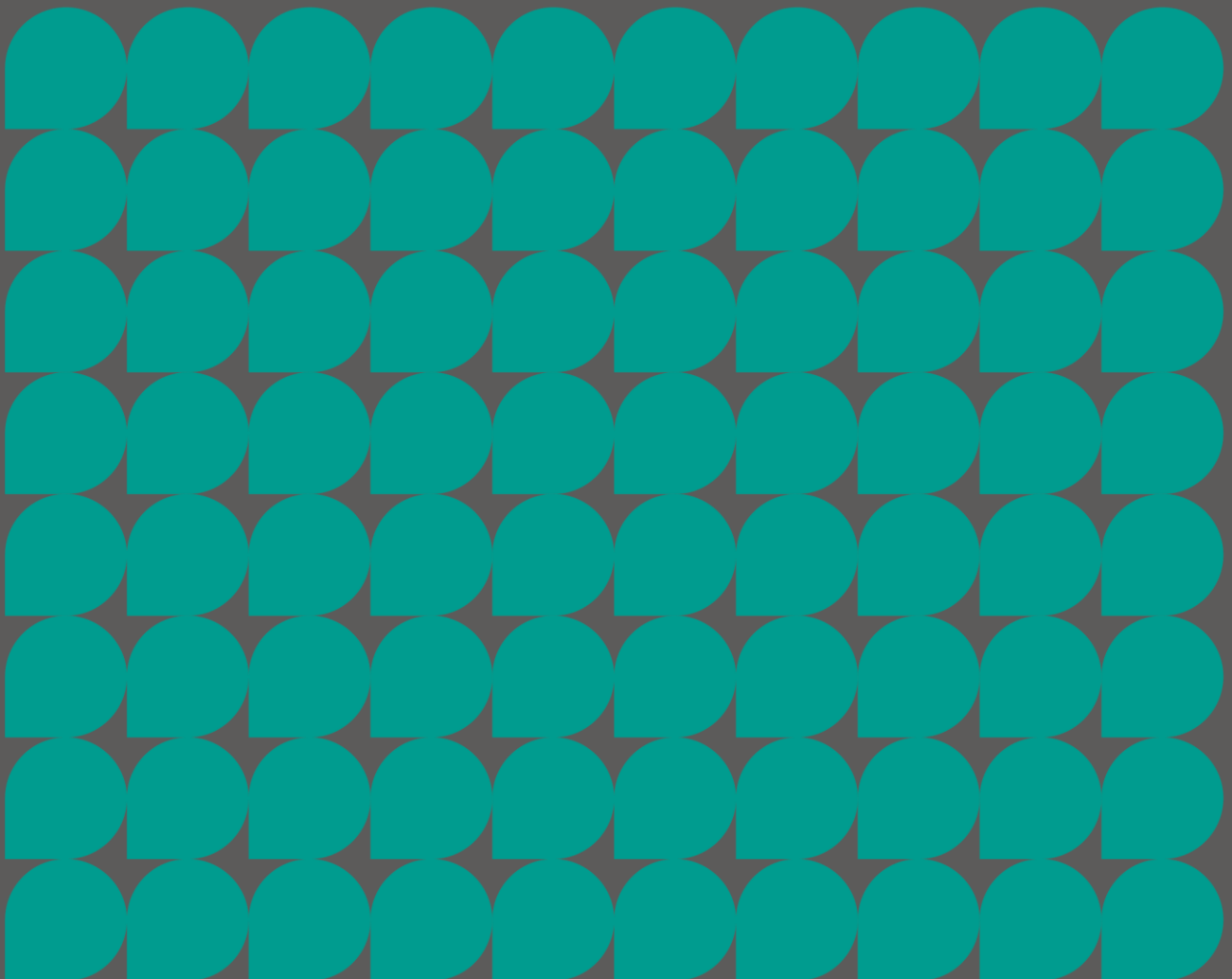


Places for Everyone

Site Selection Background Paper

July 2021



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1. Introduction

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

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

- 1.7 Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Regulation 32 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 enable a joint plan to continue to progress in the event of one of the local authorities withdrawing, provided that the plan has ‘substantially the same effect’ on the remaining authorities as the original joint plan. The joint plan of the nine GM districts has been prepared on this basis.
- 1.8 In view of this, it follows that PfE should be considered as, in effect, the same Plan as the GMSF, albeit without one of the districts (Stockport). Therefore “the plan” and its proposals are in effect one and the same. Its content has changed over time through the iterative process of plan making, but its purpose has not. Consequently, the Plan is proceeding directly to Publication stage under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.
- 1.9 The Site Selection work outlined in this paper formed part of the evidence base which was assembled to support the policies and proposals in the GMSF 2020. Given the basis on which the PfE has been prepared, the work carried out previously in relation to the GMSF remains valid in relation to the PfE 2021. That said the Site Selection Paper has been reviewed and updated in the light of the change from GMSF 2020 to the PfE2021 and sets out the site selection methodology for the PfE 2021.
- 1.10 The comments from the Draft GMSF 2019, together with local and national policy, have helped to inform the Site Selection methodology for the PfE 2021. More information on the consultation comments can be found in the Consultation Statement.

2. Policy context

- 2.1 The NPPF (Paragraph 20 – 23) states that strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development making sufficient provision for housing (including affordable housing) and employment development. Strategic policies should also provide a clear strategy for bringing sufficient land forward, this should include planning for and allocating sufficient sites to deliver the strategic priorities of the area.
- 2.2 The NPPF (Paragraphs 67- 76) states that sufficient land should be identified to meet housing needs and the NPPF (paragraphs 80 - 82) states that policies should help create conditions to meet the needs of businesses. This is set out in chapters 6 and 7 PfE 2021.
- 2.3 The NPPF (paragraph 136) states that once established Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances. Information on the PfE's exceptional circumstances case for reviewing the Green Belt boundary is set out in the Green Belt Topic Paper.
- 2.4 Paragraph 138 of the NPPF states that where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give first consideration to land which has been previously developed and/or is well served by public transport.
- 2.5 Paragraph 72 of the NPPF relates to identifying land for new homes and states that, "the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development." In identifying such locations the NPPF sets out the following considerations which are relevant to the Site Selection process:
- consider the opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, the area's economic potential and the scope for net environmental gains

- ensure that their size and location will support a sustainable community, with sufficient access to services and employment opportunities within the development itself (without expecting an unrealistic level of self-containment), or in larger towns to which there is good access

2.6 This guidance has been incorporated into the PfE Site Selection Methodology.

3. Summary of Evidence

Existing land supply

- 3.1 The housing and employment land supply has been identified following an assessment of suitable development land in the urban area by each Greater Manchester district. Sites which have been included in the existing land supply are available to view on MappingGM. More information about the overall GM housing and employment need and the existing supply is available in the PfE 2021, chapters 6 and 7 the Employment and Housing Topic Papers and MappingGM.
- 3.2 The Local Housing Need (LHN) for Greater Manchester is around 164,000 units and land for around 163,000 units has been identified in the existing land supply. This represents a small shortfall in supply compared to the LHN. However it should be noted that, as explained in the Draft PfE 2021 in Chapter 7 and the Housing Topic Paper, it is considered necessary to identify sufficient land to provide for flexibility and choice in housing delivery. Moreover, the Green Belt Topic Paper which details the case for exceptional circumstances to amend the Green Belt sets out the strategic position with respect to housing that necessitates the need to consider land which is currently protected open land / safeguarded land or Green Belt.
- 3.3 The need for industry and warehousing land in Greater Manchester is around 3,330,000 sqm and the existing land supply is just over 1,800,000 sqm, leaving a shortfall of around 1,500,000 sqm. The need for office space is around 1,900,000 sqm and the existing land supply is just over 3,100,000 sqm. The existing land supply represents a significant shortfall of land for

industry and warehousing whilst providing an oversupply of office space. However, similar to housing, the Draft PfE 2021 in Chapter 6 and the Employment topic paper explain that it is necessary to provide sufficient flexibility against the overall need for industry and warehousing and offices. Moreover, the Green Belt Topic Paper which details the case for exceptional circumstances to amend the Green Belt also sets out the strategic position with respect to employment land that necessitates the need to consider land which is currently protected open land / safeguarded land or Green Belt.

Call for Sites

- 3.4 In November 2015 a Call for Sites exercise was launched across Greater Manchester whereby local residents, businesses, land owners and developers were invited to submit sites they considered to be suitable for housing or employment development, as well as other uses such as open space. The Greater Manchester mapping platform (MappingGM) was used to aid this process, providing a facility to submit sites online alongside any supporting information. It was also possible to submit Call for Sites via email and letter. The Call for Sites remained open until March 2017 when it was closed to any further submissions. All of the Call for Sites have been submitted independently for consideration and it is therefore assumed that they are available for development.
- 3.5 The MappingGM Call for Sites assessment map¹ provided a central access point for the Call for Sites information and all of the sites submitted are available to view on the MappingGM website. The sites were uploaded to the Call for Sites map at various points throughout the Call for Sites exercise.
- 3.6 Around 1,000 individual Call for Sites were submitted for consideration in the GMSF. This includes sites submitted within Stockport however, given Stockport's decision to withdraw from the Plan in December 2020 this paper concentrates on only those sites within the 9 districts and not those within Stockport. Although it should be noted that due to the nature of the work

¹ GM Mapping Call for Sites Map <https://mappinggm.org.uk/call-for-sites/>

undertaken, it has not been possible to remove all references to sites within Stockport. The Call for Sites included land in the urban area, safeguarded land / Protected Open Land (POL) and Green Belt. This paper relates only to sites which are safeguarded land / protected open land or which are in the Green Belt.

Draft GMSF 2016 Site Selection

- 3.7 The Draft GMSF 2016 proposed 55 housing and employment allocations which were either in the Green Belt or on protected open land / safeguarded land. The approach to selecting sites in the Draft GMSF 2016 was to focus on a relatively small number of large-scale sites, rather than a greater number of diffuse, smaller sites. These sites were identified following a high level constraints assessment of all the Call for Sites and consideration of the priorities identified in the Greater Manchester Strategy².
- 3.8 Further information on the approach to Site Selection for the Draft GMSF 2016 is in the ‘Approach to Accommodating the Land Supply Shortfall’ supporting document from the 2016 consultation.

Draft GMSF 2019 Site Selection

- 3.9 The Draft GMSF 2019 proposed 51 housing and employment allocations which were either in the Green Belt or on protected open land/ safeguarded land. The approach to selecting sites continued on to focus on a relatively small number of large-scale sites, rather than a greater number of diffuse, smaller sites. A number of sites featured in the Draft GMSF 2016 were removed.
- 3.10 Further information on the approach to Site Selection for the Draft GMSF 2019 is available in the “GMSF Site Selection Topic Paper – January 2019”.

² Greater Manchester Strategy, available at <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/ourpeopleourplace>

4. Summary of the Growth and Spatial Options Assessment

- 4.1 As part of the process of producing the Places for Everyone Plan, the growth and spatial options for the plan were re-visited to check if any material changes had arisen since the GMSF 2020 to suggest that other reasonable alternative(s) to the growth and spatial options should be considered to deliver the Plan's Vision and Objectives.
- 4.2 The PfE 2021 Growth and Spatial Options Paper concludes that there have been no material changes since the production of the GMSF 2020 and that the work carried out in relation to the GMSF Growth and Spatial Options remains valid in relation to the preparation of the PfE 2021. Therefore, similar to the GMSF 2020 work, three reasonable alternatives for growth have been identified for the PfE 2021. Full details of the options and the assessment of these against the Plan's Vision and Objectives and the IA Framework can be found in the Growth and Spatial Options Paper and the IA documentation.
- 4.3 Consideration has also been given to the impact of Stockport's withdrawal on the reasonable alternatives for spatial distribution, the Spatial Options. Although in similar way to the conclusion in relation to the Growth Options, the removal of Stockport, in itself, is not considered to have resulted in a unique spatial alternative, however, two variants of the GMSF 2019 Hybrid Option were identified and considered alongside the other four spatial options in the preparation of the PfE 2021. As with the Growth Options, full details of the options and the assessment of them against the Plan's Vision and Objectives and the IA Framework can be found in the Growth and Spatial Options Paper and the IA documentation.
- 4.4 Based on the assessment in the table above, each of the spatial options have positive impacts to a greater or lesser extent in terms of delivering the overall PfE Vision and Strategic Objectives. However, it is considered that options 4(a) and 4(b) perform well against all objectives. Out of these two, it is considered that option 4(b) allows the most scope to reduce the Green Belt loss, albeit only by a limited amount, particularly given the need to propose

enduring Green Belt boundaries and the wider evidence base. Therefore, option 4(b) has been chosen as the preferred spatial option for the PfE 2021. The Growth and Spatial Options Paper concludes that each of the three growth options could be considered as having positive impacts in terms of delivering the overall PfE Vision and Strategic Objectives. However, similarly to GMSF 2020, option two appears to perform well against all. Therefore, option two has been retained as the preferred growth option for the PfE 2021.

- 4.5 In relation to the spatial options, again the paper concludes that each option have positive impacts to a greater or lesser extent in terms of delivering the overall PfE Vision and Strategic Objectives. However, it concludes that options 4(a) and 4(b) perform well against all objectives. Out of these two, it is considered that option 4(b) allows the most scope to reduce the Green Belt loss, albeit only by a limited amount, particularly given the need to propose enduring Green Belt boundaries and the wider evidence base. Therefore, option 4(b) has been chosen as the preferred spatial option for the PfE 2021.
- 4.6 This option requires additional sites, to those already identified in the districts existing land supply, to be identified, therefore a site selection process was introduced to ensure that the sites identified would help to meet the Plan's overall objectives

5. PfE Site Selection

- 5.1 The purpose of the PfE Site Selection methodology is to identify the most sustainable locations for residential and employment development that can achieve the GMSF Vision, Objectives and Spatial Strategy and meet the housing and employment land needs across the nine districts.
- 5.2 The PFE 2021 Objectives are listed below and are set out in full in Section 3 of the Draft PfE 2021, they remain broadly the same as those in the GMSF 2020. The objectives have been assessed through the Integrated Assessment (see section 4 of the GMSF 2020 IA Main Report). The PfE IA Addendum

report confirms that the changes made between GMSF 2020 and PfE 2021 did not result in a change to the assessment against the IA framework. The objectives have helped to inform the PfE Site Selection criteria. An additional objective covering health and well-being was added into the Draft GMSF 2020 to respond to consultation responses received on the Draft GMSF 2019 and engagement with health bodies.

1. Meet our housing need.
2. Create neighbourhoods of choice.
3. Playing our part in ensuring a thriving and productive economy in all parts of Greater Manchester.
4. Maximise the potential arising from our national and international assets.
5. Reduce inequalities and improve prosperity.
6. Promote the sustainable movement of people, goods and information
7. Playing our part in ensuring that Greater Manchester is a more resilient and carbon neutral city-region.
8. Improve the quality of our natural environment and access to green spaces.
9. Ensure access to physical and social infrastructure.
10. Promote the health and wellbeing of communities.

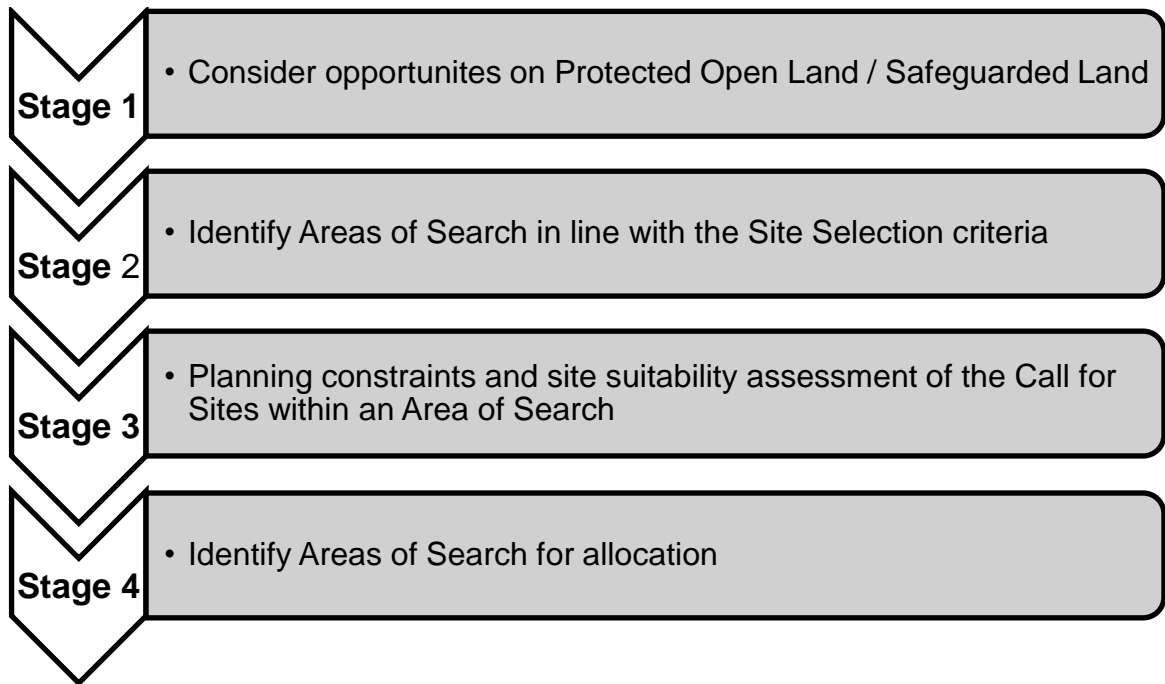
5.3 Central to the Vision for Greater Manchester is to deliver inclusive growth across the city-region. To assist in the delivery of this, the Draft PfE 2021 spatial strategy seeks to take advantage of the opportunities for delivering high levels of economic growth whilst addressing the challenges faced by the nine boroughs. In so doing it identifies a number of broad areas and opportunities which will mean the nine districts can achieve the levels of new growth required to meet its needs whilst securing genuinely inclusive growth and prosperity:

- Core Growth Area: central Manchester, south-east Salford, and north Trafford

- Inner Area Regeneration: surrounding inner parts of Manchester, Salford and Trafford
- Boost Northern Competitiveness: Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Tameside, Wigan, and west Salford
- Sustain Southern Competitiveness: In respect of PfE 2021, most of Trafford, and south Manchester
- The seven main town centres
- The rapid transit routes and strategic green infrastructure which extend through all of these areas also have an important part to play in delivering the spatial strategy.

6. Site Selection Methodology

- 6.1 To identify potential development sites for allocation a Site Selection methodology has been developed. The methodology includes seven Site Selection criteria which have been informed by the Vision, Objectives and Spatial Strategy in the Draft PfE 2021. These together with a number of "rules", ensure that the overall spatial strategy and objectives of the plan can be met and have therefore been used to guide the selection of sites within the Green Belt for development. A key outcome from the Site Selection process is to demonstrate a clear, consistent and transparent approach to the selection of sites, in the DraftPfE 2021.
- 6.2 The following stages set out the process used to identify the proposed allocations in the PfE 2021 Plan:



6.3 Stage one relates to land which is outside of the existing urban area but which is not in the Green Belt. This includes land which has been identified in district Local Plans as safeguarded land and/or protected open land (POL). This land is considered to be sequentially preferable to Green Belt. If stage one does not identify sufficient land to meet the need then it will be necessary to consider sites which are currently in the Green Belt as part of stage two.

6.4 Stage two is the identification of broad “Areas of Search” based on the Site Selection Criteria within which call for sites could be assessed. The Site Selection criteria reflect the priorities of the GMSF Spatial Strategy and objectives. The broad Areas of Search approach was chosen because of the volume of call for sites submitted and therefore it was necessary to undertake an initial high level sift to identify only those sites with the potential to meet the GMSF strategy. Sites which did not fall within an Area of Search were not considered to meet the strategy and were therefore excluded from the Site Selection process and not subject to any further assessment.

6.5 Stage three is an assessment of the sites within the identified Areas of Search to determine whether development in the Areas of Search would be appropriate, weighing the likely benefits against key planning constraints and

site suitability. This work was also guided not only by planning constraints but by the following principles, to ensure that the spatial strategy and the PfE plan objectives were met:-

- Each district was encouraged to meet their own LHN
- Where a single district has sufficient existing land supply to meet its own LHN and where this would not impact on the overall objective of inclusive growth, it was not necessary to release Green Belt.
- If a single district could not meet their own local housing need through their existing land supply there was an expectation that they would need to supplement their land supply through allocations beyond the urban area, to enable them to meet a significant proportion of their own LHN, considered to be at least 70% of its LHN
- No single district should exceed its LHN by more than 125%
- Collectively the northern Greater Manchester districts should meet around 100% of their collective LHN, in order to ensure that the overall objective of inclusive growth and boosting the competitiveness of north Greater Manchester would succeed
- The southern Greater Manchester districts should collectively meet a significant amount of their LHN, in order to achieve inclusive growth across Greater Manchester

6.6 In terms of employment land, identification of sites was informed primarily by the spatial strategy and the objectives to support strong and continued growth at the core (by focusing the majority of office/commercial development within the core growth areas of Manchester, Salford and Trafford), boost the economic competitiveness of the north (by identifying sites which are transformational in nature and provide for diverse employment opportunities which could not be delivered by the existing land supply) and sustain the competitiveness of the southern area, (by taking advantage of global opportunities presented by the airport and the proposed HS2 route).

6.7 This process enabled an assessment of the reasonable alternatives for allocations to be carried out. It resulted in some Areas of Search and sites

within them being considered more suitable for allocation than others and therefore these progressed to stage 4 of the site selection process which identifies proposed allocations within the Areas of Search.

- 6.8 As part of stage 4, further analysis was carried out of sites within the preferred areas of search in light of more detailed evidence based work on matters such as planning constraints, the GM Stage 2 Green Belt Harm Assessment and masterplanning. The principles set out above and this more detailed work was used to determine the final allocation boundaries and quantum of development. The sites within the preferred Areas of Search, where an allocation was proposed, were considered to be reasonable alternatives for the detailed allocation boundaries.. The detailed allocation boundaries can be found in the DraftPfE 2021.

Stage One - Consider opportunities on Protected Open Land / Safeguarded Land

- 6.9 All the Districts across the nine districts in PfE except Manchester, and Tameside have either safeguarded land and/or protected open land (POL) in a previously adopted Local Plan. This land source is currently protected by a range of different Local Plan policies. It is considered to be sequentially preferable to Green Belt and will contribute to keeping the total amount of Green Belt loss to a minimum.
- 6.10 As part of the process of calculating the 2020 housing land data which underpins the DraftPfE 2021, every Local Authority in the Plan area reassessed their existing urban land supply in order to optimise the amount of development which could be achieved to ensure that the release of Green Belt in the PfE could be kept to a minimum. This work included revisiting capacities within main town centres, sites in close proximity to public transport nodes (such as train stations and Metrolink stops) poorly performing employment areas and unimplemented employment permissions, as well as land identified in adopted Local Plans as POL / safeguarded land. Further details of this work are provided in the Housing Topic Paper.

6.11 The POL / safeguarded land designation has slightly different meanings in the different districts. Some land is protected for development. This is land which is considered to be suitable for development, but is reserved for development beyond that plan's current plan period or in specific cases within the plan period where there is a particular shortage of available land in the baseline supply. In other districts, this land has been protected from development for a number of different reasons, but it is not classed as Green Belt.

6.12 Given the above, it follows that the approach to POL / safeguarded land must vary in relation to its consideration in the GMSF. If the policy allows development of this land within the current plan period, and it has been considered appropriate in principle for development to be brought forward via a planning application, it has been included within the baseline housing land supply. However, where adding the land to the 2021 baseline supply would be contrary to a district's current Local Plan policy it was considered necessary to bring these sites forward for development through the Draft PfE 2021. This is because the PfE is being produced in advance of the adoption of district Local Plans in order that it can provide the overarching principles for those plans. However, because the Site Selection process outlined in this paper relates only to sites within the currently adopted Green Belt, these POL / safeguarded sites were not subject to the Site Selection process.

6.13 The following POL / safeguarded sites are proposed for allocation in the GMSF 2020:

- GM Allocation 16: Cowlshaw (Oldham)
- GM Allocation 25: Roch Valley (Rochdale)
- GM Allocation 26: Trows Farm (Rochdale)
- GM Allocation 41: New Carrington (part POL) (Trafford)
- GM Allocation 44: Pocket Nook (Wigan)

6.14 Notwithstanding the inclusion of the sites above, there remains insufficient land to meet the needs for both housing and employment land, including a sufficient flexibility buffer. It was therefore necessary to consider sites in the Green Belt in order to meet the development needs as set out in the PfE Spatial Strategy.

PfE Site Selection Criteria

6.15 Based on the PfE Spatial Strategy, plan objectives and guidance in the NPPF on Green Belt release, seven Site Selection Criteria have been developed to identify the most sustainable sites in the Green Belt. The Site Selection criteria are listed in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Site Selection Criteria for sites in the Green Belt

Criterion 1 - Land which has been previously developed and/or land which is well served by public transport

Criterion 2 – Land that is able to take advantage of the key assets and opportunities that genuinely distinguish Greater Manchester from its competitors

Criterion 3 – Land that can maximise existing economic opportunities which have significant capacity to deliver transformational change and / or boost the competitiveness and connectivity of Greater Manchester and genuinely deliver inclusive growth

Criterion 4 – Land within 800 metres of a main town centre boundary or 800m from the other town centres' centroids

Criterion 5 – Land which would have a direct significant impact on delivering urban regeneration

Criterion 6 – Land where transport investment (by the developer) and the creation of significant new demand (through appropriate development densities), would support the delivery of long-term viable sustainable travel options and delivers significant wider community benefits.

6.16 The criteria listed in the table above are as per those used in the GMSF 2020. On the basis that the PfE 2021 is being prepared on the basis that it would have substantially the same effect as the GMSF 2020 would have had on the nine districts, it follows that these remain valid in relation to the preparation of the PfE 2021.

6.17 The section below explains each Site Selection criterion, which PfE Objectives they relate to and how it has been interpreted for selecting sites.

Criterion 1 - *Land which has been previously developed and/or land which is well served by public transport*

Relevant PfE Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7

- 6.18 This criterion seeks to identify areas of previously developed land as well as the most sustainable and accessible locations which are already well served by public transport. The criterion meets the PfE objectives to prioritise the use of brownfield land and it is also directly referenced in the NPPF (2018) paragraph 138 which states, “where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give first consideration to land which has been previously-developed and/or is well served by public transport.”
- 6.19 **Previously developed land (PDL)** - Each potential site has been subject to a constraints assessment, part of which included identifying any area of PDL on sites which are within the Green Belt. There is no map of Greater Manchester which comprehensively identifies all areas of previously developed land and it was therefore necessary to carry out a desktop assessment for each potential site as part of the wider constraints analysis. Using a combination of satellite images and local knowledge a planning assessment was made to identify any areas of previously developed land. A percentage of the PDL area for each call for site was calculated to understand the approximate area of previously developed land. It should be noted that officer judgement was used to assess the area of PDL and therefore the percentages should be treated as approximate. A threshold of 30% PDL has been used. Any site with a PDL percentage above this threshold is considered to meet this criterion and an area of search was drawn around it.
- 6.20 **‘Well served by public transport’** - Areas that met this definition were identified using a number of different spatial measures. The Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels (GMAL)³ were used to identify the areas with the best public transport accessibility, for the purposes of the PfE Site Selection GMAL 5.5+ was considered to provide the most appropriate measure of good accessibility for the following key reasons:

³ Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels (GMAL) are a detailed and accurate measure of the accessibility of a point to both the conventional public transport network (i.e. bus, Metrolink and rail) and Greater Manchester Local Link (flexible transport service), taking into account walk access time and service availability. The method is a way of measuring the density of the public transport provision at any location within the Greater Manchester region.

- It includes specific areas and corridors in all nine GM districts in PfE that attract high public transport demand, particularly high-frequency bus routes and Metrolink
- It includes town and district centres, not just the Regional Centre, which is a key GMSF priority
- It includes specific, defined areas within GM which can help guide Site Selection and excludes large areas of GM that do not currently attract high public transport demand

6.21 In addition to GMAL 5.5+, 800m buffer areas were drawn around railway stations with at least two trains per hour, all Metrolink stops and all stops on the Leigh – Salford – Manchester Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). The combination of these measures collectively formed the “GMSF Site Selection Good Public Transport” area. This was mapped and used to identify Areas of Search.

Criterion 2 - Land that is able to take advantage of the key assets and opportunities that genuinely distinguish Greater Manchester from its competitors

Relevant PfE 2021 Objectives: 1, 3, 4

6.22 This criterion seeks to identify any sites around key assets in Greater Manchester. The aim of this criterion is to capitalise on existing assets which genuinely distinguish Greater Manchester from its competitors.

6.23 The key assets that genuinely distinguish Greater Manchester from its competitors and which are located within or close to the Green Belt boundary are:

- Manchester Airport / HS2 Airport Station
- Port Salford

6.24 Manchester Airport is the third busiest passenger airport in the UK, and the largest outside London with the capacity to grow to some 55 million

passengers a year. The Airport plays a vital role for Greater Manchester as well as a much wider area across the North and Midlands. The Greater Manchester Enterprise Zone presents a range of economic opportunities around the Airport. The arrival of HS2 and proposed HS2 Airport station will further boost this area.

- 6.25 Port Salford is currently under construction and will be the UK's first tri-modal inland waterway port. It is located on the Manchester Ship Canal which links from Greater Manchester westwards to the Mersey Estuary. Port Salford is also strategically located near to the junction of the M60, M62 and M602 motorways.
- 6.26 The Draft PfE 2021 identifies other assets in Greater Manchester, such as the City Centre, which are considered to be key assets however these are within the existing urban area and therefore do not form part of the PfE Site Selection process.

Criterion 3 - Land that can maximise existing economic opportunities which have significant capacity to deliver transformational change and / or boost the competitiveness and connectivity of Greater Manchester and genuinely deliver inclusive growth

Relevant PfE 2021 Objectives: 1, 3, 5

- 6.27 This criterion seeks to identify locations that have an existing employment offer and have the potential to provide transformational employment and residential development of a scale which would deliver new inclusive growth in sustainable destinations/places.
- 6.28 This criterion includes the following strategic areas:
- M62 North East Corridor
 - Wigan-Bolton Growth Corridor
 - New Carrington

- 6.29 The M62 North East corridor stretches from junction 18 (the confluence of the M60 and M66) to Junction 21 (Milnrow) and includes areas of Bury, Rochdale and Oldham. This corridor includes several existing employment locations at Heywood/Pilsworth, Stakehill and Kingsway which could be capable of delivering development at a transformative scale and significantly change the economic growth potential of the wider area.
- 6.30 The Wigan-Bolton Growth Corridor is located in the north west of Greater Manchester and will complement the M62 North-East Corridor. The corridor is focused around a proposed new road, a Bus Rapid Transit corridor and the more intense use of the Wigan-Atherton-Manchester rail line. The new road infrastructure will connect junction 26 of the M6 and junction 5 of the M61. The corridor is also linked to and builds upon the M6 logistics hub in Wigan (extending to Warrington, St Helens and West Lancashire) and Logistics North.
- 6.31 New Carrington is located in the south of Greater Manchester in Trafford, and provides the only opportunity in Greater Manchester to deliver a new settlement of significant size. Development in this location could enable the redevelopment of the extensive former Shell Carrington industrial estate and support the regeneration of Partington and Sale West.

Criterion 4 - *Within 800 metres of a main town centre boundary or 800m from the other town centres' centroids*

Relevant PfE 2021 Objective: 1, 2, 7

- 6.32 Criterion 4 identifies potential sites which are within close proximity to services and facilities in town centres and therefore offer a sustainable development location close to services and facilities.

6.33 An 800m buffer area was drawn from the boundary of the main town centres⁴ as defined in PfE Policy JP-P 45 and an 800m buffer was drawn from the centroid of the other town centres⁶ identified from the currently adopted Local Plans of the nine Greater Manchester authorities in PfE. The 800m distance is considered to be widely accepted as an appropriate distance for accessing services on foot. A buffer area was drawn from the boundary of the main town centres rather than the centroid as services are more spread out from the centre point. They also have the greatest range of services and facilities and are likely to have the best public transport connections.

Criterion 5 – *Have a direct significant impact on delivering urban regeneration*

Relevant PfE 2021 Objective: 5

6.34 Criterion 5 identifies sites which have a direct link to areas of high deprivation and therefore have the potential to deliver regenerative improvements. Areas of high deprivation were identified using the 10% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) for England 2015. Any potential site which was within or directly adjacent to these areas was considered against this criterion in terms of whether development could have a positive regenerative impact on the area of high deprivation and reduce the number of wards in Greater Manchester which fall within the 10% most deprived wards.

Criterion 6 – *Where transport investment (by the developer) and the creation of significant new demand (through appropriate development densities), would support the delivery of long-term viable sustainable travel options and delivers significant wider community benefits.*

⁴ Altrincham, Ashton-under-Lyne, Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport and Wigan

⁵ Previously this policy was GM Policy GM-E 3 in the Draft GMSF 2019 and GM E4

⁶ Ashton-in-Makerfield, Baguley, Chadderton, , , Cheetham Hill, Chorlton, Denton, Didsbury, Droylsden, Eastlands, Eccles, , Failsworth, Fallowfield, Farnworth, Gorton, Hapurhey, , Heywood, Hill Stores, Horwich, Hulme, Hyde, Lees, Leigh, Levenshulme, Little Lever, Littleborough, Longsight, , Middleton, Mossley, Newton Heath, Northenden, Openshaw, Pendleton, Prestwich, Radcliffe, Ramsbottom, , Royton, Rusholme, Sale, Shaw, Stalybridge, Stretford, Swinton, Uppermill, Urmston, Walkden, Westhoughton, Withington and Wythenshawe.

Relevant PfE 2021 Objective: 1, 2, 6

6.35 Criterion 6 seeks to exploit opportunities for integrated transport and land use planning where it is likely that development will be of such a scale that it will deliver significant wider public benefits. The following schemes are included in the Transport Strategy 2040 Delivery Plan. Any area that can contribute or directly benefit from one of the schemes listed below is considered to meet this criterion.

- Bus Rapid Transit linking Manchester City Centre to Heywood and Rochdale
- Additional Metrolink Stop at Elton Reservoir
- Additional Metrolink Stop at Cop Road
- Extension of Leigh Guided Busway
- Potential for new bus rapid transit on new road from Bolton to Wigan
- Hattersley Station south to access Godley Green
- Metrolink Western Leg (Airport line)
- Improved east/west links, Airport – Altrincham. Potential BRT scheme.
- CLC line improvements

Criterion 7 – *Deliver significant local benefits by addressing a major local problem/issue*

Relevant PfE 2021 Objective: 1,2,3,4,5,6,10

6.36 Criterion 7 relates to sites which can demonstrate direct link(s) to addressing a specific local need. To meet this criterion a site would be required to bring benefits across a wider area than the development itself and/or would bring benefits to existing communities. The type of benefits that potential sites could deliver are:

- Provide deliverable sites for housing in the north of Greater Manchester where there is an opportunity to capitalise on an existing high end market

housing area and / or provide an opportunity to diversify the housing market, contributing to the competitiveness of the north,

- Provide a specific type of housing to meet a locally identified need, eg older persons accommodation,
- Development would allow for the re-use and enhancement of an at risk heritage asset,
- Development would allow for the provision/retention of unviable community facility e.g. sports pitches,
- Development would deliver significant highway improvements which will help to resolve existing issues in the wider area.
- Development that can contribute to the delivery of additional healthcare and other wellbeing facilities.

Stage Two – Identify Areas of Search in line with the Site Selection criteria

6.37 Areas of Search were identified using the Site Selection Criteria maps produced for each of the 9 PfE districts (see Appendix 1). These maps show the approximate areas covered by Criterion 1 – 5, as well as showing all the Call for Sites which were submitted prior to 2019 (sites submitted after 2019 were considered and mapped separately). This allowed for Areas of Search to be identified where a Call for Site, or group of Call for Sites were considered to meet a Site Selection criterion. Table 1 sets out the thresholds which were applied to determine whether an area meets a Site Selection Criterion. Criterion 6 and Criterion 7 are not spatially distinctive in the way Criteria 1 to 5 are. Criterion 6 relates to major infrastructure investment as a result of development and therefore the infrastructure does not currently exist. The potential areas for this criterion were identified based on local district knowledge and informed by the 2040 Delivery Plan. Criterion 7 relates to sites which have the potential to deliver significant local benefits by addressing a major local problem/issue. These issues were identified using local knowledge.

Table 1: Site Selection criterion and the thresholds which have been applied

Site Selection Criteria	Considerations
Criterion 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply a 30% PDL threshold. Any Call for Site which is less than 30% PDL is not considered to meet this criterion • Assess how much of the area of search is within the good public transport area and apply a general rule of 50% or more of the area⁷ • Consider existing linkages to the public transport hub in determining how accessible it would be from the proposed development site
Criterion 2	<p>This criterion includes the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Port Salford • Manchester Airport / HS2 Airport Station
Criterion 3	<p>This criterion includes the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M62 North-East corridor • Wigan-Bolton Growth Corridor • New Carrington
Criterion 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess how much of the site is within the 800m town centre buffer area and apply a general rule that it must cover 50% or more of the site • Consider existing links to the town centre in determining how accessible it would be from the proposed development site
Criterion 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider whether development in the area could have a regenerative impact on the area of deprivation • Consider what linkages there are to the deprived area and the scale of development which could be proposed
Criterion 6	<p>The following schemes are included in Criterion 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus Rapid Transit linking Manchester City Centre to Heywood and Rochdale • Additional Metrolink Stop at Elton Reservoir • Additional Metrolink Stop at Cop Road • Extension of Leigh Guided Busway • Potential for new bus rapid transit on new road from Bolton to Wigan • Hattersley Station southern access to Godley Green

⁷ Good public transport area includes, GMAL 5.5+, within 800m of Metrolink stops, railway stations with at least two trains per hour, and stops on the Leigh – Salford – Manchester Bus Rapid Transit route.

Site Selection Criteria	Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metrolink Western Leg (Airport line) • Improved east/west links, Airport – Altrincham. Potential BRT scheme. • CLC line improvements
Criterion 7	<p>The following were considered in identifying sites which meet Criterion 7:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide deliverable sites for housing in the north of Greater Manchester where there is an opportunity to capitalise on an existing high end market housing area and / or provide an opportunity to diversify the housing market, contributing to the competitiveness of the north; • Provide a specific type of housing to meet a locally identified need, eg older persons accommodation • Development would allow for the re-use and enhancement of an at risk heritage asset • Development would allow for the provision/retention of unviable community facility e.g. sports pitches • Development would deliver significant highway improvements which will help to resolve existing issues in an area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development that can contribute to the delivery of additional healthcare and other wellbeing facilities.

6.38 Areas of Search were identified where it was considered a Site Selection criterion was met by one or several Call for Sites. (Submitted through the plan preparation process). An Area of Search may include one single call for site or multiple sites if they are considered to be in the same broad location. In addition to mapping the Call for Sites against the Areas of Search, the Draft GMSF 2016 allocations were also mapped, to assess their compatibility with the site selection criteria and whether they should be considered as an Area of Search.

6.39 The Area of Search approach helped to ensure that the identification of proposed allocations was driven by the overall Spatial Strategy and objectives. It also reflects the fact that decisions on one call for site could be influenced by those on nearby sites and therefore call for sites should not

necessarily be considered in isolation. The Areas of Search are intended to act as a general guide and the boundaries are therefore indicative.

6.40 Given the nature of the criteria, it was considered reasonable to apply a degree of judgment as to whether or not a call for site was considered to meet the required thresholds of a Site Selection criterion to be identified as an Area of Search. To assist in this process GIS queries on each call for site were carried out to spatially calculate how much of a specific Call for Site met a site selection criterion. The following spatial measures were calculated:

- The call for site is within the Site Selection good public transport area
- The call for site is considered to be brownfield land
- The call for site is within the buffer area of an identified town centre
- The call for site is within or adjacent to one of the 10% most deprived wards in England

6.41 These spatial measure results were also considered alongside a more detailed planning constraints assessment carried out for all the call for sites and set out in more detail below.

6.42 A total of 115 Areas of Search were identified containing 400 sites in 2016. Approximately a further 30 sites were assessed, that fell within Areas of Search, following the GMSF 2019 stage. Maps showing the Areas of Search, alongside the Site Selection criteria are available to view at Appendix 2a. Additional maps have been produced to show where sites submitted in the 2019 consultation met site selection criteria and were identified within Area of Search and are in Appendix 2b. A list of the Areas of search against the site selection criterion they have met has also been produced and can be seen in Appendix 3.

6.43 Allocations which were identified in the Draft GMSF 2016, which when assessed were not considered to meet a GMSF 2019 Site Selection criterion

and were therefore not considered to fall within an Area of Search have been listed separately in Appendix 4. These are no longer considered suitable for allocation.

The sites which fall outside Areas of Search have not been considered any further as part of this site selection process as they are not considered to be reasonable alternatives for meeting the overall vision, strategy and objectives. These sites can be viewed in Appendix 5.

Stage Three – Planning constraints assessment and Site Suitability

Assessment of the Call for Sites and Additional Sites Submitted during GMSF 2019 Consultation within an Area of Search – The Reasonable Alternatives for Allocations

6.44 Sites within the Areas of Search have been subject to an assessment against the following planning constraints:

- Health and wellbeing – distance to the nearest public park or playing field
- Social infrastructure access – distance to the nearest primary / secondary school and GP surgery
- Carbon emissions – area of the site which is within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)
- Ecology – nationally and locally identified sites, eg SSSI, SPA, SAC SBI, Wildlife Corridors etc
- Flood risk – area of the site which is within Flood Zone 2 or 3, SFRA recommendation for the site
- Water resources – area of the site which is within a groundwater source protection zone
- Landscape – Landscape Character Areas, and within 250m of a Landscape Character Areas
- Heritage – number of listed buildings, structures or monuments within the site or within 250m, as well as Scheduled Monuments, registered park or garden and Conservation Area

- Green Belt – relevant Green Belt assessment parcels from the Green Belt Assessment 2016
- Agricultural land – agricultural land grades on the site

6.45 The constraints analysis was automatically generated using GIS information from a range of data sources to give an indication of a site's development potential and to identify planning constraint(s) which would preclude the development of a site. The analysis also links to the Integrated Assessment sustainability objectives to help determine the suitability of the site / area for development. The out put of this work informed the reasonable alternatives for the proposed allocations.

6.46 Sites were also subject to a Site Suitability Assessment. The methodology for this assessment was developed independently by Arup to ensure compatibility with the IA framework, it can be viewed in Appendix 6 .The Assessment was carried out on all the call for sites in Areas of Search against constraints data based on the IA objectives. This assessment provides further information to the planning constraints as regards assessing the sustainability of all the sites and their suitability as reasonable sites to allocate. Again, this work informed the consideration of reasonable alternatives for the allocations.

6.47 Using this assessment together with a best fit of the Areas of Search against the Spatial Strategy, the spatial strategy principles (set out above), local knowledge and consideration of minimising Green Belt harm; sites were identified within Areas of Search with potential for allocation. The outcome of this process concluded with a list of sites within Areas of Search and highlighted that were considered to be more suitable for allocation (these sites were included in the stage 4 assessment). Appendix 7 provides a summary of the assessment of those sites within Areas of Search which were considered less suitable for allocation, but which represented "reasonable alternatives" for the allocation boundaries.

Stage Four –Areas of Search identified for allocation

- 6.48 Areas of Search chosen for allocation are those which are considered to have no other significant constraints precluding development and which represent the best fit for delivering the PfE Spatial Strategy and meeting identified needs with regard to the “rules”.
- 6.49 All Areas of Search identified for allocation are listed in Appendix 8. It should be noted that alongside the Site Selection process more detailed evidence based work on constraints, the GM Stage 2 Green Belt Harm Assessment and masterplanning has been prepared. This work has also helped to inform detailed allocation boundaries, areas for development and Green Belt boundaries. This is covered within the individual Allocation Topic papers.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 As part of each revision of the GMSF i.e 2019, then 2020 and PfE, changes have been made to the number of allocations and their boundaries to respond to consultation responses, new evidence and the “rules”. As a result some call for sites originally within allocations are now excluded. For clarity Appendix 9 sets out a schedule of each site submitted for consideration as a “Call for Site”, alongside their status within the Draft GMSF 2019, GMSF 2020 and Draft PfE 2021.
- 7.2 The detailed allocation boundaries can be found in the Draft PfE 2021.

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