
**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Economy Scrutiny Committee – 6 September 2017

Subject: Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and Manchester Local Plan Review - Update

Report of: Strategic Director, Development

Summary

Greater Manchester local authorities are currently working collaboratively on the preparation of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework. This document will provide a policy framework to guide development across the City Region up to 2035. It will also provide a context for the preparation by individual authorities of updated Local Plans. The Council has indicated the intention to review Manchester's Local Plan to take account of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework, and also to reflect other changes in local and national policy and in economic conditions in the city. This report provides a summary of progress on the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework, and sets out the proposed timetable for the review of the Manchester Local Plan.

Recommendations

The Economy Scrutiny Committee is requested to note and comment on the report.

Wards Affected: All

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

Draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework – draft for consultation October 2016

Manchester Core Strategy (2012)

Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 (2017)

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Greater Manchester has recognised the importance of using clear strategies to influence the way the City Region develops, making sure that investment is used intelligently to achieve clearly stated aims. To this end, the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS, discussed in another report also on this meeting's agenda) has been developed, and recently reviewed, providing the overarching narrative for Greater Manchester's objectives and providing a context for wider policy development. To achieve the priorities set out in the GMS, there are important outcomes related to the extent and nature of new development and the quality of the City Region's environment and infrastructure. These require clear policy support, which will be provided by the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework.

1.2 The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) is being developed to provide a planning framework for the Greater Manchester City Region. As such, it will explain the level of housing and commercial development expected in the region up to 2035, identify the likely distribution of this across the ten GM local authorities and also identify specific strategic allocations for new development. The GMSF will also set out key infrastructure needed to support this level and distribution of growth. The development of the GMSF will be closely aligned with the delivery of the GM2040 transport strategy, to strengthen links between new development and enhancements to the City Region transport network.

1.3 The GMSF has been initiated as a joint Development Plan Document, meaning that it is a statutory Local Plan document being produced jointly by all ten GM districts, with preparation delegated to the AGMA Executive Board. Through GM's devolution arrangements, it will be possible to prepare a Mayoral Spatial Development Strategy. This document could perform elements of the role currently proposed for the GMSF. The decision on the format in which the GMSF progresses will be taken by the districts alongside the GM Mayor. Preparation of the GMSF began in 2015, and following public examination the document it is likely to be adopted in 2020.

1.4 The GMSF will have implications for planning at district level, and therefore the Council intends to review its local plan to take account of GMSF policies, and also consider any other changes to local planning policy that are appropriate in current circumstances.

2.0 Background

2.1 There is a tradition of coordinated planning across Greater Manchester dating back to the 1986 Structure Plan and carried on through policies in the North West Regional Strategy. This has ensured that development planning takes account of Greater Manchester's functional geography, recognising the links across the ten AGMA authorities. The revocation of Regional Strategies in 2013 removed this coordinating planning strategy at a regional level. The GMSF will reinstate planning policy coordination, vital if development is to bring maximum benefit across the City Region.

2.2 Alongside the revocation of Regional Strategies, the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework created a more challenging national policy context, particularly regarding requirement to plan for housing development. These changes meant that many local authorities' plans were no longer up-to-date, including several of those in Greater Manchester districts. Because it is difficult to calculate Greater Manchester district development requirements in isolation, the GMSF was conceived as a means of producing an up-to-date plan for Greater Manchester, and a basis on which districts could review their own Local Plans.

2.3 In April 2015, the Council resolved to work jointly with the other AGMA districts to produce the GMSF, with production and formulation delegated to the AGMA Executive Board.

3.0 GMSF Preparation – Progress Update

3.1 In November 2016, the committee received a report on the consultation on the draft GMSF which provided details on the development on the document and content of the consultation draft. A brief summary of this is therefore provided in this report.

Growth options consultation – 2015/16

3.1 The initial consultation was on the appropriate level of growth for GM up to 2035, suggesting three possibilities:

- Growth based on current identified land supply;
- Meeting objectively assessed needs; and,
- A high level of housing growth proposed by house builders.

The consultation document indicated that the preferred growth option was the middle scenario (meeting objectively assessed needs).

Development of the Draft GMSF – 2016/17

3.3 Following the consultation on growth options, an initial draft GMSF document was produced. This was prepared on the basis of meeting the City Region's objectively assessed level of need for housing and commercial development, taking account of Greater Manchester's growth ambitions.

3.4 Across Greater Manchester, the draft GMSF proposed 220,000 new homes, 2,450,000m² of new office space and 4,000,000m² of new industrial/logistics space up to 2035. The draft GMSF proposed that Manchester accommodates 24% of Greater Manchester's new housing, 56% of office development and 4% of industrial/logistics development. Within Manchester, it is proposed that the City Centre and surrounding neighbourhoods are the key focus for commercial and residential growth. Manchester Airport is also a key location for growth, including sites covered by the Manchester Airport Enterprise Zone.

3.6 To fully meet identified development needs, the draft GMSF required some development in the Green Belt. Development in the Green Belt would present new challenges for the City Region, particularly due to the need to improve transport

infrastructure in these locations. At the same time, there remains considerable potential for growth at the conurbation core. Indeed, this remains the focus for GMSF development, with the priority for development being very much on brownfield sites in the urban core. This growth will also need to be supported by investment in infrastructure, and it will be important that core areas of Greater Manchester continue to be prioritised through future public and private investment decisions.

3.7 Green Belt development locations are covered by site specific allocations, three of which are in Manchester:

- Southwick Park (Brooklands – 20 dwellings)
- Medipark (Baguley – 86,000m² commercial development as part of the Manchester Airport City Enterprise Zone)
- Global Logistic (Airport City) (Woodhouse Park – 40,000m² logistics development as part of the Manchester Airport City Enterprise Zone)

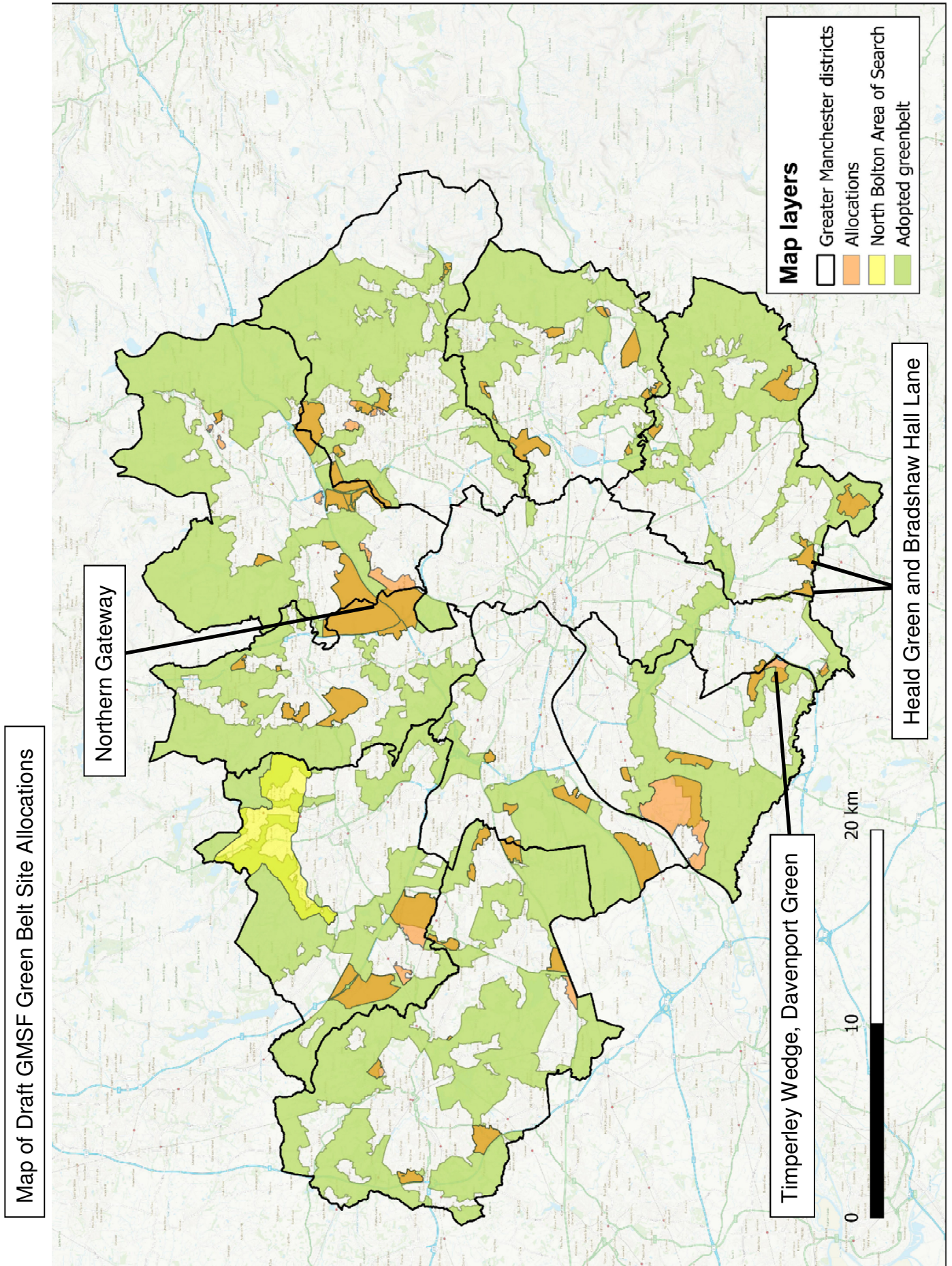
3.8 Beyond Manchester, the draft GMSF included more substantial Green Belt development proposals. The most significant Green Belt development locations close to Manchester include:

- Northern Gateway (a number of sites in Bury, Oldham and Rochdale between junctions 18 and 21 of the M62 – 9,500 dwellings, 2,726,000m² commercial floorspace)
- Heald Green and Bradshaw Hall Lane (Stockport – 5,700 dwellings)
- Timperley Wedge, Davenport Green (Trafford – 3,300 dwellings, 50,000m² commercial)

3.9 Consultation on this draft plan ran from October 2016 to February 2017. Although there was support for many policies within the GMSF, the consultation process highlighted localised concern over elements of the plan's proposals, particularly for the proposed Green Belt release and from residents living close to the affected locations. Responses included some focussed on the Manchester Green Belt proposals around the airport, although the level of concern is significantly less than for other districts' allocations. The development industry's view remains that the draft GMSF is not sufficiently ambitious. In total, approximately 27,000 responses were received, many raising concerns in respect of specific site allocations. These concerns include the loss of green space, transport impacts and pressure on social infrastructure.

Response to Draft GMSF Consultation

3.10 It is clearly important that Greater Manchester districts are able to provide a strong response to the concerns raised through the consultation on the draft GMSF. In particular, it must be clear that any release of Green Belt for development is supported by compelling evidence of need. Before considering development in the



alternative locations is being maximised. To ensure that Green Belt release is only considered as a last resort, districts have been reviewing their potential housing land supply to consider whether more housing could be accommodated on brownfield and urban sites, either through increasing densities on existing sites or adding new sites to the overall supply. Although the plan is currently a joint Development Plan Document and therefore not a mayoral responsibility, there is potential for the strategic elements of the GMSF to become the Mayor's Spatial Development Strategy.

3.11 Officers have been considering the potential to increase total potential housing yield in Manchester as part of this exercise. This work is currently ongoing across districts. Subject to the effect on total urban housing supply, this work should result in a reduction in the amount of Green Belt that needs to be released to achieve GMSF growth targets.

3.12 The Government has announced its intention to introduce a standard methodology for calculating housing needs, which is expected to be published in autumn 2017. Although the work that has calculated these figures for the GMSF to date has been thorough and robust, there will be a need to review this in light of the national methodology. There is potential for the housing need figures to change once this methodology has been applied, and this, too, could have implications for the GMSF strategy. Alongside the redoubled efforts to optimise development on urban sites, there is scope for considerable change to the details of the GMSF in its next iteration.

3.13 One of the key challenges associated with the level of growth being considered in the GMSF is the infrastructure needed to support this. To provide clear understanding about the impacts development may have and the measures that could mitigate this, Transport for Greater Manchester is currently leading work to assess the transport investment that will be needed alongside the housing and commercial development proposed by the GMSF. This work will inform the revision of the draft GMSF.

GMSF – Next Steps

3.14 The next stages of the GMSF will involve publication of the responses received through the consultation on the draft GMSF, which will happen in September 2017. This will be followed later in 2017 by publication of data and associated sources of information that sits behind the strategy. This would include updated population projections, the national methodology for calculating housing needs and revised economic growth forecasts.

3.15 Once the assessments of districts' land supply have been updated, and the implications of new population projections and the national housing methodology analysed, a revised draft of the GMSF will be prepared. The intention is that this will be published for a 12-week consultation in beginning in June 2018.

4.0 Manchester Local Plan Review

4.1 The development of the GMSF sets the fundamental policy context for development planning across the City Region, and this will clearly have implications

for policy in Manchester. Therefore, in 2015 the Executive agreed to review the Manchester Local Plan in the context of the emerging GMSF. There are other reasons that make this an opportune time to reconsider local planning policy. Since the Core Strategy was adopted in 2012, there have been significant changes to national planning policy (the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework and associated Planning Policy Guidance). Local circumstances have also changed. The Council has adopted the Our Manchester strategy, setting out its priorities for the city to 2025, and there are aims that should be fully encompassed in the Local Plan. There have been fluctuations in the economic conditions affecting the delivery of development, and severe pressures caused by still ongoing national austerity policies.

4.2 The review of Manchester's Local Plan will be an opportunity to ensure that local planning policies are up-to-date, reflecting national planning policy, the GMSF and current priorities for the city. It is likely that the spatial strategy within the extant Manchester Core Strategy will remain relevant, but it will be important to consider whether the plan should include new policy approaches to manage the form and mix of development across Manchester.

4.3 Although the development of the GMSF is not the only reason to review the Local Plan, it provides an important strategic context. As explained in the previous section, there is work to be done to reassess the approach in the GMSF in response to the last consultation. This and updated data expected to be produced shortly, which will particularly influence housing need calculations. It will be important that the Manchester Local Plan takes full account of the GMSF as it emerges in June 2018, and therefore the Council will not be in a position to consult on draft Local Plan policies until this time, at the earliest. However, there are preliminary actions in the production of a Local Plan that do not depend heavily on the GMSF, and the intention is that these will be progressed sooner, so that there is nothing to delay progress with the Local Plan when the next draft GMSF emerges.

4.4 The stages in the production of a Local Plan are clearly set out in legislation. The first external consultation stage will consider the Vision and Options that should be considered at the outset in the preparation of the plan. It is anticipated that this stage could take place in late-2017, and the committee will be kept informed as this work progresses.

4.5 Although this stage will set the Local Plan review in the context of the GMSF, it is not a stage that makes firm policy recommendations. Rather, its aim is to invite views from all stakeholders on the issues that the Local Plan should consider, although the consultation document will aim to set what these may be within the prevailing local and regional policy context.

4.6 The subsequent stages in the production of the plan are set out below. Based on current timescale expectations and taking account of the extension to the GMSF timetable, realistic dates for these stages are also suggested:

- Consultation on a first draft Local Plan document (summer 2018);
- Consultation on a final draft Local Plan (late-2018);
- Submission to the Secretary of State for Examination (late-2019);

- Examination (2019/20); and,
- Adoption (summer 2020).

4.7 Future stages in the development of the Local Plan will include proposed policies. These will need to be consistent with strategy and policies within the emerging GMSF. Given the potential for a substantial change in the approach of the GMSF from the initial draft consultation document to its next iteration, it may be necessary for the timetable for the review of the Local Plan to respond to that of the GMSF.

5.0 Summary

5.1 Preparation of the GMSF continues, with a further iteration expected in summer 2018. However, accommodating the level of development needed to meet growth ambitions is challenging. There is a need to ensure that any development beyond the existing urban area is justified and well-connected to infrastructure networks. This should not distract from the level of growth planned for Manchester and the conurbation core. Whatever investment is needed to support growth in outlying locations, significant support for the necessary infrastructure and complementary policy in relation to the core will remain vital.

5.2 The review of Manchester's Local Plan should support delivery of the GMSF, and therefore will need to progress in a way that can take account of emerging GMSF policy. This will mean that the development of substantive policy proposals will happen in 2018, once the implications of the GMSF are clearer. However, it will be important that work is done beforehand so that the plan is at a stage for policy consultation by then. Therefore, the intention is to progress with the initial Vision and Options public engagement stage of the Local Plan review before the end of 2017. The committee will be kept informed of this work as it progresses.