SIMISTER BOWLEE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

JPA 1.2

Supplementary Planning Document

February 2026

Bury Council

ROCHDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Contents

Foreword

The recently adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan allocates the Simister Bowlee site for up to 1,550 new homes.

To support the new community, the development will be required to provide specific infrastructure. This includes an upgraded local highway network, improved public transport, green spaces, a new primary school, community facilities and more routes for walking and cycling. Traffic restrictions will also be required on Simister Lane, to prevent this route from being a form of access/egress to and from the site.

The Simister Bowlee site lies between the towns of Prestwich and Middleton, spanning the districts of Bury and Rochdale. Strategically positioned at the junction of the M60, M62, and M66 motorways, it forms a major residential development area within the wider Northern Gateway. The site plays a critical role in delivering a well-planned neighbourhood that complements the largest combined employment and housing growth initiative in the North of England. The development will provide approximately 1,350 new homes in Bury and around 200 new homes in Rochdale.

Bury and Rochdale Councils are pleased to present the Simister Bowlee Development Framework which presents a clear long-term vision for the site, identifies guiding development principles and outlines the infrastructure needed to support the site's long-term development. This framework will guide consideration of future planning applications.

"The Simister Bowlee Development Framework sets out a clear vision for creating a well-planned, sustainable community of up to 1,550 new homes – 1,350 in Bury and 200 in Rochdale. With essential infrastructure, a new primary school, green spaces, and improved transport links, this development will play a vital role in shaping the Northern Gateway and delivering lasting benefits for Bury, Rochdale, and the wider region."

"This new framework represents another important step forward for this area as part of the wider Atom Valley project, which will create thousands of highly skilled jobs and new homes in Rochdale and Bury."

Figure 01: Councillor Eamonn O'Brien,Leader of Bury Council and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth

Figure 02: Councillor Neil Emmott, Leader of Rochdale Borough Council

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Introduction

1. Introduction

This draft Simister Bowlee (Northern Gateway) Development Framework ("SBDF") Supplementary Planning Document ("SPD") has been prepared by Bury and Rochdale Councils. It relates to the Simister and Bowlee (Northern Gateway) site that is allocated for residential-led development under Policy JP Allocation 1.2 ("JPA1.2") of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan ("PfE"). The site forms part of the wider 'Northern Gateway' development location which incorporates the nationally significant employment development opportunity to the north of the M62. This site is allocated under PfE Policy Allocation 1.1: Heywood / Pilsworth (Northern Gateway) ("JPA1.1"), and subject to a separate Development Framework SPD that was adopted in March 2025.

The JPA1.1 and JPA1.2 employment and residential led allocations that comprise Northern Gateway sit within the Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone ("MDZ"), which straddles Bury, Oldham and Rochdale, and forms part of the wider North-East Growth Corridor. Taken together, JPA1.1 and JPA1.2 present a significant opportunity to deliver 20,000 new jobs across up to 1.2 million square metres of employment space and more than 2,500 new homes.

This draft SBDF SPD relates solely to the JPA1.2 site that is allocated in PfE (herein referred to as 'the site'); however, it recognises the intrinsic links with the significant employment-led opportunity at JPA1.1, and seeks to provide the type and quality of homes to underpin the wider Northern Gateway and Atom Valley opportunity.

Northern Gateway presents a significant opportunity for Greater Manchester to deliver a new, sustainable residential community to support Greater Manchester's Northern communities and to reinforce the intrinsic links between homes and jobs alongside the ambitious Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ).

1.1 JPA1.2: Simister Bowlee

The Simister Bowlee site is allocated for development under PfE Policy JPA1.2. Policy JPA 1.2 identifies the site as a residential-led development opportunity that is allocated to deliver up to 1,550 new homes, supported by community and other essential infrastructure.

To provide a blueprint for the future delivery of the full JPA1.2 allocation and to establish the parameters within which future planning applications will be brought forward, Policy JPA1.2 states that development at the site should:

> *"1. Be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan, design code and infrastructure phasing and delivery strategy, in line with Policy JP-D1 'Infrastructure Implementation' that has been agreed with the local planning authorities."*

This requirement is common across major strategic allocations in PfE and assists in bridging the gap between site allocations and the development of detailed planning applications. This draft SBDF seeks to address this policy requirement by providing an indicative masterplan for the site, accompanied by a series of design and development principles to guide the future development of JPA1.2.

An Infrastructure Phasing and Delivery Strategy ("IPDS") for the site is being prepared in accordance with PfE Policies JPA1.2 and JP-D1 (Infrastructure Implementation) and should be read alongside this SPD. The IPDS will remain a 'live document' and will be subject to regular updates and amendments outside of the SPD process, in order to be responsive to constraints and opportunities, and the availability of funding, as the site is brought forward.

Purpose of the JPA1.2 Simister Bowlee Development Framework

This framework has been prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document ("SPD") by Bury and Rochdale Council (herein collectively referred to as "the Councils") and will carry planning weight as a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications on the site.

As an SPD, this document does not introduce new planning policies into the Development Plan. It provides detailed guidance on the policies in PfE to ensure that the vision for the allocation is fulfilled throughout the lifetime of the development process, and that development and infrastructure come forward in a planned and comprehensive manner.

The Framework includes a masterplan which is intended to be indicative only and retain flexibility to respond to design, site constraints and future market conditions.

This draft SBDF has been prepared in a collaborative manner, with engagement undertaken with landowners, key stakeholders and statutory and non-statutory consultees. The Councils welcome feedback on the draft SBDF during this period of consultation and will set out how the feedback received has been included into a final draft of the document – which will be considered by each Council Cabinet prior to its formal adoption.

The remainder of this chapter sets out the site context, purpose and status of the SPD.

SPDF Role and Objectives

The role of this SBDF is to establish the key principles to guide the development of the site and to inform future planning applications. The objectives of this SPDF are to:

- Establish the vision and strategic objectives for the site, shaped by public consultation, stakeholder collaboration and the Councils' ambitions;
- Set out the high-level design and development parameters that all future planning applications within the site will be required to follow;
- Implement a comprehensive and co-ordinated phased masterplanning approach across the entire JPA1.2 site allocation;
- Provide an overarching framework that sets the key development principles and parameters including matters such as land use, transport, access, movement and green infrastructure; and
- Set out a high level approach to the delivery and phasing of on-site and off-site infrastructure improvements.

SPDF Structure

This document is set out as follows:

- **Chapter 2 – Strategic Policy Context:** this sets out the planning and strategic policy context that has informed the development of the SBDF and which will continue to inform the future planning applications on the site.
- **Chapter 3 – Understanding the Site**: this sets out the site context and surroundings, and the key constraints and opportunities that have influenced concept development.
- **Chapter 4 – Vision & Strategic Objectives:** this presents the vision and the key strategic objectives for the site.
- **Chapter 5 – Design Approach:** this presents the strategic design principles that respond to the strategic context, vision and objectives for the site.
- **Chapter 6 – The Masterplan Framework:** this sets out an indicative site-wide masterplan for the site.
- **Chapter 7 – Development Principles:** this presents the development principles that respond to the strategic context, vision and objectives for the site.
- **Chapter 8 – Phasing & Delivery:** this sets out the approach to phasing, delivery and infrastructure that will inform a separate and more detailed IPDS.
- **Chapter 9 - Sustainability Strategy:** this sets out the expectations from the site with respect to net zero, carbon, energy, resource efficiency and climate resilience.
- **Chapter 10 – The Benefits:** this provides a detailed review of the economic, social, and environmental benefits that the SBDF will deliver for the local communities, the districts of Bury and Rochdale and the wider Greater Manchester City Region.
- **Chapter 11 - Social Value Strategy:** this sets out how Social Value should be embedded into the delivery of Simister Bowlee.
- **Chapter 12 – Monitoring and Review:** this provides a summary of the process for future review of the SBDF.

Figure 03: An aerial view of site allocation JPA1.2 Simister Bowlee. Please note that the boundary shown on this image is indicative - see Figure 05 for an accurate boundary plan

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Strategic Policy Context

2. Strategic Policy Context

This chapter sets out the planning and strategic policy context that has informed the development of the SBDF, and which will continue to inform planning applications that relate to the site.

2.1 The National Policy Landscape

National policy has seen a renewed focus on addressing the UK housing crisis and delivering the homes needed to support future generations, by seeking to deliver 1.5 million new homes across the next Parliament. An updated National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") was implemented in December 2024, which has sought to boost housebuilding and housing delivery, by supporting plan making and removing barriers to the delivery of suitable housing sites.

The revised NPPF has strengthened the approach towards maintaining a robust housing supply across deliverable sites which has placed an increased focus on allocated strategic sites, such as Simister Bowlee.

Sustainable Development

In its approach to delivering new development, the NPPF confirms that in order to achieve sustainable development, the planning system has three overarching and interdependent objectives, including:

An economic objective:
to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure

A social objective:
to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being

An environmental objective:
to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy

Masterplans and Placemaking

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF states that: *"Area-based character assessments, design guides and codes and masterplans can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places..."*.

The NPPF is supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which states that:

> *"Masterplans set the vision and implementation strategy for a development. They are distinct from local design guides by focusing on site specific proposals such as the scale and layout of development, mix of uses, transport and green infrastructure. Depending on the level of detail, the masterplan may indicate the intended arrangement of buildings, streets and the public realm...' and that 'A range of other plans and technical reports may be needed alongside a masterplan, to provide supporting evidence and set out related proposals, such as a local character study, landscape assessment, transport assessment and proposals for securing biodiversity net gain.*
>
> *An implementation strategy could also be included, especially where development is expected to be brought forward in a number of phases". (Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 26-006-20191001).*

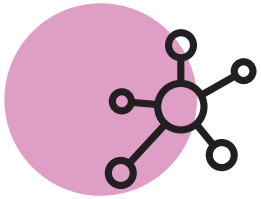
In describing how masterplans can be used most effectively, PPG states that:

> *"Masterplans are most likely to be produced by local authorities or developers. For local authorities, they can help to clarify design expectations early in the planning process, set a clear vision for the site, inform infrastructure and viability assessments and identify requirements for developer contributions or other investment. Developers may produce a masterplan to help evolve their own vision for a site, assess options, engage the local planning authority and community in pre-application discussions and support an outline planning application.*
>
> *Whoever prepares them, masterplans can benefit from a collaborative approach between the local planning authority, site promoters and local communities so that aspirations and constraints are understood early on. Masterplans produced by local planning authorities may be adopted as supplementary planning documents to give them weight in decisions on applications. Masterplans often apply to schemes that are developed over a long time period and so may need to be subject to regular review and be flexible to adapt to changing circumstances." (Paragraph: 007 Reference ID:26-007-20191001)*

The SBDF has been prepared in full accordance with NPPF (and the National Planning Practice Guidance which supports it) and seeks to significantly boost the supply of new homes in the northern arc of Greater Manchester that will deliver considerable social, economic and environmental benefits.

2.2 Places for Everyone ("PfE") Joint Development Plan

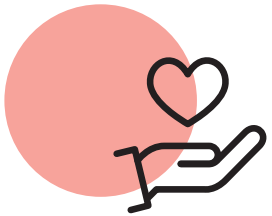
PfE is the statutory planning document that guides development in the nine Greater Manchester authorities which have formally adopted it, providing the key policy framework that underpins the preparation of the SBDF. In summary, PfE provides:



The strategic plan that informs the preparation of individual Local Plans by the nine participating Greater Manchester authorities

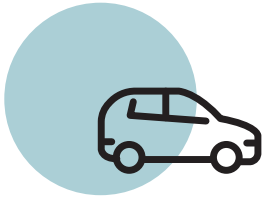
The detailed policies to inform the preparation and determination of planning applications

The planning framework for the spatial development of the nine participating Greater Manchester authorities to 2039

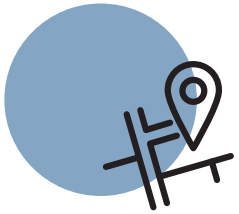


A policy framework that identifies the important assets which will be protected and enhanced

The quantum of housing and employment required in each participating local authority and across the Plan area over the lifetime of PfE



Policies to support the delivery of key infrastructure, such as transport and utilities; and



The allocation of key strategic sites that will contribute to meeting the identified housing and employment need

A new Green Belt boundary for the nine participating authorities

A key element of PfE's Spatial Strategy is boosting the competitiveness of the northern districts, which have seen relatively low levels of growth overall compared to other parts of the City Region. The northern districts are identified as having many strengths, such as their distinctive landscapes, proud communities, and a strong manufacturing base, but their potential is not currently being realised. It is recognised that significant interventions and investment will be required to address areas of deprivation and relatively low levels of growth.

PfE identifies two broad growth locations as being especially important for having the potential to deliver significant benefits for the whole conurbation and to make a major contribution to raising the competitiveness of the northern areas as a whole. One of these locations is the North-East Growth Corridor, which includes the M62 corridor from Junction 18 (the confluence of the M60 and M66) to Junction 21 (Milnrow), extending across parts of Bury, Rochdale and Oldham. Three sites have been allocated as part of the North-East Growth Corridor, two of which make up the Northern Gateway (JPA 1.1 and JPA 1.2).

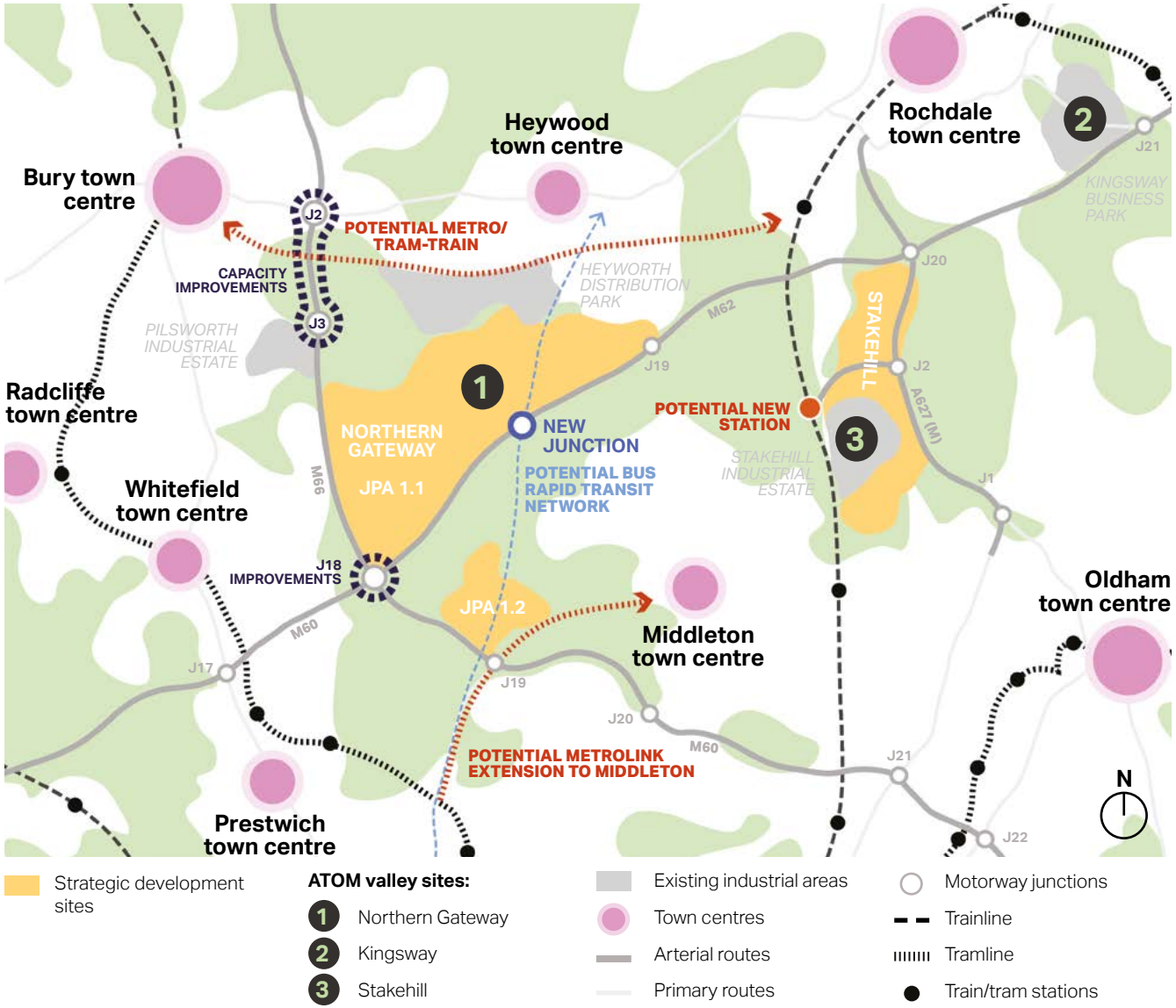


Figure 04: Regional context plan showing the wider north-east growth corridor. Strategic sites and transport infrastructure projects are highlighted, including Northern Gateway site allocations JPA 1.1 and JPA 1.2. Diagram based on Figure 4.2 from PfE (Page 62).

Site Allocation JPA1.2

PfE Policy JPA1.2 Simister and Bowlee (Northern Gateway) is the strategic allocation for the site and sets out the policy requirements that underpin the development principles and masterplan framework contained in this framework. This states that development at this allocation will be required to:

1. *"Be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan, design code and infrastructure phasing and delivery strategy, in line with Policy JP-D1 'Infrastructure Implementation', that has been agreed with the local planning authorities;*

2. *Deliver a broad mix of around 1,550 homes to diversify the type of accommodation across the Simister, Bowlee and Birch and Langley areas. This should include an appropriate mix of house types and sizes, accommodation for older people, plots for custom and self-build (subject to local demand having regard to the Councils' self-build registers and other relevant evidence) and a mix of housing densities with higher densities in areas of good accessibility and potential for improved public transport connectivity and lower densities adjacent to existing villages where development will require sensitive design to respond to its context;*

Figure 05: JPA1.2 Simister Bowlee allocation boundary

3. *Make provision for new and improved sustainable transport and highways infrastructure having regard to the indicative transport interventions set out in Appendix D in accordance with Policy JP-C8;*

4. *Make provision for traffic restrictions on Simister Lane to prevent this route from being a form of access/egress to and from the allocation except by public transport;*

5. *Make provision for affordable housing in accordance with local planning policy requirements;*

6. *Make provision for a new two-form entry primary school and make financial contributions for off-site additional secondary school provision to meet needs generated by the development, in accordance with Policy JP-P5;*

7. *Make provision for a new local centre in an accessible location which includes a range of appropriate retail, health and community facilities and ensure it is integrated with existing communities;*

8. *Ensure the design and layout allows for effective integration with surrounding communities, including active travel links and connections to local services and the new areas of employment at Heywood/Pilsworth (JPA 1.1);*

9. *Make provision for compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of the remaining Green Belt in the vicinity of the site in accordance with Policy JP-G2;*

10. *Strengthen the boundary of the Green Belt to the North West of the site such that it will comprise physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent;*

11. *Make provision for biodiversity, including taking appropriate account of Bradley Hall Farm SBI, in accordance with Policy JP-G8;*

12. *Incorporate appropriate noise and air quality mitigation measures and high-quality landscaping along the M60 motorway corridors and local road network, if required, within the allocation;*

13. *Incorporate necessary remediation measures in areas affected by contamination and previously worked for landfill purposes;*

14. *Take appropriate account of relevant heritage assets, and their settings, including Heaton Park, in accordance with Policy JP-P2; and*

15. *Consider the extraction of any viable mineral resources within Mineral Safeguarding Areas, in accordance with Policy 8 of the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan (or any relevant policies in subsequent minerals plans)."*

Other PfE Policies

PfE also includes a range of other policies relating to development management and technical/ environmental matters which have been taken into account in the preparation of this framework and are referenced where relevant in the design and development principles.

Local Plan Policies

Both Bury and Rochdale are in the process of producing their own Local Plans setting out more detailed policies including both strategic and non-strategic policies, as appropriate, reflecting local circumstances. These Local Plans will be prepared to be consistent with the overarching PfE.

There are a number of adopted Development Plan documents which, alongside PfE, currently form part of the statutory Development Plan. The relevant adopted Local Planning Policy documents for the site include:

- Saved Policies of the Bury Unitary Development Plan (adopted 1997);
- The Rochdale Core Strategy (adopted 2016);
- Saved Policies of the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (adopted 2006);
- The Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan (adopted 2012); and
- The Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan (adopted 2013).

These statutory policy documents have been fully considered in the preparation of this framework.

Figure 06: Bury and Rochdale Draft Local Plans

A key element of PfE's Spatial Strategy is boosting the competitiveness of the northern districts, which have seen relatively low levels of growth overall compared to other parts of the City Region.

Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone ("MDZ")

The potential for the North-East Growth Corridor to deliver transformative change has led to the formal designation of the Atom Valley MDZ covering the two key areas for growth at the Northern Gateway (Policy JPA1.1 and Policy JPA1.2), along with Stakehill (Policy JPA2) and Kingsway Business Park. The designation of the Atom Valley MDZ provides a clear mechanism to align public and private sector investment to ensure that there is a commitment to the principle of delivering inclusive and sustainable growth across the three sites and adjoining towns.

PfE Policy JP-Strat7 (North-East Growth Corridor) incorporates the Atom Valley MDZ and seeks to deliver a nationally significant area of economic activity, supported by a significant increase in the residential offer, delivering truly inclusive growth over the lifetime of PfE.

Atom Valley Northern Gateway Mayoral Development Corporation ("MDC")

Following the establishment of the Atom Valley MDZ, GMCA has successfully sought approval from the Secretary of State to introduce an MDC to cover the Northern Gateway Region to support the realisation of a shared vision for the area and further develop the work of the MDZ. The MDC, which is a locally controlled cross-boundary corporate body between Bury and Rochdale, was established in January 2026, and covers both JPA 1.1 and JPA 1.2, as well as surrounding motorway infrastructure and associated travel routes.

MDCs are important tools for delivering large-scale development and bring a number of advantages to complex projects such as Northern Gateway, including:

- A focus on coordination and consistent delivery from a dedicated body with a specific purpose to develop and deliver a strategic vision for a defined area;
- Highly visible public sector commitment coupled with public and private sector expertise as a driver for private investment; and
- Powers to facilitate the delivery of the project.

2.3 Corporate and Economic Strategies

The SBDF has been prepared with full regard to regional and sub-regional corporate and economic strategies across the North West, Greater Manchester and Bury and Rochdale Councils, including:

- Greater Manchester Strategy 2025-2035
- Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy 2019
- Greater Manchester Housing Strategy 2019 – 2024
- Greater Manchester 5 Year Environment Plan 2025-2030
- Greater Manchester Digital Blueprint 2023-2026
- Greater Manchester CreateGM: Strategy for Culture, Heritage and Creativity 2024-2030
- Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040
- Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Northern Gateway Transport Framework
- Bury 2030 Strategy: 'LET'S Do It!'
- Bury Housing Strategy
- Bury's Economic Strategy 2024-2034
- Bury Local Transport Strategy
- Rochdale Growth Plan 2020-2030
- Rochdale's 'People, Place and Planet' Council Plan 2028
- Rochdale Borough Transport Strategy

Figure 07: A selection of relevant sub-regional corporate and economic strategies.

03

Understanding The Site

3. Understanding The Site

The preparation of this SBDF has been underpinned by detailed technical analysis that has considered specific site opportunities and constraints.

3.1 Site Context

3.1.1 Site History

Early records (c1847) show that the site and surrounds was historically characterised by a series of farmsteads which, as part of a farm complex, provided functional and ancillary buildings arranged around a farmyard which provided a group character. The agricultural land surrounding these farms emphasised their historic and traditional functions and connections to the surrounding landscape.

Later alterations and developments dating to the 20th century have altered the appreciation of the historic form and arrangement of the buildings, and their connections to the wider landscape. The Simister, Bowlee and Rhodes Green settlements were developed during 19th and 20th Century as the character of the wider surroundings became more urban, developing the pattern of development that exists today .

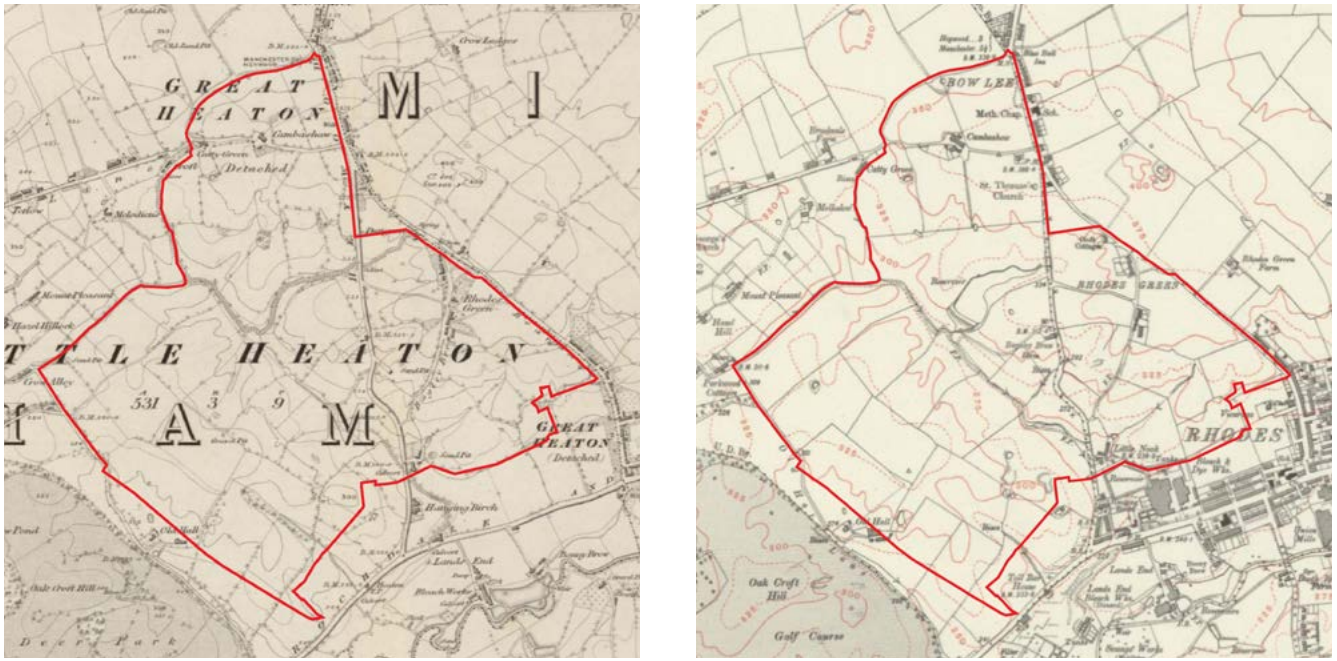


Figure 08: Historic maps of the Simister Bowlee site from circa 1850 and 1915, with site boundary added. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland, licensed under CC BY 4.0. Source: https://maps.nls.uk/

3.1.2 The Site Today

The Simister Bowlee site is strategically located in the north of the Greater Manchester conurbation, and is centrally positioned to support major growth locations in the Atom Valley MDZ, including the world class employment destination at JPA1.1.

Site allocation JPA1.2 comprises approximately 98 hectares and encompasses land to the east and west of Heywood Old Road (the A6045). The site currently comprises predominantly agricultural grazing land divided into fields by boundaries of hedgerows, fencing and trees. There are a number of dispersed farmsteads and residential properties within the site boundary and existing properties fronting on to Heywood Old Road on either side. The topography is undulating with surface water features including an unnamed watercourse running north to south across the site and a fishing pond in the central part of the site. There are several Public Rights of Way ("PRoW") also running in a broadly north/south direction across the site.

Figure 09: Agricultural land to the west of Heywood Old Road

Figure 10: Agricultural land to the east of Heywood Old Road

3.1.3 Surrounding Site Context

The northern boundary of the site consists of agricultural land to the east of Simister Village which is defined by field boundaries and hedgerows. The western boundary is defined by the M60 and the southern boundary by the suburb of Rhodes. To the north east of the allocation are further agricultural fields, North Manchester Golf Club and, further east, the built-up areas of Langley and Middleton.

The site is well related to the existing urban area. The settlements of Simister, Middleton, Rhodes, Blackley and Prestwich are all within a 2km distance of the centre of the site. Heaton Park lies to the south west, on the western side of the M60.

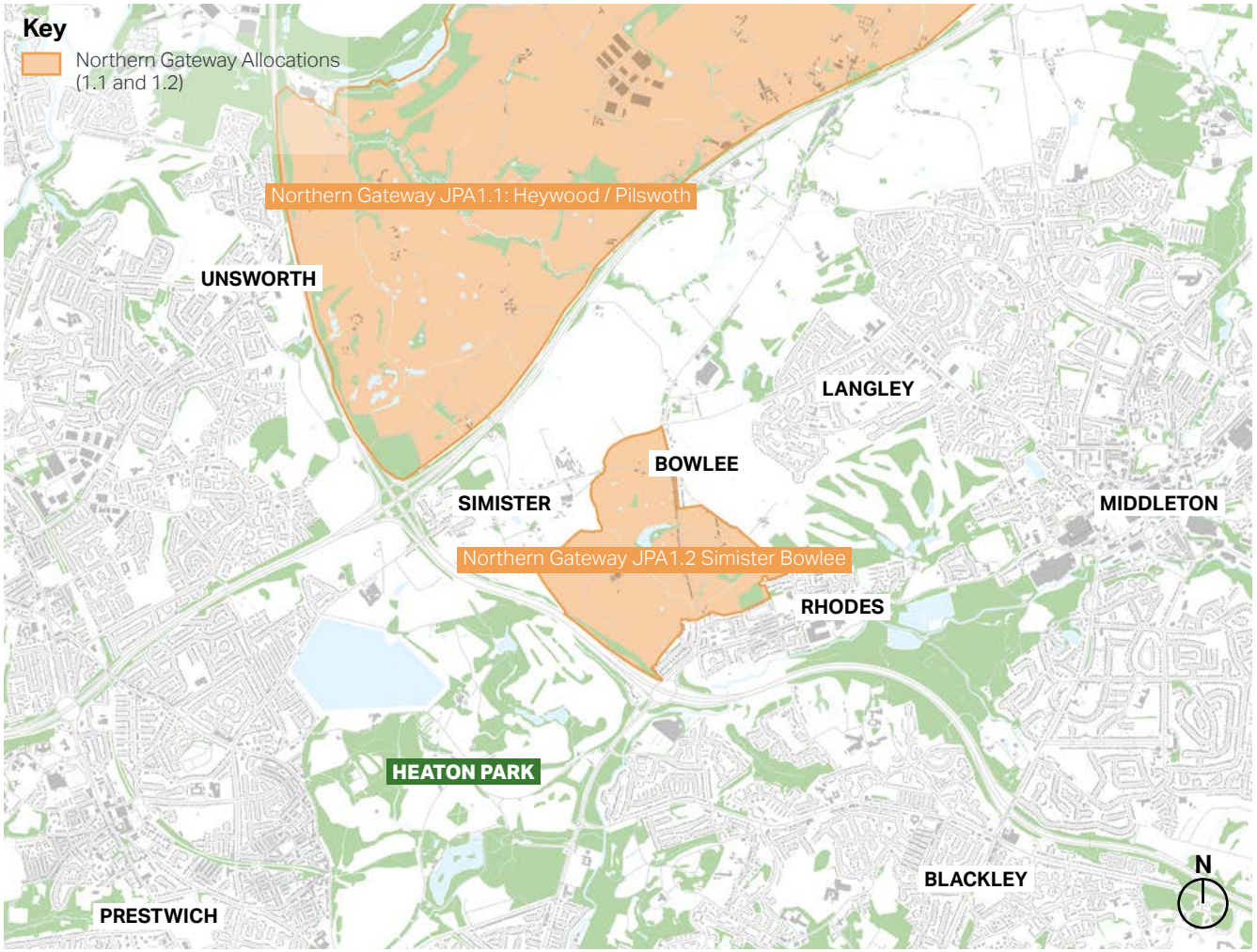


Figure 11: Plan showing Northern Gateway allocations JPA 1.1 and JPA 1.2.

3.2 Site Characteristics and Opportunities

3.2.1 Transport and Highways

Characteristics

The site is strategically located close to established residential populations in Bury, Rochdale and the town centres of Prestwich and Middleton. These areas have a large number of amenities including retail, leisure, education and healthcare. Primary access to the site is via Heywood Old Road (A6045). Existing transport links connect the site to the surrounding centres, however opportunities exist to enhance the accessibility and sustainability of the site.

Opportunities

The GM Transport Strategy 2040 recognises the key role that development at the Northern Gateway will play in generating the opportunity and demand for new public transport services. The Strategy identifies a number of key strategic initiatives that could be expected to influence journey choice to and from the JPA 1.1 and JPA 1.2 sites, including:

- Bus connections to key local centres including Bury, Heywood, Rochdale, Middleton, Manchester
- Opportunities to utilise Bowker Vale tram stop by cycle
- Long term aspirations for additional bus connections to Radcliffe, Whitefield and Prestwich
- High quality bus infrastructure
- The long term potential for a future tram-train service between Bury-Heywood-Rochdale and Oldham, including a tram-train extension into Northern Gateway
- A new Metrolink extension to Middleton
- Bus Rapid Transit between Heywood and Manchester city centre (via Northern Gateway)

The Councils are currently working directly with Transport for Greater Manchester ("TfGM") on transport initiatives as part of a comprehensive package of measures which will be further considered and programmed to support development in the Northern Boroughs.

In terms of the site itself, access opportunities have been identified to deliver primary and secondary access solutions from the A6045. Details of the bus provision on site, and/or along the A6045 are to be explored with TfGM.

Key

- Northern Gateway Allocations (1.1 and 1.2)
- Motorway
- Motorway bridge
- Motorway underpass
- Pedestrian crossing point
- Vehicular crossing point
- Primary roads
- TfGM bus network
- Railway and tramway
- Public Right of Way
- Local bus stops
- Train stations
- Tram stations
- Potential road network (Site 1.1)

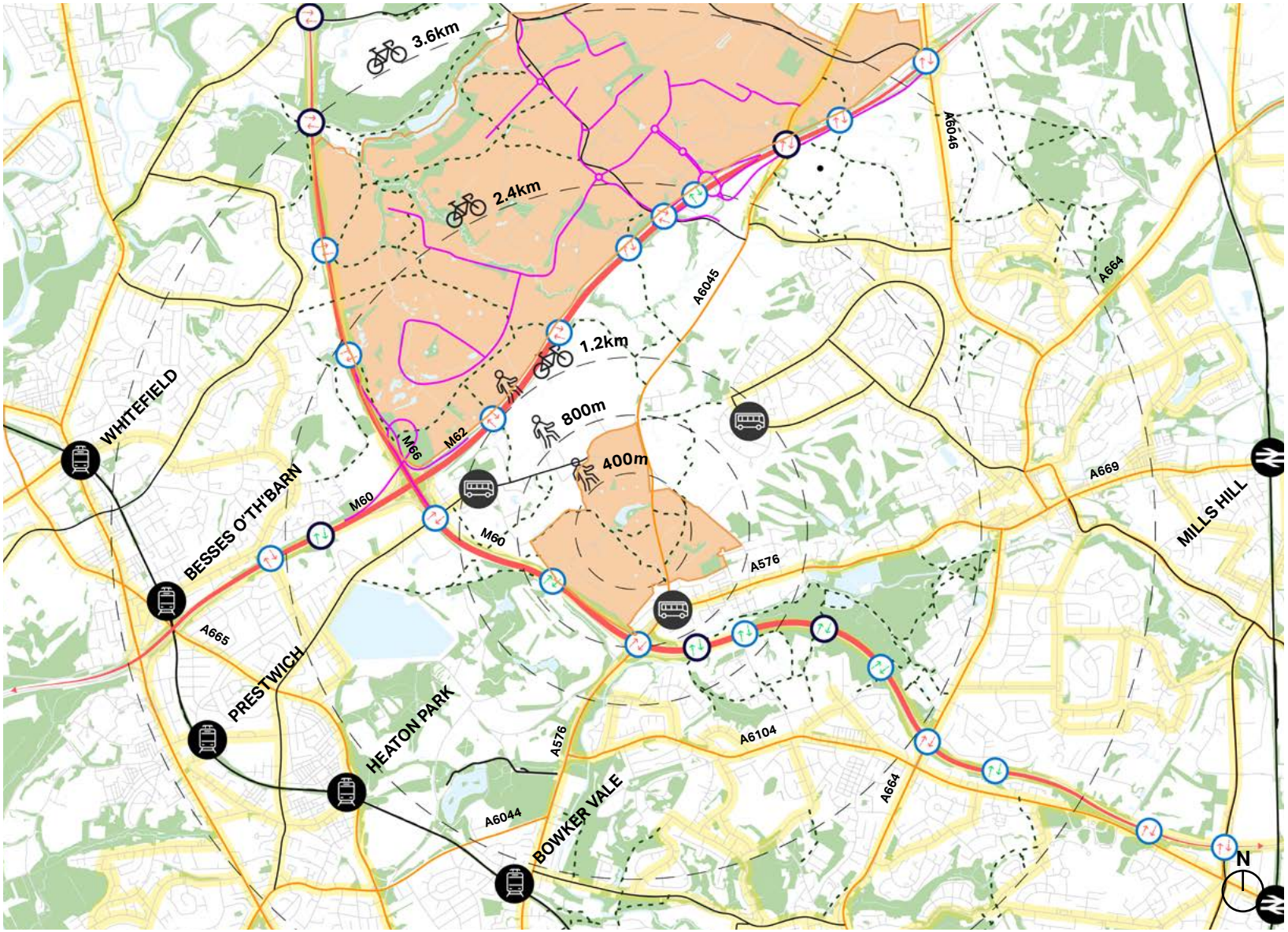


Figure 12: Plan showing the existing strategic movement and transport network surrounding the Northern Gateway allocations

3.2.2 Public Rights of Way, Footpaths and Cycle Paths

Characteristics

There is an existing network of footpaths and cycle lanes (including on Heywood Old Road) that connect the site to surrounding communities, services and amenities, including Simister Village, facilities on Manchester Old Road and Middleton. A network of Public Rights of Way ("PRoW") also traverse the site and its surrounds and link to wider destinations, including Heaton Park.

Opportunities

There is an opportunity to improve pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, that links into existing PRoWs, and provides safe pedestrian and cycle links to the local facilities and amenities. An opportunity exists to enhance east-west and north-south connections and to provide green links that integrate with the existing movement network, including PRoW's. There is also an opportunity to connect the existing residential areas at Simister Village, Heywood Old Road and Manchester Old Road through a network of green routes, and by encouraging sustainable mode of travel to reduce the reliance on the car for short trips.

Figure 13: The entrance to an existing public footpath from Heywood Old Road

3.2.3 Ecology

Characteristics

The site is characterised by largely low-quality modified grassland associated with cattle grazing and silage with some areas of other neutral grassland. There are hedgerows across the site, with ponds and a large fishing lake evident on land to the west of Heywood Old Road. A stream runs north to south through the central area of the western part of the site, featuring a riparian corridor in moderate condition. Additionally, a woodland block is adjacent to the M60. A Site of Biological Importance ("SBI") at Bradley Hall Farm, is located on the eastern part of the site.

At the time of writing, initial survey results demonstrate that the riparian corridor and linear features are the most important features for bats and that there is a limited number of skylark territories recorded. No bat roosts or water vole signs have been recorded to date and the eDNA surveys for Great Crested Newts returned negative results.

Opportunities

There is an opportunity to bring forward a development that seeks to protect sensitive habitats, enhance biodiversity and create multi-functional green corridors and spaces. In terms of Biodiversity Net Gain ("BNG"), the site offers opportunities to contribute towards 10% gain by retaining and enhancing important ecological features, and creation of new more diverse habitats offering increased opportunities for species.

Figure 14: The site is characterised by largely low-quality modified grassland associated with cattle grazing and silage with some areas of other neutral grassland.

Figure 15: There are hedgerows across the site, with ponds and a large fishing lake evident on land to the west of Heywood Old Road.

3.2.4 Heritage and Archaeology

Characteristics

Heaton Park (a Grade II Registered Park and Garden) is situated approximately 100m to the south west of the site, beyond the M60 motorway which provides a physical and visual barrier. The park has a wide setting that includes both rural and urban areas. The areas of the Registered Park and Garden nearest to the site include a golf course, whereas the Grade I Listed Heaton Hall is at a greater distance to the west. A temple to the north east of Heaton Hall (Grade II* Listed building) is situated at a high point within the park, though tree belts largely preclude views northwards towards the northern parts of the site.

There are additional listed buildings within the wider surroundings of the site including the Church of St. George (Grade II Listed building) which is approximately 300m to the north of the site. Little Nook is an altered farmstead and a locally listed building within the site that would be retained as part of any future proposals. The asset is located within a suburban setting to the north and south with land to the east and west rising steeply, providing enclosure.

There are no designated archaeological assets within the site or its surroundings.

Opportunities

There is an opportunity to ensure that the site's intervisibility with the Heaton Park Grade II Listed Registered Park and Garden is considered to inform the future design of site, and ensure key view points into and out of the site are retained.

Figure 16: The Church of St. George (Grade II Listed Building) is located approximately 300m to the north of the site.

Key

- Northern Gateway Allocations (1.1 and 1.2)
- Conservation Areas
- Grade I Listed assets
- Grade II* Listed assets
- Grade II Listed assets
- Grade II Park and Garden

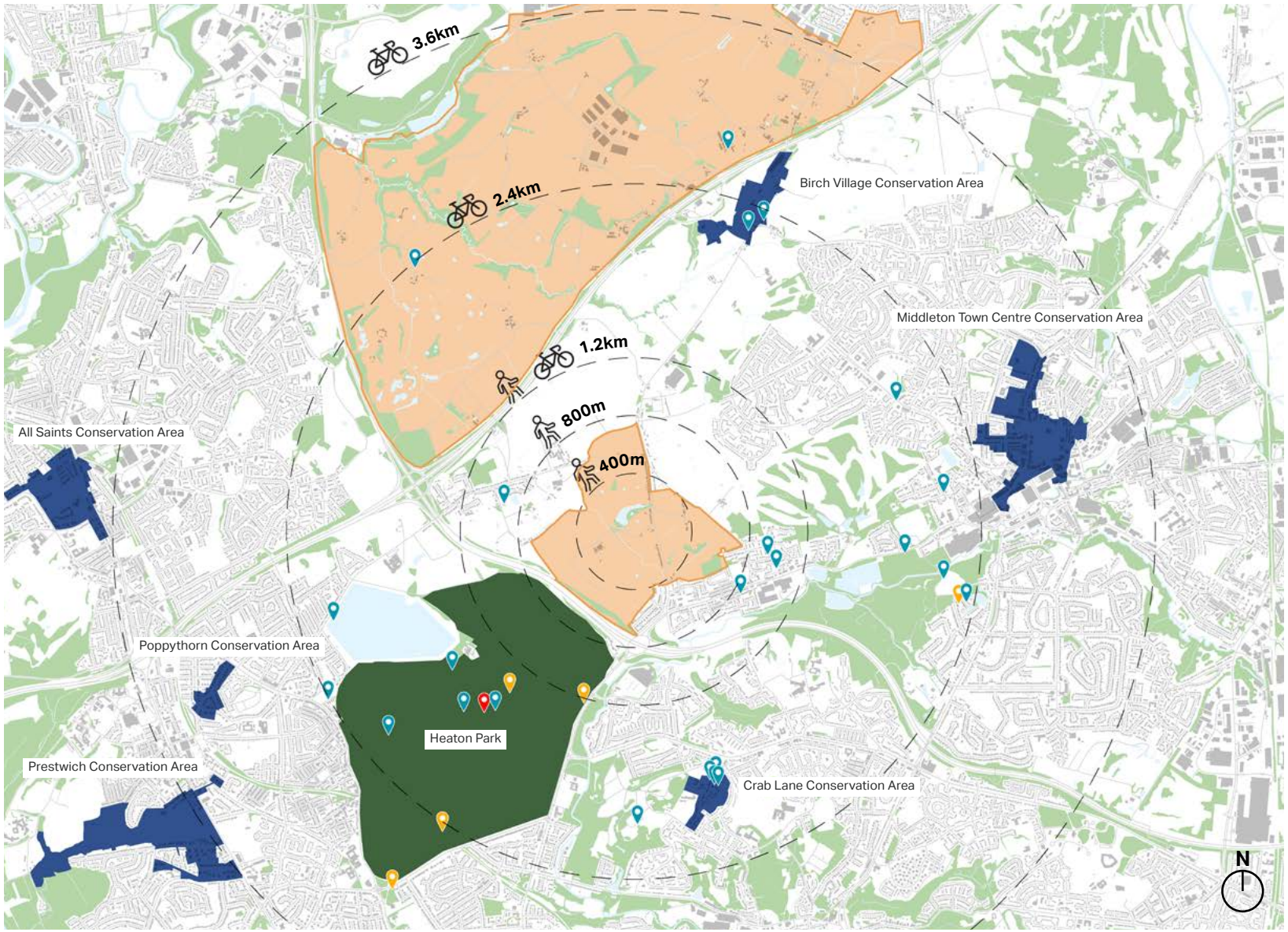


Figure 17: Plan showing heritage designations surrounding the Northern Gateway allocations

3.2.5 Landscape and Greenspace

Characteristics

There are no National Parks or National Landscapes (previously known as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) located within or close proximity of the site. The site is located within National Character Area (NCA) 54 Manchester Pennine Fringe, with NCA 55 Manchester Conurbation located to the south.

The Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Report (2018), produced by LUC, provided localised landscape evidence to support the preparation of PfE. The document identifies the site as being located within Landscape Character Type ('LCT') 'Urban Fringe Farmland' and Landscape Character Area ('LCA') 27: Simister, Slattocks and Healds Green. It assesses LCA 27 to have 'moderate' sensitivity to both residential and commercial development noting that the LCA *"contains existing large industrial development (Birch Business Park and Stakehill Industrial & Distribution Park) and is crossed by large road infrastructure such as the M62 and A627 (M) which have strong influence detracting from the rural qualities of the landscape".*

The site is formed by two parcels to the east and west of Heywood Old Road; a road which is presently characterised by ribbon residential development. The M60 corridor exerts an urbanising influence on the south western edge of the western parcel as well as the M62 to the north west.

Intervisibility exists within elevated parts of the site towards the Manchester conurbation, distant hills (South Pennines) and Scout Moor Wind Farm. In these views, the urbanised context of the surrounding landscape is apparent. The local Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network traverses the site, and the Rochdale Way passes along Boardman Lane to the north of the eastern parcel. In addition, the site has some limited intervisibility with Heaton Park Grade II Listed Registered Park and Garden (part of which comprises Heaton Park Golf Club) which contributes to the heritage and recreational quality of the site context and has been considered in the development of a Masterplan for the site.

In terms of surrounding green spaces, Bowlee Community Park is also a significant area of around 40 ha and includes cycle paths, sports pitches, changing facilities and is used for sport and community events.

There are several mature trees present throughout the site, comprising mainly hedgerow trees within fragmented and outgrown hedgerows bordering the agricultural fields. The wooded brook valley passing east-west through the site, the centrally located reservoir with associated woodland blocks, and wooded corridor associated with the M60 corridor are also characteristic features.

Opportunities

There is an opportunity to deliver a masterplan that draws on the character and landscape strengths of the site, and creates new landscape features. This includes opportunities to create a green infrastructure corridor along the existing brook, providing new green infrastructure that connects with the broader green infrastructure network and providing landscape buffers and boundary treatment to soften the development edges, whilst providing opportunities for the public to better interface with open spaces.

Key

- Northern Gateway Allocations (1.1 and 1.2)
- Green Belt
- Water
- Parks and green spaces
- Golf courses
- Play areas
- Allotments
- Sports pitches

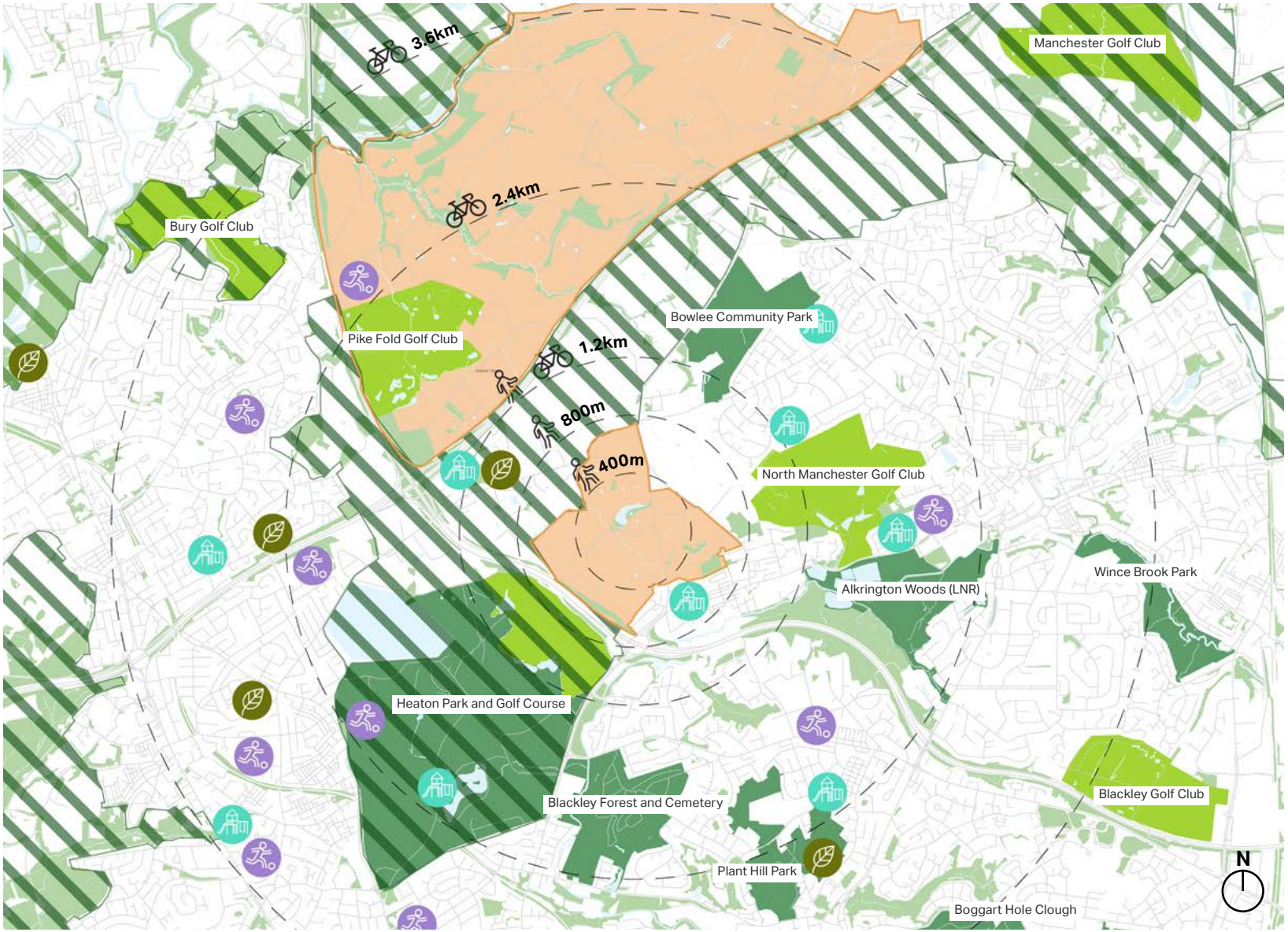


Figure 18: Plan showing existing green and blue infrastructure surrounding the Northern Gateway allocations

3.2.6 Flood Risk and Drainage

Characteristics and Constraints

There are no main rivers within the boundaries of the site. The Environment Agency flood maps identify that the site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1, therefore at the lowest risk of flooding (assessed as having a lower than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding).

There is localised risk of groundwater flooding across the northern part of the site and adjacent to the unnamed watercourse which flows north south through the site.

Opportunities

There are opportunities to incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) on-site to attenuate surface water runoff prior to discharging into the local watercourses. Detailed future designs for the development will ensure there is no increase to flood risk on the site or elsewhere as a result of the development.

3.2.7 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

Characteristics

There are several mature trees present throughout the site, comprising a mix of open grown and hedgerow trees within a combination of continuous, outgrown and fragmented hedgerows bordering the agricultural fields. Adjoining rear gardens accommodate a mix of ornamental shrub and small stature trees with tracts of hedgerow tree belts and shelter belt planting present in clusters at field boundaries across the site's rolling mixed farmland landscape. Woodland cover is present to the edge of central reservoir, although none of the on-site wooded areas are identified as Ancient Woodlands.

Opportunities

There are opportunities to retain and enhance existing hedgerows and trees, particularly on the site boundaries. There is also the potential to expand tree groups and hedges to extend the coverage and network.

However, given the topography of the site, and the likely necessity to create development plateaus, a cut and fill strategy across the site may result in tree and hedgerow loss. Replacement, mitigation and compensation will ensure new tree and hedgerow opportunities are created.

3.2.8 Retail and Services

Characteristics

Middleton Town Centre, which includes Middleton Shopping Centre, is located approximately 2km to the east of the site and offers a full range of comparison and convenience retail, and other key services. There are also local services, including a convenience store, Tesco Express and other local services; located in neighbourhood hubs in Langley to the east of the site (on Bowness Road and Wood Street), and on Manchester Old Road to the south east within 400m of the eastern part of the site. Prestwich Town Centre is also located approximately 3km to the west of the site, and also offers a full range of comparison and convenience retail, and other key services

Opportunities

The site offers the opportunity to provide integrated retail and community facilities to complement the existing offer in Middleton and Prestwich and to elevate amenity for future and existing residents. There are also opportunities to create new pedestrian connections which will improve permeability and access to existing local facilities and facilitate greater use.

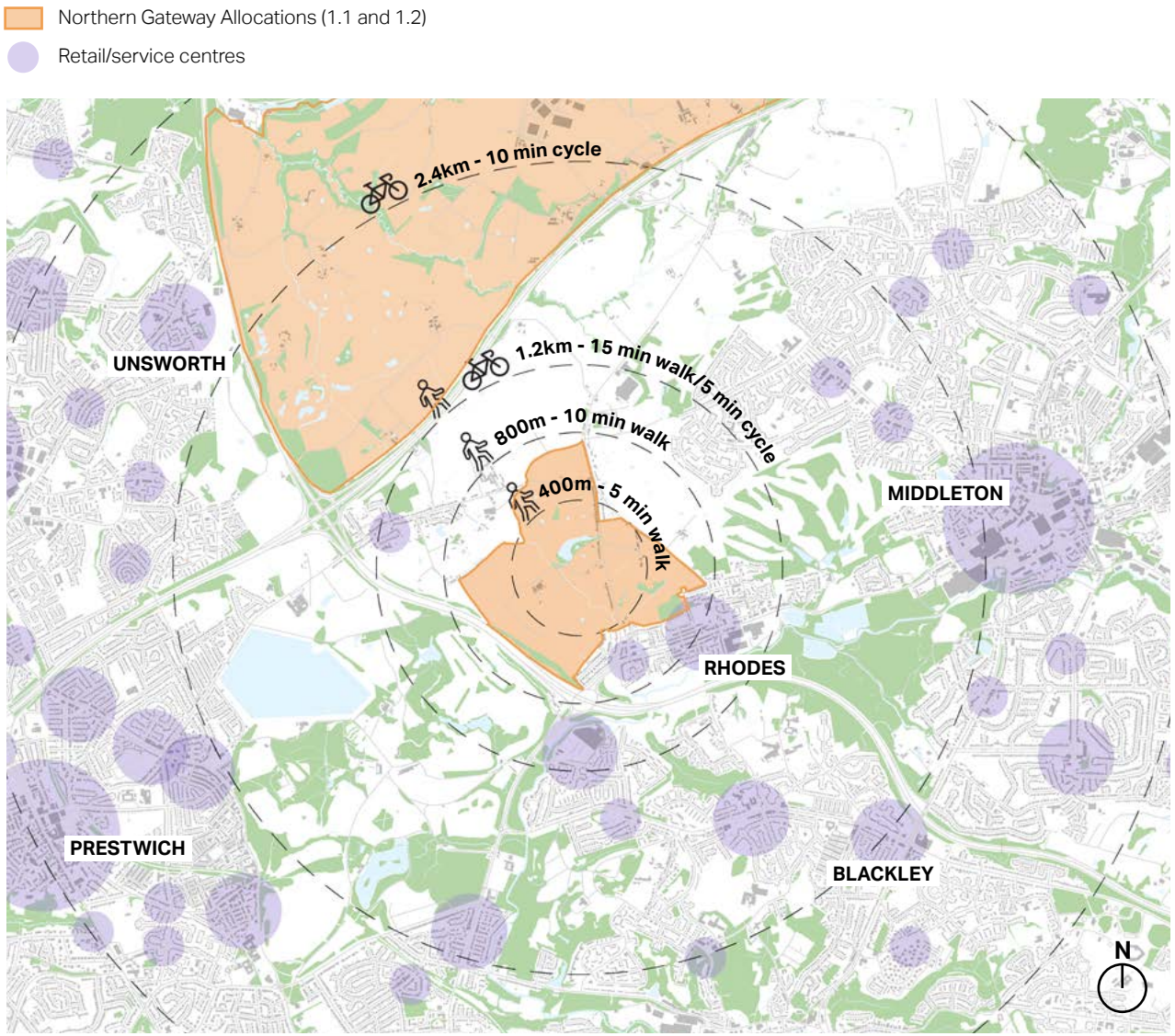


Figure 19: Plan showing existing retail/service centres surrounding the Northern Gateway allocations

3.2.9 Education

Characteristics

Within Bury there is limited local primary school provision, with no provision to the east of the M60. The nearest school within Bury is St Margaret's which is approximately 1.5km from the entrance to the development. Within Rochdale, for primary education, Within Rochdale, for primary education, Little Heaton Church of England Primary School is the closest facility and is located just to the east of the site. There is also Bowlee Park Community School which is approximately 1.5km northeast of the site.

In terms of Secondary School Provision, Parrenthorn High School is around 1.5km to the west of the site, Edgar Wood Academy is around 2km to the northeast, and Unsworth Academy and Brookhaven School are around 2.5km to the northwest, as the crow flies.

It is considered that Little Heaton currently provides sufficient capacity for the pupil yield arising from the part of the development which falls within the Rochdale Boundary.

However, there is anticipated insufficient capacity within other Rochdale primary schools in the area to meet pupil yield arising from the development. Therefore, given the scale of development availability of school places in existing schools and distance from Bury schools, new primary provision will be required on site.

Opportunities

In line with PfE Policy for JPA1.2, there is a need to make provision for a new on-site two-form entry primary school and for the development to provide a financial contribution for off-site additional secondary school provision to meet needs generated by the development.

3.2.10 Health Facilities

Characteristics

There are several GP surgeries within reasonable distance including the Family Practice and the Woodside Medical Centre in Middleton, which sit around 2km to the east of the site. There is also Whittaker Lane Medical Centre and St Gabriels Medical Centre on the west of Heaton Park, around 3km from the site. In Prestwich, there is the Longfield Medical Practice and in Unsworth there is the Unsworth Medical Centre, which are proximately 3km from the site.

Opportunities

There is a potential opportunity to co-locate new community and health facilities within the new Local Centre or for contributions to improving healthcare facilities in the surrounding area.

Key

- Northern Gateway Allocations (1.1 and 1.2)
- Supermarket
- Healthcare
- Church
- Mosque
- Secondary School / Sixth Form
- Primary School
- Nursery
- Leisure Centre

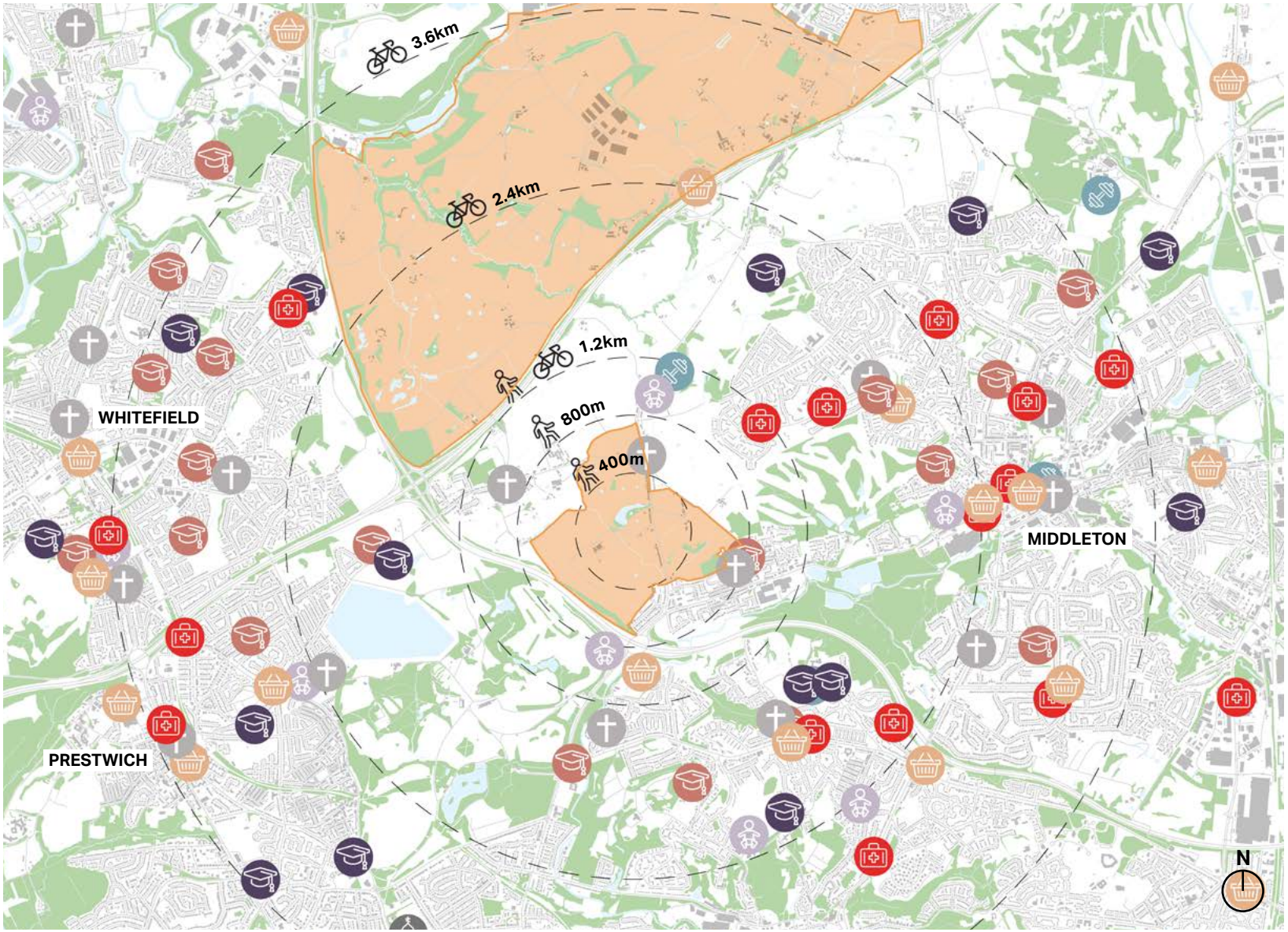


Figure 20: Plan showing existing local facilities surrounding the site

3.2.11 Topography

Characteristics

The eastern part of the site has an undulating topography which is more elevated and generally slopes towards the western and southern boundaries, towards the settlement edge of Middleton and Heywood Old Road. The western parcel has undulating topography which generally slopes towards the riparian corridor which flows through the centre of the site and as such has the general perception of a 'valley'.

Opportunities

In response to the topography of the site, there is an opportunity to implement a cut and fill strategy to create development plateaus across the site.

3.2.12 Geotechnical and Ground Conditions

Characteristics

The site predominantly comprises agricultural land which is not expected to contain significant areas of contamination that would affect the future development of the site.

The following low level potential geo-environmental risks have been identified (see table below):

Opportunities

The assessment work undertaken to date has not identified significant potential risks associated with contamination. The potential geotechnical constraints and associated standard mitigation measures can be incorporated into the design of the scheme

Area of Potential Contamination	Potential Mitigation
Backfilled historical quarries / pits.	Assessment of material, remediation (where required) and, where possible, re-use of material.
Ground gas	Ground gas protection measures may be required in new builds.
Potential for contamination of surface waters or shallow groundwater	Assessment of risk if areas of significant contamination of soils are identified. Remediation (where required) of contamination in soils is likely to significantly reduce the risk of potential impact to surface waters and/or shallow groundwater.

Table 01: Low level potential geo-environmental risks identified

3.2.13 Utilities

Characteristics

Existing utilities connect to Heywood Old Road (surface water, water main, electricity, gas, and BT). These include a 15-metre sludge main, a high-pressure gas main along Simister Lane, and a 275kV overhead line running east-west of the site. There are no utilities constraints that would prevent the development of the site.

Opportunities

There is an opportunity to utilise (and enhance where appropriate) existing utilities infrastructure, surface water, water main, electricity, gas, and BT, as well as the provision of new on-site infrastructure, to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate the development.

3.2.14 Air Quality

Characteristics

The site is partly located within the Greater Manchester Air Quality Management Area ("AQMA"). The principle sources of atmospheric pollution within and surrounding the site relates to vehicle exhaust emissions from the M60 to the west, and to a lesser extent Heywood Old Road to the east.

Opportunities

Opportunities exist to respond to air quality through the scheme's design. This should include the sensitive positioning of dwellings, the provision of green and blue infrastructure networks and the integration of sustainable means of transport. These can also help to improve and tackle air pollution.

Future development traffic can be reduced and controlled through suitable mitigation; and there is an opportunity to move away from petrol and diesel vehicles through the inclusion of household EV charging and improved public transport.

3.2.15 Noise

Characteristics

Road traffic noise, principally from the M60, M62 and Heywood Old Road (A6045), is the dominant noise sources around the site.

Opportunities

There are a variety of measures which can be implemented to minimise the impact of road traffic noise within the site, examples of which can include landscape buffers, building orientation and massing, acoustic barriers / bunds and a suitable scheme of sound insulation to dwellings.

Key

- Buildings
- Water
- Gas main
- Sludge main
- Water main
- Overhead electricity
- Public Right of Way
- Rochdale Way
- Contours
- Sand pit
- Utilities offsets (15m)
- Rhodes Green cropmark site
- Bradley Fold structural geology fault
- Historic land fill
- Viewpoints
- Designated site of ecological and geological importance
- Category A tree
- Category B tree
- Category C tree
- Category U tree (very poor condition - should be felled)
- Root protection areas
- Tree shading constraints
- Existing barn buildings, potential homes to nesting birds
- Better condition, unmanaged and species diverse grassland
- Neutral grassland featuring orchids, species diverse grasses and wildflower
- Species diverse grassland
- Wildlife habitat to be protected
- Best preserved hedgerow
- Arable land
- Ploughed land

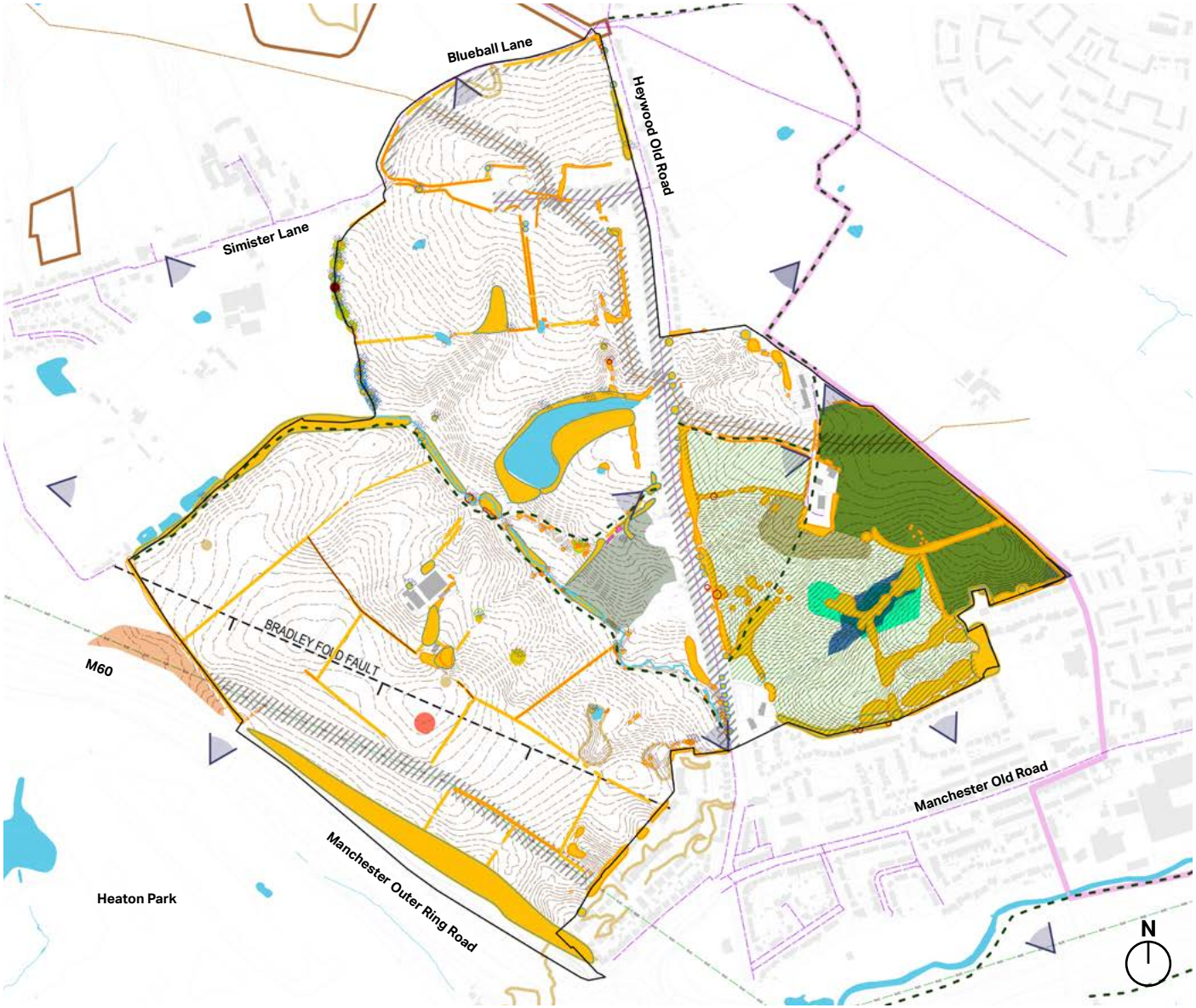


Figure 21: Site constraints diagram

Key

- Existing buildings
- Water
- Existing motorway bridge
- Existing pedestrian crossing point
- Existing vehicular crossing point
- Rochdale Way
- Existing trees and wooded areas
- Existing hedgerows
- Opportunity to create multi-functional, green corridors enhancing active travel, amenity, SuDS, BNG, and landscape
- Potential pedestrian access point
- Potential vehicular access points
- Opportunity for green nodes
- Opportunity to enhance brook crossing (subject to viability and technical justification)
- Opportunity to enhance views and vistas in and out of the development
- Potential public transport connection to Simister Lane
- Connect to existing Public Rights of Way
- Opportunity to enhance gateways
- Opportunity to incorporate existing hedgerows into green links

Figure 22: Site opportunities diagram

04

Vision & Strategic Objectives

4. Vision & Strategic Objectives

The site presents an opportunity to deliver a well-planned new neighbourhood supported by new community and transport infrastructure.

Vision

A thriving new neighbourhood where People, Planet, and Place come together.

Building a Healthy, Connected Community

Designing for Nature

A Place to Belong, Grow, and Thrive

Simister Bowlee presents an opportunity to deliver a **well-planned new neighbourhood** supported by new community infrastructure that will support the **sustainable growth** of Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ) and the transformational **employment-led opportunity** within the wider Northern Gateway (JPA1.1)

4.1 The Vision and Opportunity

Simister Bowlee will help address Greater Manchester's acute housing and affordability crisis by delivering a diverse mix of homes for all life stages, supported by essential community facilities, a new primary school, and accessible green spaces. Located across Bury and Rochdale, this neighbourhood will become a place for **future generations to live, work, and play.**

A thriving new neighbourhood where People, Planet, and Place come together.

The Simister Bowlee site, will provide the key components for a sustainable and successful neighbourhood. Our vision is to create an attractive and safe place where people feel a strong sense of belonging, both for new residents and the surrounding communities.

The site will feature a mixed-use Local Centre that fosters community life. The facilities will be tailored to the needs of the community and could include local shops, health facilities, community space, growing gardens, and green parks, creating spaces for everyday living, social interaction, and shared experiences.

The new neighbourhood will embrace sustainability as a way of life. Green spaces will be welcoming and accessible to all, while an integrated landscape strategy will respond to the area's character, enhancing biodiversity and visual appeal.

Nature will be interwoven throughout the community, including meadows, river corridor, ponds and managed woodlands that will support wildlife, provide access to the countryside, and offer opportunities for recreation, environmental learning, and well-being.

Simister Bowlee is a place where people and nature thrive together, an inspiring model of connected, sustainable living.

4.2 Strategic Objectives

Twelve objectives have been developed to support the vision for the site, which will seek to deliver an inclusive new community, new homes, facilities and the essential infrastructure required to support development.

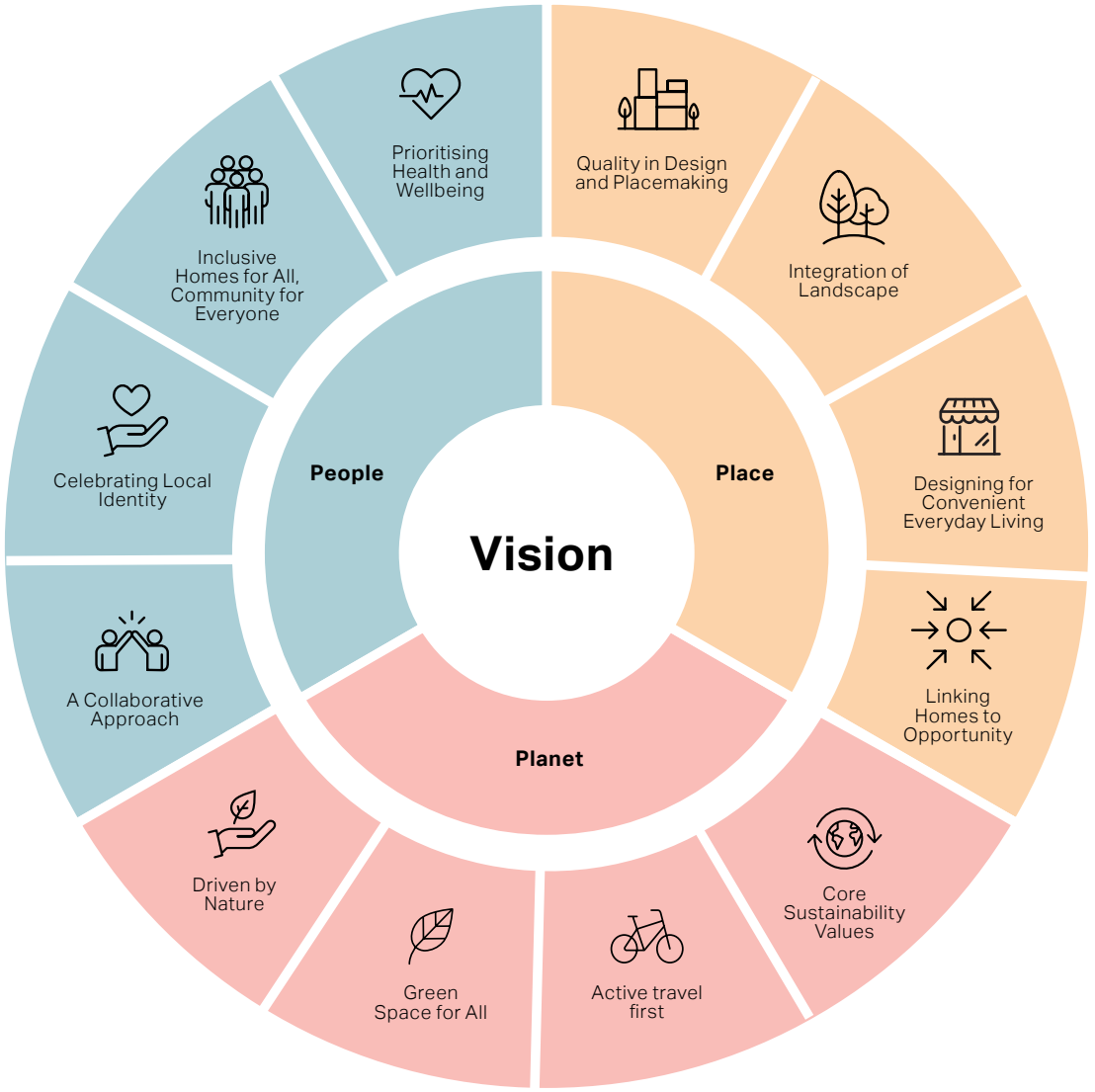


Figure 23: The twelve guiding development themes supporting the vision, grouped under the headings of people, planet and place

4.2.1 People - Building a Healthy, Connected Community

Prioritising Health and Wellbeing

The site will be designed for life in balance with people's physical, mental, and social well-being at the heart of the neighbourhood. Safe, walkable streets, green corridors, and active travel routes will support healthier lifestyles, reduce air pollution, and encourage outdoor activity. Pocket parks, nature trails and accessible play spaces will create environments for people to connect and enjoy.

Inclusive Homes for All, Community for Everyone

Development will deliver high-quality homes across a range of tenures and types, and will include affordable housing and specialist homes where there is a need, ensuring that people at every stage of life can find a home that suits. The neighbourhood will support local and changing needs.

The provision of uses that may include local shops, a primary school, healthcare provision, and community spaces, will form a sense of place and community. The neighbourhood will be a place to meet, to learn, to grow, and to belong.

Celebrating Local Identity

Drawing inspiration from the surrounding heritage, street patterns, landscape character and sloping topography, the site will be shaped by context. Community-focused design will respect the area's history while promoting social interaction through shared spaces, events, and initiatives. Community gardens, orchards, and cultural projects will knit new residents into the fabric of existing communities.

A Collaborative Approach

Development will be driven by inclusive engagement between councils, landowners, developers, local communities, and stakeholders. Collaborative engagement is central to the design process and will shape the future development of the site.

Figure 24: Parks and fitness trails encourage social cohesion and active outdoor lifestyles

4.2.2 Place - A Place to Belong, Grow, and Thrive

Quality in Design and Placemaking

This site will deliver outstanding placemaking, creating distinctive public spaces and high-quality streets that respond to local heritage, context and landscape character. A clear design code and urban design principles will ensure high-quality development that reflects the local area's character, integrating homes that blend seamlessly with the landscape and neighbouring settlements. It will foster a cohesive neighbourhood with diverse character, ranging from winding lanes to tree-lined streets, parks and wildflower meadows.

Integration of the Landscape

The site will stitch into its surroundings, respecting and enhancing connections to the surrounding Green Belt and the interface with the countryside. The landscape will permeate through the development, into the community, through river corridors, meadows and parks.

Designing for Convenient Everyday Living

The neighbourhood will be built on the principle of improved accessibility. New and enhanced active travel links will improve access between the surrounding communities, Simister Village, Middleton and key employment destinations such as JPA1.1. New sustainable active travel infrastructure, will foster use of improved walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport options.

Linking Homes to Opportunity

The neighbourhood has the scale and location to support the transformational economic potential of the wider Northern Gateway and Atom Valley. By providing the homes and community infrastructure needed to support new job growth, including up to 20,000 jobs at JPA1.1, it will anchor a thriving, future-ready neighbourhood. The integration of housing with employment, education, and community services will support a circular economy and attract long-term investment. This synergy will be further supported by increased accessibility and sustainable active travel modes to new jobs, which will support the demand for new housing, driven by a major new employment destination.

Figure 25: Development features a green pedestrian, wheeling, and cycle connection, encouraging active travel

4.2.3 Planet - Designing for Nature

Driven by Nature

Nature will define a masterplan for the site, not just as a backdrop, but as a design driver. Existing natural assets like the river valley, hedgerows, and woodland will be enhanced and reconnected through an integrated green infrastructure network. Nature corridors, wetlands, and rewilded spaces will support biodiversity, create safe habitats, and offer opportunities for play, learning, and wellbeing.

Green Space for All

Green space will be accessible from any location within the site. A connected system of multifunctional green spaces, parks, play areas, sports pitches, gardens, wild spaces, allotments and growing areas will serve both ecological and amenity functions. Play areas, community orchards and nature trails will provide places for people of all ages to relax, explore, and reconnect.

SuDS features such as swales and ponds will manage water sustainably, support biodiversity, and enrich the site's environmental resilience.

Active Travel First

The design of the site will deliver pedestrian and cycle infrastructure to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling across and beyond the site. Safe, green corridors and direct routes will connect homes with the community hubs, schools, the countryside, surrounding facilities and future planned public transport links. Prioritising active travel will reduce emissions and support healthier living.

Core Sustainability Values

Sustainability is embedded in every layer of the masterplan. From site-wide strategic decisions to detailed delivery, development will adopt a fabric-first approach to minimise carbon emissions and energy demand. Buildings will incorporate renewable technologies, promote efficient water and energy use, and support the transition to net-zero.

Figure 26: Swales as an integral part of a housing scheme

05

Design Approach

5. Design Approach

This chapter illustrates how the site constraints and opportunities, the site context, overarching vision and the policy framework have informed a set of design principles for the site. These principles have underpinned the indicative masterplan and will inform the design and delivery of future planning applications that come forward.

5.1 Design Principles

The six design principles articulated on this page should shape the development of the site. The overarching design principles will inform a detailed Design Code that will be submitted alongside a planning application for the site, to ensure that the design of site delivers high quality placemaking and adheres to the vision set out in this framework.

5.1.1 Connected Communities

5.1.2 Landscape Network

5.1.3 A Seamless Transition to the Countryside

5.1.4 Enhance the River Corridor

5.1.5 Respond to Views and Topography

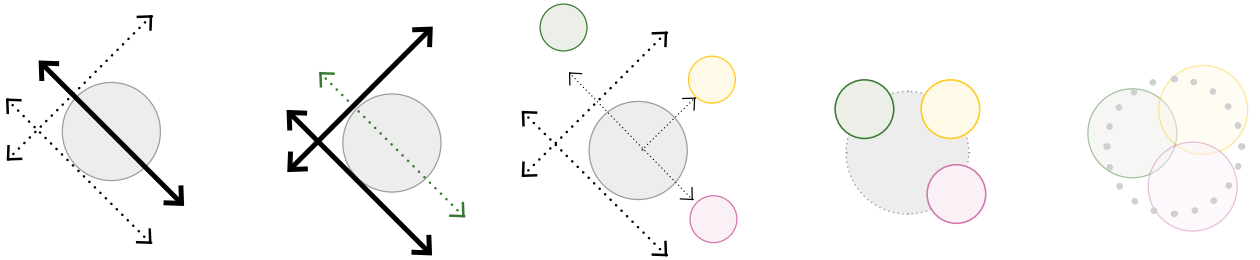
5.1.6 Transition with Interfaces and Edges

5.1.1 Connected Communities

Figure 27: Concept sketch showing enhanced connections between local communities

The site is severed into two parts by Heywood Old Road. The development offers the potential to reconnect Simister Village by active travel (but not general vehicle access) to the site and Rhodes to the east and south.

Improving connectivity through a network of green routes, that encourage walking, wheeling and cycling and reduce the reliance on the car for short trips, will serve to enhance permeability across new and existing communities.



5.1.2 Landscape Network

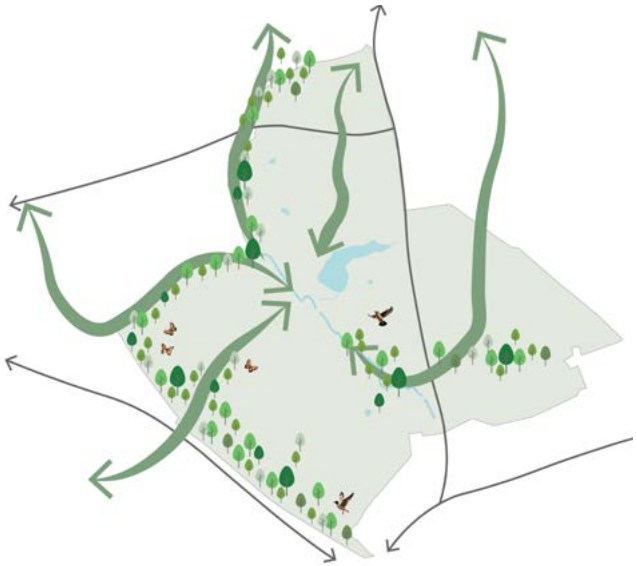


Figure 28: Concept sketch showing enhanced connections between the site and surrounding landscapes

Integration with the surrounding countryside

The development should be carefully designed so that the character and beauty of the surrounding countryside flow naturally into the site. Strategic buffer planting should be considered to enhance biodiversity but also provide effective screening, softening the visual impact of buildings and ensuring that key views remain protected.

Inclusive access to green space

Every resident, regardless of location within the development, should have direct and convenient access to high-quality green areas. These spaces will be designed for both leisure and wellbeing, offering places for relaxation, play, and community activities.

Proximity to nature

The site location allows people to be within easy reach of the wider countryside, encouraging walking, cycling, and outdoor exploration. This close connection to nature should be considered in the site design to promote a healthier lifestyle and foster a strong sense of place.

Replenishment and replacement

Whilst development could result in some loss of hedgerows and trees, new wildlife corridors, hedgerows and tree belts will be established to create additional and a greater span to benefit wildlife. Thoughtful and quality new landscape and habitats should integrate within the development to foster a positive interaction of fauna, flora and people alike.

5.1.3 A Seamless Transition to the Countryside

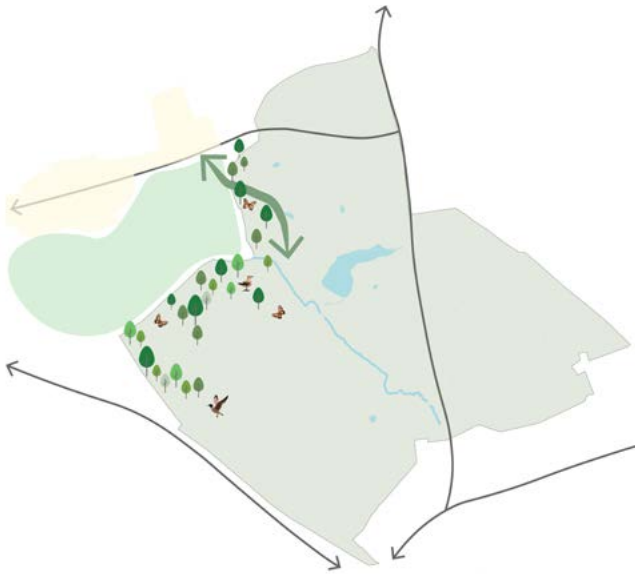


Figure 29: Concept sketch highlighting a seamless transition to the countryside

Avoid urban sprawl and homogeneous development

New development should respect the existing character of the area. It is particularly important to retain separation between Simister Village and any new development, to create a robust defensible edge between the Green Belt and the site, thus protecting the identity of the existing village. Public transport/active travel connections will be allowed within this area of the Green Belt, to help serve both Simister and the new development.

Landscape buffers to soften edges and provide visual separation

Design should introduce green spaces, tree planting, and natural screening to create a softer transition between existing residential areas and the new development. These buffers would act as visual breaks, preserving the rural setting and reducing the perception of encroachment and will have the added benefit of providing additional connectivity across the site for protected species.

Reduced density to form a transition to the countryside

Development should lower the scale and intensity of buildings towards sensitive neighbours. This approach ensures a more natural visual connection between the built environment and the rural landscape. This is especially important at the western edges of the site to retain separation between Simister Village and the new development.

5.1.4 Enhance the River Corridor

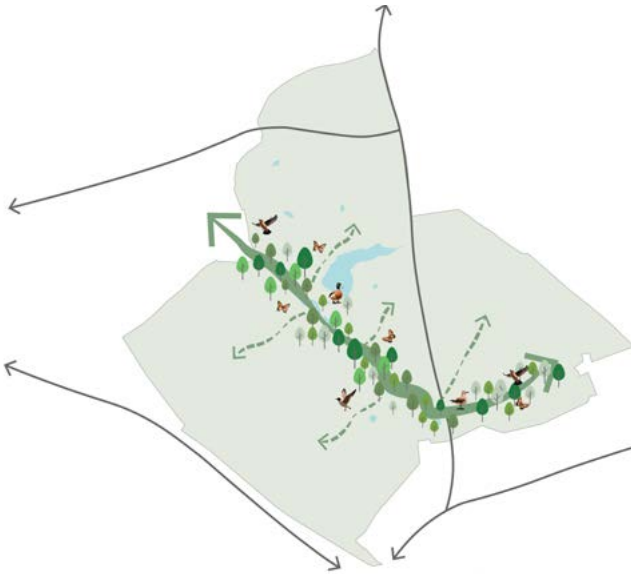


Figure 30: Concept sketch highlighting a central wildlife corridor focused around the brook

The brook and the surrounding valley form the site's primary natural asset, offering both ecological importance and visual character. They provide a distinctive landscape setting, create a sense of place, and act as a foundation for biodiversity and recreational opportunities.

A multifunctional wildlife corridor should be designed to weave through the landscape, delivering a rich, connected habitat for wildlife while supporting SuDS. This corridor provides robust connectivity, enhances ecological resilience and offers an attractive amenity space for the community, encouraging interaction with nature and promoting environmental stewardship.

5.1.5 Respond to Views and Topography

Figure 31: Concept sketch highlighting how key views could be identified and considered on site

Views out of the site should be enhanced and framed to take full advantage of surrounding landscapes, architectural features, and natural vistas. This should consider the positioning of buildings, open spaces and windows to capture key sightlines while eliminating visual clutter.

Views into the site should be mitigated through a sensitive and context-driven design approach. Strategies should include selecting an appropriate scale and massing for buildings, incorporating natural and built screening elements, and using planting schemes, fencing, or earthworks to soften the visual presence within views from surrounding areas.

5.1.6 Transition with Interfaces and Edges

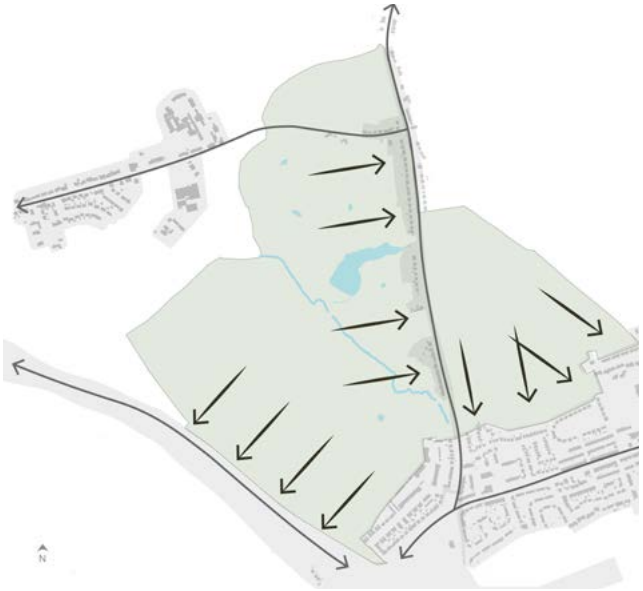


Figure 32: Concept sketch highlighting the need for a sensitive transition with interfaces and edges

Development integration with local context

The proposed development should be carefully designed to respect the surrounding settled context and character of Simister, Heywood Old Road, and Manchester Old Road. This should involve a considered approach to building scale and heights, layout, and street patterns; to ensure continuity with the established character, while also respecting local heritage features and views.

Varied neighbourhood character

The Design Codes that will support future planning applications should explore creating variety in character and identity across the development site. Built form, street pattern, architecture, materials, landscape treatments, and boundaries will be tailored to reflect and enhance the distinctive qualities of each context, while creating a cohesive place.

Sensitive treatment of site edges

Interfaces and edges of the site should be carefully managed to ensure appropriate transitions to neighbouring uses and to reflect the surrounding landscape character. This includes maintaining adequate privacy distances through the use of building setbacks, orientation, and the incorporation of landscape buffers such as planting belts, hedgerows, and tree lines to create a sense of enclosure and visual screening.

Enhanced green corridor

A strengthened and expanded green corridor will form a natural buffer along the M60 motorway edge, softening the visual impact of infrastructure and providing ecological benefits, such as feeding and movement corridors for bats, and nesting opportunities for birds. This green interface would create a more attractive environment for residents, encourage biodiversity, and contribute to a cohesive network of green spaces within and around the development.

06

The Masterplan Framework

6. The Masterplan Framework

The characteristics, constraints and opportunities identified in Chapter 3 have shaped the vision and objectives for the site presented in Chapter 4 and influenced the design principles summarised in Chapter 5. This chapter of the SBDF introduces the masterplan for the site. It sets out how proposals apply the vision, objectives and design principles to create the essential elements of a high quality and sustainable new place.

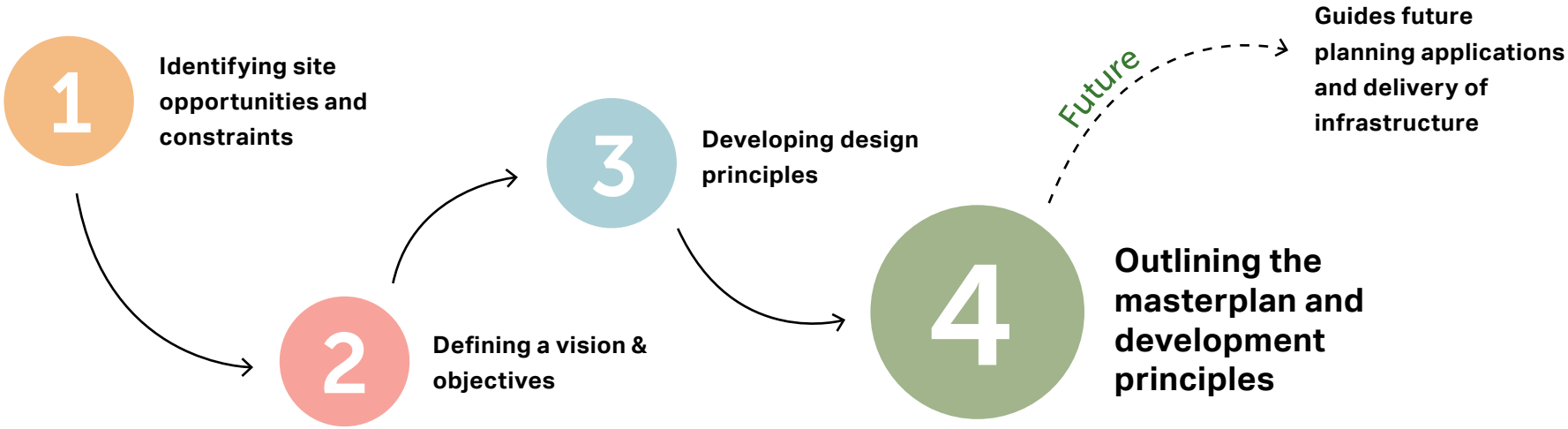


Figure 33: The process of developing the masterplan and development principles

Key

- PfE Allocation Boundary
- Existing buildings
- Existing waterways
- Existing motorways
- Existing roads
- Public Rights of Way
- Designated site of ecological and geological importance to be enhanced and retained
- Existing trees, hedges and woodland
- Existing overhead electricity/pylons
- Existing motorway crossing point and pedestrian connection to Heaton Park
- Vehicle access (indicative)
- Vehicle access (public transport only)
- Restricted vehicle traffic/no through connection for general traffic
- Primary roads (featuring cycleways and public transport)
- Secondary roads
- Pedestrian and cycle connections
- Buffer corridor
- Linear park
- Public open space
- Green corridors (including landscape, swales and pedestrian routes)
- Parks and play areas (indicative)
- School playing fields
- Community growing gardens (indicative)
- Community/retail hub (indicative)
- Primary School (indicative)
- Primary School (alternative location)
- Older person's accommodation (indicative)

Figure 34: Simister Bowlee Masterplan Framework. Please note: numbers relate to text on the following page.

6.1 Masterplan Framework

The following highlights have been identified in Figure 34:

1. Primary vehicle access to the development is via Heywood Old Road.

2. Integration of existing Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) into the development, linking new footpaths with the wider movement network.

3. A multifunctional nature corridor runs east–west through the site, serving as a defining landscape feature with nature trails, ecological enhancements, and SuDS elements.

4. Green corridors follow existing hedgerows, providing attractive, pedestrian-friendly connections with footpaths that encourage active travel and link east–west and north–south to surrounding facilities and the countryside.

5. Connectivity to Heaton Park: pedestrian routes to Heaton Park via the existing motorway bridge crossing.

6. Local Centre: positioned near the site gateway, adjacent to David Lloyd Gym and close to Simister Village, serving both existing and new residents.

7. Hillside Community Park: includes a NEAP play area, ponds, cascading SuDS, terracing, seating, and viewpoints over the valley.

8. Community growing gardens near the community hub and older persons' accommodation that promotes social interaction and outdoor activity.

9. Nature Parkland: retains and enhances existing grasslands with wildflower meadows, woodland, and improved habitats.

10. Two-form primary school in a suitable and accessible location (preferred option)

11. Nature trails and informal footpaths run along the multifunctional corridor.

12. Opportunities for Pocket Parks at some key neighbourhood nodes to provide accessible green space and "play on the way" opportunities.

13. Culvert to provide vehicular access across the brook.

14. Landscape buffer and planting along the northern edge screen views from the Green Belt and create a strong development boundary.

15. Additional landscape buffering prevents urban sprawl and strengthens the Green Belt edge.

16. Woodland Edge and Linear Park (Urban Fringe): woodland enhancement and expansion to support wildlife, provide screening from Heaton Park, and offer acoustic mitigation from the motorway.

17. Retention and improvement of the SBI.

18. Landscape planting weaves through the development, softening edges and reducing visual impact.

19. Lower density homes set back behind large gardens at the edge of Simister Village.

20. Tree-lined avenues that create strong street frontages.

6.2 Character Areas

A series of character areas have been defined within the site. The location and extent of each area has been informed by environmental features, the surrounding context, and the landscape character. Future development should be designed to respond sensitively to the distinct qualities of each of the character areas.

Planning applications will include a design code and guidance for each character area, which should be developed in accordance with the recommendations set out in the National Design Guide, incorporating the ten characteristics: context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, homes and buildings, resources, and lifespan. An outline vision for each character area is described on the following pages.

A. Simister View

Positioned along the south western part of the site, Simister View will incorporate a formal linear street pattern, carefully arranged to follow the natural contours of the land alongside areas in the north securing views over the countryside and towards Simister Village.

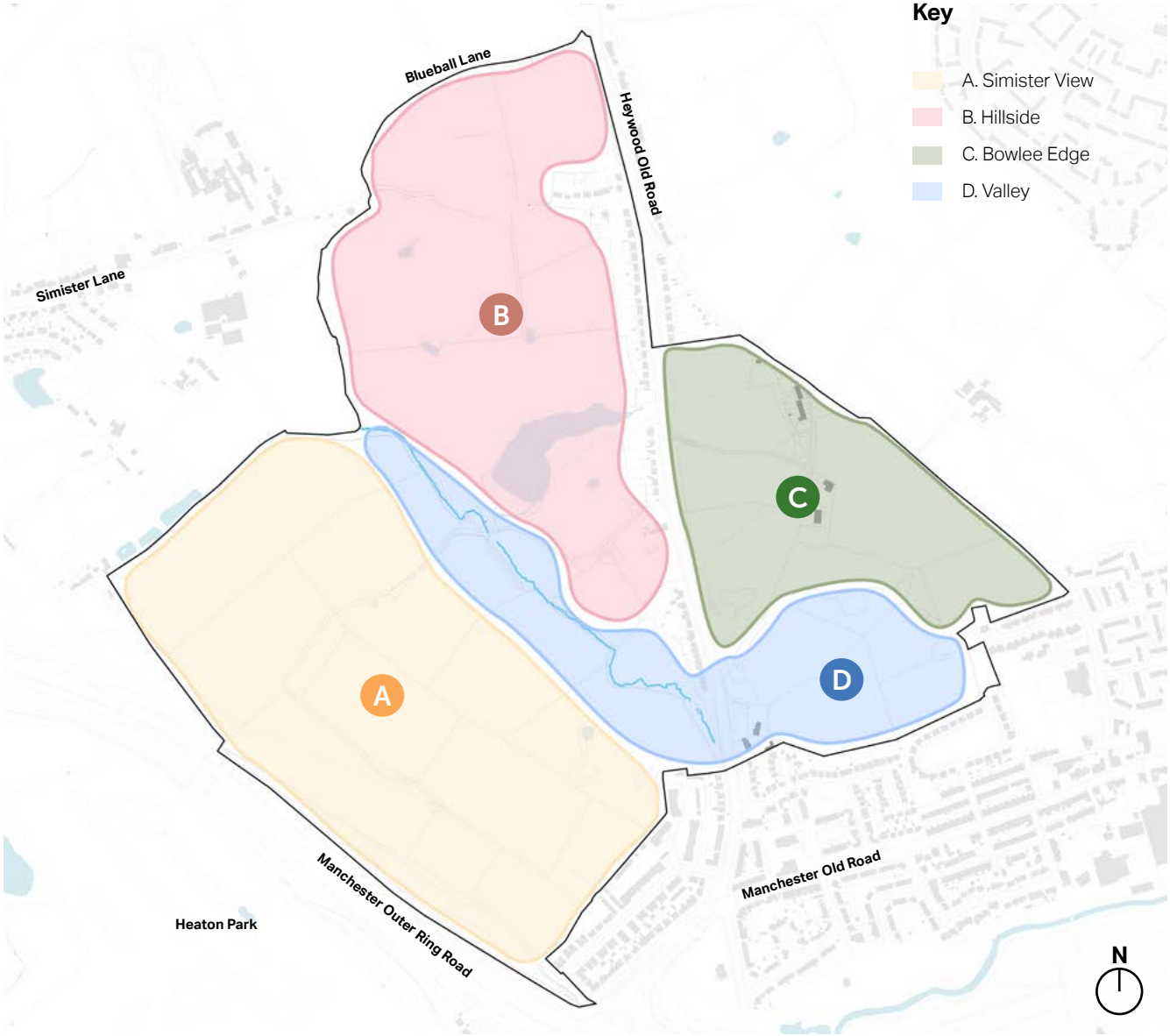


Figure 35: Indicative character areas plan

Greenery is woven throughout, with linear hedgerows framing streets and a new park acting as a key focal point, offering vantage views toward the river valley.

Woodland areas along the southwestern edge should be enhanced to create a robust landscape edge and linear parklands, enhancing ecology while providing a green outlook for the residents. Green corridors will run north–south, providing safe and direct pedestrian routes, while a primary north-south active travel route will connect Simister View to the wider neighbourhoods.

B. Hillside

Hillside is shaped in part by its sloping topography, with a more informal street pattern and homes oriented to capture views across the site to the south and west. This neighbourhood will blend buildings, trees, and green corridors, enriched by hedgerows and field lines that maintain a rural edge.

North–south pedestrian routes will encourage walking and cycling, while a proposed Pocket Park will provide a welcoming green heart for community life.

To the north of this character area there is the potential for a 'Local Centre' including a potential two-form entry primary school at its heart (subject to detailed design to identify an appropriate location within the site), small scale retail, and older person accommodation. All these uses are proposed to strengthen the sense of community and belonging, providing a vibrant and welcoming point of arrival. Designed for both new and existing communities, it should prioritise active travel with strong east–west and north–south connections.

C. Bowlee Edge

Bowlee Edge is defined by its topography, with homes taking advantage of open views to the east and vantage points capturing the Manchester City Centre Skyline. The neighbourhood will sensitively interface with established homes along Heywood Old Road.

Given the level changes across the site, Bowlee Edge will generally have a more organic grain and street pattern, with routes and development clusters responding to topography. Informal open spaces will weave throughout the neighbourhood, extending from a central green space surrounding the protected SBI.

Housing development footprints and plots should be designed to reflect the proportions of their surroundings. Development should be set back behind hedges (or other low boundaries to be agreed with the Local Authorities) where possible. Homes here will create a gentle edge to the settlement, ensuring where feasible the new blends seamlessly with the old.

D. Valley

The Valley will provide raised vantage points (in the north) offering extensive views across the brook and surrounding hillsides. The majority of Valley should provide informal open space, meandering nature trails and informal footpaths, which invite exploration. The experience is to connect with nature, providing opportunity for BNG enhancement, water, and greenery.

Development plots will positively respond to their landscape and ecological setting, with housing positively interfacing these open spaces , keeping the valley floor open to nature and recognising the importance of the SBI and its associated buffer zones.

07

Development Principles

7. Development Principles

The following Development Principles will inform the parameters for the development of the Simister Bowlee site and should be considered as part of any future planning applications. Bury and Rochdale Councils will require all planning applications to include supporting information that demonstrates how the development proposed addresses relevant development plan policies and incorporates the Development Principles.

Whilst the masterplan for the site is indicative, any significant deviation from the Development Principles must be justified by clear, robust and agreed evidence, that demonstrates why an alternative approach is required, with reference to the Vision and Objectives set out in Chapter 4.

Figure 36: A new development overlooking high quality landscaping. Homes provide natural surveillance whilst naturalistic green spaces provide habitats for wildlife.

The draft masterplan incorporates design principles which can be adopted to make development legible and easy to understand. These principles must be incorporated into all development proposals within the site.

7.1 Design

Development of the site should deliver high-quality, inclusive and sustainable places, particularly in terms of:

- Responding positively to the site's context and local character;
- Place-making and urban design quality;
- Sustainability and climate responsiveness; and
- Respecting and responding to the natural environment.

PfE Policy JPA1.2 also requires development to ensure the design and layout allows for effective integration with surrounding communities, including active travel links and connections to local services and the new areas of employment at Heywood/Pilsworth (JPA1.1).

PfE Policy JP-P1 sets out the key attributes that all development should be consistent with in order to meet the aim for the city region to be one of the most liveable city regions in the world, consisting of a series of beautiful, healthy and varied places.

PfE Policy JP-G6 requires development to be designed to support the positive use of nearby green spaces, such as by offering a high-quality setting, providing natural surveillance, and facilitating easy access by walking and cycling.

The following design principles must be incorporated into all development proposals within the site:

- Responding positively to and being informed by a thorough understanding of the local context and character, including:
  - The site's natural, built and historic environment;
  - The local townscape, landscape and setting;
  - Established patterns of development, street hierarchy and plot structure; and
  - Local materials and architectural features.
- Delivering high-quality and inclusive development that contributes to a distinctive sense of place, particularly in terms of:
  - Being visually attractive and distinctive, through architecture, materials and detailing;
  - Incorporating distinctive architectural reference points at key gateway locations and arrival points to assist with legibility;

- Using high-quality, durable and sustainable materials that are easily maintained and resistant to the effects of ageing, weather and climatic conditions;

- Ensuring that development blocks, individual buildings, streets and spaces function in a safe, inclusive and accessible way that creates a legible sense of place;

- Ensuring that the development makes an effective and efficient use of land and natural resources;

- Enabling effective, inclusive and safe patterns of movement with a clear hierarchy of routes within and around the development that promotes walking, wheeling, cycling and the use of public transport;

- Ensuring that the development is accessible to people with disabilities, the elderly and those with small children;

- Being safe and secure by minimising actual and perceived opportunities for crime, and anti-social behaviour;

- Making appropriate provision for gardens and/or outdoor amenity space;

- Making provision for high-quality green infrastructure, the provision of wildlife habitats and other wildlife-friendly features within the development;

- Ensuring opportunities are taken to positively integrate and enhance existing natural assets, such as river/brook corridors, into the development, where appropriate;

- Promoting health and wellbeing; and

- Considering opportunities for the incorporation of public art.

• Delivering development that is resilient to the ongoing and predicted impacts of climate change, particularly by:

  - Exploring opportunities to use low carbon materials where possible and feasible, to reduce the embodied carbon of new development;

- Ensuring opportunities are taken to optimise the effectiveness of solar energy installations through the site layout, building orientation and design;

- Providing high quality sustainable travel option for day-to-day needs via convenient walking, wheeling and cycling routes and catchments and easy access to public transport;

- Incorporating appropriate landscaping and urban greening; and

- Ensuring that the design includes an assessment of and response to existing hydrological characteristics to ensure the sustainable management of water in the design of a site. Sustainable drainage must be considered at the outset of the design process and integrated with the site landscaping, including tree-lined streets.

7.2 Housing

Policy JPA1.2 of PfE allocates Simister Bowlee for a new residential-led community which spans the Bury and Rochdale boundary. In accordance with Policy JPA1.2, up to 1,550 new homes should be delivered to diversify the type of accommodation across the Simister, Bowlee, Birch, and Langley areas.

Development should offer a broad mix of house types and sizes, including provision for families, first time buyers and affordable housing. This should include provision for custom and self-build plots (subject to local demand having regard to the Councils' self-build registers and other relevant evidence) as well as specialist and older persons housing, having regard to the latest Housing Needs and Demand Assessments.

All new dwellings must comply with the nationally described space standards and be built to the 'accessible and adaptable' standard in Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations unless specific site conditions make this impracticable.

The delivery of homes to meet the optional standard in Building Regulations Part M4(3) of the Building Regulations (or any subsequent revisions to the standard) is encouraged.

7.2.1 Affordable Housing

Development proposals should include the provision of affordable housing in line with Criterion 5 of PfE Policy JPA1.2 which requires provision for affordable housing to be in accordance with local planning policy requirements.

Proposals should include a range of house types, sizes and affordable tenures, and have regard to the latest Housing Needs and Demand Assessments. Affordable housing provision will be sought on site unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated that would warrant variations. Off-site contributions should provide the number of units that would have been delivered on site. Contributions should be in the form of units erected off site, the provision of land to build units or as a last resort, be in the form of a financial contribution (commuted sum).

The affordable homes should be fully integrated with the development and dispersed throughout the site, unless there are specific circumstances that warrant otherwise.

They should be indistinguishable from the market housing and built to the same specifications (i.e. not separate house types for affordable homes), unless there are particular reasons not to do so (e.g. if there is a specific requirement from a Registered Provider).

Care Home/Retirement Village

Provision should be made for specialist and older persons' housing to contribute to meeting identified needs in the latest Housing Needs and Demand Assessment. Specialist and older persons housing should be in an appropriate location to meet the needs of future residents.

7.2.2 Character and Density

The density and character of new residential development will be shaped by:

- Characteristics, constraints and opportunities at different locations, both within the site and within the surrounding context; and
- The need to deliver sustainable forms of development including efficient use of land, management of environmental impact and promoting travel by non-car modes.

The approach to residential density must align with PfE Policy H4. Development should maximise the opportunity to create sustainable homes in walkable neighbourhoods.

To optimise densities within the site, residential uses will also be acceptable in principle on the upper floors of retail and community uses.

Variations in density will help to create a mix of residential forms and typologies, helping to ensure a choice of housing while delivering an efficient and sustainable use of land.

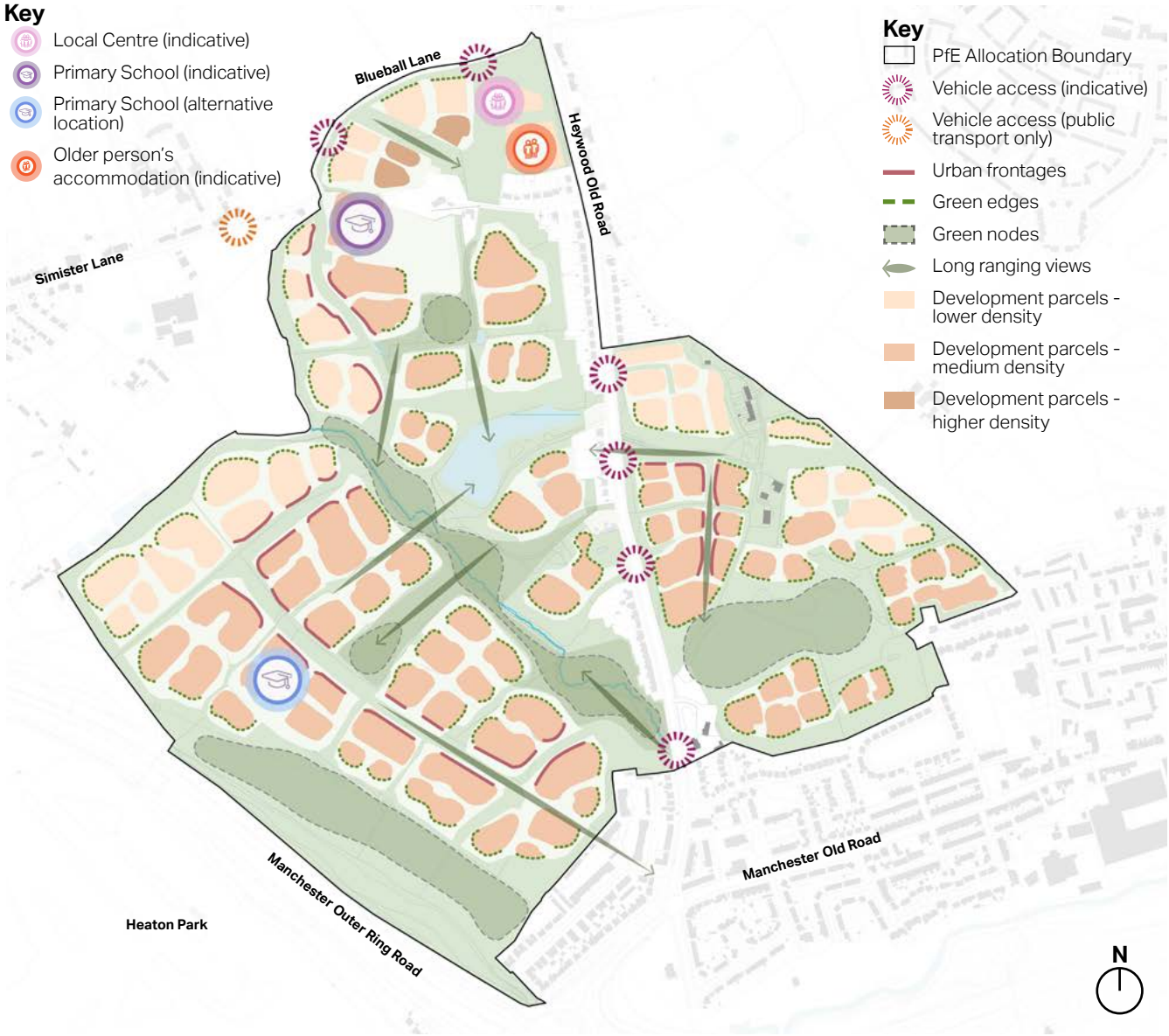


Figure 37: Indicative urban design framework and density plan

7.3 Access, Highways and Movement

Simister Bowlee is strategically located, with direct access to the highway network, and within proximity to the world class emerging employment destination at the Heywood Pilsworth site (JPA1.1).

An opportunity exists to elevate the accessibility and sustainability of the site by connecting it to surrounding communities and to the employment site at Heywood Pilsworth in a safe and sustainable way.

All development should be structured around a clear, coherent movement network that is resilient to an increasing quantum of development over time. This will be a legible and safe network both in its 'incomplete' early phases and incrementally through to final completion

Development should:

- Deliver a road system within the site that is in line with local design standards and that is capable of accommodating buses, with provision of bus stops and related infrastructure at optimum locations, and provision for active travel.
- Provide primary routes from the key vehicular access points as shown on the indicative movement, access and highways plan (Figure 38), connecting the development with surrounding area.
- Ensure high quality, convenient, safe and attractive walking, wheeling, cycling and equestrian routes where appropriate into and throughout the site.
- Provide off-site traffic mitigation measures to enable accessibility and mitigate highways impacts arising from the development.

In accordance with Policy JP-C8 (Transport Requirements of New Development) of the PfE Plan, a detailed Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan will fully consider the access, highways and active travel strategy at the planning application stage. This will include detailed technical assessment and feasibility work, as well as engagement with the Local Highways Authority, to fully agree the transport measures, interventions and mitigation required. Transport Assessments will also be used to update the Infrastructure Delivery and Phasing Strategy for the site.

7.3.1 Access

Development at Simister Bowlee will be accessed from new junctions on the existing road network as shown on the masterplan framework and the indicative movement, access and highways plan. The key access principles for the site are proposed as follows:

Northern / Southern Zone (West)

- Vehicular access is proposed at the junction of Heywood Old Road and Blueball Lane, located at the northern boundary of the site, intended to be delivered via a new access and upgrade to Blueball Lane. This access will function as one of two gateways into the development at the northern extent of the site, with the capacity to accommodate a future Local Centre and to facilitate vehicular movement across the wider site.
- A vehicular primary access from Heywood Old Road at the southern extent of the site will act as another gateway to the site and be provided by a signalised junction on the A6045, connecting to an internal spine road that connects the northern and southern gateway access points.

Figure 38: Indicative movement, access and highways plan

- A new spine road, designed in accordance with GM Streets for All design guidance, connecting the northern and southern access points, will be provided, which will facilitate access to a hierarchy of streets and development parcels that deliver a permeable, safe and legible network of routes across the site.

- Any planning application must seek provision for traffic restrictions on Simister Lane to the west, such that vehicular access is limited to public transport and active travel only. This may require infrastructure works outside of the Allocation to accommodate this.

Eastern Zone

- Suitable access points to the eastern part of the Allocation will be provided from Heywood Old Road, providing access to development parcels via an internal legible network of streets and roads.

Should for any reasons the access solutions proposed above not be suitable (as a result of further detailed design engineering), then alternative access solutions from Heywood Old Road would be required.

Bury and Rochdale Council will expect cohesive access and permeable connections on a site wide basis, to ensure access between development parcels is provided in a comprehensive way.

Additional points of vehicular access (emergency or other access, such as Management Company maintenance) may also be acceptable.

The preliminary design of access junctions should be informed by a Transport Assessment, Traffic Modelling and Traffic Surveys, prepared to support a planning application. This will ensure that the appropriate design, type and size of junction is provided – in accordance with Policy JP-C8 (Transport Requirements of New Development) of PfE.

The internal road hierarchy and layout will be designed accordance with PfE Policies JP-C1 (An Integrated Network), JP-C5 (Streets for All) and JP-C8 (Transport Requirements of New Development), as well as other relevant guidance, including the Manual for Streets.

7.3.2 Highways

Residential development at Simister Bowlee must be integrated with the wider highway network. All development will be expected to contribute towards the off-site highway works listed in Appendix D of PfE (together with any additional necessary measures identified through Transport Assessments) to improve accessibility and to mitigate highways impacts arising from the development. These include:

- M60 Junction 19 / A576 Middleton Road (localised junction improvements).

- M62 J19 / A6046 Heywood Interchange (interventions to be determined).

- Corridor improvements on A576 Middleton Road / Manchester Old Road in vicinity of M60 J19 (interventions to be determined).

- A6045 Heywood Old Road / A576 (junction improvements).

- A6045 Heywood Old Road / Langley Lane (junction improvements).

- Active travel improvements.

- Introduction of local bus services to, from, and potentially within the allocation.

Wider supporting transport initiatives, including a new Metrolink stop on proposed line between Crumpsall and Middleton and a Bus Rapid Transit ("BRT") corridor linking Manchester city centre and Rochdale via Heywood Old Road / Manchester Road; will also be supported in accordance with Appendix D of PfE.

7.3.3 Parking

Car and cycle parking will be provided in accordance with PfE Policies JP-C5 (Streets for All), JP-C6 (Walking and Cycling) and JP-C8 (Transport Requirements of New Developments and any associated guidance, including the Parking Standards in Bury SPD (June 2025) and the Rochdale Guidelines & Standards for Residential Development SPD (February 2016).

A parking strategy for the site should also promote the provision of Electric Vehicle ("EV") charging and shared mobility spaces, within proximity to the proposed Local Centre.

7.3.4 Active Travel

The promotion of sustainable modes of transport and permeable connections will be critical to the delivery of JPA1.2. Development should be designed to ensure ease of walking, wheeling, cycling; and equestrian movement where appropriate.

Active travel infrastructure will be required to be delivered both within and outside the site to support sustainable travel connections.

All development within the allocation should seek to conserve existing public rights of way (with diversions as appropriate), and improve walking, wheeling, cycling; and connectivity for both active travel and recreation through:

- Creating safe, attractive and integrated walking, wheeling, and cycling infrastructure, connecting the key neighbourhoods and character areas;

- Creating active neighbourhoods and street networks which are permeable to walking and wheeling, creating an incentive to walk and wheel;

- The enhancement of east-west pedestrian and cycle connections;

- Green links to enhance north-south walking and cycling and integrate the existing movement network including PRoW's;

- Connecting the existing settlements of Simister Village, Heywood Old Road and Manchester Old Road through a network of green routes, encouraging walking and cycling, reducing the reliance on the car for short trips;

- Improved access and safety to Heaton Park through green links, cycle and pedestrian access via an existing crossing point;

- Cycle storage and parking infrastructure including EV charging points.

The approach to active travel should have particular reference to PfE Policies JP-C5 (Streets for All), JP-C6 (Walking and Cycling) and JP-C8 (Transport Requirements of New Development). Active travel infrastructure may be required to be delivered in the immediate vicinity of the site, and outside of the allocation, to support sustainable travel connections.

7.3.5 Public Transport

Development within the allocation will be expected to make provision for public transport infrastructure including:

- The provision for bus services to traverse parts of the site, utilising the spine road and incorporating high quality bus waiting facilities (subject to agreement and feasibility).

Bus Infrastructure Provision

Accessibility by bus will be key to the sustainable development of the site. Consideration will need to be given to the location of bus stops along the spine road having regard to bus stop catchment areas. Active travel routes to and from bus stops, the nature and location of crossing points on the spine road and whether on-road bus stops or bus laybys are preferred. This will need to be agreed with the Councils and TfGM.

7.4 Ecology and Trees

Green spaces within the site provide the opportunity to retain and integrate areas of ecological importance, provide an opportunity for ecological mitigation and increase the biodiversity of the site.

An ecology strategy for the site prepared in accordance with PfE Policies JP-G7 (Trees and Woodland) and Policy JP-G8 (A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity) should focus on protecting key habitats and species through implementation of the mitigation hierarchy to avoid, mitigate and, where necessary, compensate ecological effects. The following principles should be included within the ecology strategy:

- **Protecting sensitive habitats** – the landscape strategy should seek, where possible, to protect the site's areas of ecological importance, including:
  - The retention and enhancement of the existing brook corridor and valley on the western part of the site, which will create wildlife habitats and opportunities for recreational amenity space.
  - The retention and enhancement Bradley Hall Farm SBI on the eastern parcel of the site.
  - The retention and enhancement of existing hedgerows and trees, particularly on the site boundaries, where possible. Proposals should also consider expanding tree groups and hedges to increase woodland resilience, where it aligns with the Biodiversity Net Gain strategy.
  - Existing watercourses will be retained and engagement with third party landowners will be undertaken to explore recreational opportunities around these assets.
- **Maximising biodiversity value** - increasing the biodiversity and natural carbon sequestration value of retained green spaces, with the potential for enhancement of existing grassland (i.e. within green space and open spaces) and the creation of more diverse grassland. Biodiversity enhancement may also be delivered outside of the allocation subject to detailed ecological work.

- **Designing-in ecosystems** – upgrading ecosystems within the site by permeating landscape into the development plots and utilising streets, pedestrian and cycle routes for the creation of green and blue infrastructure corridors.

- **Managing people and nature** – creating footpaths and designated walking areas to protect wildlife from pedestrian use, including clear signage and natural boundary treatments, such as hedges, low timber railings and planting, will be used to prevent public access from key areas of habitat creation to ensure they are able to meet their condition criteria and contribute towards biodiversity net gain on site.

- **Mitigating impact** – retention of the Bradley Hall Farm SBI as part of a detailed ecological assessment, in accordance with Policy JP-G8 and JPA1.2. Ensuring appropriate mitigation for protected species using the site will be determined following completion of surveys, and as part of a planning application for the site.

Development should achieve at least a 10% Net Gain in biodiversity value as measured using a Statutory Metric, in accordance with the terms of the Environment Act 2021 and Places for Everyone Policy JP-G8 and the approach will follow the Biodiversity Net Gain Hierarchy. BNG may include both on-site and off-site improvements. Where off-site provision is proposed, priority will be afforded to measures within the Councils' identified receptor sites.

7.5 Sustainability, Energy & Carbon Reduction

Greater Manchester's ambition is to become a carbon neutral city region by 2038. This ambition is supported by Bury and Rochdale Councils through a declaration of a climate emergency.

Simister Bowlee offers the opportunity to support Bury, Rochdale and Greater Manchester's commitment to net zero through the delivery of a sustainable, low carbon neighbourhood. PfE Policy JP-S2 sets out the design and development standards to support sustainability objectives including promotion of low carbon development and renewable and low carbon infrastructure.

Applications for the development of the site should adopt a fabric-first approach to minimise carbon emissions and energy demand, with buildings incorporating renewable technologies, promoting efficient water and energy use, and support the transition towards net-zero carbon.

Development should be guided by PfE Policies JP-S2, JP-S3, and the GMCA Net Zero Design and Submission Guidance (Parts 1, 2 and 3). Further detail is set out in Chapter 10.

7.6 Flood Risk and Drainage

Future planning applications for the site should be accompanied by a Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment and Strategy, in accordance with PfE Policy JP-S4 (Flood Risk and the Water Environment) and the North West River Basin Management Plan. Detailed future designs for the development will take into account the overland flow routes and any groundwater flood risk and potential areas of ponding to ensure there is no increase to flood risk on the site or elsewhere as a result of the development.

The drainage strategy for the site should maintain natural water flows incorporating SuDS, providing attenuation measures and preserving inflows into existing watercourses. A drainage strategy should incorporate the following principles:

- Locating and designing development to minimise the impacts of current and future flood risk to increase resilience to flooding.

- Utilising natural onsite drainage and storage features, including brooks and ponds.

- Managing surface water run-off through sustainable drainage systems and as close to source as possible. Surface water run-off should be restricted to mimic or improve upon greenfield run-off rates.

- Ensuring that sustainable drainage systems:

  - Are designed in accordance with GM SUDS Design Guidance to provide multifunctional benefits wherever possible, including for water quality, nature conservation and recreation.

  - Avoid adverse impacts on water quality and any possibility of discharging hazardous substances to ground.

  - Are managed and maintained appropriately to ensure their proper functioning over the lifetime of the development.

7.7 Heritage and Archaeology

A Heritage Statement should be prepared to accompany any planning application that sets out how development will consider and conserve the setting of Heaton Park, as well as other local statutory and non-statutory heritage assets, in accordance with PfE Policy JPA1.2 and JP-P2 (Heritage) and an archaeological strategy will be agreed to support the future planning applications, through the assessment of its archaeological potential and the development of tools to ensure the proposals respond appropriately to any potential effects on the historic environment.

7.8 Education

PfE Policy JPA1.2 requires the provision of a new two-form entry primary school and make financial contributions for off-site additional secondary school provision to meet needs generated by the development, in accordance with policy JP-P5.

A new two-form entry primary school is proposed within the north-western parcel of the development close to the Local Centre, ensuring convenient connections for residents. The school location will seek to reduce reliance on car travel for short trips and support walking and cycling to school.

The masterplan in Section 6 identifies the preferred location within the site however an alternative location has also been identified on the masterplan. Detailed design will confirm the final location of the school.

Initially it is likely that the primary school is developed as a one-form entry school, increasing over time to a two-form entry school if required. The precise timing of delivery of the primary school will be determined by the Council's Education Needs and Demand Assessment and the wider Infrastructure Delivery and Phasing Strategy for the site.

Figure 39: Preferred and alternative locations identified for the school

PfE Policy JPA1.2 requires the provision of a new Local Centre in an accessible location which includes a range of appropriate facilities such as retail, health and community provision. An indicative location for the Local Centre is shown on the Masterplan to the north of the western part of the site, within proximity of the David Lloyd Health Club and existing communities at Simister and Langley, to further enhance the role of the wider area as a community destination.

7.9 Local Centre

PfE Policy JPA1.2 requires the provision of a new local centre in an accessible location which includes a range of appropriate facilities such as retail, health and community provision. The Local Centre should be provided in a location which secures strong footfall and encourages active travel.

Any retail development within the Local Centre should be of a scale that serves the needs of the surrounding neighbourhoods to avoid it generating vehicular based visits from the wider area.

An indicative location for the Local Centre is shown on the Masterplan to the north of the western part of the site, within proximity of the David Lloyd Health Club and existing communities at Simister and Langley, to further enhance the role of the wider area as a community destination.

This location will create a strong sense of arrival at a key access point. Its siting will ensure a positive relationship between new buildings, the public realm, and sustainable movement corridors, contributing to a safe and welcoming environment for residents. New active travel and associated cycle and public transport infrastructure will be supported alongside the Local Centre, to encourage sustainable travel and transport connections.

Figure 40: One possible location for the Local Centre, within proximity of existing communities at Simister and Langley.

7.10 Green Infrastructure

7.10.1 Landscape

The vision for the site is to be landscape-led and to draw from the character and landscape strengths of the site. A landscape strategy will be prepared and submitted as part of any planning application, in accordance with Policies JP-G1 (Landscape Character), JP-G2 (Green Infrastructure Network), JP-G3 (River Valleys and Waterways), JP-G6 (Urban Green Space) and JP-G7 (Trees and Woodland). This should include the following principles:

1. The creation of a green infrastructure corridor along the valley of the existing brook, providing an opportunity to support wildlife, SuDS and new recreational amenity for residents.

2. Providing new linear areas of green infrastructure for wildlife to connect ecological features with the broader green infrastructure network - connecting the site to adjacent farmlands and the M60 'Wildlife Corridor'.

3. The retention and enhancement of existing hedgerows and trees and particularly on the site boundaries.

4. The provision of street tree planting to create soft street scenes and break up the density of development, built form, and roofscape.

5. The provision of a strong landscape edge to the north-west site boundary (western part of the site), adjacent to the Green Belt.

6. The consideration of landscape buffers and boundary treatment to soften development edges on:

- The **western zone**, including:
  - The western edge where there is an interface with Simister Village, where tree planting and landscaping would be utilised to soften the development edge and to provide visual separation between the site and Simister Village.
  - The southern boundary, to provide a buffer between the site and the M60 motorway.
  - The interface between the site and properties on Heywood Old Road, which respects privacy and amenity.
- The **eastern zone**, including :
  - Planting on the northern, western and southern boundary, at the interface between the site and established residential areas.
  - Planting and landscaping on the eastern boundary to mitigate the impact of the development on land to the east.

7. The retention of key views, which will be enhanced and framed, including views to Heaton Park and Simister Village; as well as longer distance views to maintain the connection of the site to the wider landscape.

7.10.2 Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Open space and recreation will be integral to the health and well-being of new and existing residents. PfE Policy JP-P7 requires new development to provide new and/or improved existing facilities commensurate with the demand they would generate.

Detailed on-site provision in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility will be determined through planning applications and Bury and Rochdale's local standards and evidence base including Bury Council Open Space Assessment (2026) and Playing Pitch Strategy and Rochdale's relevant policies and supplementary planning documents. A range of types of open space and recreation should be provided on the site, informed by natural characteristics and supporting a suitable level of open space and formal recreation opportunities for residents.

Planning applications should explore the opportunity for the following open space and recreation provision across the site:

- **Natural Parkland and Trails** – exploring new habitat and amenity areas including extensions of existing hedgerows and trees, new copses for recreational community use, orchards linked to the LC, natural wildflower meadows.
- **Communal Gardens and Parks** - making use of retained landscape to create memorable spaces that are an integral part of the green corridors. This could include semi-private and communal spaces and informal spaces where people and can sit and relax.
- **Allotments and Community Growing** – to provide spaces to grow and produce food, generating interaction, skill sharing, and food cultivation.
- **Inclusive Play** - play should be distributed and located to ensure access for everyone, being located along key walking routes, travel nodes and destinations including the Community uses. Natural play should also be encouraged, including informal 'play on the way' on walks to school.
- **Formal Sports -** formal sports provision will be discussed and agreed with the Local Authorities (with reference to any Playing Pitch Strategy and Open Space Assessment) to ensure that adequate provision is made that reflect both the character and physical characteristics of the site, and the local need for different sports activities. Where there is a need, but the site doesn't lend itself to the ability to deliver pitches on site, off-site contributions may be sought instead. Opportunities for the dual use of facilities through new school provision should be explored, along with potential for improvements to sports facilities within the vicinity of the site.
- **Enhancing Blue Infrastructure** - enhancing the existing water features such as ponds and brooks, and providing a network of connected swales and natural attenuation features within the development areas.

It is anticipated that the long-term positive management of the open spaces within the site will be secured through both a Landscape and Habitat Management Plan and the establishment of a Management Company to maintain the play areas, open spaces and parks.

7.10.3 Green and Blue Infrastructure Framework

An indicative Green and Blue Infrastructure network reflecting the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Development principles is identified below:

1. **Communal Gardens and Viewing Points** - the masterplan framework provides a network of communal gardens and viewing areas throughout the site, designed to promote relaxation, social interaction, and enjoyment of the surrounding landscape. These could provide quieter spaces for reflection, while seating areas will be accessible and welcoming throughout the year.

2. **Inclusive Play** - play facilities will be designed to be inclusive, catering to a range of ages and abilities. These spaces will be integrated along walking routes, active travel connections, and adjacent to community facilities, including links to Heaton Park. Natural play elements and informal play opportunities will be encouraged throughout the site.

Figure 41: Indicative green infrastructure framework. Please note: some numbers relate to text on the following pages

3. **Community Growing Gardens** - shared growing spaces will support community interaction, skill sharing, and food cultivation. These areas, located near community uses, will encourage intergenerational engagement and provide opportunities for educational activities.

4. **Activity and Fitness** - the masterplan framework incorporates sports and activity spaces that complement the Site's natural features and topography. Facilities will provide for both formal and informal activity, including small kickabout areas and connections to wider green spaces such as Heaton Park to encourage walking, cycling, and outdoor exercise.

5. **Ecology** - the site will be managed to safeguard natural assets, enhance biodiversity, and support long-term ecological resilience while accommodating sustainable public use.

6. **Protect and Enhance Sensitive Habitats** - sensitive habitats will be protected from disturbance, with active management plans for declining species and seasonal buffers applied where necessary.

7. **Strengthen Landscape and Ecological Character** - all landscape interventions will follow ecological design principles, reinforcing existing character, increasing habitat diversity, and restoring degraded areas through native planting and natural regeneration.

8. **Expand Woodland and Hedgerow Networks** - There is an acceptance that hedgerows and trees will be lost in places to make way for development and construction operations (cut and fill to create development plateaus, etc). However, woodlands will be expanded and strengthened, and retained hedgerows will be restored, extended or replaced to form continuous wildlife corridors. New and replacement networks of hedgerows and tree corridors/groups will also be provided to compensate for lost hedgerows and trees.

9. **Improve Ecosystem Connectivity** - habitats will be linked internally and to the wider ecological network, enhancing species movement, genetic diversity, and ecological resilience.

10. **Enhance Existing Habitat**s - grasslands, woodlands, scrub, and species-rich hedgerows will be improved where possible. Neutral grasslands will be restored, vegetation structures diversified, and designated ecological sites maintained.

11. **Increase Biodiversity and Carbon Sequestration** - green spaces will be managed to maximise biodiversity and carbon storage. Pollinator-friendly planting, species-diverse grasslands, orchards, and wildflower areas will be promoted.

12. **Design for Ecology from the Outset** – ecological enhancements will be integrated throughout development, including bird boxes, bat roosts, and insect habitats, ensuring development phases enhance ecological networks.

13. **Connect Communities with Nature** - open spaces will support food growing, outdoor learning, and environmental stewardship, reconnecting people with natural processes and seasonal cycles.

14. **Enhance and Integrate Water Features** - ponds, and brooks will be restored and integrated with swales and SuDS to improve water management and aquatic habitats.

15. **Manage Human Access to Protect Wildlife** - footpaths, boardwalks, and natural boundaries will minimise habitat disturbance, supported by clear signage to protect sensitive zones while maintaining visual openness.

Figure 42: There are hedgerows across the site, with ponds and a large fishing lake evident on land to the west of Heywood Old Road.

7.11 Green Belt

To offset the impact of removing the site from the Green Belt, there is a need to identify and deliver compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of the remaining Green Belt in the vicinity of the site. The full detail of Green Belt compensation would be proposed and agreed as part of a detailed planning application, in accordance with PfE Plan Policy JPA1.2 and Policy JP-G2 (Green Infrastructure Network).

7.12 Trees and Woodland

PfE Policy JP-G7 requires development which would result in the loss of existing trees, to replace them on the basis of two new trees for each tree lost, or other measures that would also result in a net enhancement in the character and quality of the treescape and biodiversity value in the local area, with a preference for on-site provision. An assessment of trees is expected to accompany all planning applications. Existing mature trees across the site have been considered as part of the masterplanning process and should be retained, as detailed planning applications for the site are prepared.

Given the topography of the site and the necessity to create development plateaus, a cut and fill strategy may result in tree and hedgerow loss Replacement, mitigation and compensation will be key to the delivery of the site, to ensure new tree and hedgerow corridors are provided. Further, engagement with City of Trees as part of the planning process is recommended.

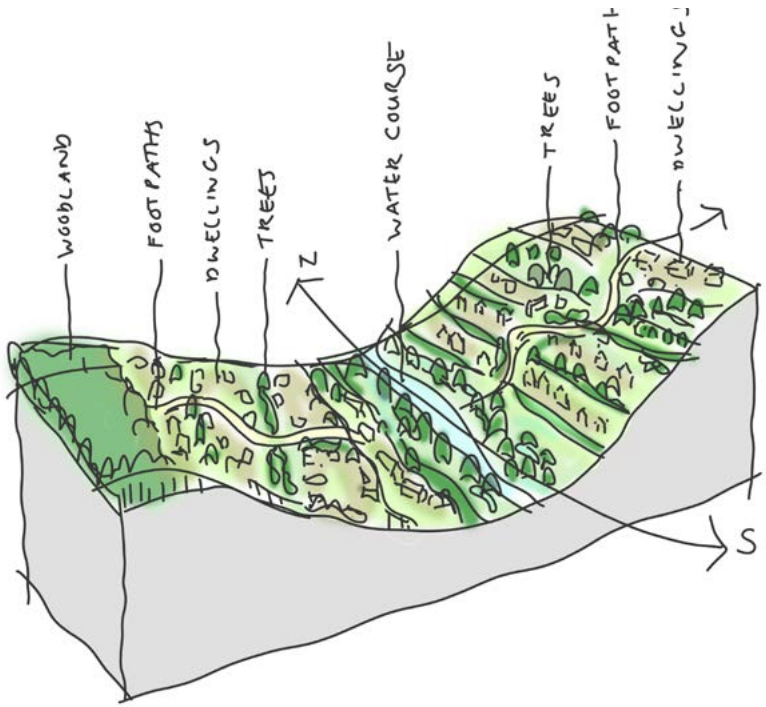


Figure 43: Concept sketch highlighting the integration of open space and natural features within the development

7.13 Digital Connectivity

PfE Policy JP-C2 requires development to commit to ensuring that all new development has full fibre to premises connections, unless technically infeasible and/or unviable, and incorporate multiple-ducting compliant with telecoms standards, to facilitate future-proof gigabit-capable network connections. It is expected that internet connections will be operational and immediately accessible to network providers when occupiers move into new properties. A digital connectivity statement is expected to accompany all planning applications.

7.14 Pollution Control

PfE policy JPA1.2 requires appropriate noise and air quality mitigation measures and high-quality landscaping along the M60 motorway corridors and local road network to be incorporated into development within the allocation. Details are expected to accompany all planning applications where required.

7.15 Landfill / Contamination

PfE Policy JPA1.2 requires necessary remediation measures in areas affected by contamination and previously worked for landfill purposes to be incorporated into development if required within the allocation. Details of remediation is expected to accompany all planning applications, where required.

7.16 Minerals

PfE Policy JPA1.2 requires development to consider the extraction of any viable mineral resources within Mineral Safeguarding Areas, in accordance with Policy 8 of the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan (or any relevant policies in subsequent minerals plans). Details of minerals extraction is expected to accompany all planning applications, where required.

08

Phasing & Delivery

8. Phasing & Delivery

The site provides a major residential-led development opportunity that is allocated to deliver up to 1,550 new homes, supported by community and other essential infrastructure. This Development Framework provides a high-level strategy and key principles for the future delivery of the full JPA1.2 allocation, whilst retaining flexibility to allow for opportunities across the site.

Given the size, it will take several years for the site to be fully delivered and therefore it is important to develop a phasing and delivery strategy to bring it forward. This phasing and delivery strategy helps to shape the parameters within which future planning applications will be brought forward and provides a holistic and coordinated approach to the delivery of on and off-site physical and social infrastructure. Development is expected to come forward in a series of phases alongside necessary infrastructure provision, and a flexible approach is proposed in order to be responsive to opportunities.

To support the delivery of infrastructure across the site, an Infrastructure Phasing and Delivery Strategy ("IPDS") for the site will be prepared in accordance with the PfE Policy JPA1.2 and JP-D1.

This IPDS should be read alongside this Development Framework, noting that the IPDS is intended to be a "live document" that is continuously reviewed and updated as detailed plans, evidence, infrastructure costs and the potential of funding become available. This will tie in with the wider Business Plan for the Northern Gateway and Atom Valley aspirations.

Planning applications within the site will be required to demonstrate how proposed development would assist in the delivery of key infrastructure, without compromising or prejudicing the comprehensive development of the site. Proposals will need to demonstrate how the development of individual plots is consistent with SBDF, the IPDS and any other material considerations. Planning applications should not sterilise, frustrate or otherwise constrain the delivery of other parts of the site or the strategic infrastructure requirements.

All development plots will need to be sufficiently coordinated with appropriate infrastructure delivered at the correct time to support a sustainable and comprehensive development. Planning applications which fail to deliver or contribute towards the wider strategic infrastructure requirements will be resisted.

Planning applications will be expected to demonstrate how delivery of housing and other development, including social infrastructure within the site, will be coordinated with the delivery of transport and other physical infrastructure that is needed to support it.

The timely delivery of key green and blue infrastructure is important to the successful phasing of Simister Bowlee. Habitat and species protection, ecological connectivity and sensitive access management must be implemented in a coordinated manner, and within timescales to be agreed with the Councils to ensure that early construction phases do not adversely affect retained ecological features. Early establishment of strategic green corridors will safeguard ecological function while providing the foundation for Biodiversity Net Gain delivery and high-quality placemaking.

The recreation and sports provision should be delivered alongside development to ensure that both demand is met and communities have the opportunity to connect with this infrastructure as the site becomes occupied.

8.1 Key infrastructure Requirements

Development proposals must:

- Ensure they are acceptable in planning terms, such that they mitigate their on and off site impact in accordance with this Development Framework;
- Make an appropriate contribution to ensure the delivery of the strategic infrastructure identified by the Development Framework; and
- Ensure that the applicant's proposals will not prejudice the delivery of strategic infrastructure and development on third party land.

Infrastructure requirements to support Simister Bowlee have been categorised as being either strategic infrastructure (primary infrastructure needed to support the full delivery of Simister Bowlee) or local infrastructure (on-plot infrastructure delivered directly as a matter of course by each developer to meet the requirements of individual development plots).

Triggers for the strategic infrastructure will be determined through relevant and updated technical evidence. These triggers will also be included and refined in the IPDS and during pre-application discussions between applicants and the Council, ensuring proper determination of the appropriate triggers for the delivery of infrastructure.

The Simister Bowlee site is split into three broad 'zones', each of which will include multiple phases of development. These zones are shown in the Figure 45 and comprise:

- **Southern Zone** - 20 hectares delivering a mix of around 800 residential units;
- **Northern Zone** - 13 hectares, delivering a mix of around 550 residential units;
- **Eastern Zone** - 11 hectares, delivering a mix of around 200 residential units;

Development in all three Zones will be required to contribute to the strategic infrastructure requirements identified in Table 02. The precise capacity and quantum of housing development in each zone will be informed by technical assessment work and be determined as part of the planning application process.

* Table continued on next page

Infrastructure Element	Infrastructure Requirement	Comment
Highways and Public Transport	A new spine road connecting the northern and southern access points	The spine road will need to be operational at an appropriate time in the development programme to facilitate public transport and active travel through the site. The point at which this becomes necessary will be determined through a detailed Transport Assessment (TA) for the whole site and factored into planning applications as they come forward. When development commences (currently envisaged to commence in Southern Zone) the TA will indicate the capacity of the junction/network in the relevant locations. The TA will identify when the transport mitigation (including secondary access / egress) will be required.
	Active travel network including cycleways and pedestrian links	These will be required throughout the site and within individual zones. The primary active travel routes will run alongside the Spine Road, ensuring connectivity with all zones. Each development plot will need to demonstrate linkages to the site wide network (existing and new as appropriate).
	Bus Stop Provision	Triggers to be determined through a Transport Assessment for the site and in conjunction with TfGM.
	Off-site highway improvements	Triggers to be determined through a Transport Assessment for the site.
Social Infrastructure	Primary School Provision including new 2-form entry primary school	Triggers to be determined through Bury Council's Education Needs, Demand Assessment and evidence of need from Rochdale Council, and the wider IPDS.
	Secondary School Provision	Triggers to be determined through evidence of need for provision generated by the development, and the wider IPDS.
	Local Centre, including retail/ community/health facilities	Triggers to be determined through up-to-date health needs assessments, and the wider IPDS.

Infrastructure Element	Infrastructure Requirement	Comment
Environmental Infrastructure	Green infrastructure including public open spaces, sports facilities and playgrounds	Triggers to be determined by Bury Council Open Space Assessment (2026) and Playing Pitch Strategy and Rochdale's relevant policies and supplementary planning document, and the wider IPDS.
	Surface water attenuation and SuDS, integrated with areas of green infrastructure	Triggers to be determined through a drainage strategy for the site, and the wider IPDS.
	Measures to protect hydrology and water quality throughout the development	Triggers to be determined through a drainage strategy for the site, and the wider IPDS.
	Nature areas, ecological mitigation and biodiversity net gain	Triggers to be determined through an ecology strategy for the site, and the wider IPDS.

Table 02: Strategic Infrastructure Requirements (Site Wide)

8.2 Local Infrastructure (On-Site)

In addition to the strategic infrastructure requirements above, each development proposal coming forward in the site will be required to provide specific necessary infrastructure to allow it to come forward. Whilst there may be some bespoke requirements on some development plots, it is likely that the following will be required on each plot:

- Appropriate Access/egress arrangements into the development plots from Heywood Old Road or the proposed spine road
- Active travel access from Heywood Old Road (or the proposed spine road)
- Internal highways
- Internal walking and cycling routes
- Utilities
- Drainage (Suds and attenuation ponds)
- Drainage (foul water)
- Water Supply
- Power Supply
- Telecoms Supply
- Noise and Air Quality mitigation
- Green Infrastructure

Figure 44: Aerial view of Junction 18 and Simister Lane

8.3 Phasing

Phasing of development, including the amount of development capable of being delivered within each zone, will be influenced by the phasing of the spine road and the extent of available capacity within the surrounding highway network. This will need to be managed to ensure that highway and junction improvements are delivered outside of the site to accommodate additional movements.

The phasing of the spine road and quantum of development across the site will also need to relate to the provision of the two-form primary school on the site. As stated in Chapter 7, education provision is required within the development and the timing of delivery of the new primary school will be determined by the Council's Education Needs and Demand Assessment and the wider IPDS, to ensure that appropriate provision is in place and available.

Depending on the eventual location of the school and phasing of the site, it may be necessary to safeguard land for the education use so that it can come forward at the necessary point of development. Provision could be based on a one-form entry, expanding to a two form entry as demand increases.

All phases of development will be delivered in line with the comprehensive vision for the wider development, supporting the strategic requirements for infrastructure, particularly with regards to the link road, active travel, public transport, education provision and greenspace.

The precise capacity and quantum of housing development in each zone will be informed by technical assessment work and be determined as part of the planning application process.

8.3.1 Southern Zone

Key features in this zone include:

- 20 hectares delivering a mix of around 800 residential units;
- Affordable housing in accordance with adopted local planning policy requirements;
- Primary access taken from Heywood Old Road at the southern extent of the site;
- A new access onto Heywood Old Road at the southern extent of the Southern Zone designed to provide for movement through the zone and providing connectivity to the Northern Zone;
- Off-site highway and junction improvements;
- Potential location of a new 2-form entry primary school;
- Green open space and recreation provision, including potential new sports pitches, neighbourhood play spaces and new linear greenways linked to active travel routes throughout the zone, connecting into the other two zones and beyond.

8.3.2 Northern Zone

The Northern Zone will provide a key gateway into the site and could be delivered in sub-phases. The key features in this zone include:

- 13 hectares, delivering a mix of around 550 residential units;
- Affordable housing in accordance with adopted local planning policy requirements;
- Primary access taken from Heywood Old Road at the northern extent;
- A new gateway junction at Heywood Old Road designed to provide for movement throughout the whole allocation, providing connectivity to later phases, southern and eastern zones within the development;
- Off-site highway and junction improvements;
- Preferred location of a new 2-form entry primary school;
- A Local Centre, with community, healthcare and retail facilities;
- Specialist accommodation for elderly living;
- Green open space and recreation provision, including potential new sports pitches, neighbourhood play spaces and new linear greenways linked to active travel routes throughout the zone, connecting into the other two zones and beyond.

It is envisaged that this zone will accommodate a mix of homes, as well as the essential social and community infrastructure, including the preferred location for a new two form primary school and the Local Centre.

Development will be programmed to allow the completion of the spine road through this zone. The full spine road should be delivered as soon as practicable, in order to provide the necessary resilience and permeability throughout the site. This is not only critical to facilitate the level of development proposed, but also essential to facilitate public transport connectivity and active travel movement within and around the site.

8.3.3 Eastern Zone

Key features in this zone include:

- 11 hectares, delivering a mix of around 200 residential units;
- Affordable housing in accordance with adopted local planning policy requirements;
- Access taken from Heywood Old Road;
- Off-site highway and junction improvements;
- Green open space and recreation provision, including potential new sports pitches, neighbourhood play spaces and new linear greenways linked to active travel routes throughout the zone, connecting into the other two zones and beyond.
- The Eastern Zone could be brought forward as a standalone site. This part of the site sits entirely within Rochdale, but the site will need to contribute to the strategic infrastructure requirements of the whole allocation, including the education provision.

Figure 45: Indicative Phasing Plan

8.4 Summary

The approach to phasing set out in this SBDF is not intended at this stage to be chronological. Instead, the phasing and delivery approach outlined above reflects a natural and logical way the site will come forward physically given the spatial principles established by the SBDF and infrastructure integrated within it, coupled with the aspiration to deliver the site successfully.

Due to the scale and nature of the proposed uses and the timescales within which it is anticipated to be delivered, the SBDF needs to be robust as well as flexible. The SBDF provides suitable controls and principles to guide future proposals and to manage design qualities, whilst being able to adapt to changing market conditions, site constraints, and opportunities to accelerate delivery. The phasing and delivery strategy outlined does not restrict the potential for zones to be accelerated where opportunities arise, or where infrastructure needs to change or allow zones to be advanced earlier than currently envisaged.

The phased delivery of Simister Bowlee will be kept under review and will be informed by up-to-date evidence prepared to support future planning applications and the IPDS. Triggers for the strategic infrastructure will be determined through relevant and updated technical evidence.

The Councils will work with all partners and stakeholders to bring forward the delivery of strategic infrastructure and development in a coordinated manner that provides significant benefits to new and existing residents. This will include the Councils (or other public sector bodies) potentially using their statutory land assembly powers (including compulsory purchase powers) to enable and facilitate the delivery of this major opportunity.

8.4.1 Funding

A range of funding and delivery mechanisms will be required, including:

- **Planning conditions and Section 106 Agreements to secure on-site infrastructure:** to secure the delivery of on-site infrastructure required to deliver development.
- **Developer contributions secured via Section 106 and Section 278 Agreements to support off-site infrastructure:** Developer contributions and/or delivery of infrastructure off-site will be secured to assist in mitigating the impact of the development (or relevant phase of the development). In line with the CIL Regulations, contributions will only be sought where they are necessary to make the development applied for acceptable in planning terms and will be fairly and reasonably related in scale to the development.
- **Public sector funding:** Where appropriate, sources of public sector funding will be investigated to assist or accelerate the delivery of strategic infrastructure and development.

8.4.2 Equalisation

Equalisation is a mechanism to ensure the fair and proportionate distribution of the necessary costs of the strategic infrastructure, regardless of which specific parcel of land is used for what purpose. This approach seeks to avoid the costs falling disproportionately on early phases of development or being pushed back to later phases, which would be to the detriment of the comprehensive delivery of the site.

An equalisation approach will be followed for the site. This means that all development proposals within the site must contribute towards that infrastructure in a fair and proportionate manner.

Details regarding the mechanism for identifying fair and proportionate contributions will evolve through the IPDS and any associated documentation to support delivery of the site.

In line with the Planning Practice Guidance, land values within the site should reflect the requirement to fund strategic and plot-specific infrastructure and mitigation.

The IPDS will continue to be updated to reflect the costs of wider infrastructure requirements of the site as they are understood and will expand upon the approach to equalisation through the contributions to be sought.

Pre-application discussions with the councils will refine local infrastructure requirements, which will be additional to those site-wide strategic infrastructure requirements that all developments should contribute towards.

09

Sustainability Strategy

9. Sustainability Strategy

Greater Manchester's ambition is to become a carbon neutral city region by 2038. This ambition is supported by Bury and Rochdale Councils through a declaration of a climate emergency. Achieving this goal will reduce the need for buildings and homes to be retrofitted in future to achieve carbon neutral goals set by Greater Manchester and the UK.

9.1 Delivering Low Carbon, Sustainable Homes

Strategic Objective 7 of PfE 'playing our part in ensuring that Greater Manchester is a more resilient and carbon neutral city region' includes two specific themes of relevance to this Chapter which are to:

1. Promote carbon neutrality of new development by 2028; and
2. Improve energy efficiency and the generation of renewable and low carbon energy

The Simister Bowlee site provides an opportunity to support Bury, Rochdale and Greater Manchester's commitment to net zero through the implementation of the policies within PfE and the delivery of low zero carbon and highly sustainable homes.

This chapter focuses on the expectations and likely benefits from the Simister Bowlee site with respect to carbon, energy, resource efficiency and climate resilience which, collectively, would make a significant contribution to climate change mitigation and address the impacts of climate change. The specific policies within PfE that are relevant to this section and are considered in turn below are:

- Policy JP-S1: Sustainable Development
- Policy JP-S2: Carbon and Energy
- Policy JP-S3: Heat and Energy Networks
- Policy JP-S4: Flood Risk and the Water Environment
- Policy JP-S6: Resource Efficiency

9.2 Promoting carbon neutrality of new development by 2028

9.2.1 Carbon and Energy

Policy JP-S2 includes an expectation that new development will be net zero in a phased approach, unless it can be demonstrated that this is not practicable or financially viable:

- From adoption (2024) – regulated operational carbon emissions: When the amount of carbon emissions associated with the building's operational energy on an annual basis is zero or negative. A net zero carbon building is highly energy efficient and powered from on-site and / or off-site renewable energy sources, with any remaining carbon balance offset.

- From 2028 – the above plus all emissions 'in construction': When the amount of carbon emissions associated with a building's materials and construction stages up to practical completion is zero or negative, through the use of offsets. For clarity, construction carbon is defined as life stages A1-A5.

Policy JP-S2 takes the definition of Net Zero Carbon from the UK Green Building Council (UKGBC) Net Zero Carbon Buildings Framework (2019).

The UKGBC Framework is due to be superseded by the emerging UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standard (UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standard). Implications of this change will need to be considered once the UKNZCBS is launched.

The GMCA has published guidance on the application of its approach to net zero. These are considered in the following pages.

9.2.2 Net Zero in Operation

The GMCA Net Zero Design Guidance states that for Applicants to comply with Policies JP-S2 and JP-S3, all new buildings should be designed and built to be Net Zero Carbon in operation in compliance with the following where practical and viable:

- Fabric efficiency
  - Space heating demand of ≤20kWh/m2/year for houses
  - Space heating demand of ≤15kWh/m2/year for flats
- Energy use and carbon emissions
  - BREEAM 'Excellent' standard (or equivalent) for the 'Ene 01 –reduction of energy use and carbon emissions' credit issue is achieved, rising to BREEAM 'Outstanding 'equivalent from 2028.
- Energy Use Intensity (EUI)
  - EUI of ≤35kWh/m2/year for TANZ homes only
  - EUI to be calculated using appropriate methodology e.g. CIBSE TM54
- No fossil fuels and low carbon heat
  - The energy strategy will be all-electric to ensure that energy demand is met through the increasingly decarbonising electricity grid.

  - It is expected that heat pumps will be used to deliver the space heating and cooling demand.

- On-site renewable energy generation and energy balance

  - Roof mounted solar photovoltaics will be prioritised.

  - Residential development should aim to provide PV equivalent to 40% footprint area.

- Offsetting (as last resort)

  - To be used where practical and viable via a fund which will be developed by Bury and Rochdale Councils.

  - It is not expected that emissions associated with unregulated energy will be offset.

Additional requirements listed within the GMCA Net Zero Design Guidance include:

- Upfront embodied carbon reporting (See Net Zero in Construction below)

- Overheating risk reduction

  - Residential uses should avoid mechanical cooling

  - Non-residential uses should pass CIBSE TM52

- Reporting energy consumption in-use

As the GMCA Net Zero Design Guidance is not incorporated into PfE, the targets included are aspirational but will be used to guide the design and construction of new developments. The exception is the space heating demand targets, which are included within Policy JP-S1 as best practice thresholds and will be applied where practical and viable.

9.2.3 Net Zero in Construction

The GMCA Net Zero Design Guidance includes aspirational targets for residential development as follows:

- 500kgCO2/m2 for homes
- 600kgCO2/m2 for flats

No targets are provided for non-residential development.

Reductions in construction carbon will focus on material efficiency (e.g. 'use less') in the first instance.

9.2.4 Carbon Offsetting

Where a development cannot achieve net zero requirements or targets, carbon offsetting will be considered; this involves a financial contribution to mitigate or compensate for the effects of unavoidable carbon emissions by investing in an off-site scheme which reduces or removes greenhouse gases elsewhere, such as tree planting or renewable energy.

In collaboration with the GMCA, Bury Council is developing a Carbon Offset Fund to enable applicants to contribute to and achieve Net Zero Carbon where practical and viable.

9.3 Improving energy efficiency and the generation of renewable and low carbon energy

9.3.1 Heat and Energy Networks

Simister Bowlee falls within the Northern Gateway Heat and Energy Network Opportunity Zone. As part of any planning applications, a Low Carbon Heat Appraisal will be prepared setting out a comparative analysis of feasible heating systems, and proposals for a heating strategy which is practical and delivers carbon savings over the course of its operation. If the Applicant can demonstrate that an alternative energy strategy will deliver the same or greater carbon savings and / or financial savings or such network connection would not be practicable or financially viable, then this will be considered.

Opportunities for smart energy networks should also be considered, including:

- Energy demand and generation balance
- Energy storage
- Microgrid(s), and
- Electric vehicle charging strategy.

9.3.2 Resource Efficiency

Circular economy is a key part of GM's ambition to be a carbon neutral and leading green city region by 2038, and Northern Gateway will have a role in supporting this.

PfE Policy JP-S6 (Resource Efficiency) requires development to use sustainable design and construction techniques to reduce carbon emissions, adapt and future proof to the impact of climate change, reduce and recycle waste and minimise water use.

It is expected that circular economy measures implemented in the development will include, but are not limited to:

- Material efficiency, minimising the quantity of materials used in construction
- Use of recycled materials and materials with a high recycled content
- Use of materials which can be repurposed or recycled at end of life
- Resource (energy and water) efficiency measures during construction and operation, and
- Reduction of waste generated during construction and operation, and diversion of residual waste from landfill

9.3.3 Climate Resilience

GM will experience changes to the climate in the future, including:

- Increased annual temperatures
- Increased winter rainfall, and
- Decreased summer rainfall.

Impacts associated with these changes to climate and measures to mitigate them are set out within PfE Policy JP-S4. Development will need to demonstrate how climate adaptability and resilience measures have been incorporated through design measures which are appropriate for Simister Bowlee. Design measures expected to be implemented on site include:

- Reducing overheating risk through passive measures in the first instance, using active cooling where necessary.
- Reducing flood risk through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), without significantly increasing embodied carbon emissions.
- Incorporating green and blue infrastructure to mitigate overheating, flood risk, and contribute to biodiversity.
- Minimising water use during operation through reducing water demand and incorporating rainwater or greywater harvesting, and
- Appropriate landscaping strategy which suits current and future climate scenarios and doesn't rely on mechanical irrigation.

9.3.4 Environmental Accreditation

PfE Policy JP-S2 requires any non-residential development should achieve a minimum of BREEAM 'Excellent' standard (or equivalent) for the 'Ene 01 – reduction of energy use and carbon emissions' credit issue, rising to BREEAM 'Outstanding' equivalent from 2028.

BREEAM provides a holistic approach to demonstrating sustainability, including categories in Energy, Water, Materials, Waste, and Pollution. The assessment process provides a robust approach to carbon and energy, resource efficiency, and climate resilience.

Applicants are therefore encouraged to pursue certification under BREEAM for non-residential uses over 1,000sqm.

Where feasible and viable, additional accreditation is encouraged to demonstrate the sustainability credentials of the site.

10

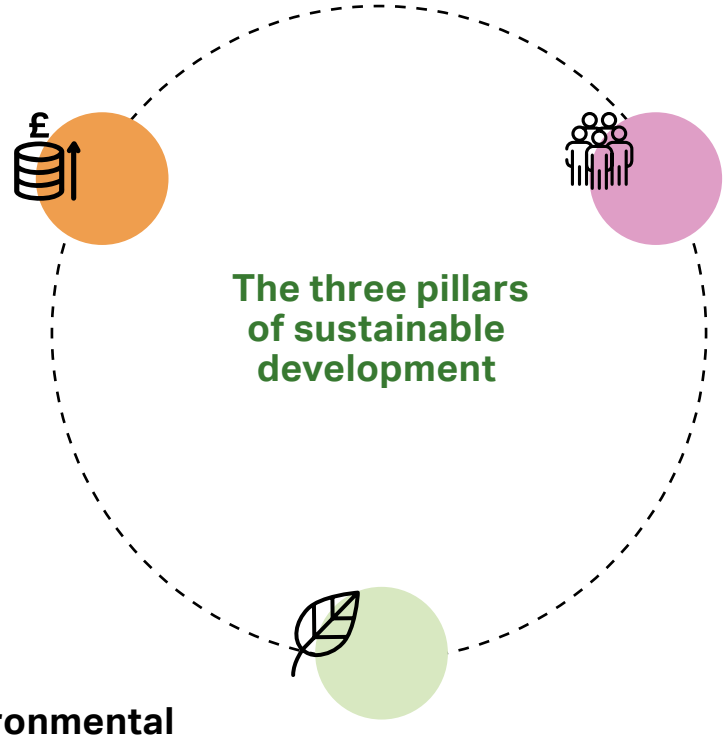
The Benefits

10. The Benefits

The proposals will bring a range of benefits that will embrace the three pillars of sustainable development:

Economic

The development of the site will boost the Greater Manchester economy and support the world class employment opportunity at JPA1.1, by delivering the type and quality of homes that will underpin long term growth and retain skills in the north of the conurbation.



Social

Delivering inclusive development that provides the types of market and affordable homes to meet local needs, alongside community infrastructure that will improve access to amenities and support the growth of the local population.

Environmental

Ensuring the development will maximise opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, creating a comprehensive green infrastructure network and ensuring that the objective of net zero carbon for both the development and the Greater Manchester area is integral to the design from the outset.

10.1 Economic Benefits

Due to its scale and importance, the development of the site would have significant economic benefits, from its construction, occupation and in the catalytic impact it would have within Bury and Rochdale, Greater Manchester and the wider region. The key economic benefits of the scheme include:

During Construction

- 1,815 'person years' of construction employment created, equating to an average of 115 FTE on and off-site construction jobs per year assuming an indicative 16 year build stage.
- 120 net additional FTE positions supported each year across the North West, via indirect and induced employment effects
- £146 million net additional GVA contribution to the North West's economy over the 16 year construction build period; and
- The potential to support approximately 45 construction apprenticeships in their entirety (with each being 3 years long).

During the Occupation of the Development

- 80 gross FTE jobs supported on the site once it is complete and fully operational.
- 1,680 working age, economically active and employed residents would occupy the new homes, generating a combined additional gross income of up to £53 million per annum, which would support an additional 215 retail and leisure-related employee jobs in the local area.
- An additional £4.65 million in collective Council Tax payments and £50,000 in business rate revenue per annum, for collection by Bury and Rochdale Borough Councils, to support local services across the Councils.

Wider Catalytic Effects

- Underpinning employment growth across the north of Greater Manchester by providing the type, quality and spatial distribution of homes in the region that will allow it to capitalise on its key strengths, growth potential and emerging industries in the Atom Valley MDZ.
- Providing the quality of housing and community infrastructure that will underpin the retention of skilled workers and support jobs in the north east growth corridor, and particularly at the world class employment destination at JPA1.1.

10.2 Social Benefits

The delivery of the site will have clear social benefits for existing and future residents, in terms of providing better choice, improving access to amenities and meeting a variety of identified housing needs. The key social benefits include:

- Delivering high quality market homes, with a range of types and tenures, to meet the needs of existing and future employees.
- Delivering affordable homes in accordance with local policy, to help meet housing needs.
- Delivering a new primary school; and other community infrastructure, including a Local Centre with flexible uses, new retail and community uses, active travel infrastructure and public open spaces. Collectively this benefit and support existing and future populations.
- Delivering new and accessible multifunctional open spaces, amenity spaces and green infrastructure to benefit existing and future residents and to improve connectivity surrounding communities and encourage healthy and active lifestyles.
- Providing a highly permeable settlement layout with continuous routes throughout the site that seeks to improve connections to, and between, existing and future communities.
- The provision of improved bus services and connectivity to key destinations, including the JPA1.1 employment site and Manchester.

10.3 Environmental Benefits

Development of the site will support the environmental pillar of sustainability through the application of key PfE policies in relation to sustainable development, carbon and energy efficiency, green infrastructure, landscape, biodiversity and heritage.

The development of the site has the potential to significantly uplift the biodiversity, accessibility and overall enjoyment and environmental value of the site; as well as embedding climate resilience and energy efficiency in the fabric of design. Key environmental benefits include:

- Seeking to achieve net zero carbon emission buildings in construction and operation, in line with the policy requirements of PfE Policies JP-S1 and JP-S2.
- Delivering a development which is adaptable and resilient to climate change and limits environmental impacts to biodiversity, building occupants, and the local community.
- Delivering an uplift in biodiversity which would, as a minimum, meet the 10% net gain requirement.
- The provision of multi-functional green infrastructure and open space that will benefit existing residents and create new green corridors through the site.
- The protection and enhancement of existing features of the site that add value, including mature trees, hedgerows and woodland.

Figure 46: Views across to the Manchester city skyline from the site

11

Social Value Strategy

11. Social Value Strategy

Social value is about the positive impacts that can be delivered in society and is measured by the actions taken to improve community benefit. There are notable inequalities within Bury's and Rochdale's communities around levels of deprivation; health and life expectancy; employment; and educational attainment. Requirements for social value in planning have the power to unlock additional community benefit from the development which can contribute towards addressing some of the deep-rooted inequality issues.

11.1 Social Value

To help to address issues around inequalities and ensure local communities benefit, it will be necessary for new development on the site to take all practicable measures to maximise its wider social value and its contribution to social inclusion. Opportunities to deliver social value through new development arise in both the construction and operational phases.

A key aspect of this is economic inclusion and ensuring that local residents and existing communities have the opportunity to share in the benefits of development and economic growth. For example, new development that includes effective initiatives around economic inclusion could help residents into employment and/or training. Such initiatives would help to tackle deprivation by raising people out of poverty and reducing inequalities, whilst benefiting the development directly through improved access to a larger, healthier and more highly skilled labour supply.

Developers will be expected to produce a Social Value Strategy which sets out how social value and social inclusion will be maximised, securing the implementation of suggested measures and enabling the public to understand the positive impact that new development will have on their neighbourhood and community.

The Council will positively engage in the production and implementation of developer-led Social Value Strategies, but the involvement of other stakeholders, including local residents, is also strongly encouraged in order to maximise their impact and the acceptance of new development.

Bury and Rochdale Councils approved the implementation of a Northern Gateway Social Value Strategy (NGSVS) and accompanying Delivery Plan in November 2025. The NGSVS aims to align the social value priorities of public sector organisations involved in the development and / or delivery of Northern Gateway and ensure that any social value outputs create positive social, environmental and economic impacts for the communities within Bury and Rochdale. The Councils are committed to working with external bodies involved in activity specific to the site and, as such, liaison with the Councils should take place during the production of developer-led Social Value Strategies to ensure alignment with wider social value activity across Northern Gateway.

12

Monitoring and Review

12. Monitoring and Review

This draft SBDF provides a clear vision for the delivery of the Simister and Bowlee (Northern Gateway) site. However, if circumstances change and have implications for the vision, design and development principles set out in this document, then a review of this document will be appropriate.

The scope and content of any review would be agreed between the councils and the updated SBDF SPD would be subject to a proportionate statutory and/or public/ stakeholder consultation prior to being finalised.

Bury Council

ROCHDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL