

# **GM Allocation 28 East of Boothstown**

## **Topic Paper**

**GMSF 2020**

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# Section A – Background

## Technical assessments

The following technical assessments have been produced on behalf of the majority landowner in support of the GMSF site allocation which they are promoting:

- Agricultural Land Quality (RAC – November 2019)
- Baseline Air Quality Assessment (Air Quality Consultants – March 2019)
- Ecological Representation (TEP - March 2019)
- Education Briefing Note (EFM – March 2019)
- Flood Risk Letter (WSP – July 2020)
- High level Archaeological Assessment (Peel – no specified date)
- Initial Heritage Appraisal (Turley – April 2020)
- Site Appraisal – Flood Risk (WSP – March 2019)
- Transport Statement (TTHC – March 2019)

These documents have not been subject to a comprehensive review by the relevant departments within the city council or any relevant external organisations such as the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit. As such, they are not endorsed by Salford City Council or the GMCA at this stage, but rather published for information as key pieces of technical work undertaken on behalf of the majority landowner of the site. It is considered helpful to publish these documents at this stage, so that people have as much information as possible in making their comments on the Publication Draft GMSF ('2020 GMSF'). The conclusions drawn in these reports are outlined for information, where relevant, in this topic paper.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The East of Boothstown allocation is situated to the immediate east of the established residential area of Boothstown and bound by Leigh Road (A572) to the north, RHS Garden Bridgewater which is currently under construction to the east and the Bridgewater Canal to the south, beyond which extends the open expanse of Chat Moss.
- 1.2. The allocation provides one of only a few opportunities within Greater Manchester to deliver very high value housing in an extremely attractive environment, benefitting not only from an established premium housing market but also a location next to the RHS Garden Bridgewater and the historic Bridgewater Canal.

## 2. Site Details

- 2.1. The 29.1 hectare greenfield site comprises open agricultural land, and mature woodland (Alder Wood) and hedgerows. The north western part of the site is a vacant former poultry farm largely occupied by agricultural buildings, whilst there is one residential dwelling on the site and areas of hardstanding. Shaw Brook runs from north to south through the site. There are playing fields in the western part of the site.
- 2.2. The site is located within the wards of Boothstown and Ellenbrook, and Worsley and would be an extension of existing residential development to the west of the site. The

site is designated as a wildlife corridor area of search, and as Green Belt through policy EN1 of the Salford Saved Unitary Development Plan policies (2009).

### **3. Proposed Development**

- 3.1. The proposed allocation is for 300 houses, including large family houses. The precise housing mix will be informed by a masterplan/framework or Supplementary Planning Document (as required by criterion 1 of the policy), and the planning application process.
- 3.2. Criterion 2 of the policy requires that development of the site will be required to provide an affordable housing scheme equivalent to at least 50% of the dwellings on the site (with an indicative affordable housing tenure split of 37.5% social rented, 37.5% affordable rented and 25% shared ownership), with some of this directed towards off-site provision. Viability work by Three Dragons has confirmed that the delivery of 50% affordable at the above tenures is financially viable.
- 3.3. Appendix 1 sets out the policy wording and boundary for the East of Boothstown allocation as set out in the 2020 Publication version of the GMSF.
- 3.4. There have been a number of changes to the wording of the allocation policy between the 2019 Revised Draft Stage and the 2020 Publication stage. These changes are mainly in response to comments received to the 2019 allocation policy, updates to the evidence base (including the transport locality assessment<sup>1</sup> prepared for the site), and new evidence with regards to flood risk on the site. Key changes are set out below:
  - New criterion added to require a landscaped buffer along the eastern boundary of the site, facing RHS Garden Bridgewater
  - The requirement for development to “Mitigate flood risk and incorporate sustainable drainage systems” has been replaced by a requirement to provide a detailed drainage and flood risk management strategy which addresses the outcomes of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, ensuring that the development is safe and does not increase flood risk elsewhere. In addition, development should incorporate high quality sustainable drainage systems as part of the green infrastructure for the site and accommodate sufficient space for any necessary flood storage, particularly in the south of the site
  - Requirement for the provision of a high quality network of pedestrian and cycle routes through the site, and off site pedestrian crossings and a footpath adjacent to site on the south side of Leigh Road added to the policy
  - Added specific reference to the reasoned justification to the net gain in biodiversity being a minimum of 10%

### **4. Site Selection**

- 4.1. The site selection process undertaken to determine the priority allocations to be taken forward through the GMSF is detailed in a background paper published

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<sup>1</sup> Systra (November 2020) Transport Locality Assessments. Introductory note and assessments – Salford Allocations

alongside the GMSF<sup>2</sup>. Land at East of Boothstown has been selected on the basis of criterion 7 (land that would deliver significant local benefits by addressing a major local problem/issue) of the assessment criteria. The site selection background paper explains that 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 local communities. Examples of the types of benefits are set out below:

- 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, e.g 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.

4.2. It is the site's ability to provide high end housing to diversify the housing market within the north of Greater Manchester, and accommodation to meet a specific need, which places the site under criterion 7. Development would contribute to the spatial strategy of the GMSF, particularly significantly increasing the competitiveness of the northern areas through the selective release of Green Belt in key locations to diversify housing provision.

## **5. Planning History**

5.1. A large proportion of the general planning history for this area relates to residential development, either in the form of demolition and rebuild, and extensions to existing dwellings. There have been some historic agricultural developments (new build and change of use) and some regrading work by (what was) North West Water. Part of the site was included within the red line for the Salford Forest Park proposal that was refused planning permission by Salford City Council.

## **6. GMSF 2019 Consultation Responses**

6.1. A large number of objections to the allocation were received with the most significant numbers relating to the exacerbation of existing issues of congestion along Worsley Road and Leigh Road, leading back from Junction 13 of the M60. Comments identified an extended rush hour and very long delays, with the impact of the RHS Garden yet to be felt. Some comments suggested that plans should await outputs from the North West Quadrant Study. Linked to the above, representations referred to inadequate public transport (specifically a lack of capacity on the, otherwise inaccessible, Vantage service and that other services had been pulled as a result) and existing issues of air pollution.

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<sup>2</sup> GMCA (September 2020) GMSF Site Selection Background Paper

- 6.2. A number of representations were critical of the level of housing need identified overall, the existing capacity on brownfield sites, and specifically in relation to this site, the type of housing being proposed not serving local communities.
- 6.3. A large number of representations objected to the loss of Green Belt / green infrastructure with a number of related issues including loss of habitats (including protected species) and recreation opportunities (specifically playing fields to rear of Falconwood Close and Poynt Chase). A number of other negative impacts on the area were identified, including the area already being overcrowded from recent developments, a lack of capacity in community and utilities infrastructure, a potential drop in property values, increased crime and a conflict with the RHS Garden.

**7. GMSF Integrated Assessment**

7.1. A summary of the integrated assessment<sup>3</sup> conclusions relating to the allocation are provided in the table below. Other than in respect of impacts relating to the development of greenfield land in agricultural use, the impacts identified were largely positive. Possible actions in respect of mitigation identified are considered to have been adequately addressed through the GMSF Policy itself, thematic policies within the GMSF and/or local policy proposed through the Publication Salford Development Management Policies and Designations Document (January 2020).

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Summary of assessment and mitigation identified</b>	<b>Action on mitigation</b>
1. Provide a sustainable supply of housing land including for an appropriate mix of sizes, types, tenures in locations to meet housing need, and to support economic growth	<p>Positive impacts arising from provision of housing and the site's proximity to green spaces, playing fields and footpaths.</p> <p>Despite this the 2019 integrated assessment identified as mitigation that reference could be made to the number of dwellings to be provided and details regarding the mix.</p>	<p>Subsequent to this an assumption relating to the total number of dwellings was added to the policy.</p> <p>The mix on the site will be determined through masterplanning and having regard to national, GMSF and Local Plan policies.</p>
2 Provide a sustainable supply of employment land to ensure sustainable economic growth and job creation	<p>Positive impacts relating to policy requirements on school provision. No negative impacts identified.</p> <p>Identified as mitigation giving consideration as to how housing land can enhance work force skills and training,</p>	<p>Issue identified considered to be a detailed one relevant to a range of sites and more appropriately addressed through thematic policies at the GM and/or local level.</p>

<sup>3</sup> Arup (January 2019, and October 2020) Integrated Assessment of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework

Objective	Summary of assessment and mitigation identified	Action on mitigation
	such as through construction jobs.	The Publication Salford Local Plan (January 2020) proposes policy requirements in relation to this issue.
3.Ensure that there is sufficient coverage and capacity of transport and utilities to support growth and development	<p>Positive impacts relating to policy requirements including access to public transport services and high quality pedestrian routes.</p> <p>Identified as mitigation to consider a feasibility study into utilities/ digital infrastructure requirements and ability of local network to support development.</p>	The recommended mitigation is addressed by GMSF thematic policies GM-E 1 and GM-N 2, and a masterplan for the site as required by the allocations policy would also address the issue.
4.Reduce levels of deprivation and disparity	<p>Identified impacts as uncertain as it was considered uncertain that development would affect deprived areas.</p> <p>Mitigation identified in respect of considering deprived areas in relation to benefits such as creation of construction and operational employment, or improved transport links or increases in the range of community facilities.</p>	The importance of social value as part of new development in the city is clearly set out in the Publication Salford Local Plan (January 2020) along with associated policy requirements.
5.Promote equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination	<p>Identified a neutral impact in relation to this objective.</p> <p>As mitigation it was identified that the policy could reference integration with existing communities and also encourage the provision of varied tenures within the development.</p>	<p>Subsequent to this recommendation detailed requirements in relation to affordable housing were added to the policy.</p> <p>In respect of the other issues raised, the policy requirement for masterplanning to be developed with the local community and other stakeholders could be significant in this regard. Other issues of equality and opportunity area addressed in thematic policies of the GMSF</p>



Objective	Summary of assessment and mitigation identified	Action on mitigation
		and the Publication Salford Local Plan. In terms of the latter, policy requirements include those relating to fairness, equality of access and design.
6. Support improved health and wellbeing of the population and reduce health inequalities	A largely positive impact was identified citing policy requirements relating to pedestrian routes, protection of natural features, including the neighbouring SBI, and the provision of allotment plots.	No mitigation identified.
7. Ensure access to and provision of appropriate social infrastructure	<p>A lack of reference to healthcare facilities resulted in a negative/uncertain impact in this regard. Positive impacts resulting from requirements in relation to school provision and allotments.</p> <p>As mitigation it was identified that ensuring healthcare provision is accessible to all is considered through masterplanning.</p>	<p>Mitigation to be addressed through masterplanning.</p> <p>Publication Local Plan included additional requirements in relation to health provision.</p>
8. Support improved educational attainment and skill levels for all	Policy requirement relating to school provision is identified as a major positive. A neutral impact is identified in relation to the education and skill levels in the working age population as it is not covered in the policy.	No mitigation identified.
9. Promote sustainable modes of transport	Positive impact identified with references to encouraging use of nearby public transport and high quality pedestrian routes.	No mitigation identified.
10. Improve air quality within Greater Manchester, particularly in the 10 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)?	<p>A positive/negative impact is identified, the assessment referencing proximity to the AQMA and also that the policy supports the use of active modes and public transport.</p> <p>Seeking to minimise private car use and considering mitigation solutions including</p>	The issues identified can be addressed through masterplanning. The policy includes requirements which seek to encourage public transport use, and this is supplemented by policy requirements in the Publication Salford

Objective	Summary of assessment and mitigation identified	Action on mitigation
	green infrastructure, incentivising electric car use and/or masterplan layout which reduces emissions near sensitive receptors are all identified as mitigation.	Local Plan. The Local Plan also includes requirements relating to electric vehicle charging and the incorporation of green infrastructure within development.
11. Conserve and enhance biodiversity, green infrastructure and geodiversity assets	The assessment identifies both positive and negative impacts in relation to this objective citing the site's location within a wildlife corridor, proximity to a protected habitat and adjacency to Worsley Woods (an SBI). Also referenced are policy requirements relating to the protection of the SBI and other natural features. The requirement for allotment plots is also identified.	No mitigation identified.
12. Ensure communities, developments and infrastructure are resilient to the effects of expected climate change	A neutral impact identified, the site is relatively low flood risk and policy requires incorporation of sustainable drainage systems to mitigate surface water flooding.  Issue is also addressed in thematic policies of the GMSF and Publication Salford Local Plan.	No action required
13. Reduce the risk of flooding to people and property	A neutral impact identified, the site is relatively low flood risk and policy requires incorporation of sustainable drainage systems to mitigate surface water flooding.  Issue is also addressed in thematic policies of the GMSF and Publication Salford Local Plan.	No action required
14. Protect and improve the quality and availability of water resources	Positive impact identified. The policy requires development to protect the quality of watercourses through and around the site.	No action required

Objective	Summary of assessment and mitigation identified	Action on mitigation
	Issue is also addressed in thematic policies of the GMSF and Publication Salford Local Plan.	
15. Increase energy efficiency, encourage low carbon generation and reduce greenhouse gas emissions	<p>A positive impact identified in relation to the promotion of cycling and walking, but negative/uncertain impacts given a lack of reference to low carbon and renewable energy facilities and a proactive reduction in direct and indirect greenhouse gases.</p> <p>The assessment recommended making reference to energy efficiency directly and ways that it can be increased, such as highlighting the benefits of sustainable modes of transport</p>	Issues are addressed in thematic policies in the GMSF and a number of policies within the Publication Salford Local Plan including in relation to climate change, design, access and energy.
16. Conserve and/or enhance landscape, townscape, heritage assets and their setting and the character of GM	<p>Positive impacts identified in relation to retention of landscape features and ensuring that vehicular access does not compromise the quality of existing residential areas.</p> <p>In respect of mitigation, the assessment identifies a need to consider heritage assets outside of the site throughout the detailed design to reduce risk throughout construction and operational phases.</p> <p>Mitigation also includes a need to ensure that the policy is designed to take advantage of the natural landscape assets and connections to these both on and off site and also townscape assets that are present.</p>	<p>Mitigation issues identified are addressed by separate thematic policies in the GMSF and policies within the Publication Local Plan in respect of heritage, design and green infrastructure. Masterplanning requirements provide an opportunity to consider the issues raised further.</p> <p>A heritage impact assessment of the allocation has been undertaken.</p>
17. Ensure that land resources are	Major negative impacts identified resulting from the	Previously developed land opportunities within the city are identified

Objective	Summary of assessment and mitigation identified	Action on mitigation
<p>allocated and used in an efficient and sustainable manner to meet the housing and employment needs of GM, whilst reducing land contamination</p>	<p>development of greenfield land in agricultural use.</p> <p>Mitigation included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider how PDL development and the development of derelict land, properties and infrastructure could be encouraged as a result of development</li> <li>• Further research into agricultural land quality</li> </ul>	<p>through Salford's Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (and brownfield register). No particular opportunities relating specifically to the site are apparent.</p> <p>Mitigation is included within chapter 4 and chapter 9 of the GMSF</p>
<p>18. Promote sustainable consumption of resources and support the implementation of the waste hierarchy</p>	<p>A neutral impact is identified due to a lack of specific reference within the policy.</p> <p>Mitigation included the promotion of sustainable construction methods and giving consideration to waste and recycling facilities in design.</p>	<p>These issues are specifically addressed in the Publication Salford Local Plan including policy requirements relating to efficient and coordinated use of land, energy, design and waste.</p>

# Section B – Physical

## 8. Transport

- 8.1. A Locality Assessment<sup>4</sup> has been prepared for the site allocation in order to confirm the potential transport impacts and identify appropriate mitigation to support the inclusion of the allocation in the GMSF. The Locality Assessment for the East of Boothstown site concludes that the allocation is deliverable, and the traffic impacts of the site are considered to be 'less than severe' in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework. It should be noted that the assessment is considered to be a 'worst case' scenario which does not take full account of the extensive opportunities for mode shift toward active travel and public transport improvements associated with the significant continued investment proposals within the Greater Manchester 2040 Transport Strategy.
- 8.2. The Locality Assessment has considered the impacts of the site allocation in isolation and in context with other nearby sites such as the Hazelhurst Farm, and the North of Mosley Common allocation in Wigan. Results from the modelling work indicate that the allocation in isolation has a limited impact on the A580 East Lancashire Road and A572 Leigh Road. As a consequence of this, no highway mitigation has been deemed necessary to accommodate the additional demand generated to or from the allocation.
- 8.3. Mitigation has been investigated at the A580 East Lancashire Road Junction with A577 Mosley Common Road and the A572 Leigh Road/ A577 Mosley Common Road Junction. Flows associated with the proposed East of Boothstown allocation are considered to be negligible at both junctions and would not therefore directly necessitate funding any improvement. A scheme for the A580 East Lancashire Road Junction with A577 Mosley Common Road is being funded through Section 106 monies which would improve the operation of the junction, however, there is limited scope to provide any further improvement.
- 8.4. Modelling was undertaken for junction 13 of the M60 at the roundabouts at Worsley Brow. This indicates that the junction operates above capacity in the reference case and is broadly comparable in the 'with GMSF' scenarios. A scheme to improve the operation of the roundabouts is currently being introduced at Junction 13 and this is anticipated to improve the operation of the junction.
- 8.5. With regards to sustainable transport modes, Boothstown is served by a range of public transport services, with bus stops provided along the A572 Leigh Road serving the Regional Centre to the east and Leigh / Wigan to the west. These provide a 30-minute frequency, whilst the more frequent V1/V2 bus services (Leigh-Salford-Manchester Bus Rapid Transit) run along the A580 East Lancashire Road to the north 1km from the site. A footpath runs north-south through the allocation and there is also a footpath along the northern bank of the canal and a cycle path along the southern towpath which can be accessed via the Vicars Hall Lane bridge crossing. Footways are provided along parts of Leigh Road, providing access to bus

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<sup>4</sup> Systra (November 2020) Transport Locality Assessments. Introductory note and assessments – Salford Allocations

stops. The Locality Assessment identifies some walking and cycling improvements which would improve the site's accessibility by sustainable modes, these include:

- Footpath along Leigh Road (£95k)
- Footpath from canal to Occupation Rd access
- A572 Leigh Rd crossing
- B5232 Newearth Rd crossing

8.6. The 2020 GMSF site allocation policy has been updated to incorporate these requirements into the policy and further sustainable transport measures may be identified through the masterplanning process. It explains that the development shall: ensure good quality access by walking and cycling for all residents to services and facilities in Boothstown and the local area, bus services on the surrounding road network, the Bridgewater Canal and Chat Moss to the south, including through the provision of a high-quality network of pedestrian and cycle routes through the site; and provide off-site pedestrian crossings and a footpath adjacent to the site on the south side of Leigh Road. It is considered that improving connectivity for sustainable modes throughout the allocation and in proximity to the allocation would allow for greater connectivity to the established public transport network.

8.7. Two vehicular site accesses are likely to be required to serve the allocation providing a primary access, and a secondary access in the event of an emergency. The primary access would be provided from a priority access off Occupation Road. A large signalised junction is provided at the junction with the A572 Leigh Road, which also serves the Royal Horticultural Society Garden Bridgewater, due to open in 2021. Given the anticipated level of demand to and from the allocation, a ghost island junction arrangement is considered appropriate at Occupation Road. This junction has been tested in the 2040 future scenario and is considered to operate within capacity. If required, a secondary access (to be used in the event of an emergency) could be taken from Quayside Close to the south west of the allocation.

## **9. Flood Risk and Drainage**

9.1. Shaw Brook runs in a southerly direction through the site from the northern to the southern boundary, with a tributary joining in the northern part of the site.

9.2. Broad scale flood modelling for the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)<sup>5</sup> has shown a greater fluvial flood risk on this site than previously thought. The city council is currently working with the landowner and their consultants to find a solution to this issue. It is anticipated that the proposed number of dwellings can be delivered safely on the site and further evidence is expected to be produced to support this, based on more detailed modelling of the flood risk. Therefore, the SFRA concludes that it is likely that development on this site can pass the Exception Test once detailed fluvial modelling information is available.

9.3. The broad scale modelling shows that in a 1 in 100 year event (i.e. a flood which has a 1% probability of occurring in any given year), large areas of the central and southern parts of the site would be flooded, mostly by shallow water, but with deeper

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<sup>5</sup> JBA consulting (March 2019) Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Greater Manchester – Update

water along the Shaw Brook corridor and at the southern end of the site. Once climate change is taken into account, both the area and depth of flooding increase.

- 9.4. Surface water flooding follows a similar pattern to the fluvial flooding, with water pooling largely at the southern end of the site, particularly in an extreme event. It is anticipated that on this site measures to mitigate surface water flooding and measures to mitigate fluvial flooding would complement each other. Both are being addressed in ongoing discussions with the landowner regarding flood risk.
- 9.5. Some land within the site would need to be used for high quality sustainable drainage systems to mitigate the surface water flooding issues. Sufficient open land within the site area would also need to be left to provide for suitable storage of flood water in the event of a fluvial flood, to compensate for any loss of flood storage as a result of the development, ensuring that there is no increase in flood risk elsewhere and that the development would be safe for its lifetime.
- 9.6. The flood risk review undertaken on behalf of the landowner<sup>6</sup> has demonstrated that fluvial flows to the adjacent RHS site can be attenuated through works to this site, which would divert overland flows which currently reach the RHS site into the network of sustainable drainage systems proposed for this site. The 2020 allocation policy has been amended to take into account the above issues and ensure that adequate flood risk mitigation is provided.

## **10. Ground Conditions**

- 10.1. Agricultural land data suggests that the entire site comprises grade 3 agricultural land (grades 1, 2 and 3a are defined as the best and most versatile). Grade 3 land is subdivided into sub grade 3a (good quality land) and sub grade 3b (moderate quality land). There is however no detailed Agricultural Land Classification data available for the site.
- 10.2. The majority landowner has undertaken an assessment of the agricultural land classification of the site allocation<sup>7</sup> which is published alongside the GMSF for information. The assessment of the agro-climatic conditions indicates that whilst the number of field capacity days is considered to be unfavourable for agricultural land working, there is no overriding climatic limitation to agricultural land quality. The soil survey mapping shows the Brickfield 3 association across the majority of the site, with Turbary Moor soils in the south. The appraisal explains that the Brickfield 3 association is characterised by predominantly loamy and clayey surface-water gley soils that are waterlogged for much of the year and cultivation can be difficult. The Turbary Moor soils comprise peat throughout, where uncultivated the soils are very acidic with high groundwater levels. The soils can be improved for arable crops by draining using pumped ditches combined with field drains.
- 10.3. The report concludes that the soils are affected by wetness and workability and are most likely to be of sub-grade 3b, with the potential for sub-grade 3a and 4 to be

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<sup>6</sup> WSP (May 2020) GM Allocation 31 – Land East of Boothstown, Salford: Site Appraisal – Drainage and Flood Risk. Also letter from WSP dated 17 July 2020 regarding the above

<sup>7</sup>Reading Agricultural Consultants Ltd (November 2019) Agricultural Land Quality, Land East of Boothstown.

present. Based on the adjacent survey data the report considers that soils mapped to the south of the site are likely to be of a better quality.

## **11. Utilities**

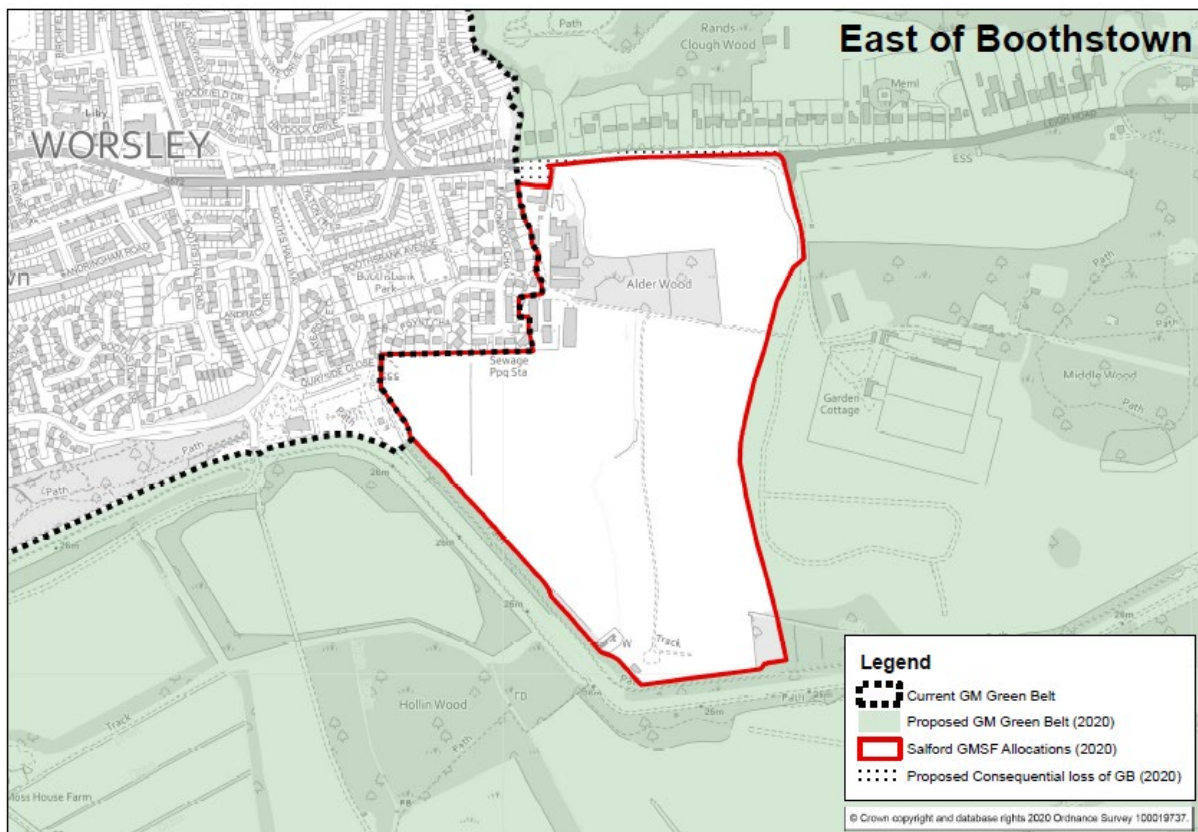
- 11.1. United Utilities has advised that there is a large gravity sewer running east to west through the central part of the site, with a smaller gravity main running north to south through the north west corner of the site. In addition to this, there is a large trunk mains with formal easements running north to south through the site. Having regard to these issues, the GMSF allocation policy requires that the development of the site provides an easement for the significant utilities infrastructure running through and near the site. The majority landowner has prepared a development framework for the site, which indicates that the relevant easements can be accommodated within the development proposals and would not constrain delivery.
- 11.2. Cadent has indicated that, due to this site connecting near one of their extremities, reinforcement may be required to ensure that there is enough pressure at the connection point. The demand is estimated to be 300scm/h at peak or 3,250kwh (on the assumption that all homes connect to the gas network). The need for this would be assessed in detail at the time the connection request is submitted to Cadent.
- 11.3. Electricity North West (ENWL) estimates that the total electrical demand (the peak demands used to determine the size of the connections required for each development) associated with this site is 0.42MW. The demands associated with the city's baseline supply of housing and employment sites and the four GMSF allocations in Salford totals 243.3 MW. To inform their plans for the network, ENWL forecast how customers would use and generate electricity in their annual Distribution Future Electricity Scenarios (DFES) and information on developments are an important input to this. In assessing the impact of all proposed developments in Salford up to 2037 on the network, ENWL makes assumptions about the average electrical demand of each type of development (each house would be heated by gas and half of the apartments would have electrical heating and the other half would have heat pumps which significantly increase the electrical requirements of the property. Assumptions are also made about the electrical consumption of the industrial and commercial spaces.). The assessment is therefore an approximation, recognising that customers would change their needs over the same timescales.
- 11.4. ENWL has indicated that there is approximately 54MW space capacity within Salford's 11 primary substations. ENWL concludes that by 2037, additional electrical demands would exceed spare capacity if all of the developments are realised such that their network. ENWL would therefore need to expand their network, and although would first consider using the existing network more flexibly, the size of the estimated new capacity is likely to mean that new Primary substations would be needed. These are issues associated with accommodating the wider development requirements within Salford rather than being specific to this site. ENW has indicated that requirements would depend on the precise timing and extent of developments, interacting with the altered needs of other customers. Ongoing dialogue between the city council and ENWL would therefore be important and the masterplanning process provides an opportunity to consider further any site-specific requirements.



# Section C – Environmental

## 12. Green Belt Assessment

12.1 The allocation would result in the removal of 29.6 hectares of existing Green Belt. 29.1 hectares of this land would be within the development allocation itself and a further 0.5 hectares along the northern boundary of the allocation to exclude: existing dwellings falling between the allocation and the residential area of Boothstown and Ellenbrook; and Leigh Road to the immediate north of the site, with the new Green Belt boundary being drawn along its northern edge.



### *Exceptional Circumstances*

12.2 The strategic level exceptional circumstances for site allocations within the current Green Belt are set out in detail in a Background Paper<sup>8</sup>, with the key driver being the need to deliver the ambitions set out in the Greater Manchester Strategy and the objectively assessed need for both employment and housing. East of Boothstown has been selected to deliver part of the identified dwelling requirement as one of only a few opportunities across Greater Manchester to provide very high value homes in an extremely attractive environment<sup>9</sup>.

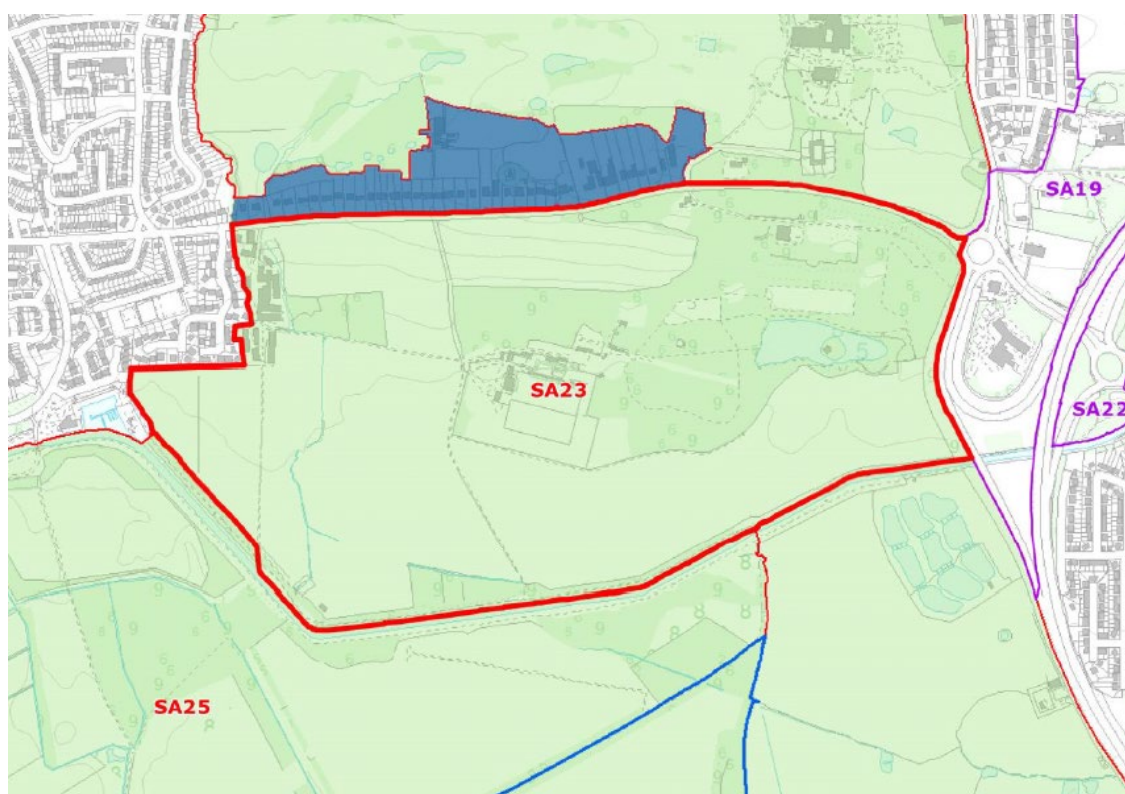
<sup>8</sup> GMCA (October 2020) Our Exceptional Circumstances

<sup>9</sup> GMCA (September 2020) GMSF Site Selection Background Paper – criterion 7

- 12.3 At the local level the site would contribute to a wider mix of dwellings coming forward in the city (particularly houses in Salford West) with the existing pipeline heavily weighted towards apartment development reflecting the city's location at the heart of the GM conurbation and forming part of the City Centre. The allocation would also deliver a significant number of affordable dwellings, with the GMSF allocation policy requiring the provision of an affordable housing scheme equivalent to at least 50% of the 300 dwellings to be provided, with some of this being off-site.
- 12.4 The GMSF Allocation policy identifies a number of requirements for the development of the site some of which have the potential to bring wider benefits. These are discussed in greater detail elsewhere in this topic paper but include: improvements to the footway to the south of Leigh Road and the northern path alongside the Bridgewater Canal; the opportunity to enhance the ecological value of Shaw Brook; a 10% biodiversity net gain; and the provision of a neighbourhood equipped area of play and allotments.

#### *Contribution to Green Belt purposes*

- 12.5 An assessment of the contribution that parts of the Greater Manchester Green Belt make to the Green Belt purposes defined in national policy was published in 2016<sup>10</sup>. The allocation was assessed as part of parcel SA23 in that document, which also included Green Belt land to the east.



- 12.6 A summary of this assessment is shown in the table below:

<sup>10</sup> LUC (2016) Greater Manchester Green Belt Assessment

GB Purpose	Assessment	Conclusion on contribution
<b>Purpose 1 - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b>		
1a - Does the parcel exhibit evidence of existing urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?	There are a few urbanising features within the parcel but there is a strong sense of openness because they are set within a mixed land use of woodland, a small lake to the east and farmland to the west.	Strong
1b - Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?	The parcel plays a strong role in inhibiting ribbon development to the south and east of the A572 and along the road leading to the Garden Centre and Scout Hall.	Strong
<b>Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b>		
Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?	The parcel forms part of a critical gap between the settlements of Boothstown and Ellenbrook to the west and Worsley to the east. Parcels SA20 and SA21 also form part of this gap.	Strong
<b>Purpose 3 – To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		
Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?  Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?	The parcel is rural in character and displays characteristics of the countryside.	Strong
<b>Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		
Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of a historic town(s)?	The parcel plays a role in the setting of the historic settlement of Worsley, but to a limited degree.	Moderate
<b>Purpose 5 - Assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b>		
The assessment does not provide a parcel by parcel assessment in relation to this purpose given difficulties in distinguishing the extent to which individual parcels delivers against it.		

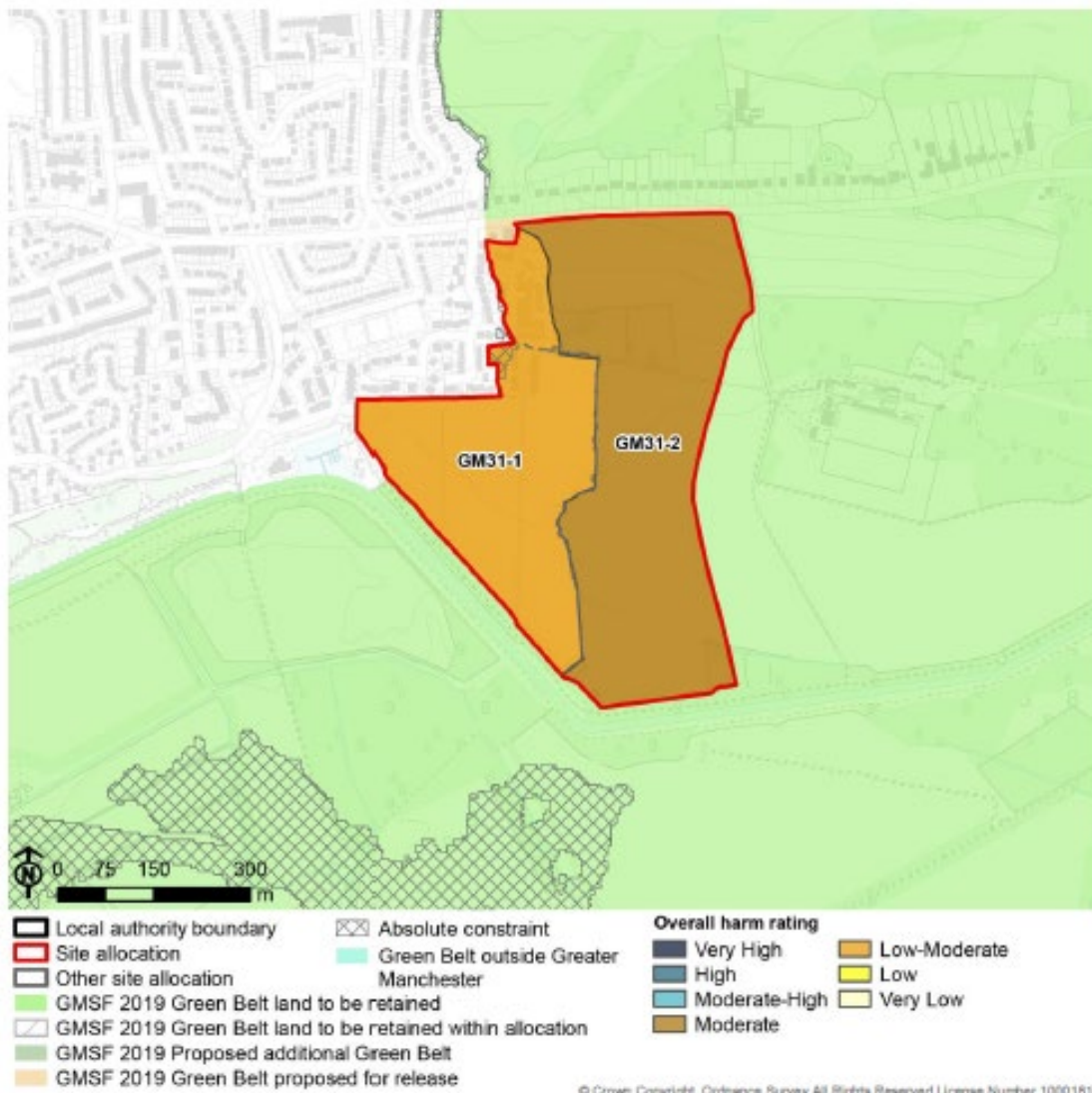
### *Potential Impact on the Green Belt*

12.7 Further to the above, an assessment of the potential harm to the Green Belt arising from the allocation's release has been undertaken<sup>11</sup>. This focuses on the allocation

<sup>11</sup> LUC (September 2020) Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study, Assessment of Proposed 2019 GMSF Allocations

boundary as proposed in the Revised Draft GMSF published in 2019<sup>12</sup> and as shown in the image below<sup>13</sup>. Only very minor changes to the boundary have been proposed in the latest version of the GMSF (2020) correcting mapping errors on the allocation's western boundary. This does not affect the conclusions reached in relation to the earlier version of the allocation.

- 12.8 The new Green Belt boundary would be formed by Leigh Road to the north of the allocation, and to the east has been drawn along the planning application red line boundary for RHS Garden Bridgewater.



- 12.9 The eastern and western parts of the allocation (as shown on the image above) have been identified as causing differing levels of harm to the Green Belt. The release of the western element is identified as causing “low-moderate” harm and the eastern element, which reflects the full extent of the allocation, “moderate” harm<sup>14</sup>. A more

<sup>12</sup> GMCA (January 2019) Revised Draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework

<sup>13</sup> LUC (September 2020) Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study, Assessment of Proposed 2019 GMSF Allocations, Appendix B, page 183

<sup>14</sup> LUC (September 2020) Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study, Assessment of Proposed 2019 GMSF Allocations

detailed summary of the allocation's potential impact on Green Belt purposes and on adjacent Green Belt, as identified in the Greater Manchester Assessment of Proposed Allocations<sup>15</sup>, is provided in the table below.

Impact on Green Belt purposes:

	<b>GM31/1 (eastern element)</b>		<b>GM31/2 (western element)</b>	
Purpose 1 – Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Moderate impact	The release of the land would constitute sprawl. However, the degree of urbanising containment and lack of distinction from the urban edge limits its role in preventing sprawl.	Moderate impact	The release of the land would constitute sprawl. Despite its degree of urbanising containment, the sub-area has some distinction from the urban edge and its openness contributes to its role in preventing sprawl.
Purpose 2 – Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	Limited/No impact	Its release would not significantly extend the inset edge of Boothstown and Ellenbrook further east than that existing to the immediate north. Woodland blocks act as relatively significant separating features and Green Belt land outside of the Allocation plays a stronger role in maintaining separation.	Moderate impact	Releasing this land would reduce the gap between Boothstown and Ellenbrook, and Worsley that is relatively narrow (circa 1.4 km) but the woodland at Middle Wood and the M60 motorway would remain as significant separating features.
Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding	Moderate impact	The land is perceived as countryside.	Moderate impact	Despite a degree of urbanising containment, the land is free of urbanising

<sup>15</sup>LUC (September 2020) Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study, Assessment of Proposed 2019 GMSF Allocations, Appendix B page 185 and 187

	<b>GM31/1 (eastern element)</b>		<b>GM31/2 (western element)</b>	
the countryside from encroachment		However, the degree of urbanising containment and lack of distinction from the urban edge limits the role of the land in preventing encroachment on the countryside.		development, has some distinction from the urban edge and is generally perceived as countryside.
Purpose 4 – Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	Relatively limited impact	An element of the setting of the historic settlement of Worsley. Release of this land would detract from this but would not affect key elements of historic character and setting.	Relatively limited impact	An element of the setting of the historic settlement of Worsley. Release of this land would detract from this but would not affect key elements of historic character and setting.
Purpose 5 – To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land	Equal contribution impact	All Green Belt land is considered to make an equal contribution to this purpose.	Equal contribution impact	All Green Belt land is considered to make an equal contribution to this purpose.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt:

	<b>GM31/1 (eastern element)</b>	<b>GM31/2 (western element)</b>
	No/ negligible impact  Would increase the containment of retained open woodland to the west, but the wooded nature of this area means that its distinction from the urban area would not be	No/ negligible impact  Would lead to increased containment of retained Green Belt land to the north of Leigh Road, comprising of a golf course and washed-over development, but the urbanising

	significantly weakened. The release would result in a relatively distinct boundary between the inset settlement and retained Green Belt land, marked by dense tree cover.	influence of that development means that development in the sub-area would not cause additional impact. No significant change in the strength of distinction between the inset settlement and the Green Belt, which would still have no distinct boundary feature to the east and would be bordered by the RHS Bridgewater site.
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12.10 The cumulative impact of all changes to the Green Belt proposed through the GMSF has also been assessed<sup>16</sup>. In this context it is similarly identified that the allocation's release would constitute "sprawl" and "encroachment into the countryside". It is described that the release of the allocation "would narrow the gap between Boothstown and Ellenbrook and Worsley" but that "significant separating features mean the Green Belt here would continue to contribute to preventing the settlements from merging." It is also identified that the allocation "could detract from the setting and special character of Worsley to a relatively limited extent."<sup>17</sup>

*Mitigation to address Green Belt harm*

12.11 The principal cause of harm to the Green Belt is from the loss of Green Belt land within the Allocation itself and as such "mitigation measures would not reduce the harm of release of this Allocation"<sup>18</sup>.

12.12 Nevertheless, NPPF paragraph 138 of the NPPF states that, when drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, strategic policy making authorities should "set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land". To this end an assessment of the potential to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt around GMSF allocations has been undertaken<sup>19</sup>.

12.13 The assessment identifies a number of potential projects as listed below<sup>20</sup>:

<sup>16</sup> LUC (September 2020) Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study, Cumulative Assessment of Proposed 2020 GMSF Allocations and Additions

<sup>17</sup> LUC (September 2020) Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study, Cumulative Assessment of Proposed 2020 GMSF Allocations and Additions - Strategic Area 7, pages 22 and 23.

<sup>18</sup> LUC (September 2020) Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study, Assessment of Proposed 2019 GMSF Allocations, Appendix B page 183

<sup>19</sup> LUC (September 2020) Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study: Identification of Opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of the Green Belt in the vicinity of Proposed 2019 Green Belt Allocations

<sup>20</sup> LUC (September 2020) Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study: Identification of Opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of the Green Belt in the vicinity of Proposed 2019 Green Belt Allocations, Appendix F

Potential enhancement projects	
<b>Access</b>	
1.	Potential PRow access improvements; including multi-user access improvements to Roe Green Loophole.
2.	Improvement of the existing Bridgewater Canal Towpath.
3.	Extension to Salford Trail long distance footpath.
4.	Creation of local level cycle routes.
5.	Installation of new pedestrian / cycle crossing over Bridgewater Canal.
<b>Sport and recreation</b>	
6.	Creation of woodland play areas.
7.	Potential spectator and access upgrades at Roe Green Cricket Club, Roe Green Tennis Club and Ellesmere Sports Club.
8.	Potential new allotment facilities.
<b>Biodiversity and wildlife corridors</b>	
9.	Use of active woodland management practices.
10.	Small scale landscape enhancements.
11.	Potential restoration of mossland habitats, including peatland restoration to lowland raised bog.
<b>Landscape and visual</b>	
12.	Community hub improvements at Beesley Green.
13.	Potential extension of buffer planting or existing tree coverage.
14.	Enhance habitat connectivity by restoring lost hedgerows in existing Green Belt and managing the landscape accordingly to allow for the movement of species.

12.14 Opportunities in this regard can be considered further through the masterplanning process required by the GMSF Allocation policy (criterion 1). However, relevant to the above, the allocation policy includes the following key requirements:

- Criterion 3 - Retain Alder Wood and the other areas of mature deciduous woodland and protected trees
- Criterion 4 - Take opportunities to enhance the ecological value of Shaw Brook, including naturalising where practicable and retaining significant open land around it, and utilise the brook as a central landscape feature running through the site
- Criterion 5 - Incorporate a landscaped buffer along the eastern boundary of the site, facing RHS Garden Bridgewater
- Criterion 9 - Support the objectives for the Great Manchester Wetlands Nature Improvement Area and avoid harm to protected species
- Criterion 10 - Ensure good quality access by walking and cycling for all residents to services and facilities in Boothstown and the local area, bus services on the surrounding road network, the Bridgewater Canal and Chat Moss to the south, including through the provision of a high quality network of pedestrian and cycle routes through the site; off-site pedestrian crossings and a footpath adjacent to the site on the south side of Leigh Road
- Criterion 11 - Secure further improvements to the path on the north side of the Bridgewater Canal to provide a high quality walking and cycling route to RHS Garden Bridgewater, Worsley Village and Boothsbank Park
- Criterion 14 - Include new allotment plots to meet the local standard unless suitable alternative provision can be made in the local area



## Summary

12.15 Exceptional circumstances have been identified to justify the allocation of Green Belt land for development. A “moderate”<sup>21</sup> level of harm to the Green Belt has been identified as resulting from the site’s release, with “no/negligible” impact on adjacent Green Belt. The East of Boothstown allocation would contribute both to GM wide dwelling requirements and has been selected on the basis of it delivering high value homes in a particularly attractive environment. At the local level the development of the site would contribute to the mix of dwellings within the city and deliver a significant number of affordable dwellings.

### 13. Green Infrastructure

13.1. Approximately two thirds of the site has been mapped as priority green infrastructure for Greater Manchester<sup>22</sup>. The eastern and southern part of the site is within the Greater Manchester woodland green infrastructure network. It is therefore important that a high priority is put on protecting and enhancing green infrastructure in this location, and this is reflected in the allocation policy.

13.2. A public footpath crosses the western part of the site in a north-south direction, connecting to the path which runs along the northern edge of the Bridgewater Canal. Development is required to provide high quality pedestrian and cycle routes throughout the site and secure further improvements to the path alongside the canal.

13.3. Shaw Brook flows through the site and the allocation policy requires development to take opportunities to enhance the ecological value of the brook and use it as a central landscape feature running through the site.

13.4. Other requirements of the allocation policy relating to green infrastructure include:

- Retention of Alder wood and other areas of mature woodland and protected trees
- Landscaped buffer along the eastern boundary of the site facing RHS Garden Bridgewater

13.5. A number of potential enhancements to green infrastructure on the site and in surrounding areas are suggested in the Green Belt Opportunities work<sup>23</sup>. These opportunities and the potential deliverability of them would be considered through the masterplanning and planning application stages.

### 14. Recreation

14.1. The allocation policy requires that development shall provide further improvements to the path on the north side of the Bridgewater Canal to provide a high-quality walking

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<sup>21</sup> As concluded in relation to the eastern element of the site, which reflects the full extent of the allocation proposed.

<sup>22</sup> GMCA (May 2018) GMSF Background Paper: The Natural Environment – Priority Green and Blue Infrastructure

<sup>23</sup> LUC (September 2020) Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study: Identification of Opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of the Green Belt in the vicinity of Proposed 2019 Green Belt Allocations, Appendix F

and cycling routes to RHS Garden Bridgewater, Worsley Village and Boothsbank Park.

- 14.2. A new neighbourhood equipped area of play is required within the site to provide facilities that are aimed at older children, which will be of benefit to the allocation and wider community. The allocation policy also requires new allotment plots are provided to meet the local standard unless suitable alternative provision can be made in the local area. Development will be required to contribute to the achievement of Salford City Council's recreation standards in accordance with the Salford Greenspace Strategy (2019), and the relevant existing policies in the Salford Unitary Development Plan (2009). New recreation standards are proposed in the Salford Local Plan: Development Management Policies and Designations which was published in January 2020 and is due to be adopted in 2021.
- 14.3. The allocation policy requires that the existing playing fields within the site are either retained or replaced. If the playing fields are affected consultation will be required with Sport England, having regards to the latest Salford playing pitch strategy.

## **15. Landscape**

- 15.1. The Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment 2018<sup>24</sup> identified the landscape character type to be "Historic Parks and Wooded Estate". This assessment was informed by The Landscape Character Assessment published by Salford City Council in 2007<sup>25</sup>, for those sites located within Salford. This latter assessment identified the area as "Urban Lowland Fringe" and one of three large, loosely connected blocks of predominantly open land which break up the built development of western Salford. The land slopes gently down towards the Bridgewater Canal to the south with extensive open views across the disused arable farmland. Alder Wood is located within the central area of the northern half of the site.
- 15.2. As part of the 2018 Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment a number of potential mitigation measures and opportunities to consider for any new development were identified. These included (and that are relevant to this site) opportunities broadly relating to the following: careful siting of any development to avoid elevated hill tops and ridges; ensuring that the sense of separation between distinct settlements is retained; ensuring that any development is in keeping with the form, density and vernacular of existing buildings; conserve and managing existing woodlands to encourage habitat diversity; the designing-in of sustainable urban drainage systems to any new development; conserving and protecting the setting of any heritage assets and to respect the character and historic qualities of the Worsley Village and St Mark's Conservation Areas; enhancing existing public access and providing new informal recreation routes and; protecting and enhancing the sense of naturalness and tranquillity associated with areas away from the urban fringe. The site allocation policy now reflects identified mitigation measures and opportunities.

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<sup>24</sup> LUC (August 2018) Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment

<sup>25</sup> Salford City Council (September 2007) Landscape Character Assessment

## 16. Ecological/Biodiversity Assessment

- 16.1. Middlewood SBI is located to the east of the site and briefly meets the site boundary. This SBI is now within RHS Garden Bridgewater; a landscaped buffer to the RHS garden is included as a requirement within the allocation policy. The northern extent of the Botany Bay Wood is located approximately 50m to the southwest of the site across the Bridgewater Canal. It is not considered that the development would have any unacceptable impact on Botany Bay Wood.
- 16.2. This site is part of the Great Manchester Wetlands Nature Improvement Area and also part of the Carbon Landscape Partnership Area. The allocation policy requires development to support the objectives of the nature improvement area and Salford Local Plan policy BG1 Nature Improvement Areas would also apply.
- 16.3. Although the site falls within the “Mosslands” area of the Carbon Landscape, geological surveys show peat is only dominant on the southern fringes of the site. The primary biodiversity interest on this site is therefore the birds, wildlife and existing habitats supported by the site, rather than any potential for bog restoration. The Greater Manchester Ecology Unit have highlighted a number of species records on this site, and appropriate surveys would be required prior to development in order to avoid harm to protected species (as required by the allocation policy).
- 16.4. There is a small area of plantation broadleaved woodland in the southeast corner of the site which is a priority habitat at a Greater Manchester level. The area of woodland to the east of Booths Bank farm may also be priority habitat (subject to further survey). The allocation policy requires retention of Alder Wood and other areas of mature deciduous woodland and protected trees. There is a small area of marshy grassland in the south of the site and a pond in the southwest of the site which are priority habitats at a Greater Manchester level and may be priority habitats nationally (subject to further survey). There are a number of hedges, generally running north to south throughout the site which may be a priority habitat at a national level (subject to further survey)<sup>26</sup>.
- 16.5. The GMSF and Salford Local Plan include requirements for a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity, with the reasoned justification for this site noting that the priority for any off-site nature conservation enhancements is likely to be the restoration of lowland raised bog and complementary habitats in Chat Moss.

## 17. Habitat Regulation Assessment

- 17.1. The 2020 Habitats Regulations Assessment<sup>27</sup> initially ‘screened in’ this allocation for further assessment, stating that it is within 5km of the Manchester Mosses Special Area of Conservation (SAC), with potential cumulative air pollution effects and recreational impacts. However, in the more detailed “Appropriate Assessment” stage, further consideration of air pollution impacts from road traffic increases identified no need for mitigation on this site, beyond the generic mitigation contained within the plan. The discussion of potential recreational impacts notes that there is limited public access to the SAC and quotes Natural England as saying that they are not

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<sup>26</sup> Information from <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx> and Penny Anderson Associates (2008) Salford Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey 2008

<sup>27</sup> GMEU (October 2020) Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework

concerned about an increase of recreational pressure on these sites due to a lack of public access.

## **18. Heritage Impact Assessment**

- 18.1. A screening exercise was undertaken by Salford City Council and GMAAS in September 2017<sup>28</sup> whereupon the site was 'screened in', requiring further detailed assessment in terms of both the built heritage and the below ground remains.
- 18.2. With regards to the built heritage there are no designated or non - designated heritage assets within the site boundary but there are three grade II listed buildings within the RHS Garden Bridgewater site to the east, all associated with the former Worsley New Hall that previously stood on the site (the Gardeners Cottage, The Bothy and the Ice House). It was concluded that owing to the location and orientation of the proposed allocation to these assets together with the existing undulating landscaping and vegetation which provides a high level of screening, that the proposed allocation for residential development would not have a detrimental impact upon the setting and significance of the assets.
- 18.3. The further assessment work<sup>29</sup> undertaken in relation to below ground remains found that the site does not contain any known remains of national importance that would merit preservation in-situ, but there is considerable potential for buried remains of at least local importance to survive.
- 18.4. The study identified the northern portion of the site as having the greatest potential for the survival of prehistoric and Romano-British archaeological remains suggested by the presence of earthworks located on the higher ground at the north of the site. There is also the potential for the survival of buried remains of the original 18<sup>th</sup> Century Booths Bank Farm Cottage building along with original elements surviving.
- 18.5. It was considered that the potential for archaeological remains to survive merited further investigation which could be achieved via a geophysical survey of the higher ground at the north of the site followed by a programme of trial trenching. It also concluded that a programme of coring may be appropriate to determine the presence of peat on the site at significant depths. If the Booth's Bank Farm building were to be demolished or redeveloped, a building survey would be able to evaluate the extent of the survival of original elements and of their historical importance. Where remains were found the study concluded that these should be preserved through sympathetic planning or fully excavated and recorded with consideration given to disseminating the information on the site's heritage.
- 18.6. Having regard to the above the allocation policy requires that there will be a need to employ methods throughout the construction process that will ensure the potential for archaeology is investigated and any finds safeguarded and properly recorded.

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<sup>28</sup> This screening exercise was published in the following document: Salford City Council (February 2019) Heritage Assessment of site allocations

<sup>29</sup> GMAAS (November 2018) Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and Salford Local Plan. Archaeological Assessment: H3/1 East Boothstown

## 19. Air Quality

- 19.1. It is recognised that there are some existing air pollution challenges in Salford and Greater Manchester more widely, primarily associated with road transport and the Greater Manchester local authorities are working jointly to tackle these issues.
- 19.2. In Salford, the current Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) was defined in 2016 and was declared for potential exceedances of the annual mean Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) air quality objective. The site is located to the south of part of the defined AQMA, which extends along parts of Leigh Road. A detailed air quality impact assessment would be required at the planning application stage.
- 19.3. The GMSF site allocation policy requires that this site provides good access by walking and cycling to existing services and facilities in the local area and bus services on the surrounding road network, which would assist increasing the use of sustainable travel modes. The site allocation policy has been expanded (since the Revised Draft GMSF was published) to require that the site accommodates high quality pedestrian and cycle routes within it and also delivers off-site improvements, including pedestrian crossings and a footpath adjacent to the site on the south of Leigh Road. Encouraging a shift to the use of more sustainable modes of travel would assist in reducing emissions, alongside other measures as part of a coordinated effort.
- 19.4. A Greater Manchester Spatial Framework: Strategic Modelling Technical Note has been published alongside the GMSF. This provides an estimate for each modelled scenario (2025 and 2040) regarding air quality impacts derived from a combination of cumulative vehicle mileage change and national fleet change assumptions. There is a forecast reduction in both carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and nitrogen oxides (NOX) emissions, although this is not appropriate for identifying specific air quality changes at an individual highway level.
- 19.5. Greater Manchester has also releasing a Clean Air Plan<sup>4</sup> for consultation in October 2020. The 10 Greater Manchester local authorities have worked together to consider a range of interventions and research has determined that the most appropriate approach is to implement a Clean Air Zone (CAZ) across the whole of Greater Manchester, with supporting measures to help owners upgrade to less polluting vehicles. The implications of a proposed GM-wide CAZ would lead to significant vehicle fleet improvements and associated air quality improvements in advance of the GMSF modelling scenario years of 2025 and 2040. While this plan is focussed on reducing Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) emissions, the proposals may also impact Carbon Dioxide emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>) due to fleet changes. The outcome of the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan is that roadside Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) levels, in Greater Manchester, would be below the legal limit by 2024. The Strategic Road Network, including motorways and some major roads, is not included in the CAZ as these are under the control of Highways England.
- 19.6. Various policies within Greater Manchester's Transport Strategy 2040, and the GMSF itself, are also aimed at reducing emissions and improving air quality across the sub-region.

19.7. Policy PH1 (Pollution control) of the Publication Salford Local Plan: Development Management Policies and Designations (January 2020) requires that development in Salford shall be consistent with achieving a substantial improvement in Salford's air quality and meeting statutory air quality targets. The development of this site allocation would need to comply with this policy once the plan is adopted and an air quality impact assessment would be required at the planning application stage.

## **20. Noise**

20.1. The A572 Leigh Road is located to the immediate north of the site, such that the site would be subject to some traffic noise. The noise impacts would need to be considered at an early stage in the masterplanning process, and detailed noise assessments would need to be submitted alongside any planning application.

# Section D – Social

## 21. Education

21.1. There is no policy requirement for the provision of a school on the site.

21.2. Education Facilities Management on behalf of the landowner has prepared an Education Briefing note for the allocation<sup>30</sup>. The note concludes as follows:

“12.2 Given the size of this development it does not warrant a primary school by itself and it is probable that it should either contribute to the creation of the new school at Hazelhurst Farm or the expansion of an existing local school, perhaps within Boothstown. It is noted, however, that the majority of schools within walking distance are at the capacity of their sites. The only exception to this appears to be Mesne Lea, however, at this time SCC has confirmed that due to site constraints, particularly access issues, it does not have any plans to expand this school.

12.3 This development is, therefore, likely to depend either upon the existence of places remaining within local schools, which is unlikely into the future given the number of new dwellings proposed overall, or upon the creation of a new local school in association with another development. The most local of these is the proposed school at GMA 30 Hazelhurst Farm, which if provided at 1FE (1ha) would provide sufficient capacity for both itself and GMA 31.”

21.3. The city council will work with the landowner to secure an appropriate solution for primary school provision at the time the development comes forward, having regard to actual and forecast capacity, pupil yields from housing developments and the cost of making provision for primary school places. Regard will also be had to the potential development of Hazelhurst Farm under as part of the GMSF which has a policy requirement to set aside land to accommodate additional primary school provision, unless it can be demonstrated that sufficient additional school places would be provided off-site within the local area to meet the likely demand generated by the new housing.

## 22. Health Impact Assessment

22.1. There is no site-specific health provision identified as being required as a result of the proposed development. The landowner has produced a development framework for the site which identifies that the provision of 300 dwellings at the site could accommodate an estimated 662 additional residents, based on the average household size in Salford at the 2011 Census. Based on the national benchmark of 1,800 patients per GP and 1,400 per dentist the site might generate demand equivalent to approximately half a full time GP and dental practitioner.<sup>31</sup>

22.2. The identification of the specific needs of the city’s growing population and the best way to serve them is a continually evolving process which is being considered by Salford Together through updates to their Strategic Estates Strategy and Locality

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<sup>30</sup> Education Facilities Management (March 2019) Education Briefing Note – Land to East of Boothstown (GM Allocation 31)

<sup>31</sup> Peel (March 2019). East Boothstown Development Framework. Page 41, paragraph 7.9

Plan. This work will inform the production of the required masterplan / framework that is to be developed in consultation with the local community, as required by criterion 1 of the policy.

- 22.3. Policy HH2 of the Salford Publication Local Plan: Development Management Policies and Designations (January 2020) requires that sites subject to masterplanning requirements (which includes all GMSF allocations in Salford) would need to ensure that appropriate provision is made for primary health care facilities. The developer should engage with the Clinical Commissioning Group at the earliest opportunity in order to determine health care requirements associated with the development. Where satisfactory provision cannot otherwise be made in the local area, individual developments that would generate additional demand for primary health care would be required to incorporate primary health care facilities.



# Section E – Deliverability

## 23. Viability

- 23.1. Three Dragons has assessed the financial viability of all of the GMSF allocations on behalf of the GMCA and districts<sup>32</sup>. The proposed development of 300 houses on the East of Boothstown site has been assessed as being clearly viable, with this taking into account local transport mitigation measures and the requirements of the allocation policy, including 50% of the total dwellings being affordable housing (with the affordable housing comprised of 37.5% social rented, 37.5% affordable rented and 25% shared ownership), some of which may be off-site having regard to local need.
- 23.2. Full details of the methodology used by Three Dragons and also the base assumptions and testing summary are set out within the Stage 2 allocations viability report that has been published as part of the evidence base for the 2020 GMSF.

## 24. Phasing

- 24.1. The detailed phasing of development on the site will respond to, and form part of the masterplan / framework or Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that has to be developed in consultation with the local community and other stakeholders, and be considered acceptable by the city council (in line with criterion 1 of the allocation policy).
- 24.2. In advance of the masterplan plan process, it has been indicatively assumed by the city council that initial completions on the site could be delivered from 2025/26 at an average annual rate of 30 per annum. If delivered at this rate throughout the build programme, all 300 dwellings would be completed by 2034/2035. Given the size of the site, it has been assumed that there would only be one developer.

## 25. Indicative Masterplanning

- 25.1. Criterion 1 of the allocation policy requires that development of the site will:

“Be in accordance with a masterplan/framework or Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that has been developed in consultation with the local community and other stakeholders, and is considered acceptable by the city council, or in the case of an SPD adopted by the city council;”

- 25.2. It is clear therefore that any masterplan of this site will have to have been developed with the local community and other stakeholders. The layout of the development will need to clearly respond to the requirements of the allocation policy, including:
  - Retaining Alder Wood and the other areas of mature deciduous woodland and protected trees (criterion 3)
  - Retaining significant open land around Shaw Brook, and utilising the brook as a central landscape feature running through the site (criterion 4)

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<sup>32</sup> Three Dragons et al (October 2020) Greater Manchester Spatial Framework. Stage 2 Allocated sites viability report

- Incorporating a landscaped buffer along the boundary with RHS Garden Bridgewater (criterion 5)
- Incorporating high quality sustainable drainage systems as part of the green infrastructure for the site and accommodate sufficient space for any necessary flood storage, particularly in the south of the site (criterion 7)
- Including a new neighbourhood equipped area of play (criterion 12)
- Retaining or replacing the existing playing fields (criterion 13), and providing on-site allotments unless suitable alternative provision can be made in the local area (criterion 14)
- Providing an easement for significant utilities infrastructure running through and near the site (criterion 15)
- Incorporating mitigation to address noise from nearby roads (criterion 17)

25.3. An illustrative masterplan has been prepared by the landowner; this was submitted by the landowner in their representations to the Revised Draft GMSF and is set out below:



25.4. As can be seen above, the illustrative masterplan provides an indicative layout of the development, including:

- The location of the housing, primary and secondary roads
- Green space such as trees and woodland and other green infrastructure
- Proposed water bodies and wetlands
- Existing and proposed pedestrian and cycle routes and linkages

25.5. The illustrative masterplan appears to respond to many of the allocation policy requirements and shows that at a high-level the site is deliverable for new housing. Notwithstanding this, the above masterplan should be treated as purely indicative as to how the site may be developed at this stage; it is not endorsed by the city council given that there is a requirement to prepare a masterplan in consultation with the local community and other stakeholders which has to be considered acceptable by the city council (under criterion 1 of the policy).

# Section F – Conclusion

## 26. The Integrated Assessment

- 26.1. Other than in respect of impacts relating to the development of greenfield land in agricultural use, the impacts identified in the integrated assessment were largely positive. Possible actions in respect of mitigation identified are considered to have been adequately addressed through the GMSF Policy itself, thematic policies within the GMSF and/or local policy proposed through the Publication Salford Development Management Policies and Designations Document (January 2020).

## 27. The main changes to the Proposed Allocation

- 27.1. Between the 2019 Revised Draft stage and the 2020 Publication stage, the site allocation boundary has been subject to very minor changes along its north western boundary to correct a mapping error. The development yield remains the same.
- 27.2. There have been various changes to the wording of the site allocation policy, which are mainly in response to comments received to the 2019 allocation policy and updates to the evidence base. The most significant change to the policy is as a result of updated evidence on flood risk, which has shown greater fluvial flood risk on the site than previously identified. Additions have been made to the policy to address this including the requirement for the provision of a detailed flood risk management and drainage strategy, sustainable drainage systems as part of the site's green infrastructure and space for flood storage.
- 27.3. A new criterion has been added to the policy to require a landscaped buffer along the eastern boundary of the site, in order to ensure that built development is sensitively integrated into the landscape and does not go all the way up to the RHS Bridgewater boundary.
- 27.4. Having regard to the recommendations in the locality assessment<sup>33</sup>, the policy includes some additional sustainable travel requirements including the provision of a pedestrian and cycle routes through the site, off site pedestrian crossings and a footpath adjacent to site on the south side of Leigh Road.
- 27.5. A copy of the updated policy is provided in annex 1.

## 28. Conclusion

- 28.1. The 29.1 hectare site provides one of only a few opportunities within Greater Manchester to deliver high value housing in an extremely attractive environment. The site could accommodate 300 houses developed at a low density and provide an affordable housing scheme equivalent to at least 50% of the dwellings, with some of this directed to off-site provision. The site was selected for inclusion in the GMSF on the basis that it would bring benefits across a wider area, and it is considered that its

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<sup>33</sup> Systra (November 2020) Transport Locality Assessments. Introductory note and assessments – Salford Allocations

development would assist in attracting and retaining highly skilled workers within Greater Manchester, increasing the competitiveness of the northern areas.

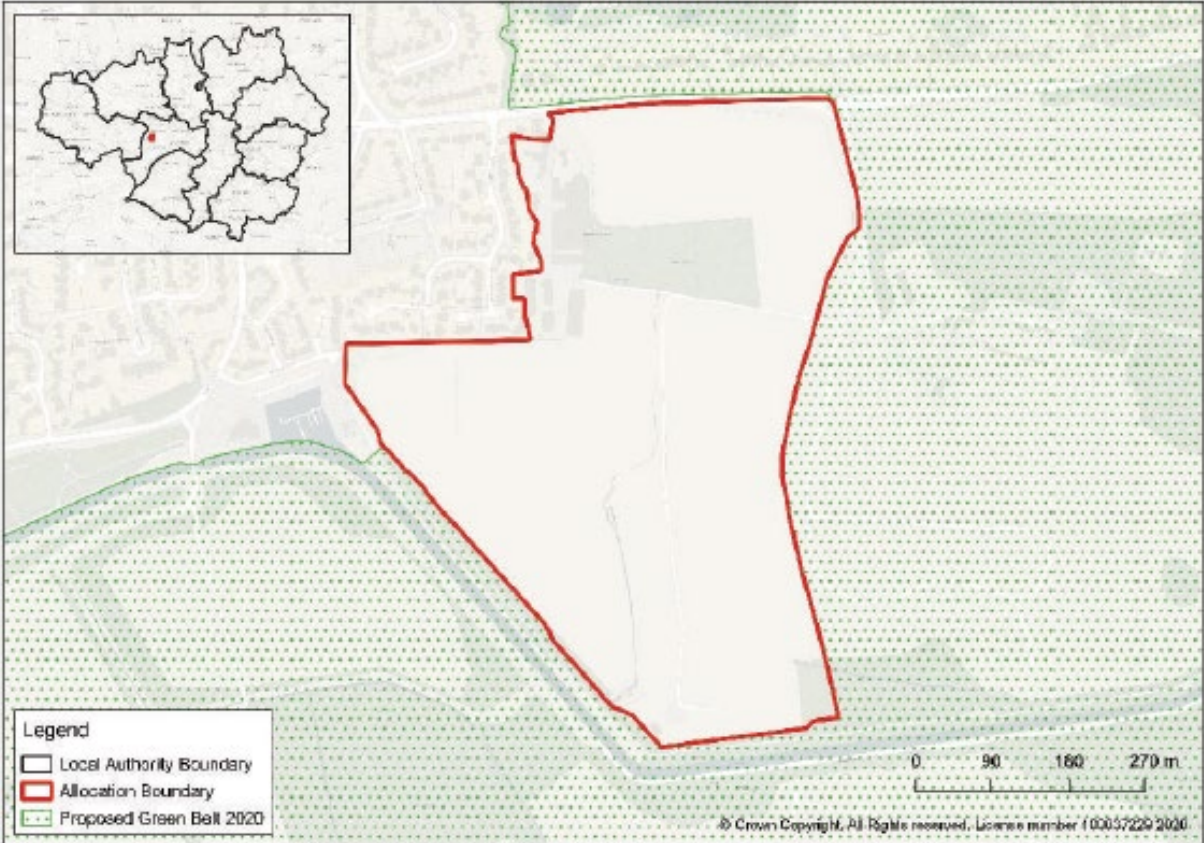
- 28.2. Evidence indicates that the site can be viably developed taking into account the requirements of the site allocation policy. The integrated assessment demonstrates that the impacts would be largely positive. Various technical assessments have been undertaken in support of the site. Whilst these constraints would need to be considered in the site's development and can generally be overcome, new evidence has shown greater flood risk on the site than previously identified, which has resulted in additional requirements within the site allocation policy to address this (as discussed in the previous section).

# Section G – Appendices

## Appendix 1 – Policy wording for East of Boothstown allocation (in the 2020 Publication GMSF)

### Policy GM Allocation 28

#### Land East of Boothstown



Picture 11.40 GMA 28 East of Boothstown

The area between the existing settlement of Boothstown and the RHS Garden Bridgewater site, between Leigh Road and the Bridgewater Canal, will be developed for around 300 dwellings. The site will be developed at a low density and to an exceptional quality, primarily targeting the top end of the housing market with the intention of attracting and retaining highly skilled workers within Greater Manchester.

Development of this site will be required to:

1. Be in accordance with a masterplan/framework or Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that has been developed in consultation with the local community and other stakeholders, and is considered acceptable by the city council, or in the case of an SPD adopted by the city council;

2. Provide an affordable housing scheme equivalent to at least 50% of the dwellings on the site (with an indicative affordable housing tenure split of 37.5% social rented, 37.5% affordable rented and 25% shared ownership), with some of this directed towards off-site provision;
3. Retain Alder Wood and the other areas of mature deciduous woodland and protected trees;
4. Take opportunities to enhance the ecological value of Shaw Brook, including naturalising where practicable and retaining significant open land around it, and utilise the brook as a central landscape feature running through the site;
5. Incorporate a landscaped buffer along the eastern boundary of the site facing RHS Garden Bridgewater;
6. Provide a detailed drainage and flood risk management strategy which addresses the outcomes of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, ensuring that development does not increase flood risk elsewhere;
7. Incorporate high quality sustainable drainage systems as part of the green infrastructure for the site and accommodate sufficient space for any necessary flood storage, particularly in the south of the site;
8. Protect the quality of watercourses through and around the site;
9. Support the objectives for the Great Manchester Wetlands Nature Improvement Area and avoid harm to protected species;
10. Ensure good quality access by walking and cycling for all residents to services and facilities in Boothstown and the local area, bus services on the surrounding road network, the Bridgewater Canal and Chat Moss to the south, including through the provision of a high quality network of pedestrian and cycle routes throughout the site; off-site pedestrian crossings and a footpath adjacent to the site on the south side of Leigh Road;
11. Secure further improvements to the path on the north side of the Bridgewater Canal to provide a high quality walking and cycling route to RHS Garden Bridgewater, Worsley Village and Boothsbank Park;
12. Include a new neighbourhood equipped area of play;
13. Retain or replace existing playing fields;
14. Include new allotment plots to meet the local standard unless suitable alternative provision can be made in the local area;
15. Provide an easement for the significant utilities infrastructure running through and near the site;
16. Take its primary access from Occupation Road;
17. Incorporate mitigation to address noise pollution from nearby roads;
18. Conserve and enhance the setting of nearby heritage assets; and
19. Employ methods throughout the construction process that will ensure the potential for archaeology is investigated and any finds safeguarded and properly recorded.

11.267 This site to the east of Boothstown offers one of a small number of opportunities within Greater Manchester to deliver very high value housing in an extremely attractive environment, benefiting not only from an established premium housing market but also a location immediately next to the new RHS Garden Bridgewater which is due to open in 2021. It is essential that the development of the site fully maximises the opportunities presented by this location, and delivers the highest quality living environment. A lower density of development than would normally be required under Policy GM-H 4 'Density of New Housing' will be acceptable on this site.

11.268 Water vole and bird surveys will be required prior to any development, as will a desk-based archaeological assessment of the whole site and an historic building assessment of Boothsbank Farm. The priority for any off-site nature conservation enhancements required to deliver a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity from the development of the site is likely to be the restoration of lowland raised bog and complementary habitats in Chat Moss to the south.