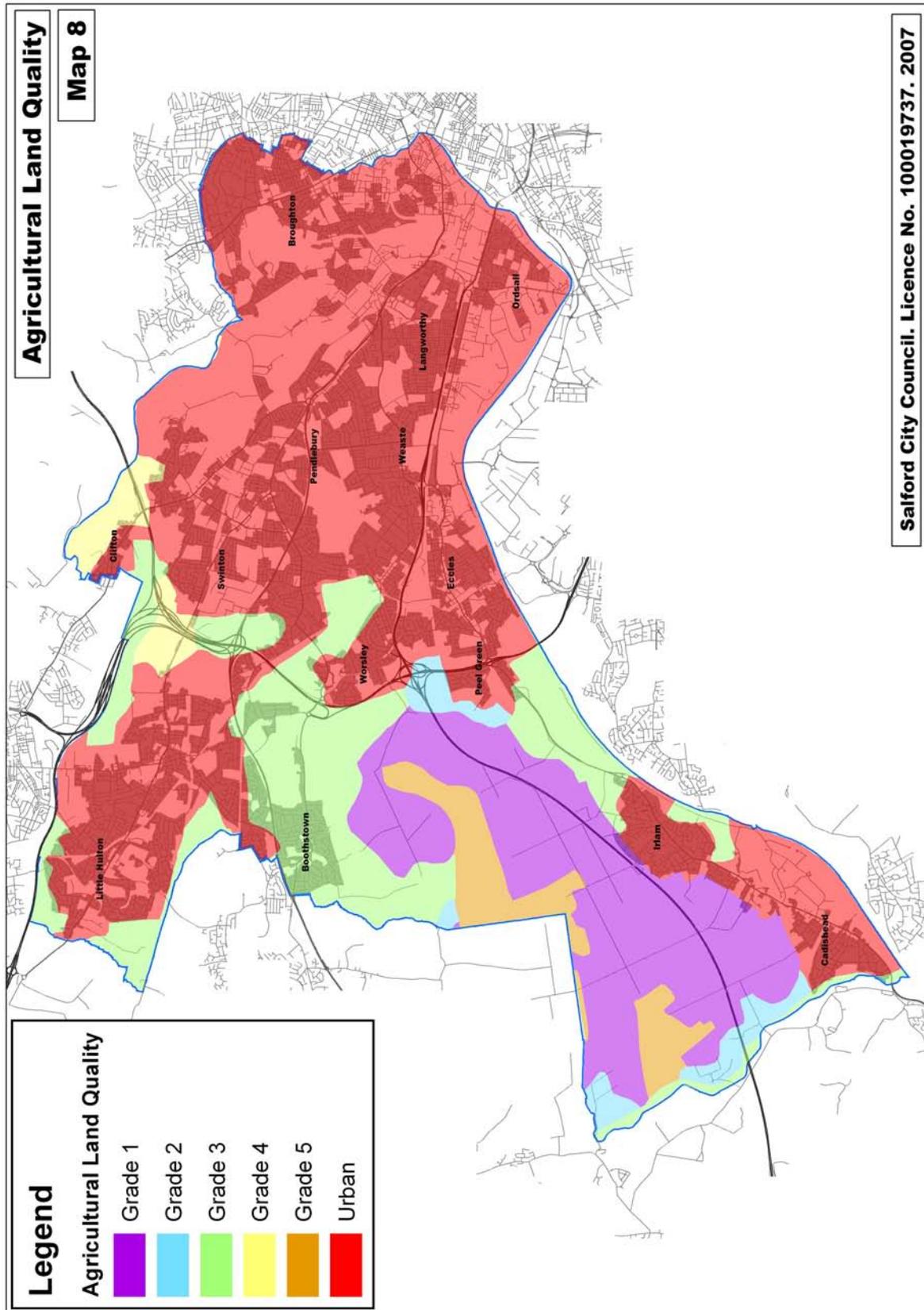
Map 12.1 Relief



Map 12.2 Solid Geology



Map 12.3 Drift Geology



Map 12.4 Agricultural Land Quality

13 References

Policies and Guidance

City of Salford Unitary Development Plan 2004 – 2016, Salford City Council Adopted June 2006

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Geological Map Data, British Geological Survey (Natural Environment Research Council 2007)

Provisional Agricultural Land Classification (Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs 2005)

Ordnance Survey Maps Old and Current

Appendix 1- Details of 4 National Landscape Character Areas relevant to Salford

Details of 4 National Landscape Character Areas relevant to Salford

JCA 54 Manchester Pennine Fringe

Location

- The Manchester Pennine Fringe forms an area of transition between the open moorlands and densely populated urban areas, lying to the north and west of Manchester. 49% of the area is defined as urban, 31% is cultivated and approximately 5% is woodland. 53% of the area falls within the LFA.

Overall Character

- This transitional area runs along the boundary of the Millstone Grit uplands of the Southern Pennines and the Dark Peak and the overlying Coal Measures which dip south and east beneath the Manchester plain. The smooth, undulating landform has been cut by a series of steep sided valleys.
- Woodland cover is sparse overall, though there are concentrated pockets of woodland within the narrow, steep sided stream valleys. Areas of scrub are also found on steeper slopes
- The lower, steeply undulating foothills are characterised by a regular pattern of fields, varying in size according to the topography. Hedges in lower areas give way to stone walls on higher ground.
- Agriculture is based on stock rearing, with fields comprising a mixture of variable quality grassland and rough grazing.
- Much of the area has an unkempt appearance due to heavy recreational use from adjacent urban areas and the diversification of farming into a range of urban related uses. The larger urban areas are located in the valley bottoms and at the foot of escarpments.
- Semi-natural habitats include unimproved grassland, rushy meadows and herb rich hay meadows.
- Traditional buildings such as farmsteads and the cores of older settlements are constructed in characteristic Pennine stone. Stone walls and winding lanes combine with these buildings to give many parts of the area a consistent, upland feel.
- While there are prehistoric and medieval landscape elements (barrows and field systems), 18th and 19th century industrialisation that has had the most significant influence on this landscape. The area continues to be affected by a number of heavy industries including quarrying, sand and gravel working, landfilling and brick making.

JCA 55 Manchester Conurbation

Location

- Countryside extends into the Manchester conurbation, following the network of corridors formed by numerous rivers and transport corridors. The area is, however, predominantly urban (65%). 9% is woodland and 8% is under cultivation (5% improved grassland, 3% arable).

Overall Character

Appendix 1- Details of 4 National Landscape Character Areas relevant to Salford

- The Manchester conurbation is centred on low hills which rise above the drift covered plain of New Red Sandstone. Sands and river alluvium lie along the valleys of the Mersey and its tributaries. These river valleys contain the most significant stretches of countryside within the otherwise built up area of the conurbation.
- Many of the river valleys have large areas of woodland along their slopes, providing a buffer with neighbouring areas.
- Field boundaries, where they occur, include both fences and hedges.
- While the valleys do still include areas of farming (including arable and pastures), some areas are now used for horsiculture or recreational uses (playing fields, golf courses etc), water treatment works and country parks.
- The area is significantly influenced by the urban and suburban development that is focused around Manchester. The river valleys include a number of uses associated with the urban area including water treatment works and waste disposal sites, together with recreation provision.
- Semi-natural habitats include sizeable areas of open grassland and some areas of wetland.
- There are few surviving examples of traditional vernacular development, though the area has an increasingly recognised legacy of industrial archaeology.

JCA 60 Mersey Valley

Location

- This area comprises the distinctive river valley landscape focused on the Mersey and associated estuaries. It includes farmland, wetland and extensive industrial and urban development. 32% of the area is urban, 21% is arable, 13% improved grassland and 16% is semi natural comprising salt marshes, sand and mudflats. 8% of the area is woodland. Most of the area falls within the Mersey Forest.

Overall Character

- The area is underlain by Triassic sandstone, which surfaces to the south and east of Runcorn. Most of the area is overlain with glacial boulder clay, pockets of sand and gravel and, along the valley bottom, estuarine and river alluvium and windblown sand. Peat has formed in drainage hollows created during the early post-glacial period, most common on the western fringes of Manchester.
- This is a relatively un-wooded landscape with some trees along field boundaries, watercourses and ditches and, particularly in the east, isolated woodland blocks.
- Most field boundaries are marked by hedges many of which are intermittent and have been replaced by post and wire fences. Field boundaries on the mosses are marked by ditches. Where farmland has been fragmented by industrial or urban development field patterns are becoming fragmented and subject to scrub invasion.
- To the north of the Mersey, agriculture is dominated by arable farming which, with the poor field boundaries, creates an open, largescale landscape. To the south of the Mersey mixed arable and dairy farming predominates. The mosslands are characterised by market gardening with some arable and pastures.
- Settlements, including Ellesmere Port, Warrington, Runcorn and Widnes, reflect the area's industrial character, with docks, chemical and oil refineries and extensive urban and suburban areas.
- Important wetland habitats remain along the estuary shores.
- Inland the Mersey has been widened and channelled to create the Manchester Ship Canal.

Appendix 1- Details of 4 National Landscape Character Areas relevant to Salford

- The predominant building material is red brick though a number of villages are constructed of sandstone. Many of the areas's oldest buildings are half timbered, though many of these now lie within urban areas
- The estuary of the River Mersey is a defining element in the landscape, having created the valley landform, the wetland and contributing to the area's industrial and settlement history. From many parts of the area, however, the river and its tributaries are not visible.

JCA 56 Lancashire Coal Measures

Location

- The Lancashire Coal Measures surround the towns of St Helens and Wigan and extend from the Mersey Valley in the south to the Lancashire and Amounderness Plain in the north west. The area is dominated by industry and the legacy of mineral working. 34% of the area is classed as urban, and 43% is agricultural land. Only 4% is under woodland cover. 0.3% is LFA and 0.5% is designated as SSSI.

Overall Character

- The area is underlain by coal measures which are buried under a patchy layer of glacial drift deposits. This is an elevated landscape, rising to 170 metres at Billinge Hill and falling abruptly to the Lancashire Plain, Merseyside and the Mersey Valley. Hills and valleys run from north west to south east, creating a landscape of gently corrugated hills
- Across most of the area, woodland cover is very limited. The principal exception is the area to the northwest of Wigan where there is a higher incidence of trees and woodland, creating a more enclosed and small scale landscape.
- Large parts of the area have been affected by mineral extraction and field patterns have often been lost. Where it survives, the pattern is predominantly rectangular and is defined by degraded hedges or post and wire fencing.
- Most farming is arable, though in many places the drainage has been severely disrupted by colliery subsidence. Often the land is little more than recreational open space, used in many cases for horsiculture.
- The area includes many towns that developed during industrialisation in the nineteenth century. Allied to these settlements are pits, spoil tips and open cast sites. Many of these are now being reclaimed and landscaped.
- Semi-natural habitats have formed on many former industrial sites, particularly where undermining has resulted in the formation of subsidence flashes.
- There are few surviving examples of traditional vernacular development, though the area has an increasingly recognised legacy of industrial archaeology. The area includes many towns that developed during industrialisation in the nineteenth century. Allied to these settlements are pits, spoil tips and open cast sites. Many of these are now being reclaimed and landscaped.

Appendix 2 - Agricultural Land Classification Definitions

Agricultural Land Classification Definitions (from “Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales” 1988 Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food)

Grade 1 – excellent quality agricultural land

Land with no or very minor limitations to agricultural use. A very wide range of agricultural and horticultural crops can be grown and commonly includes top fruit, soft fruit, salad crops and winter harvested vegetables. Yields are high and less variable than on land of lower quality.

Grade 2 – very good quality agricultural land

Land with minor limitations which affect crop yield, cultivations or harvesting. A wide range of agricultural and horticultural crops can usually be grown but on some land in the grade there may be reduced flexibility due to difficulties with the production of the more demanding crops such as winter harvested vegetables and arable root crops. The level of yield is generally high but may be lower or more variable than Grade 1.

Grade 3 – good to moderate quality agricultural land

Land with moderate limitations which affect the choice of crops, timing and type of cultivation, harvesting or level of yield. Where more demanding crops are grown yields are generally lower or more variable than on land in Grades 1 and 2.

Grade 3a - good quality agricultural land

Land capable of consistently producing moderate to high yields of a narrow range of arable crops, especially cereals, or moderate yields of a wide range of crops including cereals, grass, oilseed rape, potatoes, sugar beet and the less demanding horticultural crops

Grade 3b - moderate quality agricultural land

Land capable of producing moderate yields of a narrow range of crops, principally cereals and grass or lower yields of a wide range of crops or high yields of grass which can be grazed or harvested over most of the year

Grade 4 – poor quality agricultural land

Land with severe limitations which significantly restrict the range of crops and/or level of yields. It is mainly suited to grass with occasional arable crops (e.g. cereals and forage crops) the yields of which are variable. In moist climates yields of grass may be moderate to high but there may be difficulties in utilisation. The grade also includes very droughty arable land.

Grade 5 – very quality agricultural land

Land with very severe limitations which restrict use to permanent pasture or rough grazing, except for occasional pioneer forage crops.

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