



DEBATE PACK

Number CDP 2016/0249, 12 December 2016

Greater Manchester Spatial Framework

This pack has been prepared ahead of the debate to be held in Westminster Hall on Wednesday 14 December 2016 at 4.30pm on the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework. The debate will be opened by William Wragg MP.

Louise Smith
Nikki Sutherland

Contents

1.	Greater Manchester Spatial Framework	2
1.1	The Greater Manchester Combined Authority	2
1.2	The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework	2
	Housing and green belt land within the GMSF	3
1.3	Conflicting views	4
1.4	Further information	4
2.	News items	5
3.	Press releases	7
4.	Parliamentary material	14
	PQs	14
	Debate contributions	15
5.	Useful links and further reading	19

The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

1. Greater Manchester Spatial Framework

1.1 The Greater Manchester Combined Authority

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), established in 2011,¹ is made up of the ten Greater Manchester councils and an interim Mayor ahead of elections for the Mayor to be held in May 2017.²

The ten councils are: Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

For further information see Library briefing papers, [Combined Authorities](#), 23 November 2016 and [Devolution to Local Government in England](#), 23 November 2016.

1.2 The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework

The GMCA is in the process of producing a “Greater Manchester Spatial Framework” (GMSF), which will be a joint plan to manage the supply of land for jobs and new homes across Greater Manchester, up to the year 2035. The idea is that the GMSF will be the overarching development plan within which Greater Manchester’s ten local planning authorities will be able to identify more detailed sites for jobs and homes in their own area. As such, the GMSF will not cover everything that a local plan would cover and individual districts will continue to produce their own local plans.³ The “key milestones” and timetable for the GMSF, as proposed by the GMCA is as follows:

1. [Consultation on an initial GMSF evidence base - November 2014](#) (consultation closed);
2. [Consultation on vision and draft strategic options - November 2015 to January 2016](#) (responses to consultation now published);
3. [Call for Sites](#) (initial responses now published);
4. [Draft GMSF](#) – for consultation from 31 October to 23 December 2016;
5. Publication of the GMSF in 2017; and
6. Submission, examination and adoption of the GMSF in 2018.⁴

¹ As established by the *Greater Manchester Combined Authority Order 2011*

² The *Greater Manchester Combined Authority (Election of Mayor with Police and Crime Commissioner Functions Order 2016)*, made on 29 March 2016, established the position of elected Mayor of the Combined Authority, with the first election on 4 May 2017 and the elected Mayor taking office, including taking over the functions of the Greater Manchester Police and Crime Commissioner, on 8 May 2017

³ GMCA, [Greater Manchester Spatial Framework website](#) [on 7 December 2016]

⁴ GMCA, [Greater Manchester Spatial Framework website](#) [on 7 December 2016]

The [draft Greater Manchester Combined Authority \(Functions and Amendment\) Order 2016](#) (hereafter the draft Order) and its accompanying [draft explanatory memorandum](#) will confer on the GMCA, to be exercisable by the Mayor, a duty to prepare a spatial development strategy.⁵ The draft GMSF could be used as the basis for this, or, following the election of the Mayor it could be agreed that a new or revised document be produced. The draft Order was laid before Parliament on 21 November 2016, but has not yet been approved.

Housing and green belt land within the GMSF

The [draft GMSF](#) proposes that 227,200 net additional dwellings will be needed in the period up to 2035, some of which it suggests should be built on 4,900 hectares of Greater Manchester's green belt. The table below adapted from table 8.1 of the [draft GMSF](#) sets out the required distribution of these additional houses across Greater Manchester, together with a broad indication of the balance of houses and apartments:

District	Total Requirement (number of dwellings)	Average Annual Requirement (average number of dwellings / year)	Houses (%)	Apartments (%)
Bolton	16,800	840	85	15
Bury	12,500	625	85	15
Manchester	55,300	2,765	15	85
Oldham	13,700	685	85	15
Rochdale	15,500	775	90	10
Salford	34,900	1,745	30	70
Stockport	19,300	965	75	25
Tameside	13,600	680	80	20
Trafford	23,100	1,155	60	40
Wigan	22,500	1,125	90	10
Total for GM	227,200	11,360	55-60	40-45

The green belt in Greater Manchester equates to 47 per cent of the total land area of Greater Manchester. The proposals in the draft GMSF would reduce this coverage of green belt land to 43 per cent.⁶ The “reasoned justification” provided for this in the draft GMSF is as follows:

⁵ The [draft Greater Manchester Combined Authority \(Functions and Amendment\) Order 2016](#) and its accompanying [draft explanatory memorandum](#)

⁶ GMCA, [draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework](#), p76

The scale of development that needs to be accommodated within Greater Manchester over the next two decades means that some changes to the green belt boundaries within Greater Manchester are necessary, but these have been minimised as far as possible, having regard in particular to the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. This will result in a net reduction in the total area of designated green belt of 4,900 hectares (8.2%), ensuring that nearly 43% of Greater Manchester will be green belt.

16.0.2 As such, the Green Belt makes up a considerable proportion of Greater Manchester, and it is therefore vital that its various parts play a beneficial role that supports the environmental, social and economic well being of the sub-region's residents. The Greater Manchester Mayor and local authorities will plan, in particular, for the enhancement of its green infrastructure functions, such as improved public access and habitat restoration, helping to deliver environmental and social benefits for the residents of Greater Manchester and providing the high quality green spaces that will support economic growth.⁷

1.3 Conflicting views

Specialist publication Planning has reported that Leigh MP and Labour Mayoral candidate Andy Burnham has already expressed concerns about the amount of green belt land that the GMSF earmarks for release.⁸ The article notes that while the new Mayor would need to agree to the plan for it to be adopted, he/she would need to secure the agreement of the GMCA councils if they wanted to amend it.⁹

Another article in the Manchester Evening News reports the views of each MP in the Greater Manchester region on the proposals, "[From 'crucial' to 'ridiculous' - what MPs think of Greater Manchester's radical expansion plans](#)", 31 October 2016.

An [article from law firm Pinsent Masons](#) highlights the view of their planning expert that the draft GMSF is "not ambitious enough" in terms of identifying enough land for new jobs and homes, stating that the numbers are lower than those that have been achieved by Greater Manchester in "recent years".¹⁰

1.4 Further information

For further information on housing and green belt policy see Library briefing papers:

- [Green Belt](#), 5 January 2016;
- [Planning for Housing](#), 25 May 2016; and
- [Housing supply for local authorities \(England\)](#), 24 November 2016, an interactive Excel tool to view and compare local-level housing information, including on affordable housing levels.

⁷ GMCA, [draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework](#), p76

⁸ "What obstacles does the city-regional plan for Manchester face?" [Planning](#), 4 November 2016 [subscription required]

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Out-law.com "[Greater Manchester to consider draft 'Spatial Framework' planning strategy this week](#)" 26 October 2016

2. News items

Manchester Evening News

Stockport Lib Dems want to pull borough out of the Greater Manchester housing masterplan

Todd Fitzgerald 5 December 2016

<http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/stockport-green-belt-housing-masterplan-12273036>

Manchester Evening News

Nearly 1,000 rental homes on the way in Manchester thanks to government cash

Todd Fitzgerald 2 December 2016

<http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/new-homes-rent-greater-manchester-12262830>

Manchester Evening News

From 'crucial' to 'ridiculous' - what MPs think of Greater Manchester's radical expansion plans

Jennifer Williams 31 October 2016

<http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/crucial-ridiculous-what-mps-think-12099154>

BBC News Online

MPs vow to fight new Greater Manchester homes plan

22 October 2016

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-37739205>

BBC News Online

Greater Manchester plans for 225,000 new homes revealed

21 October 2016

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-37729165>

Manchester Evening News

Why thousands of homes could be built on Greater Manchester's green belt

Jennifer Williams updated 14 September 2016

<http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/thousands-homes-could-built-greater-11872866>

3. Press releases

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

A bold new plan for jobs, economic growth and new homes

31 October 2016

Greater Manchester Leaders agreed to approve the draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) plan for consultation at the meeting of the Joint GMCA/AGMA Executive Board on 28 October 2016.

The GMSF is the 10 authorities' joint plan for land allocation across Greater Manchester to provide housing and investment opportunities for sustainable growth. The draft GM Spatial Framework has been published today and the views of Greater Manchester residents and stakeholders are now being sought during an eight-week consultation ending on 23 December 2016.

Views submitted will be considered and a final draft will be published in 2017 when a further period of consultation will be held.

The Draft GMSF is available to view online and paper copies are available in each of the 10 districts. A series of public events are being arranged across Greater Manchester over the next few weeks. For further information please visit www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/GMSF

Responses to the consultation may be made:

Online at <http://gmsf-consult.objective.co.uk>

By email to GMSF@agma.gov.uk

By Post to : Greater Manchester Integrated Support Team, PO Box 532, Town Hall, Manchester, M60 2LA

Over the next twenty years there is a need to deliver continued sustainable economic growth, creating more jobs and new homes for the people of Greater Manchester.

Greater Manchester's local authorities are working together to deliver this growth to ensure new homes and jobs are provided in the right places with the transport infrastructure (roads, rail, Metrolink) to support communities and manage growth sustainably. By having a plan, greater control over land allocation will ensure development of new homes comes with investment in roads, school places, green spaces and public transport. Without a plan, development would happen in any case, without capturing benefits for local communities. In other words, a place with a plan is a place with a future.

The GMSF will help our city-region to manage growth so that Greater Manchester is a better place to live, work and visit. Greater Manchester should be as well known for the quality of its environment as for its economic success. Greenbelt will play a role in achieving this goal but

there are important green spaces, parks, rivers and canals in the heart of our urban communities, which are equally valuable. The protection and enhancement of all these spaces is a central theme of the framework and strategy.

A key consideration of the development of the framework has been to adopt a brownfield first approach to land allocation. This focus has ensured that nearly three quarters of the proposed housing land supply is within the existing urban area on brownfield land with remaining new allocations from land being withdrawn from the greenbelt. A new greenbelt boundary for Greater Manchester will offer greater protection to prevent development in the newly designated greenbelt whilst also meeting our housing and employment needs over the next 20 years.

The GMSF will minimise the amount of greenbelt land required for development by focusing on relatively few, large sites. This will provide opportunities to support developments with the required transport infrastructure, necessary school places and other vital services needed to create successful neighbourhoods.

Councillor Richard Farnell, lead member for planning and housing at GMCA, said: "Greater Manchester is a thriving city region, renowned across the world for its numerous technological and scientific advancements, sporting and artistic excellence. We support a culture of innovation and enterprise.

"In order to continue to attract business, workers and tourists, we need to grow. We will successfully manage this growth and deliver major economic, social and environmental improvements. We are mindful that this needs to support Greater Manchester's prosperity in the long term as well as meet its short-term needs.

"We want all residents of Greater Manchester to share in the benefits of this prosperity."

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

GMCA lead member for planning and housing welcomes IPPR North report

31 October 2016

GMCA Lead Member for Planning and Housing, Cllr Richard Farnell said; "I welcome IPPR North's Closer to Home Report.

"The report acknowledges that Greater Manchester continues to lead the way with housing devolution and some of the report's recommendations are already being implemented here in Greater Manchester.

"The importance of joined up local plans like Greater Manchester's Spatial Framework (GMSF) is made clear by the report's authors. Our bold plan, developed for Greater Manchester by Greater Manchester Leaders, will ensure that we have the homes and jobs to deliver

continued sustainable economic growth for decades to come. Progress has been made on the GMSF since the report was written and the public consultation on first draft of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework has been launched today. I'd encourage all residents to contribute and help shape the future of our city-region by going to <http://gmsf-consult.objective.co.uk>

"A lifting of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) land use restrictions, where brownfield opportunities alone are insufficient to deliver the housing supply that is needed, would warmly welcomed by Greater Manchester Leaders. Other recommendations from the report, including more flexibility across funding streams for housing and access to resources that can help us unlock stalled sites requiring significant investment in infrastructure or remediation would also help Greater Manchester to deliver the homes we need.

Williamwragg.org

MPs build momentum in fight to protect local green belt

26 October, 2016

Two Stockport MPs are campaigning to protect local green belt land from housing developments proposed by the Combined Manchester Authority, and are calling on local residents for support.

Cheadle MP, Mary Robinson and William Wragg, MP for neighbouring Hazel Grove, have raised concerns that their constituencies are in danger of losing a substantial amount of green belt to future housing development if the plans proposed in the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework are given the go ahead.

The plan will determine where housing development can take place across Greater Manchester over the next twenty years, and if agreed will include the release of previously protected green belt land for large scale housing development.

Locally, this would see over 8,000 homes built on green belt in Cheadle, whilst in neighboring Hazel Grove, permission would be given to build a further 4,000 on green belt around the village of High Lane.

Both MPs have launched online petitions and held meetings with concerned residents whose communities would be affected should the plan be approved. Representatives from both Save Heald Green Green Belt and Woodford Neighbourhood Forum spoke to Mary in depth about their concerns over the impact additional homes would have on their communities.

Mary said: "Last week I had sight of the latest plans, and I am shocked and angry that this draft plan proposes over 8,000 houses to be built on precious green belt land in Woodford, Heald Green and Cheadle Hulme. I believe if this scale of development goes ahead, it will not only

devastate our countryside, but it will also place unprecedented pressure on our local infrastructure and undermine our local communities.

“I urge local residents to join me in fighting to protect our green belt and instead to call for the development of brownfield sites where communities would benefit from the additional investment from regeneration projects, not the destruction of our natural landscape.”

William added:

“The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework has the potential to threaten large areas of the Greenbelt surrounding my local communities. I am very concerned by this real prospect of thousands of properties being built on previously protected land. There are also significant doubts as to whether local infrastructure of roads and amenities, which already struggle with existing demands, can support such large scale building programmes.

“The fact is we need more housing. However, the areas which should be developed first are those 'brownfield sites'. These are sites that have previously been used for commercial or industrial purposes, but are now vacant. Stockport has many of these sites which have not yet been developed for housing, and across the country it is estimated there is enough brownfield land for to build some 650,000 homes – making significant contribution to the Government’s target of 1million new homes built between 2015 and 2020.”

Save Heald Green Green Belt, a Facebook group with almost 500 followers, has previously campaigned against the proposed development of green belt land which forms part of the Seashell Trust.

Phil Carter of Save Heald Green Green Belt, met with Mary to discuss the group’s concerns over the proposals. He said: “So far, we have focussed on the Seashell Trust’s application for 325 houses. However, the new Spatial Framework suggests it might end up more than double that number. The local infrastructure simply will not support a development of this size and we are grateful to Mary for her support.”

A link to Mary’s e-petition can be found on her website, www.mary-robinson.org.uk as well as details of areas which will be affected by these proposals.

Residents across Hazel Grove constituency are able to sign the petition, which already has over 650 signatures, at the following link - www.williamwragg.org.uk/protect-our-greenbelt

Platform, The everyday portal for sharing knowledge and intelligence on sustainability across Greater Manchester.

Greater Manchester's Spatial Framework: Strengthening our Natural Capital

11 October 2016

Contributed by [Anne Selby](#), Chief Executive of The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire Manchester and Merseyside

Protecting and enhancing Greater Manchester's natural assets with the new Spatial Framework

Natural Capital can be defined as our precious stock of natural assets. Here in Greater Manchester, this extends from our river valleys and diverse array of wildlife, to Salford's 10,000-year-old peat bogs and that bit of grass behind your local super market – and everything in between.

Natural Capital assets provide basic ecosystem services such as the production of food and water, climate control and disease prevention and can even help prevent flooding. They keep our economy afloat, our societies functioning, and sustain human life.

"Valuing our natural capital and greenspace can achieve a better quality of life for the people of Greater Manchester"

Greater Manchester's biodiversity is under continual threat from fragmentation, isolation, development, farming and pollution. We need to protect and preserve our green space and ecosystems in order to manage and adapt to challenges and contribute to a better future for all.

Valuing our natural capital and greenspace can achieve a better quality of life for the people of Greater Manchester.

A mass of evidence argues that if you have access to green space, your health and wellbeing is so much better.

"If we want a vibrant, resilient city...we need to link greening with industrial and residential development"

Recent studies have also found significant associations between green space maintenance and crime reduction, specifically in cities across America.

Community plots and well-maintained gardens encourage residents to spend more time outdoors. This boosts local pride in the overall appearance of these areas, generates a greater sense of community alliance, and increases informal surveillance of the area, thereby deterring crime.

People want to live and work in attractive cities. They want to cycle or walk to work, visit a local park during the weekend or grow their own in a local allotment.

If we want a vibrant, resilient city that people want to live in and future generations want to stay in, we need to link greening with industrial

and residential development, encouraging people to use their gardens to promote and enhance wildlife. All great cities have this.

The Natural Capital Group is the Local nature Partnership for Greater Manchester, and works to ensure that the value of local environments and ecosystems, and the services they provide to the economy and local people, are taken into account when planning decisions are made.

When Local Authorities develop plans, they have a duty to cooperate and take the views of the Natural Capital Group into consideration.

The National Capital group is a pretty broad church as a group, from private to third sector, we work together to find a consensus and take a solid, evidence based approach, flying the flag for green infrastructure and services.

"Areas like the peat bogs aren't overly attractive and can sometimes get a bad reputation for being dangerous wastelands...the answer to this is engagement and education"

We've been consistently involved in the consultation and development of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework, gathering research and info for policy development and meeting with relevant planners.

As a group, we can also declare Nature Improvement Areas (NIA's) for investment and planning purposes.

These areas offer opportunities to establish and improve ecological networks by enlarging, enhancing and connecting existing green areas and wildlife habitats and creating new sites.

NIA's have been woven into the new framework and we're keen to highlight the significance of specific areas such as the Greater Manchester Wetlands.

Much of the land across this 'Carbon Landscape' lies on former coalfields and peat mosses, as well as critically important lowland raised bogs, which store mass amounts of carbon and are very important to the environment.

We're now in the second phase of a Heritage Lottery Funded project to create a 'living landscape,' linking wildlife corridors across the Wetlands and over to Merseyside. It's all making a big difference to the city region.

Aesthetically, areas like the peat bogs aren't overly attractive and can sometimes get a bad reputation for being dangerous wastelands.

The answer to this is engagement and education. Engage local people with landscapes that may be alien to them, get them involved, volunteering and help them understand the ecological importance of these unique sites.

"We've got to get people behind the concept of a more climate resilient city in order to enact change"

This is why organisations such as the [Greater Manchester Environmental Education Network](#) are so important. MEEN is dedicated to supporting schools, organisations and individuals to engage the next generation in

the importance of climate resilience, promoting environmental education and sharing good practice around sustainability.

Greater Manchester has given itself a pretty tough carbon reduction target, but I believe we can achieve it. It's great to see. There are many people from all sectors giving their time to chair groups, educate others and contribute to the movement.

As part of this, there's a real need for businesses to take responsibility and be mindful of their impact on biodiversity and ecosystems.

As well as supporting various international schemes that allow businesses to offset their carbon, the [Wildlife Trust](#) also runs a local, informal scheme that supports the re-wetting of peat bogs.

We're hoping, that a formal carbon compensation scheme could be established in Greater Manchester. The landscape is littered with initiatives, such as biodiversity offsetting that could yield more value out of developments, however at the present time the Government is not properly legislating to support it. To embed carbon offsetting as a culture in Greater Manchester would be fantastic – it's there, its working, we just need to scale it up.

The future is looking bright for Greater Manchester. The city region was recently invited to become a member of an international cohort of 100 Resilient Cities and will gain access to tools, funding, technical expertise, and other resources to build resilience to the challenges of urbanisation, improve the health and well-being of Greater Manchester's citizens and protect the city from flooding risks.

Ultimately, we've got to get people behind the concept of a more climate resilient city in order to enact change. People need to understand that we all need to take responsibility, work with nature and respect the services it provides, in order to adapt and continue to live good quality lives.

4. Parliamentary material

PQs

[Affordable Homes](#)

Asked by: Liz McInnes

I thank the Minister for that answer. The recently published Greater Manchester spatial framework states an ambition to

“significantly increase the supply of housing that people can afford, including through the planning system.”

How will Greater Manchester be able to achieve that ambition, given that the Housing and Planning Act 2016 lets developers off the hook by effectively ending their obligation to provide affordable homes to rent and buy?

Answered by: Gavin Barwell | Department: Communities and Local Government

The Housing and Planning Act does no such thing. The hon. Lady's question made it clear that she was interested in more affordable homes for people to rent or buy. The Act requires developers to provide affordable starter homes for first-time buyers, but there will still absolutely be a determination to deliver affordable homes for rent. I look forward to visiting Greater Manchester shortly to discuss these matters.

HC Deb 24 October 2016 | Vol 616 c10

Asked by: Gwynne, Andrew

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will meet the hon. Member for Denton and Reddish to discuss the consultation process for the draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework Development Plan.

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether the Greater Manchester Combined Authority is legally required to consult the public on the sites identified in the draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework Development Plan.

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether the Greater Manchester Combined Authority is legally required to consult all councillors in the 10 metropolitan district councils on the sites identified in the draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework Development Plan.

Answering member: James Wharton | Department: Department for Communities and Local Government

The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities is currently involved in the preparation of a Greater Manchester Spatial Framework Development Plan working with the 10 metropolitan councils in the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's area. We understand that this is intended to become a joint development plan document.

A local authority may arrange for the discharge of any of its functions by a committee, sub-committee, an officer or by any other local authority. The ten local authorities have delegated responsibility for the "coordination" of the Greater Manchester Strategic Framework to Association of Greater Manchester Authorities Executive Board, a committee of the Combined Authority. Under these current arrangements, it is for each individual authority to decide how to engage its members in the production of the document.

Each local planning authority must also comply with section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires them to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement which should explain how they will engage local communities and other interested parties in producing development plan documents and determining planning applications. This should be published on the local planning authority's website and it is the authority's responsibility to ensure that any Development Plan Document is prepared in accordance with it.

It would not be appropriate for me to meet to discuss the detail of a plan in preparation.

HC Deb 04 February 2016 | PQ 24413; PQ 24412; PQ 24411

Debate contributions

Member's debate contribution: [Neighbourhood Planning Bill](#)

Member: William Wragg

The hon. Gentleman raises an important point. That is something that my local authority in Stockport is looking at, to ensure it can use its land assets for the development of housing, so I agree with him on that.

One thing missing from the Bill, although certainly not from our debate this evening, is the issue of the green belt. We know that green-belt land is protected under the Town and Country Planning Act 1947, and it plays an important role in protecting the environment and semi-rural communities, such as the ones I represent, from urban sprawl. Fundamentally, the green belt preserves natural green land, open spaces, wildlife habitats and the character of such areas.

Although it is not currently addressed by the Bill, I am deeply concerned about the threat posed to the local green belt in my constituency by potential massive building development. For instance, the Greater

Manchester spatial framework, a policy of the Greater Manchester combined authority, which my hon. Friend the Member for Bolton West (Chris Green) referred to, will determine where residential development can take place, including the release of green-belt land. The policy has the potential to threaten large areas of green belt in my constituency. I am concerned by the prospect of thousands of properties being built on previously protected land, especially in the High Lane and Marple areas of my constituency. There are significant doubts about whether already stretched local infrastructure could support such development.

Saying that, there is no doubt that we need more housing. However, the areas that should be developed first are brownfield sites, which are those areas previously used for other purposes. Stockport in my area has many such sites that have not yet been developed for housing, and across the country it is conservatively estimated that there is enough brownfield land for the development of some 650,000 properties, making a significant contribution to the Government's target. I therefore want to ask my hon. Friend the Minister, if this is not covered in the Bill, what is being done or can be done to prioritise brownfield development and to protect green belts from over-zealous local authority plans, such as that in Greater Manchester. I can only hope that development in the green belt in my constituency will be as sparse as Members on the Opposition Benches are this evening.

HC Deb 10 October 2016 | Vol 615 cc113-4

Member's debate contribution: [South Manchester Transport Infrastructure](#)

Member: Mary Robinson

My hon. Friend, whose constituency is right next to mine, knows full well how important that link would be. Indeed, I will add my words to his in pressing for that project to be considered.

I look forward to the refreshment of the SEMMMS plan, which is ongoing, and I will press for further consideration of the A34 corridor plan, which will explore the A34's intersection with the M60. That plan will enable Transport for Greater Manchester to develop a more detailed understanding of the long-term growth implications along the A34 and to identify further areas of improvement to manage congestion. These problems need to be addressed both imminently—indeed, immediately—and for the longer term. This junction is broken and we need to fix it.

It is a fact that alongside Greater Manchester's growing economic strength—growth that creates new employment and development opportunities across the wider conurbation, including Stockport—pressure continues to be put on local highway networks. There is particular pressure at junctions where there are complex flows of traffic wanting to access the city, Manchester Airport, the M60, the M56 and, very importantly for my constituents, local facilities and residential areas.

Further pressures on the general network and the A34 corridor are also in the spotlight as the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and the

Cheshire East local plan are being drawn up. It is clear that local plans must take into account the implications of increased developments, and where there are cross-boundary transport infrastructure issues it is vital to have co-operation between all stakeholders, including central Government.

I will highlight for the Minister the need for continued investment in the north. I welcome all the investment that we have had so far, but I am firmly focused on the north's future. I have also stressed the importance of smaller infrastructure projects—yes, we need High Speed 2 and High Speed 3—but we also need to underwrite this ambition with support for large local projects.

I am pleased that for Members whose constituencies have problematic junctions, the Government have committed themselves to investment, delivering the biggest road improvement programme since the 1970s. Continuing that commitment will be imperative.

Infrastructure investment is represented by the £475 million Local Majors fund, which is designed to support local transport projects. That is an example of the type of investment funds we need in the wake of the referendum. Indeed, these smaller scale but large local projects also need prioritising.

I have had meetings with the interim Mayor of Greater Manchester and the strategic transport director of Transport for Greater Manchester to discuss applications for the fund and the role I can play in facilitating them. I encourage the Minister to continue making local authorities aware so that we can all benefit from the potential prosperity the funds can generate. In my constituency, we look forward to progress being made on the changes so urgently required at the Gatley junction, and that should be considered as part of the wider SEMMMS strategy.

I am conscious of time, but I want to touch briefly on the ambitious developments in high-speed rail. HS2 will sweep into the north. I know I am touching on the programme with a brevity that does not do justice to its importance, but with phase 2a to Crewe opening in 2027 and the delivery of phase 2b marked for completion in 2033, there can be no further delay to the roll-out of the UK's largest infrastructure project, through which the north can benefit from increased capacity to meet demand. I therefore look forward to the legislation being brought forward later this year for phase 1. Although I appreciate the extension of timetables for delivery to allow the petitions process, I urge the Government to take steps to prevent further delays to the opening of the first step to high-speed rail.

From a local perspective, I am pleased that the ambitious project of HS2 will come close to Cheadle at Manchester airport, but I would welcome further assurances on that crucial airport link to move from planes to trains. Additionally, I welcome the commitment to modernise and renew the rolling stock, with a move away from Pacer trains—many commuters between Cheadle and Manchester will echo my views—following Arriva's new franchise around Manchester. I know passengers would welcome an increase in the capacity and comfort of local

journeys. I also highlight the need for investment in stations, particularly through working cross-departmentally with the Department for Communities and Local Government to improve station environments, such as that at Cheadle Hulme in my constituency. In addition, I will be looking for greater responsibilities for franchises to invest in ticketing, to make it easier and more comfortable to travel and to use the networks to the full.

HC Deb 13 July 2016 | Vol 613 cc166-8WH

5. Useful links and further reading

Greater Manchester Spatial Framework

<https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/GMSF>

Housing the Powerhouse *Open Letter to Greater Manchester Leaders* 8 December 2016

<http://www.housingthepowerhouse.com/downloads/Greater-Manchester-Plan-Open-Letter-to-GM-Leaders.pdf>

Centre for Research on Economic and Social Change *Manchester Transformed: why we need a reset of city region policy* November 2016

<http://www.cresc.ac.uk/medialibrary/research/ManchesterTransformed.pdf>

IPPR North *Closer to Home: Next steps in housing and devolution* 31 October 2016

<http://www.ippr.org/publications/closer-to-home>

About the Library

The House of Commons Library research service provides MPs and their staff with the impartial briefing and evidence base they need to do their work in scrutinising Government, proposing legislation, and supporting constituents.

As well as providing MPs with a confidential service we publish open briefing papers, which are available on the Parliament website.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in these publically available research briefings is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware however that briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

If you have any comments on our briefings please email papers@parliament.uk. Authors are available to discuss the content of this briefing only with Members and their staff.

If you have any general questions about the work of the House of Commons you can email hcinfo@parliament.uk.

Disclaimer

This information is provided to Members of Parliament in support of their parliamentary duties. It is a general briefing only and should not be relied on as a substitute for specific advice. The House of Commons or the author(s) shall not be liable for any errors or omissions, or for any loss or damage of any kind arising from its use, and may remove, vary or amend any information at any time without prior notice.

The House of Commons accepts no responsibility for any references or links to, or the content of, information maintained by third parties. This information is provided subject to the [conditions of the Open Parliament Licence](#).