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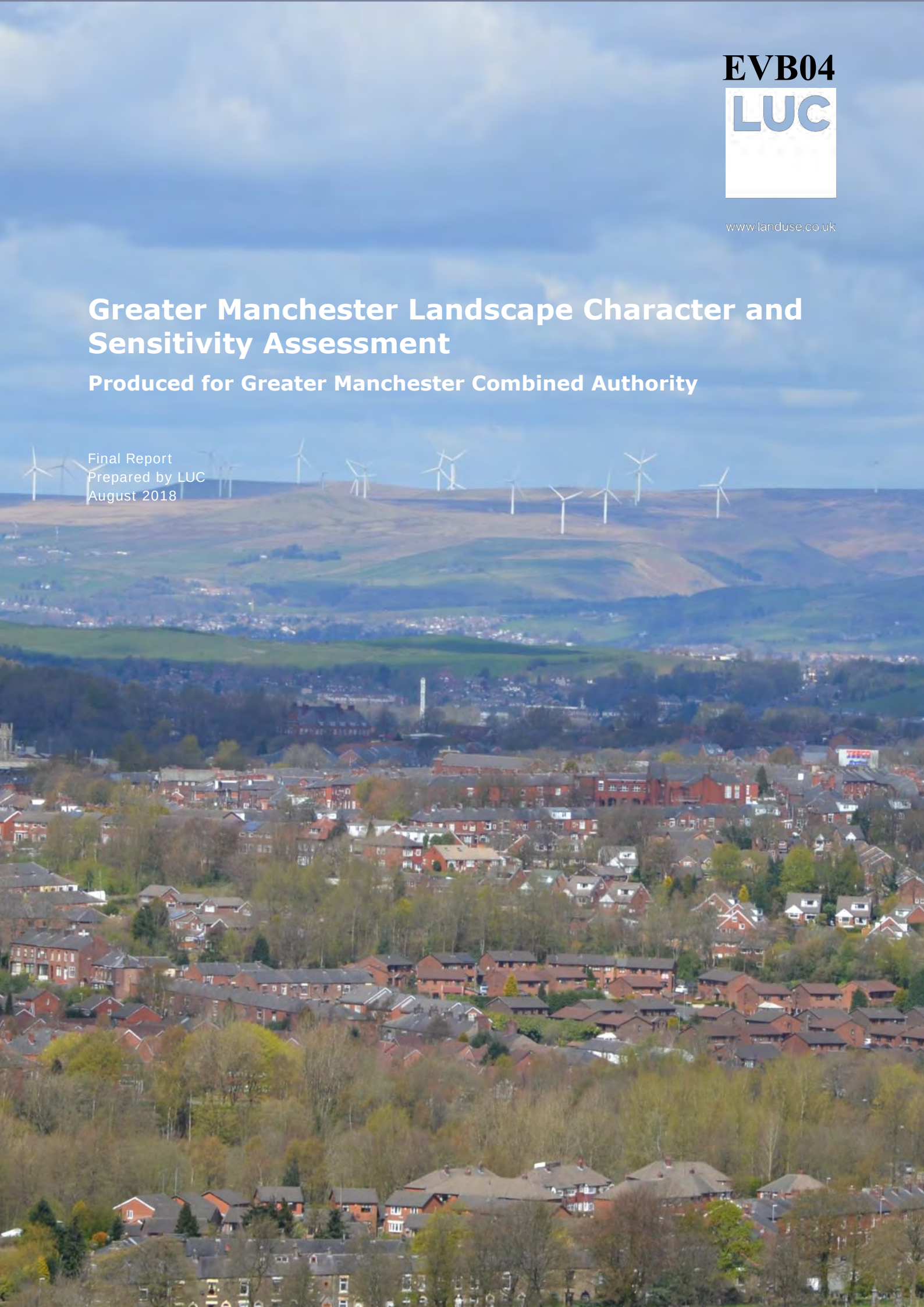
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Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment

Produced for Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Final Report
Prepared by LUC
August 2018



Project Title: Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment

Client: Greater Manchester Combined Authority

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The cover photo was taken at Higher Hartshead (SD 95868 03281) near the Oldham and Tameside border. The View looks north-west over Lees and Shaw (Oldham) towards Scout Moor Wind Farm.

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August 2018

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1 Introduction and background

Introduction

1.1 LUC was commissioned by Manchester City Council on behalf of itself and the other nine Greater Manchester local authorities (Bolton MBC, Bury MBC, Oldham MBC, Rochdale MBC, Salford CC, Stockport MBC, Tameside MBC, Trafford MBC and Wigan MBC) as well as the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) in November 2017 to produce up-to-date landscape evidence to support preparation of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework.

1.2 The new landscape evidence will inform the overall development strategy and provide the basis for the future management and enhancement of the conurbation's natural capital, green infrastructure network and the provision of a positive strategy for the future Green Belt.

1.3 Understanding the character of a place is a key part of ensuring the protection and enhancement of built and natural environments, managing sustainable economic growth and improving the health and wellbeing of local communities.

Background and policy context

The European Landscape Convention

1.4 The European Landscape Convention (ELC) came into force in the UK in March 2007. It establishes the need to recognise landscape in law; to develop landscape policies dedicated to the protection, management and planning of landscapes; and to establish procedures for the participation of the general public and other stakeholders in the creation and implementation of landscape policies.

1.5 The ELC definition of 'landscape' recognises that all landscapes matter, be they ordinary, degraded or outstanding:

"Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors"

1.6 Signing up to the ELC means that the UK is committed on the one hand to protect, manage and develop our landscapes and on the other to raise landscape awareness, involvement and enjoyment amongst local and visiting communities. Landscape character is defined by the ELC as *'a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse'.*

National planning policy context

1.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in 2012 and under review at the time of writing, states within its core planning principles that planning should *"take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it"*.

1.8 The NPPF (2012) calls for valued landscapes to be protected and enhanced (para 109), also recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services. An up-to-date Landscape Character Assessment is also recommended to support planning decisions and underpin criteria-based policies against which development proposals will be judged, with landscape sensitivity assessments undertaken where expansion options are being considered.

1.9 Paragraph 99 from the National Planning Policy Framework states that local plans should take account of biodiversity and landscape. Paragraph 109 requires that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued

landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services. Paragraph 113 goes on to say that local planning authorities should set criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting the landscape will be judged.

1.10 National Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 8-001-20140306 states that "*where appropriate, 'landscape character assessments' should be prepared to complement Natural England's National Character Area profiles. Landscape Character Assessment is a tool to help understand the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and identify the features that give it a sense of place. It can help to inform, plan and manage change and may be undertaken at a scale appropriate to local plan-making*".

1.11 The ten Manchester local authorities, acting through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, are preparing a statutory Development Plan Document (DPD) to manage land for future growth and development in the public interest. The Spatial Framework will also consider the environmental capacity of land and ecosystems in Greater Manchester, setting out the authorities plan to enhance and protect the quality of the natural environment, conserve wildlife and tackle air quality and flood risk issues, supporting sustainable development.

1.12 The first draft of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework was published for consultation in 2016, prompting more than 25,000. The Greater Manchester Mayor subsequently announced a radical re-write of the 2016 Draft Spatial framework to produce a plan which provides solution to the housing crisis and maximises the 'liveability of Greater Manchester', including aspects such as sustainability and quality of life. Understanding the character of place is a key part of ensuring the protection and enhancement of both the built and natural environments, managing sustainable economic growth and improving the health and welfare of local communities.

Project aims and objectives

1.13 The aims of the project were:

To provide an evidence base for the landscape character/sensitivity of Greater Manchester which takes account of changes in land use, pressures for change including characterisation of the landscape, identification of sensitive and non-sensitive areas.

To contribute towards the development of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework by bridging the Natural England National Character Area profiles, North West Regional Character Framework and character assessments undertaken by individual districts and

To consider cross boundary matters, in particular views from the Peak District National Park and Natural Improvement Area (NIA) and identify anomalies and discontinuities as well as potential enhancements and improvements.

To provide guidance and advice to help shape the scope of more detailed area specific assessments where required.

1.14 The project was designed to support:

The drafting of spatially specific development plan policies at strategic (Greater Manchester) scale.

The assessment of a sites/areas suitability to accommodate development potential, especially in or on the edge of towns, and in the wider countryside; informing the siting, spacing, scale and design conditions for particular forms of development.

The Integrated Assessment (SEA/SA) of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and also the context for Environmental Assessments supporting individual planning applications.

2 Existing information about Greater Manchester's landscape

2 Existing information about Greater Manchester's landscape

National Character Areas

2.1 England is divided into a total of 159 National Character Areas (NCAs)[1], which identify areas based on their landscape character, biodiversity and geodiversity. Greater Manchester has a diverse landscape and falls within NCAs; 36: Southern Pennines, 51: Dark Peak, 54: Manchester Pennine Fringe, 55: Manchester Conurbation, 56: Lancashire Coal Measures, 60: Mersey Valley and 61: Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain. These NCAs are shown on **Figure 2.1** and described below.

NCA 36: To the north of Bolton, Bury and Rochdale sweeping moorlands make up part of the Southern Pennines. Here pastures are enclosed mostly by drystone walls and the narrow valleys contain gritstone settlements.

NCA 54: Manchester Pennine Fringe is a transitional zone between open moorlands of the Southern Pennines / Dark Peak (NCA 51) to the east and the conurbation. This area incudes industrial settlements as such Bury, Bolton, Rochdale, Oldham, Dukinfield and Glossop and is characterised by deeply incised, steep valleys which are present as the landform transitions from moorland to urban area.

NCA 56: In the west of the Great Manchester area, the Lancashire Coal Measures lie around the settlement of Wigan. The area contains a series of gentle hills and valleys with a scattering of urban centres, active mineral sites and derelict or reclaimed workings set within areas of farmland.

NCA 60: to the south east of the city of Salford lies the low-lying river valley of the River Mersey. This area is characterised by arable farmland, lying close to the Manchester conurbation to the east. The Manchester Ship Canal links the estuary of the Mersey to the centre of Manchester with many major roads, railways, canals and transmission lines also crossing the area, often associated with large scale industrial infrastructure.

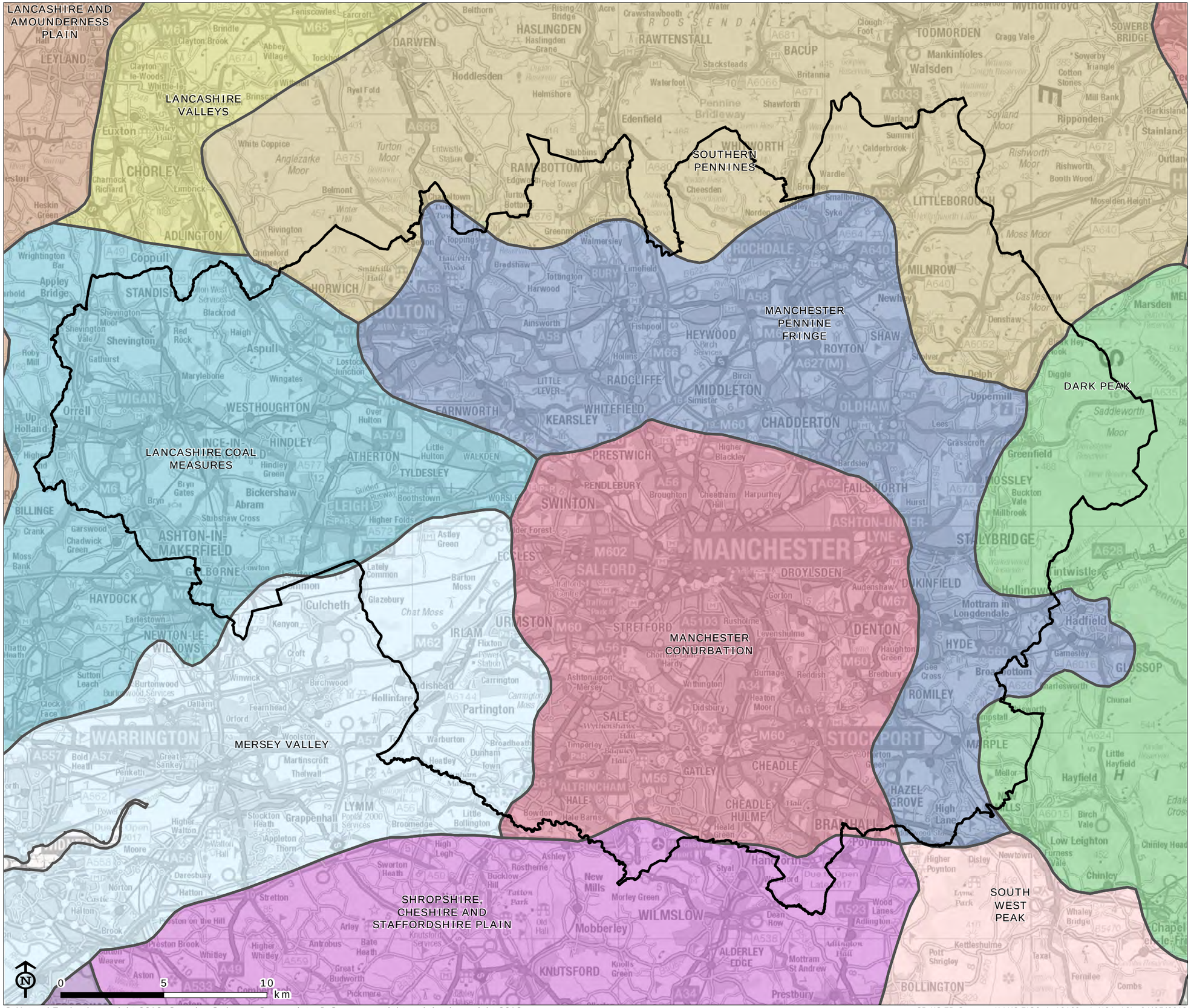
NCA 55: Manchester Conurbation takes in much of the central and southern part of Greater Manchester. The area is characterised by dense urban and industrial development located within networks of green infrastructure, centred on low hills and crossed by a number of rivers and canals. Many settlements (including the larger settlements of Manchester, Sale, Salford and Stockport) have grown together to form the Manchester conurbation.

2.2 The NCA profiles provide useful context for the Greater Manchester Landscape Character Assessment, but are insufficiently detailed and precise to inform development of Spatial Framework, including assessment of potential development areas and future management of the wider countryside.

[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles#ncas-in-north-west-england

Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study

Figure 2.1: National Character Areas within Greater Manchester



Greater Manchester Combined Authority

National Character Area

- Cheshire Sandstone Ridge
- Dark Peak
- Lancashire and Amounderness Plain
- Lancashire Coal Measures
- Lancashire Valleys
- Manchester Conurbation
- Manchester Pennine Fringe
- Mersey Valley
- Merseyside Conurbation
- Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain
- South West Peak
- Southern Pennines
- Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe

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Source: GM, NE, OS

North West Landscape Character Framework

2.3 A regional scale landscape character framework[2] was prepared in 2009 to inform preparation of the now abolished regional spatial strategy. **Figure 2.2** shows an extract covering the Greater Manchester area. While more specific than the definition of NCAs, the framework identified relatively few character types covering Greater Manchester, including:

- Open Moorland Plateau
- Upland Fringes and Ridges
- Industrial Foothills and Fringes
- Urban
- Valley Pastures with Industry
- Mosslands
- Settled Sandlands
- Estate Farmlands

2.4 Descriptions were prepared at a regional scale and do not provide sufficient detail or spatial specificity to adequately support preparation of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework.

District-scale Landscape Character Assessments

2.5 A number of the councils across Greater Manchester have prepared district-scale landscape character assessment, most dating back ten years or more. Coverage of district-scale Landscape Character Assessment is summarised in **Table 2.1** and illustrated in **Figure 2.3**.

Table 2.1: District-scale Landscape Character Assessment coverage

Scale / District	Notes
Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council	2001, seven character types (see link[3]).
Bury Metropolitan Borough Council	2009, 14 character types (see link[4]).
Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council	2009, seven character types (see link[5]).
Salford City Council	2007, four character types (see link[6]).
Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council	A preliminary Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken in 2006. This identified thirteen character areas (described on link[7]). A new Landscape Character Assessment was being prepared in parallel with the Greater Manchester assessment work (this will be available once completed on link[8]).
Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council	2004 landscape strategy, seven character types, (https://www.trafford.gov.uk/planning/strategic-planning/docs/spg-2004-landscape-strategy.pdf)

2 http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605111717/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/regions/north_west/ourwork/landscapecharacterframework.aspx

3 http://www.bolton.gov.uk/sites/DocumentCentre/Documents/Landscape%20Character%20Appraisal.pdf

4 http://www.bury.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=17537&p=0

5 https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1213/oldham_local_landscape_character_study

6 https://www.salford.gov.uk/media/385604/lca-final-document.pdf

7 https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/live-iag-static-assets/pdf/LDF/UDP+Appendices/Appendix+12+Landscape+Character.pdf.

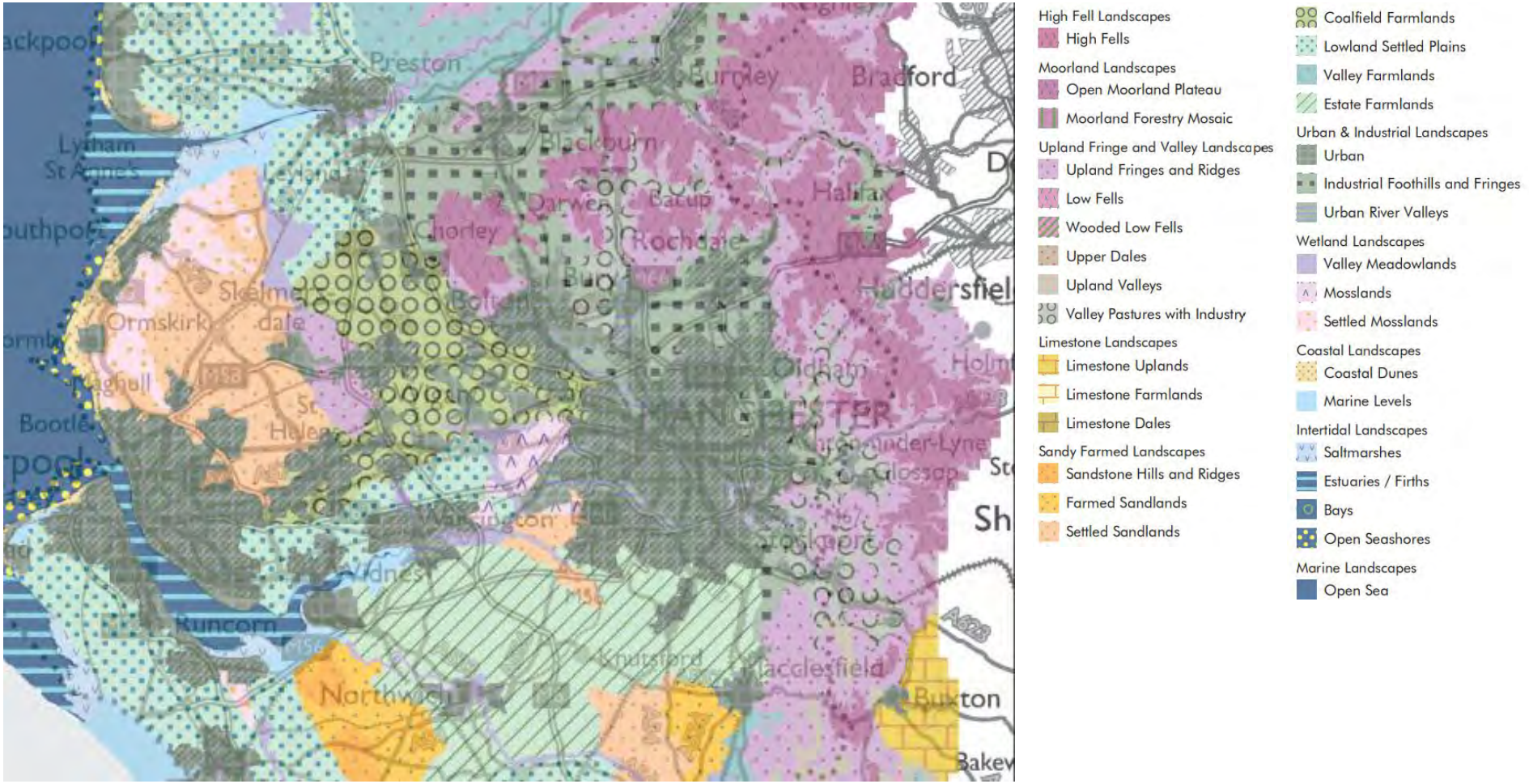
8 https://www.stockport.gov.uk/evidence-planning-policy

Scale / District	Notes
Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council	2009, six character types, (https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Council/Strategies-Plans-and-Policies/Planning/Local-plan/Background/Key-Local-Studies/WiganLandscapeCharacterAssessment.aspx)

2.6 Landscape Character Assessments had not previously been prepared for the Manchester City, Rochdale or Tameside Council areas.

2.7 The Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment provided an opportunity to update these previous studies, fill gaps in coverage and consolidate them into a single assessment, with continuity across district boundaries. This would provide a sound baseline to inform the analysis of landscape sensitivity.

Figure 2.2: North West Landscape Character Framework (2009) – extract



Greater Manchester
Landscape Character
and Sensitivity Study

Figure 2.3: Existing District-level Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) Coverage

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- Greater Manchester District Authority
- No LCA coverage
- Existing LCA coverage

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GMCA
GREATER MANCHESTER
COMBINED AUTHORITY

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Other relevant initiatives

2.8 The landscape character assessment and sensitivity study was also carried out in the context of a range of other initiatives which will influence the character and quality of the landscape across Greater Manchester. These include:

Nature Improvement Areas: Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs) are a network of large scale initiatives in the landscape of England to improve ecological connectivity and improve biodiversity.

- Great Manchester Wetlands Nature Improvement Area[9] is a diverse landscape of water, fen, wet grassland, wet woodland and lowland raised bog. It covers some 48,000 hectares, focusing on the Wetlands of Wigan (The Flashes), the mosslands of Chat Moss and Risley Moss to the west and southwest of Manchester and the Mersey Wetlands corridor stretching from Rixton to Warrington.
- The Dark Peak Nature Improvement Area[10] lies within the Peak District National Park, to the east of Manchester was a three-year pilot landscape-scale conservation initiative, to improve, expand and link up existing wildlife-rich areas within the Dark Peak; connecting nature with nature and nature with people.

Carbon Landscape Project[11]. The Carbon Landscape is a £3.2 million Heritage Lottery Funded landscape scale initiative with the ambition to make a step change in the restoration of an ancient landscape transformed by industry. The programme area sits within the GM Wetlands Nature Improvement Area and covers former coalfields to the north and west and mosslands and riverside environments to the south providing a combination of peatscapes and brownfield sites. Three core zones have been identified:

- The Flashes
- The Mosslands
- The Mersey Wetlands Corridor

The Carbon Landscape will enhance and connect up the restoration of this landscape, altered by industry, creating and improving nationally significant habitats and reconnecting local people with the heritage and wealth of opportunities for enjoyment and learning on their doorstep.

City of Trees[12] is an innovative project designed to re-invigorate Greater Manchester's landscape by restoring underused, neglected woodland and planting a tree for every man, woman and child that lives in the City Region, within a generation. With the aim of planting three million trees, this project has the potential to enhance, restore and transform many landscapes across Greater Manchester, so the landscape character assessment can play a key role in drawing out the existing role of trees and woodlands in shaping the character of place, and how this can be conserved and reinforced in the future.

Northern Forest[13] is a joint initiative by the Woodland Trust and five community forests (including the City of Trees initiative) which proposes a new northern forest running the whole width of England from Liverpool and Chester in the west to the coastline of the East Riding of Yorkshire and would include the cities of Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield and Hull. The aim is to plant 50 million trees in the 25 years between 2017 and 2042, a trebling of current planting rates in the area; this would help to increase woodland cover in one of the least wooded parts of the country. The initiative was developed as an environmental counterpart to the government's Northern Powerhouse strategy. Again, the landscape character assessment will inform development of plans for the forest, drawing out the existing role of trees and woodlands in shaping the character of place, and how this can be conserved and reinforced in the future.

[9] https://www.lancswt.org.uk/living-landscapes
[10] http://www.moorsforthefuture.org.uk/dark-peak-nia-0
[11] https://www.lancswt.org.uk/carbon-landscape-project
[12] http://www.cityoftrees.org.uk/about-city-trees
[13] https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2018/01/a-new-northern-forest-beyond-the-headlines/

3 Methodology

3 Methodology

3.1 This new landscape evidence comprises an integrated landscape character and sensitivity assessment for Greater Manchester, based on the definition, mapping and description of regionally consistent Landscape Character Types. The key stages of the method followed are set out below, with the results set out in Chapter 4.

Stage 1: Desk study

Evidence gathering

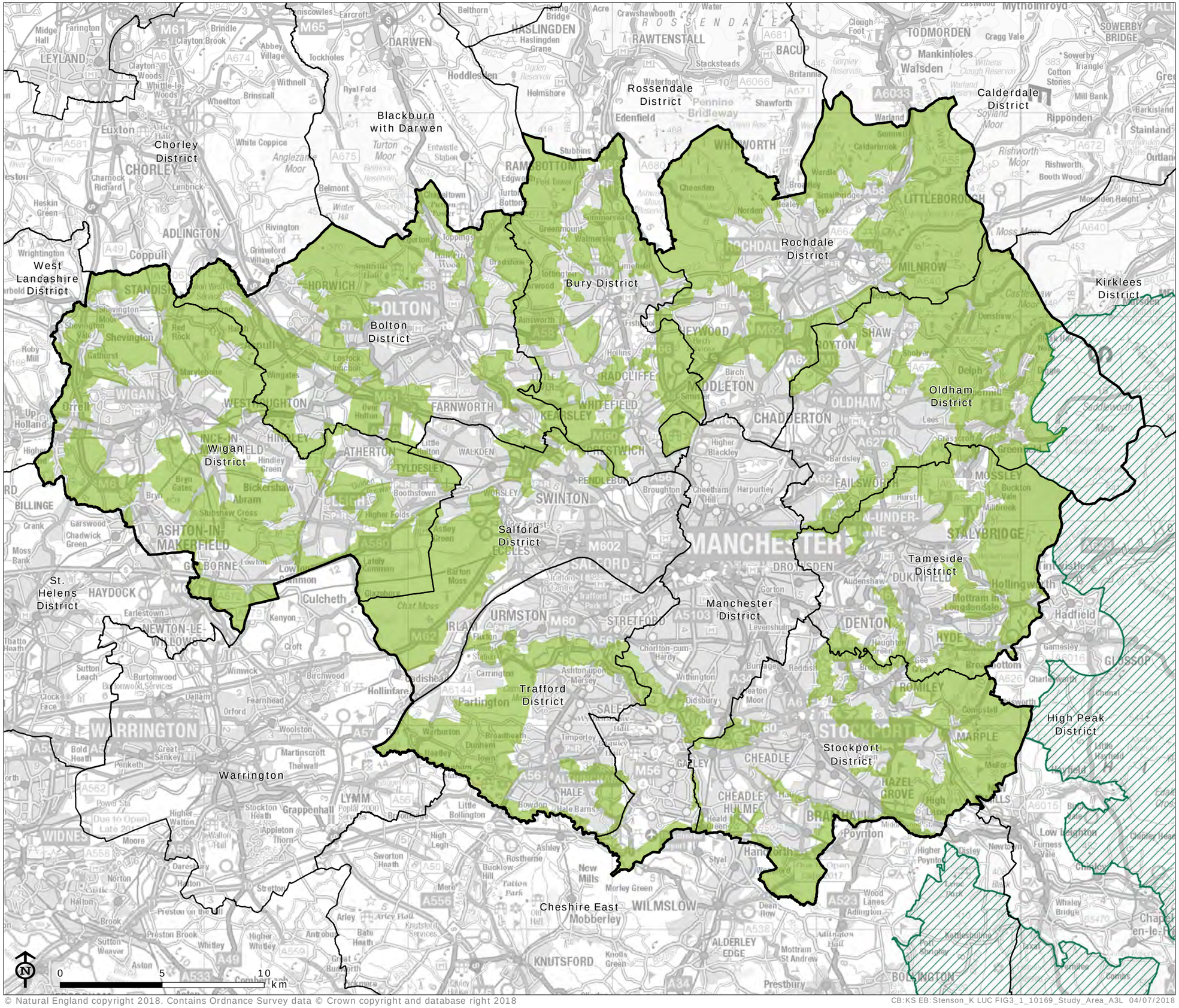
3.2 All relevant documents and available GIS data were compiled and reviewed to form the starting point and overall context for the study. These are set out in **Appendix 2**.

Definition of the study area

3.3 One of the first tasks was to define the study area. Focused within the ten Greater Manchester Authorities (excluding the area falling within the Peak District National Park) the study area comprised those areas included in the Greater Manchester Green Belt Assessment (comprising the existing Green Belt together with areas defined as safeguarded land), together with other areas of open land that had been included in previous district-scale landscape character assessments. The study area, showing constituent council areas, neighbouring council areas and the Peak District National Park, is shown in **Figure 3.1**.

Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study

Figure 3.1: Study area



Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Local authority

Peak District National Park

Green belt

Map Scale @A3: 1:180,000

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CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIG3_1_10169_Study_Area_A3L 04/07/2018

Source: GM, NE, OS

Preliminary landscape classification

3.4 An initial desk based assessment was undertaken to assemble information from district-scale landscape character assessments, and to rationalise and harmonise the landscape classification to ensure consistent coverage across Greater Manchester (and with neighbouring authorities where relevant). This consistently defined classification was extended to the three authorities where there was no pre-existing landscape character assessment.

3.5 At this stage, the landscape classification was focused on the definition of Landscape Character Types which can occur in several locations across Greater Manchester, as opposed to geographically unique Landscape Character Areas. The draft classification was consulted on with the project steering group and the ten authorities prior to being finalised.

3.6 Once the framework of Landscape Character Types was agreed, the study identified Greater Manchester wide Landscape Character Areas. It was agreed that description and analysis of sensitivity would focus at Landscape Character Type level, though any significant variations in sensitivity would be brought out for specific Landscape Character Areas.

3.7 The mapping of Landscape Character Types is shown in **Figure 4.1**, with the component Landscape Character Areas shown in **Figure 4.2**.

Relationship with the Stockport Landscape Character Assessment

3.8 This Greater Manchester wide study was undertaken in parallel with work to produce a Landscape Character Assessment for Stockport, within Greater Manchester. Therefore, the Stockport Landscape Character Areas were considered as part of the broader framework of GM-wide Landscape Character Types (nesting as a finer grained, geographic-specific classification below the GM LCTs) which flow across the boundaries of the ten constituent local authorities. The more detailed Stockport assessment allowed the definition and more detailed description and analysis of Landscape Character Areas.

Confirming the approach to assessing landscape sensitivity

Background and definitions

3.9 There is currently no prescribed method for assessing landscape sensitivity. However, the *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity* (Scottish Natural Heritage and the former Countryside Agency, 2004) is a discussion paper on landscape sensitivity and capacity and has informed LUC's approach over the years.

3.10 Paragraph 4.2 of Topic Paper 6 states that:

'Judging landscape character sensitivity requires professional judgement about the degree to which the landscape in question is robust, in that it is able to accommodate change without adverse impacts on character. This involves making decisions about whether or not significant characteristic elements of the landscape will be liable to loss... and whether important aesthetic aspects of character will be liable to change'.

3.11 In this study the following definition of sensitivity has been used, which is based on the principles set out in Topic Paper 6. It is also compliant with the third edition of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA 3, 2013) as well as definitions used in other landscape sensitivity studies of this type:

Landscape sensitivity is the relative extent to which the character and quality of an area (including its visual attributes) is likely to change.

Types of development considered

3.12 The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment assesses the landscape of each LCT in terms of its sensitivity to the 'principle' of built development, without knowing the specific size, configuration or exact location (as this would be detailed at the planning application level). The two development scenarios considered across all Greater Manchester LCTs are:

Residential development and road infrastructure – defined as two to three storey semi-detached or detached houses with gardens and supporting community infrastructure, with a net density range of 40-60 dwellings per hectare.

Commercial development– Block shaped warehouse-type buildings, at least two storeys high. These comprise the typical regular grid-like layouts of a business park, with associated road infrastructure and car parking. Limited landscaping usually comprises grass verges and occasional tree planting.

3.13 As noted above, while the sensitivity assessment was focused on Landscape Character Types (which may occur in several locations), any significant variations in sensitivity were drawn out in relation to specific Landscape Character Areas.

A criteria-based assessment

3.14 In line with the recommendations in Topic Paper 6 and NPPF, the landscape sensitivity assessment is based on an assessment of landscape character using carefully defined criteria – drawing on the experience of other similar studies elsewhere in the UK. Criteria selection is based on the attributes of the landscape most likely to be affected by development, and considers both 'landscape' and 'visual' aspects of sensitivity. The criteria used by this study are defined in **Table 3.2**Error! Reference source not found., providing examples of the types of landscape character or features that could indicate low or high sensitivity against each.

Making an overall judgement on levels of landscape sensitivity

3.15 A five-point rating from 'low' to high' landscape sensitivity is used to illustrate overall levels of landscape sensitivity – i.e. how susceptible the character and quality of the landscape would be to change. These definitions are shown in the **Table 3.1** below.

Table 3.1: The five-point scale of landscape sensitivity

Sensitivity judgement	Definition
High	The key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are highly sensitive to change.
Moderate-high	The key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change.
Moderate	Some of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change.
Low-moderate	Few of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change.
Low	The key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are robust and are unlikely to be subject to change.

3.16 **As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation.** This is particularly to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of landscape sensitivity is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (i.e. 'criteria').

3.17 Each Landscape Character Area is assessed against each criterion in turn, with explanatory text indicating specific locations, features or attributes of lower or higher sensitivity. This culminates in an overall landscape sensitivity judgement (using the five-point scale above), taking account of the inter-relationships between the different criteria and the specific characteristics of the landscape being assessed. These overall judgements are also displayed in summary tabular and mapped format for all LCTs in **Chapter 4** with LCT-specific detail provided in the individual profiles at **Chapter 5.**

Table 3.2: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment criteria and definitions

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment Criteria				
Physical character (including topography and scale)				
This considers the shape and scale of the landform, landscape pattern and landscape elements in relation to the scale of potential development. Smooth, gently undulating or flat landforms are likely to be less sensitive to development than a landscape with a dramatic landform, distinct landform features or incised valleys with prominent slopes. This is because developments may mask distinctive topographical features which contribute to landscape character. This criterion considers how developments fit with the scale of the landform (understanding the scale of the development proposed is important when applying this criterion). Larger scale, simple landforms are likely to be less sensitive to larger scale developments than smaller scale, enclosed landforms (where large scale developments could appear out of scale with the underlying landform). Conversely, smaller developments may be able to be screened within enclosed landforms, therefore reducing landscape sensitivity. Existing small-scale features in the landscape in the form of existing buildings or trees will influence the scale of development that can be accommodated in the landscape.				
Low sensitivity	**Low-moderate sensitivity**	**Moderate sensitivity**	**Moderate-high sensitivity**	**High sensitivity**
e.g. the landscape has smooth, gently undulating or featureless landform with uniform large-scale landscape pattern and low density of overlying landscape features.	*e.g. the landscape has slightly undulating features with more large scale than small scale field patterns and a low number of small scale landscape features.*	*e.g. the landscape has an undulating landform and some distinct landform features; it is overlain by a mixture of small-scale and larger scale field patterns and a moderate density of small-scale landscape features.*	*e.g. the landscape has a steeply undulating landform with some distinct landform features; most of the field pattern is small scale and small scale landscape features are relatively common.*	*e.g. the landscape has a dramatic landform or distinct landform features that contribute positively to landscape character; the area has a high density of small-scale landscape features and is overlain by a small-scale field pattern.*
Natural character				
This criterion considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape in terms of coverage of semi-natural habitats and valued natural features (e.g. trees, hedgerows) which could be vulnerable to loss from development. Areas with frequent natural features (including large areas of nationally or internationally designated habitats) result in increased sensitivity to development, while landscapes with limited natural features (including intensively farmed areas or areas with high levels of existing development) will be less sensitive.				
Low sensitivity	**Low-moderate sensitivity**	**Moderate sensitivity**	**Moderate-high sensitivity**	**High sensitivity**
e.g. much of the landscape is intensively farmed or developed with little semi-natural habitat coverage and few valued natural features.	*e.g. there is a mixture of intensively farmed areas with semi-natural habitats forming an occasional feature.*	*e.g. there are areas of valued semi-natural habitats and features found in parts of the landscape, whilst other parts are intensively farmed or developed.*	*e.g. areas of valued habitats are extensive with areas of locally and nationally designated land; other areas remain agricultural or developed.*	*e.g. large areas of the landscape are nationally or internationally designated for their nature conservation interest; there is a frequent occurance of valued natural features across the landscape.*
Historic landscape character				

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment Criteria				
This considers the extent to which the landscape has 'time-depth' (a sense of being an historic landscape, with reference to the Historic Landscape Characterisation) and/or the presence of heritage assets that are important to landscape character (i.e. Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings, archaeological features and remains or other features listed in the landscape character assessment). Landscapes with small-scale, more irregular field patterns of historic origin are likely to be more sensitive to the introduction of modern development than landscapes with large, regular scale field patterns because of the risk of losing characteristic landscape patterns.				
Low sensitivity	**Low-moderate sensitivity**	**Moderate sensitivity**	**Moderate-high sensitivity**	**High sensitivity**
e.g. A landscape with relatively few historic features important to the character of the area and little time depth (i.e. large intensively farmed fields).	*e.g. a landscape with a small number of historic features important to the character area and some time depth.*	*e.g. A landscape with some visible historic features of importance to character, and a variety of time depths.*	*e.g. a landscape with many historic features important to the area and a strong sense of time depth.*	*e.g. A landscape with a high density of historic features important to the character of the area and great time depth (i.e. piecemeal enclosure with irregular boundaries, ridge and furrow)*
Form, density and setting of existing settlement/development This considers the overall settlement form and character of existing settlement edges and considers whether development in the landscape would be in accordance with the general pattern, setting and form of current development. It also relates to the landscape pattern associated with existing settlement edges (where relevant), for example if it is well integrated by woodland cover or open and exposed to form a 'hard edge' to the adjoining landscape. This criterion also considers the extent to which the landscape contributes to the identity and distinctiveness of settlements, by way of its character and/or scenic quality, for example by providing an attractive backdrop/ setting, or playing an important part in views from a settlement. This also considers the extent to which the area contributes to a perceived gap between settlements (the loss of which would increase coalescence).				
Low sensitivity	**Low-moderate sensitivity**	**Moderate sensitivity**	**Moderate-high sensitivity**	**High sensitivity**
e.g. the area does not contribute positively to the setting of the settlement or play a separation role. Development in the assessment area would have a good relationship with the existing settlement form/ pattern, and could provide the opportunity to improve an existing settlement edge.	*e.g. the area mildly contributes to the setting of the settlement with few views and has a little to no role in separating different settlements. Developing in this area would not adversely affect the existing settlement edge.*	*e.g. the area provides some contribution to the setting of the settlement, or plays some part in views from the settlement, or plays a role in the perception of a gap between settlements. Development in the assessment area may be slightly at odds with the settlement form/ pattern, and may adversely affect the existing edge to some extent.*	*e.g. the area provides a good contribution to the setting with multiple views from the settlement, or plays a distinct role in separating different settlements. Development in this area would negatively impact the settlement form/ pattern and make the settlement edge less distinctive.*	*e.g. the area provides an attractive backdrop/ setting to the settlement, plays an important part in views from the settlement, or forms an important part in the perception of a gap between settlements. Development in the assessment area would have a poor relationship with the existing settlement form/pattern, and would adversely affect an existing settlement edge (which may be historic or distinctive).*
Views and visual character including skylines				

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment Criteria				
This considers the visual prominence of the assessment area, reflecting the extent of openness or enclosure in the landscape (due to landform or land cover), and the degree of intervisibility with the surrounding landscape (i.e. the extent to which potential development would be visible). Visually prominent landscapes are likely to be more sensitive to development than those which are not so visually prominent. Landscapes which are visually prominent and intervisible with adjacent landscapes (both urban and rural) are likely to be more sensitive to development than those which are more hidden or less widely visible. It also considers the skyline character of the area including whether it forms a visually distinctive skyline or an important undeveloped skyline. Prominent and distinctive and/or undeveloped skylines, or skylines with important landmark features, are likely to be more sensitive to development because new buildings/structures may detract from these skylines as features in the landscape. Important landmark features on the skyline might include historic features or monuments.				
Low sensitivity	**Low-moderate sensitivity**	**Moderate sensitivity**	**Moderate-high sensitivity**	**High sensitivity**
e.g. the area is enclosed/visually contained and/or has a low degree of visibility from surrounding landscapes and the area does not form a visually distinctive or important undeveloped skyline	*e.g. the area is for the most part enclosed, with few open areas and limited amount of intervisibility with the surrounding landscapes. The area has very few visually distinctive or important skylines.*	*e.g. the area is semi-enclosed or has some enclosed and some open areas. It is likely to have some intervisibility with surrounding landscapes, and may have some visually distinctive or undeveloped skylines within the area.*	*e.g. the area is mostly open with a good degree of visibility from the surrounding landscapes and the area has some distinctive and undeveloped skylines.*	*e.g. the area is open and/or has a high degree of visibility from surrounding landscapes, and/or the area forms a visually distinctive skyline or an important undeveloped skyline.*
Access and recreation This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. They may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land, and outdoor tourist / visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Importance of features may be indicated by designation as long distance footpaths or recreation routes, national cycle routes, proximity to areas of local population, presence of National Trust land ownership, and outdoor tourist attractions often marked on Ordnance Survey maps.				
Low sensitivity	**Low-moderate sensitivity**	**Moderate sensitivity**	**Moderate-high sensitivity**	**High sensitivity**
e.g. recreation value limited to community sports facilities and local open spaces. *Limited provision of access routes which are likely to be of community importance, e.g. local footpaths, bridleways and limited areas of open access land.*	*e.g. a landscape with few green spaces or recreational areas. The landscape is used locally, but has little access to open access land, footpaths and public rights of way.*	*e.g. landscapes with green spaces or recreation areas valued in the local context.* *Well-used landscapes with some access land, footpaths and public rights of way, possibly with long distance recreation routes or presence of land under National Trust ownership.*	*e.g. landscapes with an ample supply of green space that are well-used and have local to regional importance with good access and many outdoor attractions, country parks or areas under National Trust ownership.* *Some longer distance and*	*e.g. landscapes regionally important for access and enjoyment of the landscape, e.g. with popular outdoor tourist attractions, country parks, land under National Trust ownership, or a concentration of locally important outdoor attractions with visitor facilities.* *Presence of well-connected*

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment Criteria				
			reasonably connected routes and rights of way available.	*long distance routes and public rights of way linking centres of population.*
Perceptual and experiential qualities This considers qualities such as the rural character of the landscape (traditional land uses with few modern human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. Landscapes that are relatively remote or tranquil (due to freedom from human activity and disturbance and having a perceived naturalness or a traditional rural feel with few modern human influences) tend to increase levels of sensitivity to development compared to landscapes that contain signs of modern development. High scenic value and dark night skies also add to sensitivity in relation to this criterion. This is because development will introduce new and uncharacteristic features which may detract from a sense of tranquillity and or remoteness/naturalness.				
Low sensitivity	**Low-moderate sensitivity**	**Moderate sensitivity**	**Moderate-high sensitivity**	**High sensitivity**
e.g. the area is significantly influenced by development/ human activity, where new development would not be out of character.	*The area is considerably influenced by development / human activity, with a low sense of rural character.*	*e.g. A landscape with some sense of rural character, but with some modern elements and human influences.*	*e.g. a landscape with a good sense of rural character, with few built or modern elements. The landscape has some scenic value and relatively dark skies.*	*e.g. A tranquil or highly rural landscape, lacking strong intrusive elements. A landscape of high scenic value with dark skies and a high perceived degree of rural character and naturalness with few modern human influences.*

3.18 Landscape sensitivity often varies within LCTs, with areas exhibiting of higher and lower sensitivity. It is therefore very important to take note of the explanatory text supporting the assessments in each Landscape Character Area profile in Chapter 5, particularly the boxes entitled *'Notes on any variations in landscape sensitivity'* and *'Special landscape qualities and key sensitivities'*. Whilst the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment results provide an initial indication of landscape sensitivity, they **should not be interpreted as definitive statements on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development**. All proposals will need to be assessed on their own merits through the planning process, including – where required – through proposal-specific Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIAs).

Desk-based Landscape Character Area character and sensitivity assessments

3.19 All available spatial and descriptive information was interrogated against the framework of Landscape Character Types, to draft into descriptive/evaluative profiles to form the basis for the final versions (following the fieldwork verification stage) presented in Chapter 5. The profiles are structured into four main sections as follows:

Overview map, representative photographs and a summary description of the LCT's location and overall character.

Landscape character description, comprising bullet-pointed key characteristics under the following sub-headings for ease of reference:

- Topography, geology and drainage
- Land use and field patterns
- Semi-natural habitats and woodland cover
- Archaeology and cultural heritage
- Settlement, road pattern and rights of way
- Views and perceptual qualities

Landscape evaluation, comprising the following sections:

- Summary of current landscape condition
- A bullet-pointed list of the forces for change impacting on landscape character and condition – both past and current forces, and potential future ones.

Landscape sensitivity assessment, comprising the following:

- An assessment of landscape sensitivity against the individual criteria set out in Table 3.2, using the five-point low to high sensitivity scale described at Table 3.1.
- An overall assessment of landscape sensitivity for the LCT as a whole to the relevant development scenarios – again using the five-point scale of sensitivity.
- Notes on any key variations in landscape sensitivity – outlining any locations within the LCT which might be of higher or lower sensitivity to the overall assessment score, including specific Landscape Character Areas with different sensitivity.
- Special landscape qualities and key sensitivities: a bullet-point summary of the landscape features or attributes that would be most sensitive to change
- Guidance and opportunities to consider for any future development within the LCT.

3.20 The understanding of views was informed by an analysis of intervisibility across the study area, designed to identify those areas that are more or less prominent within the wider landscape. Two analyses were undertaken. The first, based on bare ground topography, did not take account of the screening effect of buildings or trees. GIS based analysis draped a 500m grid of points over the landscape and calculated the number of other points from which each point could theoretically be seen. The second took account of the screening effect of buildings and trees, identifying more limited areas judged to be more prominent within the wider landscape. The results are presented in Appendix 3.

Stage 2: Field verification

3.21 A structured process of field survey verification was undertaken in order to test and refine the outputs from the desk study, both in terms of the landscape classification (including definition of key characteristics) and the desk-based information populated into draft LCT profiles. Each LCT was visited in turn, with a number of viewpoints visited and public rights of way walked (in addition to driving through and around each LCT on public highways) to record information and take photographs.

3.22 The field survey exercise was particularly helpful in gathering information on current landscape condition, relationships with existing development locations and patterns, aesthetic/perceptual qualities (e.g. feelings of tranquillity) and important views. The latter considered both views within each Landscape Character Area and visual relationships between adjacent urban areas, surrounding authority areas and the Peak District National Park. It also noted any important landmark features/ areas that would be sensitive to change.

Stage 3: Reporting

3.23 Landscape Character Type profiles were updated and refined following field survey and presented to the project steering group and, subsequently, the ten authorities, for comment, prior to being finalised.

3.24 This report was produced in draft for consideration by the project steering group and the ten authorities. Comments received were accounted for in this final report.

4
Overall results

4 Landscape Character classification and overall Landscape Sensitivity results

Landscape Character Assessment classification for Greater Manchester

4.1 The framework of ten Landscape Character Types (LCTs), as described in the previous chapter, is shown at **Figure 4.1**, comprising:

Broad Urban Fringe Valleys

Historic Parks and Wooded Estate Farmland

Incised Urban Fringe Valleys

Mosslands and lowland farmland

Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (Dark Peak)

Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (West/South Pennines)

Pennine Foothills (Dark Peak)

Pennine Foothills (West/South Pennines)

Reclaimed Land/Wetlands

Urban Fringe Farmland

4.2 **Figure 4.2** shows the 46 component Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). **Table 4.1** below shows which Landscape Character Areas fall within which Landscape Character Type(s). Some Landscape Character Areas fall within more than one LCT; these are marked with an asterisk.

Table 4.1: Relationship between Landscape Character Types and Landscape Character Areas

Landscape Character Type	Landscape Character Area
Broad Urban Fringe Valleys	LCA 42: River Bollin LCA 45: River Mersey
Historic Parks and Wooded Estate Farmland	LCA 2: Westhoughton to Marsland Green* LCA 4: Bispham, Winstanley and Land Gate* LCA 5: Orrell, Shevington and Standish* LCA 7: Haigh, Top Lock and Hindley Hall* LCA 9: Hulton Park* LCA 18: Worsley and Egerton LCA 19: Heaton, Prestwich, Whitefield and Stand Parklands LCA 43: Dunham Massey
Incised Urban Fringe Valleys	LCA 6: River Douglas

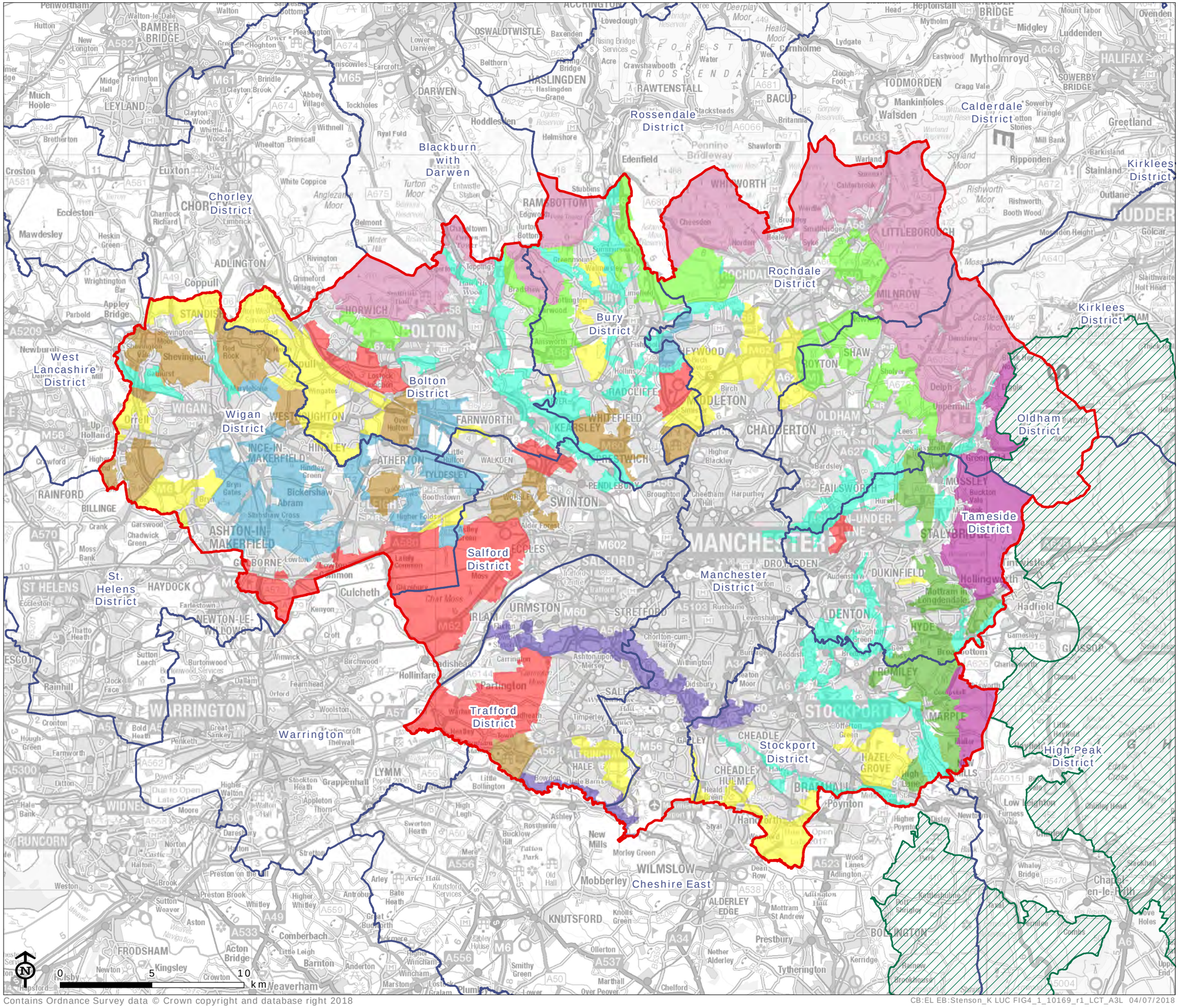
Landscape Character Type	Landscape Character Area
	LCA 12: Middle Brook LCA 15: Eagley and Bradshaw Brooks LCA 16: River Irwell (south Bury) and River Croal LCA 23: River Irwell (north Bury) and Kirklees LCA 25: River Roch LCA 31: River Medlock LCA 34: River Etherow LCA 36: River Tame LCA 37: River Goyt LCA 39: Ladybrook
Mosslands and lowland farmland	LCA 1: South Wigan and Salford Mosslands* LCA 11:Red Moss and Chew Moor LCA 17: Clifton Moss LCA 26: Prettywood, Pilsworth and Unsworth Moss* LCA 44: Warburton and Carrington Mosses LCA 46: Littlemoss and Ashton Moss
Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (Dark Peak)	LCA 30: Shore Edge to Dove Stones Reservoir* LCA 32: White Gate to Mottram LCA 35: Ludworth Moor and Dark Peak Foothills*
Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (West/South Pennines)	LCA 13:Smithills and Horwich* LCA 14: Cheetham, Smithills and Horwich Moorland Fringes LCA 20: Affetside and Ainsworth8 LCA 22: Holcombe to Greenmount and Higher Summerseat* LCA 24: Knowl and Rooley Moors, Fringes and Foothills* LCA 29: Rough Hill to Brun Moor LCA 30: Shore Edge to Dove Stones Reservoir*
Pennine Foothills (Dark Peak)	LCA 33: Matley and Mottram Dark Peak Foothills* LCA 35: Ludworth Moor and Dark Peak Foothills* LCA 38: Offerton to High Lane*
Pennine Foothills (West/South Pennines)	LCA 13: Smithills and Horwich* LCA 20: Affetside and Ainsworth*

Landscape Character Type	Landscape Character Area
	LCA 22: Holcombe to Greenmount and Higher Summerseat* LCA 24: Knowl and Rooley Moors, Fringes and Foothills* LCA 28: Rochdale and Oldham South Pennine Foothills
Reclaimed Land/Wetlands	LCA 1: South Wigan and Salford Mosslands* LCA 2: Westhoughton to Marsland Green* LCA 3: Wigan Flashes LCA 7: Haigh, Top Lock and Hindley Hall* LCA 10: Lever Edge and Tyldesley* LCA 26: Prettywood, Pilsworth and Unsworth Moss*
Urban Fringe Farmland	LCA 1: South Wigan and Salford Mosslands* LCA 4: Bispham, Winstanley and Land Gate* LCA 5: Orrell, Shevington and Standish* LCA 8: Standish Crest, Blackrod and Westhoughton LCA 9: Hulton Park* LCA 10: Lever Edge and Tyldesley* LCA 20: Affetside and Ainsworth* LCA 21: Little Lever and Elton Reservoir LCA 22: Holcombe to Greenmount and Higher Summerseat* LCA 27: Simister, Slattocks and Healds Green LCA 33: Matley and Mottram Dark Peak Foothills* LCA 38: Offerton to High Lane* LCA 40: Heald Green to Bramhall LCA 41: Altrincham and Hale

An asterisk indicates a Landscape Character Area which falls within more than one Landscape Character Type.

Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study

Figure 4.1: Landscape Character Types



Greater Manchester Combined Authority area

Local Authority boundary

Peak District National Park

Landscape Character Types

- Historic Parks and Wooded Estate Farmland
- Mosslands and Lowland Farmland
- Pennine Foothills (Dark Peak)
- Pennine Foothills (West/South Pennines)
- Reclaimed Land / Wetlands
- Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (West/South Pennines)
- Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (Dark Peak)
- Urban Fringe Farmland
- Broad Urban Fringe Valleys
- Incised Urban Fringe Valleys

Map Scale @A3: 1:200,000

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CB:EL EB:Stenson_K LUC FIG4_1_10169_r1_LCT_A3L 04/07/2018

Source: GMCA, Natural England, LUC

Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study

Figure 4.2: Landscape Character Areas

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority area
- Local Authority boundary
- Peak District National Park
- 1: South Wigan and Salford Mosslands
- 2: Westhoughton to Marsland Green
- 3: Wigan Flashes
- 4: Bispham, Winstanley and Land Gate
- 5: Orrell, Shevington and Standish
- 6: River Douglas
- 7: Haigh, Top Lock and Hindley Hall
- 8: Standish Crest, Blackrod and Westhoughton
- 9: Hulton Park
- 10: Lever Edge and Tyldesley
- 11: Red Moss and Chew Moor
- 12: Middle Brook
- 13: Smithills and Horwich
- 14: Cheetham, Smithills and Horwich Moorland Fringes
- 15: Eagley and Bradshaw Brooks
- 16: River Irwell (south Bury) and River Croal
- 17: Clifton Moss
- 18: Worsley and Egerton
- 19: Heaton, Prestwich, Whitefield and Stand Parklands
- 20: Affetside and Ainsworth
- 21: Little Lever and Elton Reservoir
- 22: Holcombe to Greenmount and Higher Summerseat
- 23: River Irwell (north Bury) and Kirklees
- 24: Knowl and Rooley Moors, Fringes and Foothills
- 25: River Roch
- 26: Prettywood, Pilsworth and Unsworth Moss
- 27: Simister, Slattocks and Healds Green
- 28: Rochdale and Oldham South Pennine Foothills
- 29: Rough Hill to Brun Moor
- 30: Shore Edge to Dove Stones Reservoir
- 31: River Medlock
- 32: White Gate to Mottram
- 33: Matley and Mottram Dark Peak Foothills
- 34: River Etherow
- 35: Ludworth Moor and Dark Peak Foothills
- 36: River Tame
- 37: River Goyt
- 38: Offerton to High Lane
- 39: Ladybrook
- 40: Heald Green to Bramhall
- 41: Altrincham and Hale
- 42: River Bollin
- 43: Dunham Massey
- 44: Warburton and Carrington Mosses
- 45: River Mersey
- 46: Littlemoss and Ashton Moss

Map Scale @A3: 1:200,000

0 5 10 km

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CB:VG EB:Stenson_K LUC FIG4_2_10169_r1_LCA_A3L 04/07/2018

Source: GMCA, Natural England, LUC

Overall Landscape Sensitivity Assessment results

4.3 **Table 4.2** provides a summary of the overall judgement scores for each of the Landscape Character Areas by the three development scenarios. These scores are also shown in mapped format at **Figures 4.3 to 4.4.** Please note that no areas were assessed as being of low sensitivity within **Figure 4.3**. An asterisk indicates a Landscape Character Area which falls within more than one Landscape Character Type.

Please note that the overall judgement scores should always be interpreted in conjunction with the information contained in the detailed Landscape Character Area profiles at Chapter 5.

4.4 The maps show certain spatial patterns of sensitivity. LCTs covering upland areas tend to have relatively high levels of sensitivity to both development scenarios considered as part of this study. Similarly, Areas within the Historic Parks and Wooded Estate Farmland LCT also have relatively high levels of sensitivity due to their historic importance, although they may contain urban fringe characteristics.

4.5 Conversely, the sensitivity of areas within the Urban Fringe Farmland LCTs tends to be relatively lower than other areas in the study, although there are a number of areas where sensitivity is raised by proximity to the Peak District National Park or the setting the undeveloped land provides to nearby settlement. Land within the Reclaimed Land and Wetlands LCT also tend to have reduced levels of sensitivity due to their low lying nature and the extensive human influences on the landscape.

4.6 Generally, the landscape is more sensitive to commercial/industrial development than residential development.

Table 4.2: Overall landscape sensitivity assessment scores, by Landscape Character Area and development scenario

Please note that the overall judgement scores should always be interpreted in conjunction with the information contained in the detailed LCA profiles at Chapter 5, which contain information about variations in sensitivity within LCTs and LCAs.

LCT	LCA	Scenario	
		2-3 storey residential housing developments	Commercial/industrial developments
Broad Urban Fringe Valleys	LCA 42: River Bollin	**M-H**	**M-H**
	LCA 45: River Mersey	**M**	**M**
Historic Parks and Wooded Estate Farmland	LCA 2: Westhoughton to Marsland Green* Stand Parklands	**M-H**	**H**
	LCA 4: Bispham, Winstanley and Land Gate*	**M-H**	**H**
	LCA 5: Orrell, Shevington and Standish*	**M-H**	**H**
	LCA 7: Haigh, Top Lock and Hindley Hall*	**M-H**	**H**
	LCA 9: Hulton Park*	**M-H**	**H**
	LCA 18: Worsley and Egerton	**H**	**H**
	LCA 19: Heaton, Prestwich, Whitefield and	**M-H**	**H**
	LCA 43: Dunham Massey	**H**	**H**
Incised Urban Fringe Valleys	LCA 6: River Douglas	**M-H**	**H**
	LCA 12: Middle Brook	**M-H**	**H**
	LCA 15: Eagley and Bradshaw Brooks	**M-H**	**H**
	LCA 16: River Irwell and River Croal	**M**	**M-H**
	LCA 23: River Irwell (north Bury) and Kirklees	**M-H**	**H**
	LCA 25: River Roch	**M**	**M-H**
	LCA 31: River Medlock	**M-H**	**H**
	LCA 34: River Etherow	**M-H**	**H**
	LCA 36: River Tame	**M**	**M-H**
	LCA 37: River Goyt	**M-H**	**H**
	LCA 39: Ladybrook	**M-H**	**H**

LCT	LCA	Scenario	
Mosslands and lowland farmland	LCA 1: South Wigan and Salford Mosslands*	M	M
	LCA 11:Red Moss and Chew Moor	M	M
	LCA 17: Clifton Moss	M	M
	LCA 26: Prettywood, Pilsworth and Unsworth Moss*	M	M
	LCA 44: Warburton and Carrington Mosses	M	M
	LCA 46: Littlemoss and Ashton Moss	M	M
Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (Dark Peak)	LCA 30: Shore Edge to Dove Stones Reservoir*	M-H	H
	LCA 32: White Gate to Mottram	M-H	H
	LCA 35: Ludworth Moor and Dark Peak Foothills*	M-H	H
Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (West/South Pennines)[8]	LCA 13: Smithills and Horwich*	M-H	H
	LCA 14: Cheetham, Smithills and Horwich Moorland Fringes	M-H	H
	LCA 20: Affetside and Ainsworth*	M-H	H
	LCA 22: Holcombe to Greenmount and Higher Summerseat*	M-H	H
	LCA 24: Knowl and Rooley Moors, Fringes and Foothills*	M-H	H
	LCA 29: Rough Hill to Brun Moor	M-H	H
	LCA 30: Shore Edge to Dove Stones Reservoir*	M-H	H
Pennine Foothills (Dark Peak)	LCA 33: Matley and Mottram Dark Peak Foothills*	M	M-H
	LCA 35: Ludworth Moor and Dark Peak Foothills*	M	M-H
	LCA 38: Offerton to High Lane*	M	M-H
Pennine Foothills (West / South Pennines)	LCA 13: Smithills and Horwich*	M	M-H
	LCA 20: Affetside and Ainsworth*	M	M-H
	LCA 22: Holcombe to Greenmount and Higher Summerseat*	M	M-H
	LCA 24: Knowl and Rooley Moors, Fringes and Foothills*	M	M-H

LCT	LCA	Scenario	
	LCA 28: Rochdale and Oldham South Pennine Foothills	M	M-H
Reclaimed Land/Wetlands	LCA 1: South Wigan and Salford Mosslands*	L-M	M
	LCA 2: Westhoughton to Marsland Green*	L-M	M
	LCA 3: Wigan Flashes	M	M
	LCA 7: Haigh, Top Lock and Hindley Hall*	L-M	M
	LCA 10: Lever Edge and Tyldesley*	L-M	M
	LCA 26: Prettywood, Pilsworth and Unsworth Moss*	L-M	M
Urban Fringe Farmland	LCA 1: South Wigan and Salford Mosslands*	M	M-H
	LCA 4: Bispham, Winstanley and Land Gate*	M	M-H
	LCA 5: Orrell, Shevington and Standish*	M	M-H
	LCA 8: Standish Crest, Blackrod and Westhoughton	M	M-H
	LCA 9: Hulton Park*	M	M-H
	LCA 10: Lever Edge and Tyldesley*	M	M-H
	LCA 20: Affetside and Ainsworth*	M	M-H
	LCA 21: Little Lever and Elton Reservoir	M	M-H
	LCA 22: Holcombe to Greenmount and Higher Summerseat	M-H	H
	LCA 27: Simister, Slattocks and Healds Green (Oldham)	M	M
	LCA 33: Matley and Mottram Dark Peak Foothills*	M	M-H
	LCA 38: Offerton to High Lane*	M	M-H
	LCA 40: Heald Green (Stockport) to Bramhall	L-M	L-M
	LCA 41: Altrincham and Hale	M	M-H

An asterisk indicates a Landscape Character Area which falls within more than one Landscape Character Type.

NOTE ON INTERPRETATION: This map shows the overall sensitivity of the different Greater Manchester Landscape Character Areas. It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed LCA profiles at Chapter 5, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each LCA.

Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study

Figure 4.3: Overall Landscape Sensitivity Assessment results for residential development / related transport infrastructure

Greater Manchester Combined Authority area

Local Authority boundary

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

- Low
- Low - Moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - High
- High

Landscape Character Areas

1: South Wigan and Salford Mosslands
2: Westhoughton to Marsland Green
3: Wigan Flashes
4: Bispham, Winstanley and Land Gate
5: Orrell, Shevington and Standish
6: River Douglas
7: Haigh, Top Lock and Hindley Hall
8: Standish Crest, Blackrod and Westhoughton
9: Hulton Park
10: Lever Edge and Tyldesley
11: Red Moss and Chew Moor
12: Middle Brook
13: Smithills and Horwich
14: Cheetham, Smithills and Horwich Moorland Fringes
15: Eagley and Bradshaw Brooks
16: River Irwell (south Bury) and River Croal
17: Clifton Moss
18: Worsley and Egerton
19: Heaton, Prestwich, Whitefield and Stand Parklands
20: Affetside and Ainsworth
21: Little Lever and Elton Reservoir
22: Holcombe to Greenmount and Higher Summerseat
23: River Irwell (north Bury) and Kirklees
24: Knowl and Rooley Moors, Fringes and Foothills
25: River Roch
26: Prettywood, Pilsworth and Unsworth Moss
27: Simister, Slattocks and Healds Green
28: Rochdale and Oldham South Pennine Foothills
29: Rough Hill to Brun Moor
30: Shore Edge to Dove Stones Reservoir
31: River Medlock
32: White Gate to Mottram
33: Matley and Mottram Dark Peak Foothills
34: River Etherow
35: Ludworth Moor and Dark Peak Foothills
36: River Tame
37: River Goyt
38: Offerton to High Lane
39: Ladybrook
40: Heald Green to Bramhall
41: Altrincham and Hale
42: River Bollin
43: Dunham Massey
44: Warburton and Carrington Mosses
45: River Mersey
46: Littlemoss and Ashton Moss

Map Scale @A3: 1:180,000

LUC

GMCA

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CB:VG EB:Stenson_K LUC FIG4_3_10169_Sensitivity_Residential_A3L 20/08/2018

Source: GMCA, LUC

NOTE ON INTERPRETATION: This map shows the overall sensitivity of the different Greater Manchester Landscape Character Areas. It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed LCA profiles at Chapter 5, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each LCA.

Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study

Figure 4.4: Overall Landscape Sensitivity Assessment results for commercial/ industrial developments

Greater Manchester Combined Authority area

Local Authority boundary

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

- Low
- Low - Moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - High
- High

Landscape Character Areas

1: South Wigan and Salford Mosslands
2: Westhoughton to Marsland Green
3: Wigan Flashes
4: Bispham, Winstanley and Land Gate
5: Orrell, Shevington and Standish
6: River Douglas
7: Haigh, Top Lock and Hindley Hall
8: Standish Crest, Blackrod and Westhoughton
9: Hulton Park
10: Lever Edge and Tyldesley
11: Red Moss and Chew Moor
12: Middle Brook
13: Smithills and Horwich
14: Cheetham, Smithills and Horwich Moorland Fringes
15: Eagley and Bradshaw Brooks
16: River Irwell (south Bury) and River Croal
17: Clifton Moss
18: Worsley and Egerton
19: Heaton, Prestwich, Whitefield and Stand Parklands
20: Affetside and Ainsworth
21: Little Lever and Elton Reservoir
22: Holcombe to Greenmount and Higher Summerseat
23: River Irwell (north Bury) and Kirklees
24: Knowl and Rooley Moors, Fringes and Foothills
25: River Roch
26: Prettywood, Pilsworth and Unsworth Moss
27: Simister, Slattocks and Healds Green
28: Rochdale and Oldham South Pennine Foothills
29: Rough Hill to Brun Moor
30: Shore Edge to Dove Stones Reservoir
31: River Medlock
32: White Gate to Mottram
33: Matley and Mottram Dark Peak Foothills
34: River Etherow
35: Ludworth Moor and Dark Peak Foothills
36: River Tame
37: River Goyt
38: Offerton to High Lane
39: Ladybrook
40: Heald Green to Bramhall
41: Altrincham and Hale
42: River Bollin
43: Dunham Massey
44: Warburton and Carrington Mosses
45: River Mersey
46: Littlemoss and Ashton Moss

Map Scale @A3: 1:180,000

LUC

GMCA

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CB:VG EB:Stenson_K LUC FIG4_4_10169_Sensitivity_Commercial_A3L 20/08/2018

Source: GMCA, LUC

5 Landscape Character Type profiles

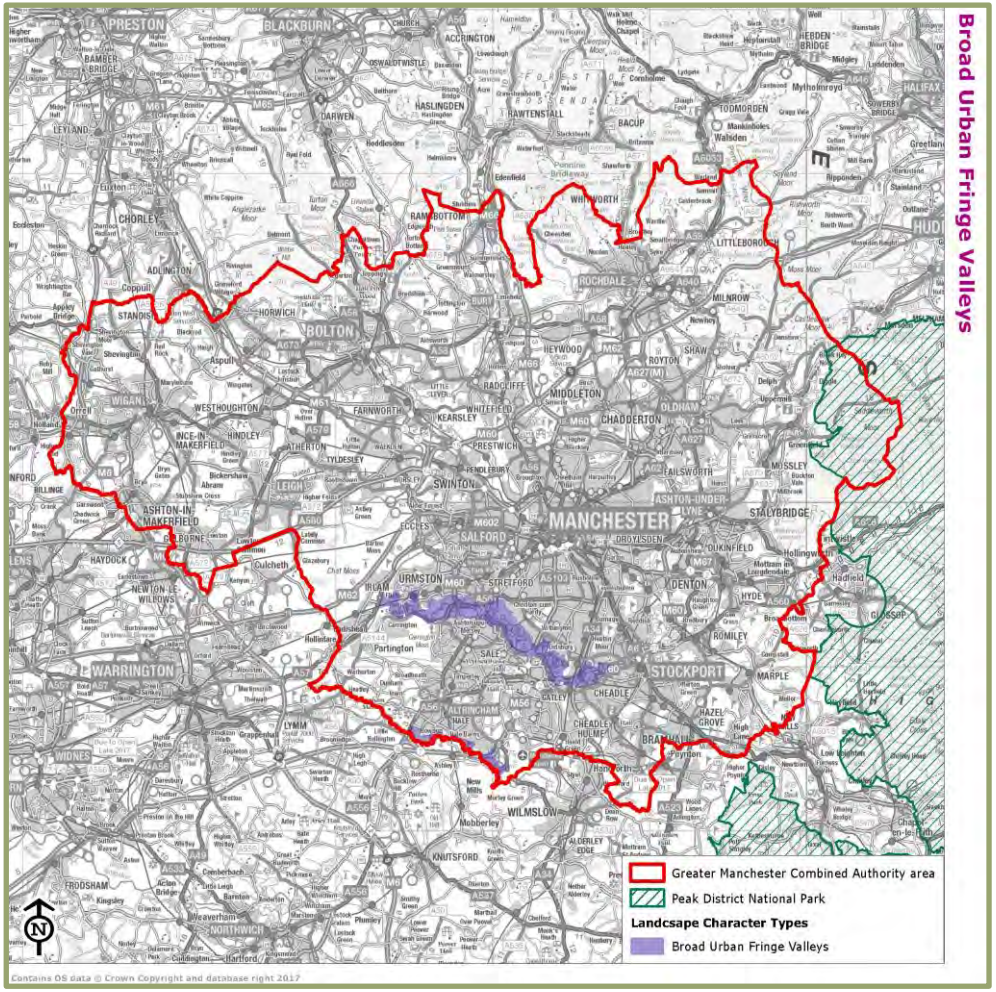
5 Landscape Character Type profiles

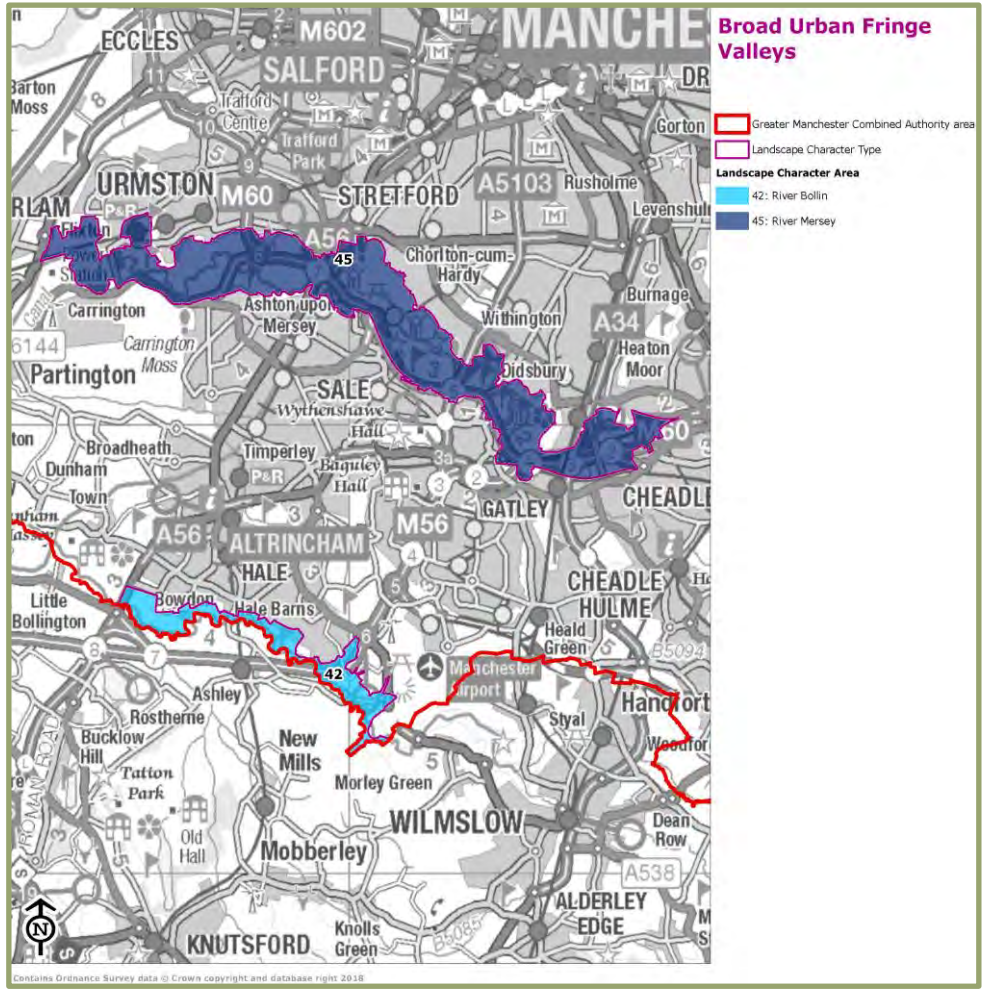
5.1 The following chapter contains the full profiles for each Landscape Character Area, including the Landscape Character Assessments and Landscape Sensitivity Assessments. Use the contents table below to navigate to the profiles by clicking on the hyper-linked page number.

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LCT: Broad Urban Fringe Valleys





This Landscape Character Type (LCT) is found in Trafford, Manchester and Stockport Districts.

Representative photographs



Canalised River Mersey with footpath (Trans Pennine Trail) running along engineered banks, Manchester



Reclaimed land of Flixton Sludge Beds (SBI) within the low-lying Mersey Valley, Trafford



Sale Waterpark and the M60 bisecting the Mersey Floodplain, Trafford



Large flat arable fields and numerous Pylon lines crossing the Mersey Floodplain. Trafford



Medium sized arable field contained by robust hedgerows and trees in the Bollin Valley, Trafford



A538 tunnel under Manchester Airport runway, Manchester District



Horse paddocks along the urban edge within the Bollin Valley, Trafford



Wooded banks of the River Bollin, Trafford



Sports fields on urban edge of Ashton upon Mersey, Trafford

Landscape character description

Key characteristics

Topography, geology and drainage

Lowland valleys located within wide flat and gently sloping floodplains (typically 10-20m AOD).

Underlying bedrock of sandstone (Wilmslow and Helsby formation) and areas of Tarporley siltstone.

Thick fluvial deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravel overlay the bedrock forming the fertile, low and wide river terraces, with the subtle imprint of dried out oxbow lakes evident in places.

Substantial canalisation of the Mersey from Stockport to the A6144 (Carrington Spur Road) with banks made up of grassed engineered slopes; these have changed little since their construction.

The Bollin is a smaller, slow moving river which retains its natural meanders, mud banks and terraces.

Land use and field patterns

A mix of small and medium sized pastoral fields and with horse paddocks adjacent to the urban edge.

Larger arable fields are found on drier, flatter ground in western areas of the Mersey and along the urban edge of the Bollin Valley.

Robust hedgerows and lines of trees containing the pastoral fields, whilst more intensive arable areas have witnessed 20th century boundary removal and field enlargement.

Significant recreation and amenity land uses with golf courses and frequent playing fields. Sale Waterpark and Charlton Water (reclaimed from former gravel pits) are located with the Mersey Valley.

Other land uses within the Mersey include utility infrastructure with numerous water treatment works, flood alleviation schemes, and large electricity substations.

Semi-natural habitats and woodland cover

The Bollin is traced by riparian woodland, wet grassland and pockets of dense deciduous woodland (some ancient), including Cotteril Clough SSSI to the southwest of Hale Barns.

Tree cover is limited to localised areas of remnant trees and small woods in the Mersey, often adjacent to the watercourse, together with structural planting associated with motorways and golf courses.

The Mersey includes natural river meanders in the west with associated wet pasture, meadows, and wooded river banks designated as a Site of Biological Importance (SBI).

Also within the Mersey, post-industrial landscapes and former gravel/clay extraction pits have regenerated to form scrub and grassland habitats, creating locally important wildlife sites designated as SBIs. These include the Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) at Broad Ees Dole, Chorlton Ees & Ivy Green, Chorlton Water Park and Mersey Vale Nature Park.

Archaeology and cultural heritage

A scattering of Listed Buildings throughout, including traditional farmstead buildings, churches, halls and canal infrastructure. Examples include the Grade II* Abney Hall and Grade II listed Bridgewater Canal Aqueduct in the Mersey, and Grade II listed Yewtree House and The Priory in the Bollin.

There are a number of Conservation Areas, often forming part of larger urban areas beyond the LCT. Examples include South Hale and Ashley Heath on the edge of the Bollin Valley and Cheadle Village, Northenden, Didsbury St. James, Chorltonville, Ashton on Mersey, and Flixton on the edge of the Mersey.

Watch Hill motte and bailey castle is located with the Bollin Valley close to the A556 – the only Scheduled Monument in Trafford.

The western stretch of the Bollin forms part of the setting of the Grade II* parkland at Dunham Masssey.

Settlement, road pattern and rights of way

There is limited settlement within the floodplains, though they both lie adjacent to dense urban areas.

The lack of settlement within the Mersey Valley has allowed the development of transport infrastructure including motorways, large roads, railways and tramways producing a number of bridged crossings and large motorway junctions. Large power lines also cross the valleys, adding to the urban character.

The M56 motorway cuts though the Bollin and the presence of Manchester Airport and runway which is partly built over the valley detracts significantly from the rural setting of the eastern valley.

A network of footpaths criss-cross the valleys, some designated as public rights of way, and others are desire lines running from the surrounding urban areas. The Trans Pennine Trail long distance footpath and cycleway runs along engineered banks of Mersey.

The Bowdon Bollin covers the western area of the Bollin Valley, containing open access space with promoted footpaths and heritage interests.

Views and perceptual qualities

The valleys themselves are not visually prominent due to the flat topography and absence of elevated viewpoints.

Views can be open and distant along the floodplains, but contained by the higher ground and urban edge. There are more restricted views from more vegetated and wooded lower ground.

Perceptual qualities are significantly affected by the proximity of adjacent urban areas. The Bollin is crowded by development to the north, but opens out into the rural countryside of Cheshire East to the south, retaining a sense of relative seclusion enhanced by its wooded character. The Bollin in Cheshire East is designated for its local landscape importance.

Large roads including the M60 (Mersey) and M56 (Bollin) sever the visual unity of the rivers' courses and can heavily influence local views and perceptions of tranquillity.

Rural tranquillity within eastern areas of the Bollin Valley is also substantially reduced by the intermittent noise of aeroplanes travelling to/from Manchester Airport.

Large electricity pylons traverse the landscape and frequently dominate views, which accentuate an urban presence. The canalisation of the Mersey significantly detracts from its naturalistic character.

Large industrial buildings with chimneys (particularly near Carrington) and church spires can form landmarks the skyline.

Vandalism, fly-tipping and illegal off-road motorbike use can be an issue in some areas.

Intactness and condition

The Mersey Valley is characterised by larger fields of pasture and intensively farmed arable land, delineated with low hedgerows and post and wire fencing. Tree cover is relatively sparse and generally limited to structural tree planting associated with recreation grounds, golf courses, transport routes, and semi-natural regeneration of brownfield land. The canalisation of the large stretches of the Mersey and presence of large motorways, numerous electricity pylons, golf courses and playing fields significantly reduces its rural and naturalistic characteristics. A more naturalistic character is present along the un-canalised lower reaches of the Mersey, before it enters into the Manchester Ship Canal, as the river follows a course of natural meanders with associated gravel bars, low river terraces and wooded river banks.

The low-lying Bollin Valley is more rural and contains a relative abundance of woodland, with some such as Sunbank Wood and Cotteril Clough SSSI being ancient in origin, supporting a flower-rich ground flora. The landscape within the Bollin Valley is generally in good condition, comprising small and medium scale fields of pasture and arable farmland enclosed by intact hedgerows and lines of trees. Horse paddocks along the urban edge are common and add to the valued small scale enclosed character of landscape, although this land use detracts from traditional pastoral qualities and can result in over-grazed paddocks and replacement of traditional hedgerow boundaries with fencing. The sound of traffic along the M56 motorway and noise emanating from neighbouring Manchester Airport substantially reduce the sense of rural tranquillity in the eastern parts of the valley.

Landscape sensitivity assessment

Criteria	Description	Sensitivity Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	Landform is generally flat or gently sloping, between 10 to 20m AOD. The Mersey Valley is generally large-scale and open, with medium and large fields and tracts of post-industrial, reclaimed land. Elsewhere, a complex pattern of recreational uses creates a more intimate scale. Within the Bollin Valley a varied pattern of small and medium sized fields, trees and pockets of woodland creates a smaller-scale landscape.	**M**
Natural character	Land use is largely semi-improved pastoral farmland with occasional larger arable fields and pony paddocks. Semi-natural and ancient woodlands within the Bollin Valley are important wildlife habitats on the edge of a densely populated urban area, including Cotteril Clough SSSI. Reclaimed post-industrial land and gravel/clay pits within the Mersey Valley support semi-natural habitats. Some are of nature conservation importance and are protected as SBIs and managed as LNRs. The lower reaches of the Mersey remain un-canalised following a natural course and is designated as a Site of Biological Importance (SBI). Other habitats include wet pastures and wildflower meadows. Manicured golf courses, amenity grasslands and other peri-urban land uses (e.g. water treatment works) are found in several locations.	**M**
Historic landscape character	Varied field patterns; small, irregular fields, piecemeal enclosures of differing shapes and sizes and regular Parliamentary and 20th century agglomerated fields. Scattering of Listed Buildings throughout, mainly comprising traditional farmstead buildings, village churches, halls and some canal infrastructure. Conservation Areas, often forming part of larger urban areas, located on the edges of the valleys. As such the landscape forms an important part of their settings. Gravel pits restored as Sale Waterpark and Chorlton Waterpark, forming new wildlife and recreational uses from past industrial heritage. Formal parkland and gardens of Grade II* Abney Hall within the Bollin, part of which forms the Abney Hall. Watch Hill motte and bailey castle is located with the Bollin Valley - the only Scheduled Monument in Trafford. The western Bollin forms part of the setting of the Grade II* Dunham Massey Registered Park and Garden.	**M**
Form, density and setting of existing settlement/ development	Limited settlement within the floodplains themselves, though they both lie adjacent to dense urban areas to form part of the rural backdrop to development and provide green corridors separating discrete settlements. • Motorways and large roads cross the valleys with cuttings, embankments, major road junctions and bridges which, together with water and electricity infrastructure, have a dominant influence on local areas. • The valleys are often overlooked by urban areas although the low-lying landscape and often dense vegetation cover means the urban edge is generally screened from views within. • The adjacent dense urban areas add to the urbanising influence on the character of the valleys along the settlement edge.	**M-H**
Views and visual character including skylines	The valleys are not visually prominent in the landscape due to the flat topography. Distant views are attained along the floodplain, but contained by adjacent higher ground and urban edge. Other views within the floodplain are constrained by local vegetation and large road infrastructure. Occasional longer views from elevated locations on the valley sides are attainable, looking across to opposite side of the valley and to distant hills and the surrounding urban areas. Large electricity pylons cross the valleys and dominate local views. Church spires and large industrial buildings with chimneys can form landmarks the skyline along the valley edge.	**M**
Access and recreation	• Number of nature and heritage-based recreational destinations including Sale Water Park, Chorlton Ees & Ivy Green Nature Reserve, Chorlton Water Park and Abney Hall in the Mersey. Network of footpaths criss-cross the valleys, some designated as public rights of way, and others are desire lines running from the surrounding urban areas.	**M-H**

	• The Trans Pennine Trail (footpath and cycleway) runs along engineered banks of Mersey. • Amenity grassland associated with golf courses and large areas of playing fields serving the adjacent urban areas. • Tracts of post-industrial land crossed by informal desire lines emanating from the nearby urban edge. The Bowdon Bollin covers the western area of the Bollin Valley, containing open access space with promoted footpaths and heritage interests.	
Perceptual and experiential qualities	Perceptual qualities significantly affected by the proximity of adjacent urban areas. The Bollin is crowded by development to the north, but opens out into the rural countryside of Cheshire East to the south, designated for its local landscape importance. Large roads including the M60 (Mersey) and M56 (Bollin) sever the visual unity of the rivers' courses and can heavily influence local views and tranquillity. Rural tranquillity within eastern areas of the Bollin Valley substantially reduced by the intermittent noise of aeroplanes travelling to/from Manchester Airport. The canalisation of the Mersey significantly detracts from its naturalistic character. Large industrial buildings with chimneys (particularly near Carrington) and church spires can form landmarks the skyline. Vandalism, fly-tipping and illegal off-road motorbike use can be an issue in some areas.	**M**

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity

LCA 42: River Bollin					
Development scenario	Sensitivity				
2-3 storey residential housing developments				**M-H**	
Commercial/industrial developments				**M-H**	
The naturalistic setting and secluded relatively small scale of the River Bollin results in a **moderate-high** landscape sensitivity to both development scenarios (but particularly larger scale commercial/industrial developments). Un-canalised stretches of the Mersey also display a naturalistic character, although the open and large scale character of the surrounding farmland, presence of large electricity pylons and views nearby industrial buildings reduces the sensitivity of the landscape.					

LCA 45: River Mersey					
Development scenario	Sensitivity				
2-3 storey residential housing developments			**M**		
Commercial/industrial developments			**M**		
The River Mersey LCA is judged to be of **moderate** sensitivity to both development scenarios as it is low-lying and not widely visible from surrounding areas. Surrounding urban and industrial development and the M60 / M61 motorway junction have a strong influence, detracting from the rural qualities of the landscape and therefore reducing overall sensitivity.					

Special landscape qualities and key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the special landscape qualities and key features/attributes that would be sensitive to change (e.g. as a result of development):

Flat valley floors with a complex pattern of small scale farming practices, rough wet pasture, woodland, recreational grounds and water bodies.

Robust hedgerows and lines of trees containing small and medium sized fields of pasture within the Bollin Valley providing an enclosed and secluded character in parts.

The relative abundance of riparian and mature broadleaved woodland (some identified as ancient) within the Bollin Valley including Cotteril Clough SSSI.

Other sites of local biodiversity importance designated as SBI (including the un-canalised section of the Mersey), including wet pasture, meadows and wooded river banks.

The Local Nature Reserves at Broad Ees Dole, Chorlton Ees & Ivy Green, Chorlton Water Park and Mersey Vale Nature Park – restored former industrial land and gravel extraction pits and popular recreational destinations.

The valleys' use and role as green corridors on the doorstep of urban areas, hosting footpaths and desire lines which provide access into the contrasting rural landscape. Their function in separating and containing development on their fringes.

The nationally important Trans Pennine Trail and cycle way running along the engineered embankments of the canalised Mersey.

The historic settlement pattern often associated with river crossings, with a scattering of Listed Buildings including traditional farmhouses.

Land within Conservation Areas associated with larger urban areas of the valley edges – the valleys forming part of their rural setting.

The nationally designated Watch Hill motte and bailey castle in the Bollin Valley – the only Scheduled Monument in Trafford.

The secluded and rural character of many parts the Bollin Valley, forming part of the setting of the Dunham Massey Grade II* Registered Park and Garden and locally designated valley landscape within Cheshire East.

Guidance and opportunities for future development and landscape management/enhancement

Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Area include:

Avoid siting any development on more elevated valley slopes where buildings would be prominent on the skyline. Conserve open, undeveloped skylines.

Protect the role and function of the valley landscapes as green corridors separating areas of dense development, including their importance for access and recreation by nearby urban communities.

Protect and where possible enhance semi-natural habitats and networks including broadleaved (including ancient) and riparian woodland, semi-natural grassland, wet pasture, scrub. Avoid siting development that would lead to the loss or fragmentation of any locally or nationally designated wildlife site.

Development should be carefully sited to avoid areas within floodplains that have retained a naturalistic and undeveloped character, or areas that are in a state of transition to semi-natural habitat. It should also respect the characteristic pattern of sparse settlement centred on river crossing points.

Ensure any new development does not dilute the strong field patterns associated with the landscape within the Bollin Valley. Strengthen areas of lost field boundaries across both valleys by planting or gapping up lengths of characteristic hedgerows.

Planting, potentially including through the Northern Forest Initiative[1], should be used to provide a transition between any new development and areas of open land in order to avoid hard development edges – using locally prevalent species and respecting characteristic patterns of tree cover.

[1] See the Government's news announcement for the initiative at https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-northern-forest-gets-government-backing

Staggered blocks of planting should also be introduced along motorways and main roads to help screen views of traffic and reduce noise.

Explore opportunities to restore further areas of reclaimed land within the Mersey Valley for wildlife and recreation, also with possible links to The Northern Forest initiative.

Protect the setting and integrity of Watch Hill motte and bailey castle Scheduled Monument in Trafford.

Hedgerows should be conserved and enhanced where applicable gaps repaired. New hedgerow planting should be encouraged where it has been removed and replaced by post and wire fencing.

Respect local building styles and materials in new housing developments, seeking to reflect these in their design and build.

Conserve the character and setting of the Conservation Areas on the valley edges, including South Hale and Ashley Heath on the edge of the Bollin Valley and Cheadle Village, Northenden, Didsbury St. James, Chorltonville, Ashton on Mersey, and Flixton on the edge of the Mersey.

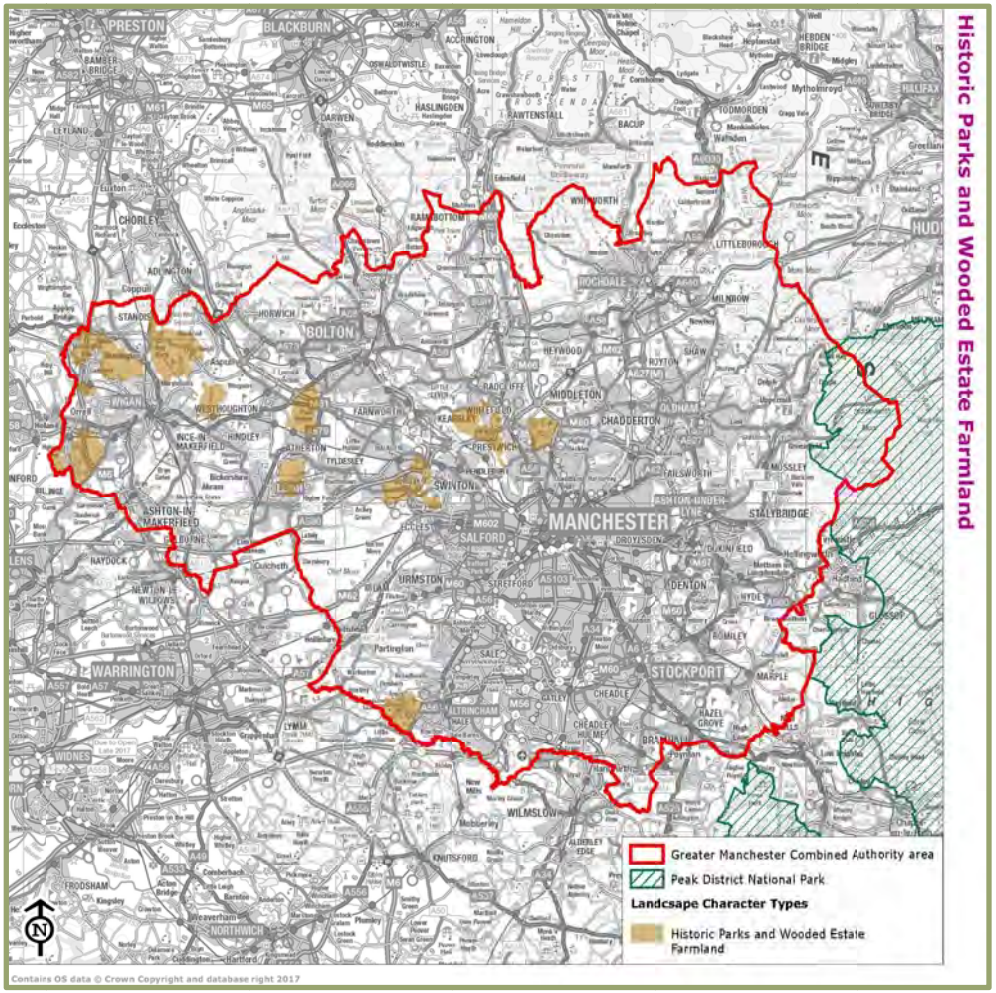
Ensure any new development respects the setting of the Grade II* Registered Park and Garden at Dunham Massey, and the locally designated landscape of the Bollin Valley just across the border in Cheshire East.

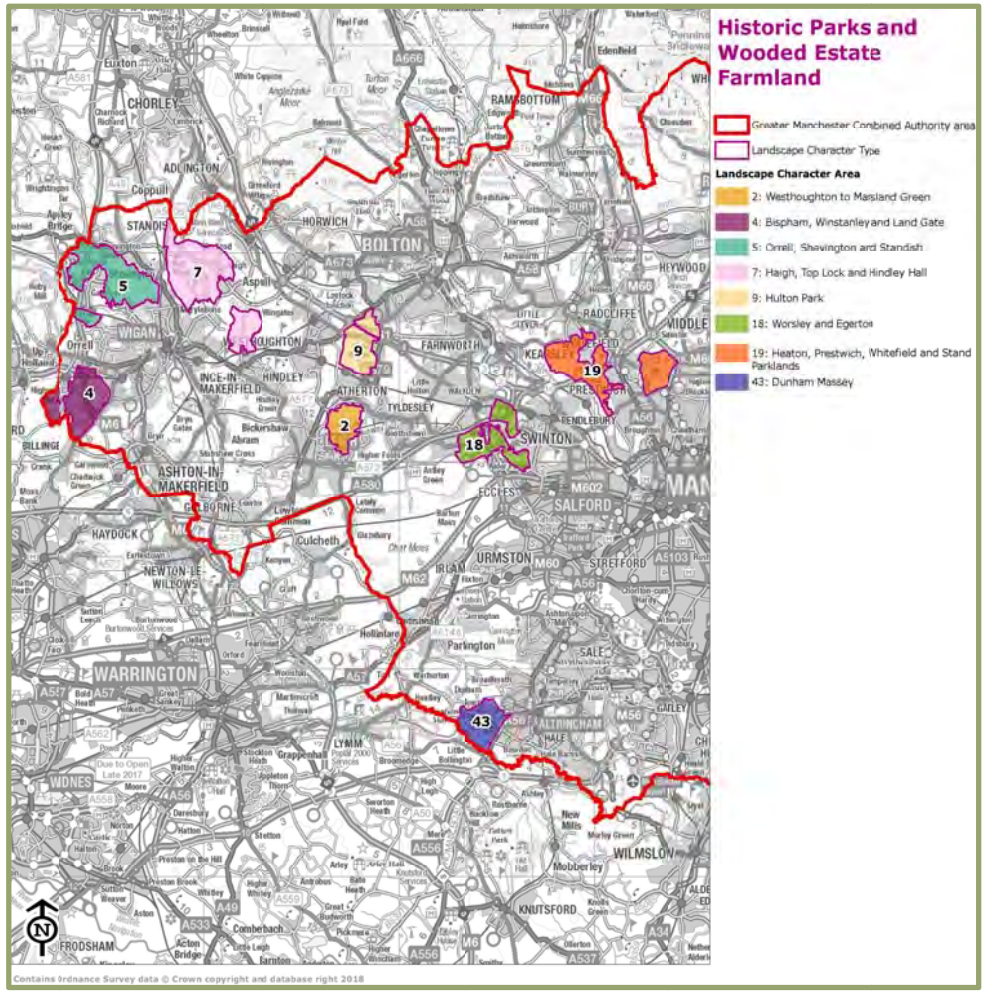
Protect the pockets of relative tranquillity and secluded character associated with the Bollin Valley and areas of semi-natural habitat within the Mersey.

Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off or industrial land uses.

Recreational opportunities should be maintained and enhanced in order to preserve the high recreational value of the valleys as green fingers though densely populated areas. Opportunities should be sought to strengthen the links between public footpaths, bridleways, cycle routes (including the Trans Pennine Trail) and the various recreational destinations found within the landscape.

LCT: Historic Parks and Wooded Estate Farmland





This Landscape Character Type (LCT) is found in Wigan, Bolton, Salford, Bury and Trafford Districts.

Representative photographs


Wooded clough at Standish, Wigan


Arable land at Brownlow, Wigan


Heaton Park, Manchester


Parkland at Dunham, Trafford


Haigh, Wigan


Golf Course at Worsley, Salford


Hedgerow at Worsley, Salford


Worsley Woods Nature Reserve, Salford


Toddington Lane, north of Haigh, Wigan

Landscape character description

Key characteristics

Topography, geology and drainage

- Undulating landform of hills cut by deep, steep-sided wooded valleys ('cloughs'). Plateau-like ridges and terraces are a feature.
- Elevation ranges between 20m – 50m AOD in valley bottoms to over 150m AOD on hill tops, e.g. at Haigh (Wigan).
- Underlying bedrock geology of Coal Measures (mudstones, siltstones, sandstones) overlain by fluvio-glacial deposits and boulder clay.
- Brooks drain along slopes into rivers or small reservoirs in valley bottoms. There are numerous small ponds.
- Soils are typically sand or silty loams to clayey loam. Agricultural land is mostly classed as Grade 3 with some areas around Dunham (Trafford) classed as Grade 2 and Outwood (Bury) classed as Grade 4.

Land use and field patterns

- Largely mixed farmland, with arable cultivation on gentler slopes and pasture on steeper land, located in between small wooded cloughs.
- Regular, medium to large scale fields enclosed by a mix of hedgerows, often gapped, post and wire fencing or occasional gritstone walls. Fields are of post-medieval (e.g. at Gathurst and east and west of Philips Park), 19th or 20th century origin.
- Some of the former estate landscapes are now public parks (including parts of Country Parks / Woodland Parks), many of which have golf courses, e.g. Haigh Woodland Park (Wigan) and Whitefield/Stand (Bury).

Semi-natural habitats and woodland cover

- Streams, ponds and lakes provide biodiversity value, many locally designated as part of Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) e.g. lakes at Worsley Woods (Salford) and pools at Dunham Massey (Trafford).
- Landscape structure provided by broadleaved estate woodland and semi-natural woodland cloughs, also comprising many SBIs and some Local Nature Reserves (LNR), e.g. Philips Park and Mere Clough (Bury). Dunham Park (Trafford) is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- Small areas of Ancient Woodland are linked with estate landscapes, while extensive blocks of plantation woodland, planted as game cover or as structure planting, are found along motorways.

Archaeology and cultural heritage

- 16th to 19th century estates associated with halls and houses, with open parkland, plantation woodland and small lakes, the best preserved of which are Registered Parks and Gardens (Grade II* Dunham Massey with its Grade I listed hall, carriage house and stables; Grade II Hulton Park; and Grade II Heaton Park with its Grade I listed hall).
- Conservation Areas at Haigh Village in Wigan, Roe Green/Beesley Green, Worsley Old Hall, Worsley Village (with Grade I listed church) and St. Mark's in Salford, Dunham Town and part of The Devisdale in Trafford and St. Mary's, Prestwich in Bury.
- Other areas have clusters of Listed Buildings (mainly Grade II and II*, some Grade I) mainly associated with former halls and houses, some of which are now hotels.
- There are a number of Scheduled Monuments, most of which are medieval moated sites comprising wide ditches, some water-filled, partly or completely enclosing islands on which stood domestic or religious buildings e.g. Wardley Hall moated site in Salford.

Settlement, road pattern and rights of way

- Scattered villages associated with historic estates, some at hilltop locations.
- Traditional farm buildings found along straight to gently winding country lanes, some following ridgelines, and often demarcated by hedgerows.
- Many parts of the landscape are dissected by, or bordering, motorways and railway lines e.g. the M6 at Shevington, the M61 at Hulton and Worsley, and the M60 at Prestwich/Whitefield.
- A network of public footpaths tends to follow country lanes and field boundaries. The Rotary Way passes through the LCT around Bolton, and National Cycle Routes 55 and 6 cross through other parts.

Views and perceptual qualities

- Extensive views from hill tops and ridges, e.g. north / north-east to Rivington in the West Pennines, south from Heaton Park across Greater Manchester, and south-west from Haigh across the Douglas Valley to Wigan.
- The ridges within the LCT form skylines in views from neighbouring valleys and urban / suburban areas.
- Lower lying areas are more visually contained by landform and woodland, e.g. Worsley, Dunham.
- Strong visual connections between Dunham Massey and the rural landscape of Cheshire East, including the Bollin Valley (locally designated for its landscape value).
- Motorway corridors are audibly and visually dominant in some areas (e.g. Worsley, Prestwich Forest Park, Shevington, Winstanley), reducing the sense of tranquillity in these locations.
- A sense of naturalness and tranquillity can be experienced in parkland and woodland areas, often associated with small water bodies, away from settlement and transport corridors.

Intactness and condition

This is a well-wooded rural landscape which contains a number of nationally significant historic estate landscapes. Many of these former estate landscapes are now in recreational use (e.g. Country Park / Woodland Park, golf courses, hotels) and are consequently well maintained, with intact buildings, estate walls and hedgerows. Elsewhere, mixed farmland predominates, and is largely intact with the exception of gapped hedgerows and a prevalence of post and wire fencing. Some areas have retained a notably historic character e.g. Dunham Massey, a National Trust site, has a well maintained parkland landscape set around a Georgian mansion. Dunham Park SSSI is considered to be of national importance for its mature timber fauna which provides a habitat for invertebrates and is currently assessed as being in favourable condition.

Neighbouring urban / suburban areas and particularly transport corridors have a strong influence in some areas, locally reducing tranquillity. Away from transport corridors, parkland and wooded areas, often associated with small water bodies, provide a sense of naturalness and tranquillity.

Landscape sensitivity assessment

Criteria	Description	Sensitivity Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	• Landform generally undulating, with plateau-like ridges and deep, steep-sided valleys. • Some parts of the LCT are low-lying, undulating between approximately 20m and 50m AOD, other parts rise to over 150m AOD. • Medium to large scale fields contained by a strong woodland structure. • Small-scale features include hedgerows, estate walls and farm buildings.	**M-H**
Natural character	• Land use largely mixed farmland, with arable on gentler slopes and pasture on steeper slopes. • Estate woodland and semi-natural wooded cloughs designated as SBIs and/or LNRs. • Dunham Park (Trafford) is nationally designated as a SSSI. • Small areas of Ancient Woodland linked with historic parkland. • Network of streams, ponds and lakes provide biodiversity value, some part of SBIs and LNRs.	**M**
Historic landscape character	• Fields are a mixture of post-medieval, 19th and 20th century origins. • 16th to 19th century estates associated with halls and houses, with open parkland, plantation woodland and small lakes. • Registered Parks and Gardens found at Dunham Massey (Grade II*). Hulton Park (Grade II) and Heaton Park (Grade II). • Conservation Areas associated with historic villages and settlement cores. • Some areas have clusters of Listed Buildings (mainly Grade II and II*, some Grade I) mainly associated with former halls and houses. • The landscape includes a scattering of Scheduled Monuments, most of which are medieval moated sites.	**M-H**
Form, density and setting of existing settlement/ development	• Scattered settlements including some elevated villages, connected by straight to gently winding country lanes, some following ridge tops. • Strong woodland structure. • Surrounding residential and industrial areas, and motorway corridors which bisect the landscape, have a strong influence in places.	**M-H**
Views and visual character including skylines	• Extensive views from open hill tops and ridges, north / north-east to the West Pennines, south across the Greater Manchester conurbation and south-west across the Douglas Valley. Ridges form skylines to lower lying river valleys and urban / suburban areas. • More restricted views from lower slopes and valleys, where woodland provides additional containment e.g. Worsley, Dunham. • Strong visual connections between Dunham Massey and the rural landscape of Cheshire East, including the Bollin Valley.	**M-H**
Access and recreation	• Public footpaths tend to follow country lanes and field boundaries in between cloughs. • Long distance Rotary Way and Sustrans routes pass through or along the edge of several parts of the LCT. • Many of the estate landscapes are now public parks with golf courses, some form part of wider Country Parks / Woodland Parks.	**M**
Perceptual and experiential qualities	• Rural feel in some areas of parkland and woodland, often associated with small water bodies, with a sense of naturalness and tranquillity. • Motorway corridors are audibly and visually dominant in some areas.	**M**

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity

Landscape Character Type level					
Development scenario	Sensitivity				
2-3 storey residential housing developments				**M-H**	
Commercial/industrial developments					**H**

Heaton Park (which forms the eastern part of LCA 19) is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden with several Listed Buildings including the Grade I listed Heaton Hall. It is also a public park with parkland, woodland and a boating lake. The Registered Park and Garden is therefore judged to also be of **high** sensitivity to housing developments.

Hulton Park (which forms a significant part of LCA 9) is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden and within the Registered Park and Garden boundary is also judged to be of **high** sensitivity to housing developments.

It is therefore of paramount importance that the guidance below is closely followed when residential development proposals are considered within these parts of the landscape (and for all parts when considering commercial/industrial developments).

Notes on any variations in landscape sensitivity, by Landscape Character Area					
LCA 43: Dunham Massey					
2-3 storey residential housing developments					**H**
Commercial/industrial developments					**H**

Explanation for variance in sensitivity from overall LCT scores: Dunham Massey is a well maintained historic landscape, which contains a Grade II* Registered Park and Garden, Conservation Area and numerous Listed Buildings, including the Grade I listed hall, carriage house and stables. The LCA also has a well-defined boundary with the neighbouring suburban areas of Bowdon and The Devisdale to the east. As such it would be of **high** sensitivity to both development scenarios.

It is therefore of paramount importance that the guidance below is closely followed when development proposals are considered within this LCA.

LCA 18: Worsley and Egerton					
2-3 storey residential housing developments					**H**
Commercial/industrial developments					**H**

Explanation for variance in sensitivity from overall LCT scores: Worsley is an intact and well-wooded landscape with well-defined boundaries with the surrounding residential areas. There are four Conservation Areas within the LCA, and numerous Listed Buildings. The area is of recreational importance, with a Nature Reserve, Boating Lake and two golf courses. The M60 has fragmented the landscape, locally reducing tranquillity, and development would further erode the historic character of the landscape and its recreational value. As such it would be of **high sensitivity** to both development scenarios.

It is therefore of paramount importance that the guidance below is closely followed when development proposals are considered within this LCA.

Special landscape qualities and key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the special landscape qualities and key features/attributes that would be sensitive to change (e.g. as a result of development):

- Elevated hills and ridges, which form a backdrop to lower-lying river valleys and urban / suburban areas.
- 16th to 19th century estate landscapes with open parkland, plantation woodland and small lakes, some of which are of national importance (Dunham Massey, Heaton Park and Hulton Park), and the numerous Listed Buildings contained within.
- Conservation Areas protecting historic villages and settlement cores, and traditional farm buildings in the wider rural area.
- Deep, steep-sided wooded valleys or 'cloughs' which are often recognised for their ecological importance as SBIs or LNRs.
- A network of streams, ponds and lakes, some of which form part of SBIs or LNRs.
- A strong landscape structure of broadleaved estate woodland, including some small areas of Ancient Woodland.
- Extensive and long-distance views from elevated areas, often experienced from the country lanes which follow ridgelines - north / north-east to Rivington in the west Pennines, south across the Greater Manchester conurbation and south-west across the Douglas Valley.
- Visual connections between Dunham Massey and the rural landscape of Cheshire East, including the Bollin Valley (locally designated landscapes).
- Recreational opportunities in the form of public parks (some forming Country / Woodland Parks), golf courses, long distance walking and cycling routes (Rotary Way, National Cycle Routes 55 and 6) and a network of public footpaths which follow country lanes and field boundaries.
- The sense of naturalness and tranquillity which can be experienced from some areas of parkland and woodland, away from major transport corridors and the urban fringe.

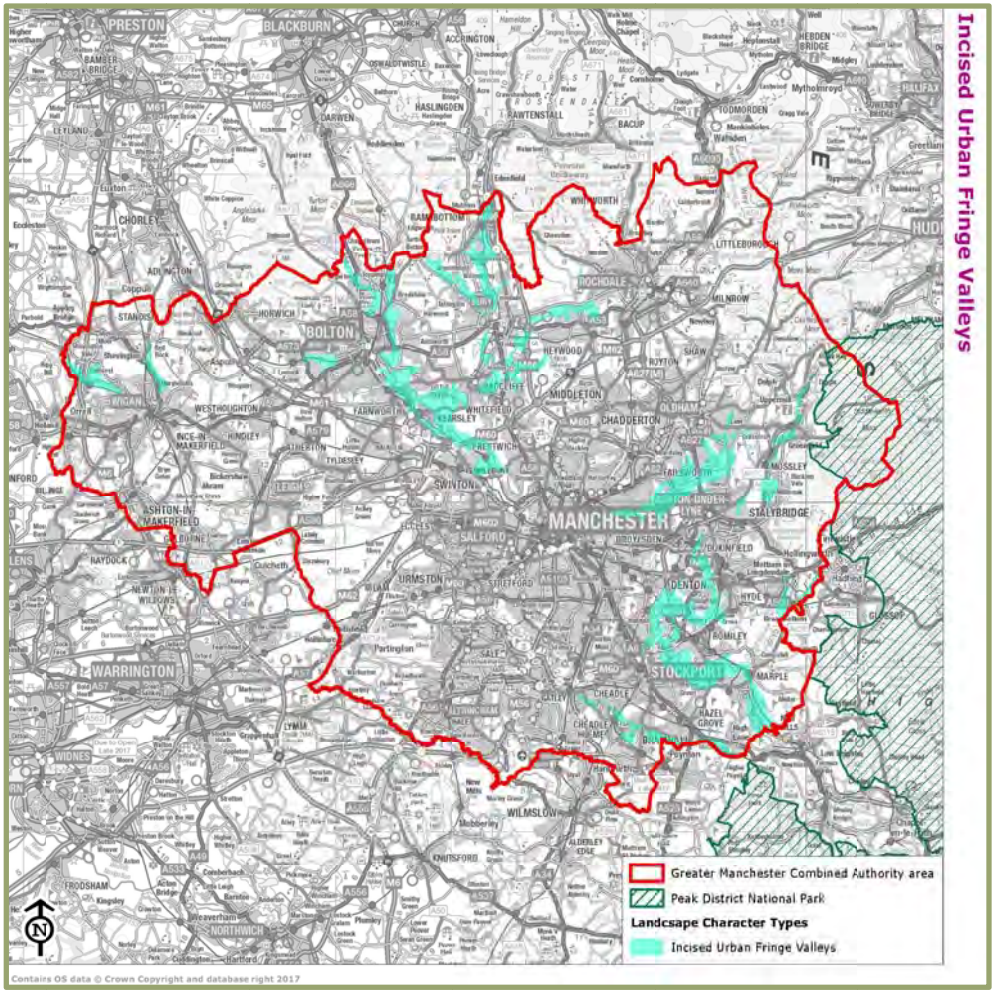
Guidance and opportunities for future development and landscape management/enhancement

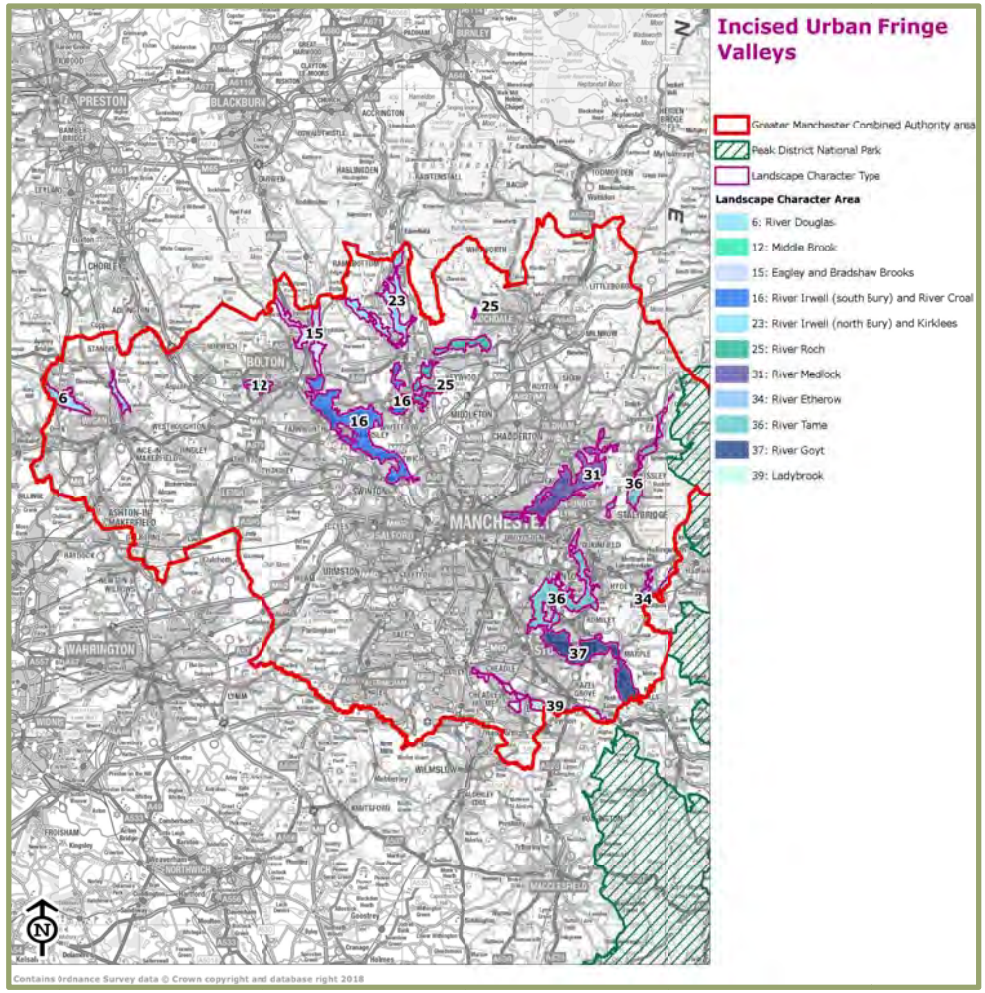
Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Type include:

- Avoid siting development on elevated hill tops and ridges which form the skyline in views from lower lying valleys and settlements.
- Ensure that the sense of separation the landscape provides between distinct settlements is retained.
- Prevent further fragmentation of the landscape (e.g. caused by motorway corridors) by associating new development with existing buildings and urban areas.
- Ensure that any development is in keeping with the form, density and vernacular of existing buildings. Avoid any large scale development to retain the historic character of the landscape.
- Protect areas of semi-natural habitat, including wooded cloughs and wetland areas designated as SBIs. Seek to enhance these where possible and provide linkages to form robust habitat networks.
- Protect areas of broadleaved woodland (particularly ancient woodland) which provide important semi-natural habitat and create wooded skylines. Utilise the screening effects of existing woodland to integrate development into the landscape where possible.
- Conserve and manage existing woodlands to encourage habitat diversity, using locally appropriate species and protecting from grazing during establishment.
- Consider additional woodland planting to screen existing industrial areas and motorway corridors as appropriate.
- Restore and enhance remaining field patterns with additional, species rich, hedgerow planting to fill gaps and replace post and wire fencing. Reintroduce hedgerow trees where appropriate.
- Conserve and manage wetland areas, including those which form part of SBIs and LNRs.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology and subsequent knock-on effects, such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off.
- Ensure any new development respects the character and historic qualities of the Registered Parks and Gardens (Grade II* Dunham Massey, Grade II Heaton Park and Grade II Hulton Park) and their settings.
- Ensure any new development respects the character and historic qualities of the Conservation Areas at Haigh Village, Roe Green/Beesley Green, Worsley Old Hall, Worsley Village, St. Mark's, Dunham Town, The Devisdale and St. Mary's, Prestwich.
- Conserve and protect the setting of important heritage assets, including the Grade I listed hall, carriage house and stables at Dunham Massey, the Grade I listed hall at Heaton Park, the Grade I listed church at Worsley and the Wardley Hall moated site (Scheduled Monument).

- Enhance existing public access and provide new informal recreational provision e.g. by improving connections between public footpaths and long distance routes.
- Maintain open and long ranging views to the open ridges at Rivington in the West Pennines, framed views to the Greater Manchester conurbation and open views across the Douglas Valley.
- Maintain inter-visibility between Dunham Massey and Cheshire East across the Bollin Valley which is locally designated for its landscape importance.
- Protect and enhance the sense of naturalness and tranquillity associated particularly with areas away from the urban fringe.

LCT: Incised Urban Fringe Valleys





This Landscape Character Type (LCT) is found in Wigan, Bolton, Bury, Salford, Rochdale, Oldham, Manchester, Tameside and Stockport Districts.

Representative photographs



Narrow incised valley of the Hurstclough Brook with Ancient Woodland and public footpaths, Tameside



M6 motorway and railway bridges crossing the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, Wigan



Modern town houses located within the narrow wooded Kirklees Valley, Bury



Views of Uppermill and Uppermill Viaduct (Grade II listed) within the settled Tame Valley, Oldham



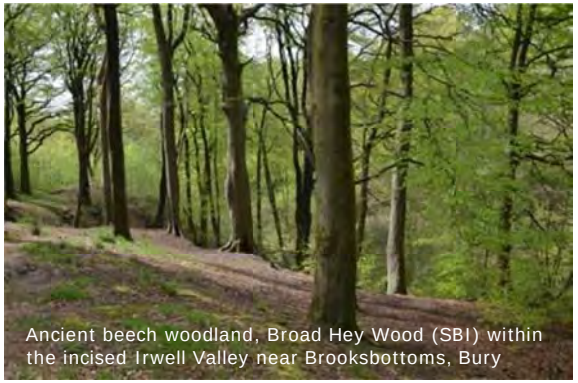
Brooksbottoms Mill, part of the Brooksbottoms Conservation Area within the Irwell Valley, Bury



Peak Forest Canal long distance footpath and Grade II listed canal bridge, Stockport



Large pylon lines and sewage works within the Goyt Valley, Stockport



Ancient beech woodland, Broad Hey Wood (SBI) within the incised Irwell Valley near Brooksbottoms, Bury



Pony keeping and Kearsley Mill (Grade II listed) within the Irwell Valley, Bolton

Landscape character description

Key characteristics

Topography, geology and drainage

- Typically narrow, incised valleys cutting through rolling hills which include the Pennine and Dark Peak foothills (where the enclosing landform rises to around 300m AOD).
- Upstream the rivers and tributaries are typically narrow and fast flowing, forming steep sided V-shape valleys and gorges. Further downstream the rivers widen and meander across flatter valley bottoms.
- Underlying bedrock geology dominated by Pennine Coal Measures, comprising mudstones, siltstones and sandstones topped by fluvial deposits. Bedrock strata are exposed in places due to fluvial erosion.
- Small tributary cloughs formed by seasonal streams flowing straight down valley sides, characterised by fast-moving streams, pools and falls.

Land use and field patterns

- The valleys cut through thick glacial deposits supporting lower quality, in places poorly draining farmland.
- Small to medium pastoral fields and horse paddocks on the valley sides and areas of wet grassland and scrub along the valley floor. Some arable fields are found on the drier, flatter ground on the valley floors.
- Semi-regular fields of 19th century origin marked by (often gappy) hedgerows and post-and-wire fencing. Areas of arable farmland include agglomerated 20th century fields. There are rare examples of medieval strip fields around settlements.
- Dry stone walls (some in a state of disrepair) delineate pastures on higher slopes, reflecting the character of nearby upland foothill landscapes.
- A significant amount of the land with the valleys is used for recreation with amenity grassland associated with golf courses, frequent playing fields and Country Parks.
- Other land uses include utility infrastructure with numerous reservoirs and water treatment works, flood alleviation schemes, industrial development, and large electricity substations.

Semi-natural habitats and woodland cover

- Valleys typically traced by riparian woodland with banks of dense broadleaved woodland (some ancient), distinctive moss-covered trees and a wildflower-rich understorey.
- Woodland and areas of parkland create important wildlife corridors between densely populated urban areas, with significant areas designated as Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) and managed as Local Nature Reserves (LNRs).
- SSSI-designated habitats found at Nob End and Ashclough in the Irwell Valley; the Lowside Brickworks and Hollinwood Branch Canal in the Medlock Valley; Ladcastle & Den Quarries and Huddersfield Narrow Canal within the Tame Valley.
- Post-industrial and reclaimed land at various stages of regeneration, with locally valued mosaics of scrub, herbaceous vegetation and reedbeds. These include LNRs at Moses Gate Country Park, Clifton Country Park, Glodwick Lows[1] and Reddish Vale Country Park.

Archaeology and cultural heritage

- The valleys have a long industrial heritage as a power source for the 19th and 20th century cotton industry. Rivers are often flanked by large, sometimes derelict, mills built of gritstone or red brick with tall chimneys forming distinctive skyline features.
- Other industrial relics include canals (including the Peak Forest Canal Conservation Area), railways, weirs, cobbled roads, and scheduled sites such as Samuel Oldknow's lime kilns in Stockport and Ringley Old Bridge (Bolton).
- Landmark viaducts and aqueducts including Marple Aqueduct (Grade I Listed, Scheduled Monument), Uppermill (Oldham), Broadbottom (Stockport), Tame (Tameside) and Darcy Lever (Bolton) – all Grade II listed viaducts.
- Earlier scheduled sites include the remains of a Castlesteads promontory fort on the east bank of the Irwell (Bury) and the site of a post-medieval glassworks near Clarke's Bridge within the Tame Valley.
- A number of Conservation Areas, some now forming part of larger urban areas, often linked to historic river crossings. Examples include the Eagley Bank, Brooksbottoms, Ramsbottom and Summerseat.
- Historically important buildings include churches, traditional farmstead buildings, occasional medieval

[1] A brickpit within this LNR in Oldham falls within the Lowside Brickworks SSSI and is currently going through the process of notification as a Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS).

manor houses and halls. Examples include the 14th century parish church of St Mary in Radcliffe (Bury) and the Tudor manor house of Bramhall Hall in Stockport.

Settlement, road pattern and rights of way

- Modern and historical industrial complexes, recreational buildings, scattered farmsteads and small settlements connected by winding lanes. Some steeper areas are inaccessible by road.
- The valleys are typically overlooked adjacent urban areas, with some redevelopment sites for housing located on exposed ridges, emphasising their close proximity to densely populated areas.
- Major rail and road routes, including the M60, M66, M67 and M6 cross and run partly though some of the valleys. These linear features incorporate extensive cuttings, embankments, bridges and junctions.
- Networks of footpaths criss-cross the valleys. Some are formal public rights of way; others simply desire lines running from the surrounding urban areas.
- Numerous long distance footpaths and cycle routes run through the valleys and along canals, including the Pennine Bridleway, Trans Pennine Trail and E2 European Long Distance Route. Other routes include the Tame Valley Way, Cheshire Ring Canal Walk, Midshires Way, Rotary Way and Irwell Sculpture Trail.
- The East Lancashire Heritage Railway in the Irwell Valley is a popular tourist attraction. It stops at historic stations at Summerseat and Ramsbottom and a new station at Burrs, and links up with the Irwell Sculpture Trail.
- Other disused railway lines provide recreation and nature conservation corridors, including within the Irwell, Kirklees, Medlock and Tame valleys.

Views and perceptual qualities

- Views are typically contained by the steep valley sides and woodland. From the more elevated locations along the valley sides there are views to the surrounding Pennine uplands (including the Peak District National Park) and over Greater Manchester.
- The elevated valley sides of the Irwell and Kirklees afford views to the landmark hills of Harcles Hill and Scout Moor, with the Peel Monument and Scout Moor Wind Farm forming focal points. Wimberry Stones Brow/Indian's Head is a distinctive upland landform feature visible from the Tame in Oldham.
- The Saddleworth War Memorial is a prominent skyline feature on Alderman's Hill (also known locally as "Pots and Pans Hill") above the Tame Valley.
- While proximity to urban areas, transport and other infrastructure can significantly affect their character, the narrow valley landforms and often dense woodland cover provide a sense of seclusion and tranquillity.
- Major transport infrastructure can sever the valleys' visual unity, influence local views and break perceptions of tranquillity and the small landform scale. Large pylons frequently dominate views.

Intactness and condition

The narrow incised valleys are typically wooded and have a natural character, with areas having a strong sense of seclusion and relative tranquillity, contrasting with surrounding densely populated urban areas. Their character is influenced by a complex mix of land uses and variations in topography. Traditional farming practices with enclosed pastures and areas of rough grazing land are intermingled with pony paddocks, recreation grounds, golf courses, industrial sites and large scale utility infrastructure forming a juxtaposition of scale and form. Some areas are strongly influenced by the visual presence of the adjoining urban edge and by numerous tall pylon lines and major road and rail routes which cross and run along the valleys. In places, modern housing has taken the place of industry with densely packed town houses, asphalt driveways and manicured lawns contrasting the naturalistic and historic qualities of the valleys. The farmland is largely intact and a relative abundance of mature native woodland (many identified as ancient) and traditional stone built buildings can provide a sense of time depth and a high scenic quality. A decline in landscape management detracts from this in parts, with issues including the neglect of hedgerows and their replacement with post and wire fencing, derelict sections of dry stone walls gapped up or completely replaced by fencing and the presence of over-grazed and subdivided horse paddocks. Antisocial behaviour is evident in some areas with issues such as fly tipping, littering, graffiti, and elicit motorbike use. The valleys have strong links to the industrial past with Conservation Areas, historic mills, canals, railways, cobbled roads and weirs crossing fast flowing rivers to present a sense of time depth.

Nob End SSSI, which occupies the site of former mid-19th Century alkali waste tip, is currently in 'unfavourable condition' due to the presence non-native species and bare ground caused by the construction of an access bridge. The Hollinwood Branch Canal and Huddersfield Narrow Canal SSSIs are the best examples of a mesotrophic standing water system and a flowing eutrophic water system in Greater Manchester and Merseyside, respectively. However, these SSSIs are currently both in unfavourable condition due to issues such as freshwater pollution, agricultural runoff, inappropriate weed control, inappropriate weirs, dams and other structures, and a lack of corrective works.

Landscape sensitivity assessment

Criteria	Description	Sensitivity Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	• Narrow valleys cutting though Pennine and Dark Peak foothills defined by steep valley sides and surrounded by rolling hills rising to a height of 300m AOD. • Further downstream the landform comprises more gentle undulations at elevations between 10 – 60m AOD. • The valleys are typically an enclosed landform with a complex pattern of small and medium sized fields with hedgerows, stone walls, buildings and a relative abundance of woodland creating small-scale landscapes. • More open elevated valley sides and flatter lower-lying valleys are larger in scale. • Distinctive landscape features are a consequence of strong variations in local topography, prominent slopes and exposed bedrock.	**M-H**
Natural character	• Land use is mainly semi-improved pastoral farmland with occasional arable fields on the gentler slopes and lower-lying areas. • Recreation/amenity and industrial land uses are also common. • SSSI-designated habitats at Nob End and Ashclough in the Irwell Valley; the Lowside Brickworks and Hollinwood Branch Canal in the Medlock Valley; Ladcastle & Den Quarries and Huddersfield Narrow Canal within the Tame. • Ancient and semi-natural woodland forming important wildlife corridors between urban areas - many designated as SBIs and/or LNRs. • Post-industrial land supporting semi-natural habitats with scrub, herbaceous vegetation and reedbeds, with LNRs at Moses Gate Country Park, Clifton Country Park, Kirklees Valley, Glodwick Lows and Reddish Vale Country Park. • Networks of streams, ponds, lakes and reservoirs fringed by wet grassland and meadows also provide biodiversity value.	**M-H**
Historic landscape character	• Field patterns reflect piecemeal and Parliamentary enclosure, with some enlargement in the 20th century evident. There are rare examples of older strip fields around settlements. • Evidence of the area's industrial legacy includes large former cotton mills (with landmark chimneys), connected by associated railway sidings, canals (including the Peak Forest Canal Conservation Area) and cobbled roads. • A number of Conservation Areas with historic settlement focused on river crossings and growth during the early industrial age. • Numerous viaducts dating from the 19th century railway forming prominent landmarks. Marple is known for its nationally designated aqueduct. • A scattering of Listed Buildings; Grade I examples being the 14th century parish church of St Mary in Radcliffe (Bury) and Bramhall Hall in Stockport. • Other nationally designated heritage assets including a promontory fort in the Irwell Valley and post-medieval glassworks within the Tame.	**M**
Form, density and setting of existing settlement/ development	• Modern industrial and historical industrial complexes, recreational buildings, a scattered pattern of farmhouses and small settlements connected by winding lanes. • Some modern housing estates are built on former industrial sites, contrasting with the otherwise small scale, naturalistic setting. • Other land uses include utility infrastructure with numerous reservoirs and water treatment works, flood alleviation schemes, industrial development, and large electricity substations. • Roads, railways, canals and associated bridges form frequent features – including several motorways and main railway routes. • Strong relationship with dense urban development surrounding the valleys – they form important green corridors separating discrete settlements and form a rural backdrop to modern development.	**M-H**
Views and visual character including skylines	• Views within typically contained by the steep valley sides and woodland, with occasional views to the urban edge. • Occasional longer views from elevated locations, looking down a river's course and across to opposite side of the valley with distant hills beyond (including the Pennine uplands and Dark Peak uplands of the Peak District). • The Peel Monument and Scout Moor Wind Farm form focal points in views from the Irwell and Kirklees; as does the Saddleworth War Memorial above the Tame Valley. • Church spires and mills are historic landmarks within the valleys, along with historic stone built bridges, aqueducts and viaducts. • Large electricity pylons and major transport infrastructure dominate some views within the valleys as contrasting man-made features.	**M-H**

Access and recreation	• Networks of footpaths and desire lines running from the surrounding urban areas. • Numerous long distance footpaths and cycle routes running through the valleys and along canals, including the Pennine Bridleway, Trans Pennine Trail and E2 European Long Distance Route. Other routes include the Tame Valley Way, Cheshire Ring Canal Walk, Midshires Way, Rotary Way and Irwell Sculpture Trail. • The East Lancashire Heritage Railway in the Irwell Valley is a popular tourist attraction, linking with the Irwell Sculpture Trail. • Other disused railway lines provide recreation and nature conservation corridors, including within the Kirklees, Medlock and Tame valleys. • A significant amount of the land with the valleys is used for recreation with amenity grassland associated with golf courses and playing fields. • Vandalism, fly-tipping and antisocial motorbike used can be an issue with some access restricted as a consequence.	**H**
Perceptual and experiential qualities	• Tranquillity can be affected by proximity to urban areas, transport infrastructure and utility developments located within the valleys. • There can be sense of seclusion, however, in less accessible and less developed parts of the valleys. Here woodland and sound of running water are more prevalent. • Mature and ancient woodland cover and traditional field patterns give a sense of time depth. This contrasts with neighbouring urban areas. • Large roads and motorways the valleys sever the valleys' visual unity, introducing the sight and sound of moving traffic which often dominates. • Overhead power lines also weaken the rural character of the valleys.	**M**

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity

Landscape Character Type level					
Development scenario	Sensitivity				
2-3 storey residential housing developments				**M-H**	
Commercial/industrial developments					**H**

Narrower valleys cutting though the Pennine and Dark Peak foothills would have a higher sensitivity to both development scenarios (but particularly larger scale commercial/industrial developments) due to the enclosed and smaller-scale landform. The naturalistic setting of these valleys, with a typical abundance of mature native woodland, have a generally high scenic value with pockets of rural tranquillity and are assessed as being of **high sensitivity** to both development scenarios. Such areas are found within the Irwell and Kirklees valleys (LCA 23) Eagley and Bradshaw Brooks (LCA 15) the Etherow Valley (LCA 34), the Goyt Valley (LCA 37) and upstream areas of the Medlock (LCA 31) and Tame (LCA 36) valleys. **It is therefore of paramount importance that the guidance below is closely followed when development proposals are considered within these parts of the LCT.**

The lower-lying and flatter areas of the river valleys that cut through dense urban areas typically contain development such as large utility and electricity infrastructure, water treatment works, industrial sites and some are crossed by major road and rail routes. These areas generally have a lower sensitivity to both scenarios due to the strong influence development already has on the rural qualities of the landscape.

Notes on any variations in landscape sensitivity, by Landscape Character Area					
LCA 16: River Irwell and River Croal, LCA 25: River Roch, LCA 36: River Tame					
2-3 storey residential housing developments			**M**		
Commercial/industrial developments				**M-H**	

Explanation for variance in sensitivity from overall LCT scores:

These LCAs areas judged to be of **moderate-high** sensitivity to commercial / industrial developments and **moderate** sensitivity to 2-3 storey residential housing developments. They contain existing large development, such as electricity substations, water treatment works and industrial complexes, as well as being crossed by motorways, such as the M60, M66 and M67. The surrounding urban areas also have a strong influence, detracting from the rural qualities and naturalistic character of the valleys. This results in lower sensitivity judgements than the LCT as a whole.

Special landscape qualities and key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the special landscape qualities and key features/attributes that would be sensitive to change (e.g. as a result of development):

- Areas of complex varying topography with steep valley sides, flatter valley floors and undulating land overlain by a pattern of small scale farming practices, rough wet pasture, woodland and water bodies.
- The valleys' role as important wildlife corridors running between densely populated urban areas, with locally designated semi-natural habitats and networks, including a relative abundance of ancient and riparian woodland interspersed with areas of parkland and regenerating post-industrial land.
- SSSI-designated habitats at Nob End and Ashclough within the Irwell Valley; the Lowside Brickworks and Hollinwood Branch Canal within the Medlock Valley; and Ladcastle & Den Quarries and Huddersfield Narrow Canal within the Tame Valley.
- The strong connections the valleys have to the area's industrial past, including historic landmark mills, workers' housing, canals, railways, weirs, prominent listed viaducts and the nationally important Marple Aqueduct.
- Nationally designated heritage assets such as Samuel Oldknow's lime kilns, Ringley Old Bridge (Bolton), the remains of a promontory fort on the east bank of the Irwell (Bury) and the site of a post-medieval glassworks near Clarke's Bridge within the Tame Valley (Tameside).
- Conservation Areas located with the valleys or on the valley edge with the historic settlement pattern often associated with river crossings, including Brooksbottoms, Summerseat, Uppermill, Dobcross and Ramsbottom, as well as the role the landscape plays as a rural setting to these settlements.
- The scattering of Listed Buildings including the Grade I 14th century parish church of St Mary in Radcliffe (Bury) and Bramhall Hall in Stockport.
- Opportunities to access and enjoy the green corridors formed by the valleys via the strong public rights of way network, linking with adjacent urban areas and the elevated foothills beyond.
- Numerous long distance footpaths and cycle routes running through the valleys and along canals, including the Pennine Bridleway, Trans Pennine Trail and E2 European Long Distance Route, Tame Valley Way, Cheshire Ring Canal Walk, Midshires Way, Rotary Way and Irwell Sculpture Trail.
- Other natural and heritage features creating valued recreational spaces, including a number of Country Parks and disused railway lines now hosting multi-user trails.
- Wooded skylines defining the enclosed valley landscapes. Occasional longer views from elevated locations, including to the Pennine and Dark Peak uplands of the Peak District National Park, as well as locally renowned features including the Peel Monument, Saddleworth War Memorial and Wimberry Stones Brow/Indian's Head.
- The secluded and relatively tranquil character of the narrow valleys that contrast with adjoining urban areas. Strong rural qualities in parts with inaccessible areas having a sense of isolation and remoteness.

Guidance and opportunities for future development and landscape management/enhancement

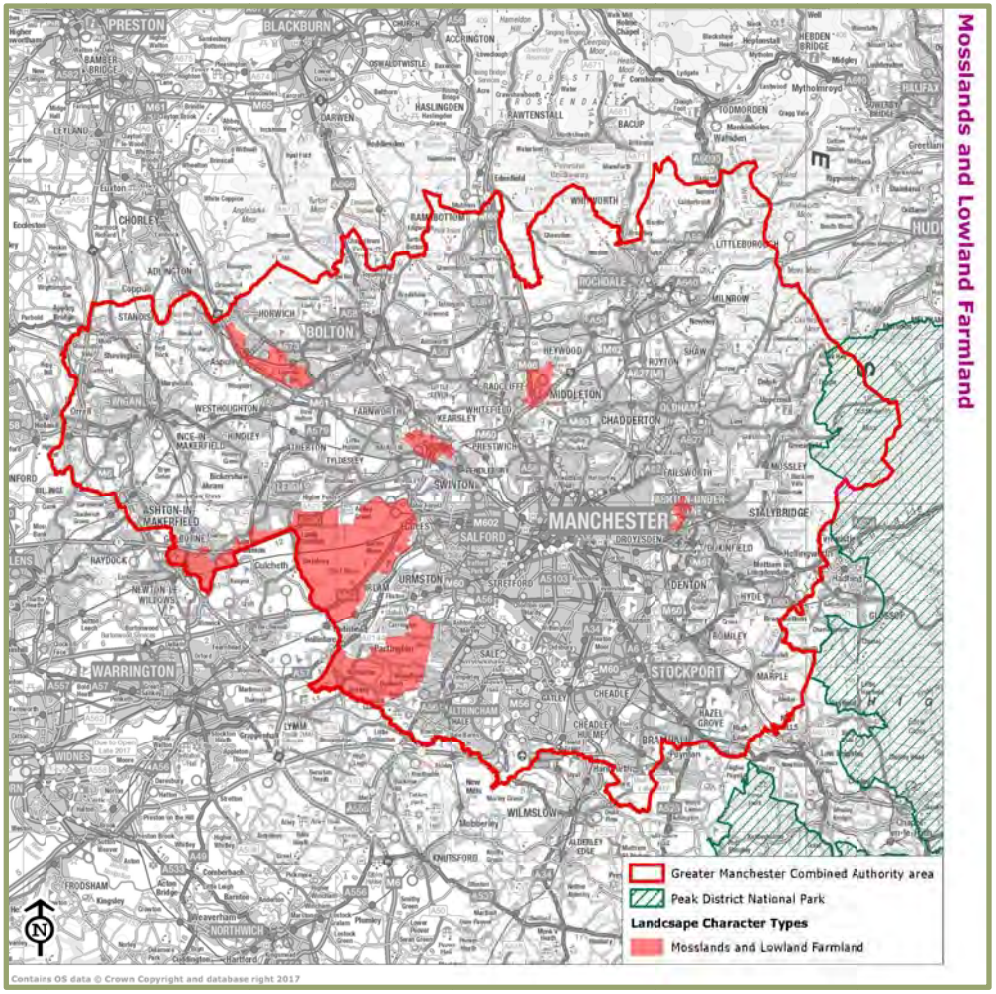
Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Area include:

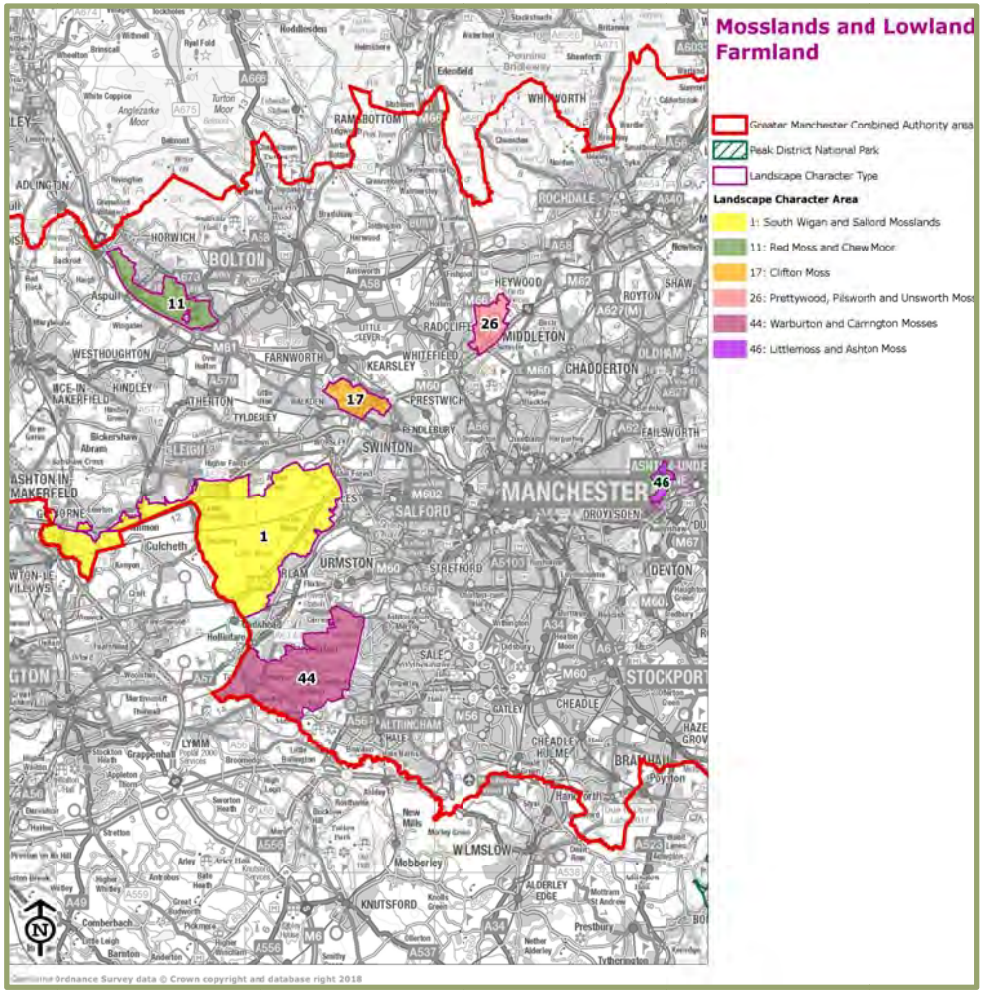
- Avoid siting development on the edges of valley where buildings would be prominent on the skyline. Conserve wooded and open undeveloped skylines.
- Utilise the screening effects of the tight valley topography and existing tree/woodland cover to integrate limited new development into the landscape.
- Protect and where possible enhance semi-natural habitats and networks including riparian, broadleaved and ancient woodland, wet grasslands, meadows and regenerating habitats on former industrial land. Avoid siting development in locations that would lead to the loss or fragmentation of any locally or nationally designated wildlife site.

- Strengthen the dry stone wall network in association with any new development, reflecting local building styles and materials. Any new boundaries should also reflect local characteristics.
- Hedgerows should be preserved and enhanced where applicable the fill in gaps. New hedgerow planting should be encouraged where it has been removed and replaced by post and wire fencing.
- Avoid the felling of any significant areas of woodland to maintain the contained and secluded character of the valleys and to retain the existing screening of the urban edge.
- Explore opportunities to further develop post-industrial and reclaimed sites (such as at Lily Hill north of Whitefield) for habitat creation with possible links with The Northern Forest initiative2.
- Conserve the character and setting of the Conservation Areas, as well as the role the landscape plays as a rural setting to historic settlements.
- Conserve remaining industrial relicts, including historic mill buildings, canals and railway lines. Development should be carefully sited in order to maintain the link between historic mills, canals, railways and roads.
- Conserve the nationally designated listed buildings and scheduled sites of Samuel Oldknow's lime kilns, the Marple Aqueduct, Ringley Old Bridge, as well as the sites of Castlesteads promontory fort and the post-medieval glassworks near Clarke's Bridge.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). This is of particular importance as the LCT covers many of Greater Manchester's main river valleys.
- Encourage woodland creation schemes on areas of low grade agricultural land, including through the Northern Forest initiative.
- Conserve key views and intervisibility with the South/West Pennines and Dark Peak foothills, upland fringes and open moorlands and including the landmarks of Peel Tower, Saddleworth War Memorial and Wimberry Stones Brow/Indian's Head (within the Peak District National Park).
- Any new development should be sympathetic in style, vernacular and form to historic industrial development within the valleys (particularly the use of local stone and red brick).
- Recreational opportunities should be maintained and enhanced in order to preserve the high recreational value of the valleys as green fingers though densely populated areas. Opportunities should be sought to strengthen the links between valleys along public footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes and the various recreational destinations and heritage sites found within the landscape.
- Formal recognition should be sought for recreational routes with possible extensions of existing long-distance routes or the formation of new ones. Examples include the Leeds & Liverpool Canal towpath in Wigan (currently National Cycle Route 562) and old railway line running though the Kirklees Valley (National Cycle Route 6).
- Protect the pockets of seclusion and tranquillity associated with the tightly enclosed valleys and their woodlands, along with their strong sense of time depth and traditional rural qualities in an urban context.

[2] See the Government's news announcement for the initiative at https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-northern-forest-gets-government-backing

LCT: Mosslands and Lowland Farmland





This Landscape Character Type (LCT) is found in Wigan, Bolton, Bury, Salford, Trafford and Tameside Districts.

Representative photographs


Woodland at Red Moss, Bolton


Ashton Moss Wetland, Tameside


Cadishead Moss, Salford


Trans Pennine Trail, Dunham Woodhouses, Trafford


Woodland at Clifton Moss, Bolton/Salford


Lostock Golf Course, Bolton


Rumworth Reservoir from Lostock Junction, Bolton


Motorway Embankment, Unsworth, Bury


Road at Barton Moss, Salford

Landscape character description

Key characteristics

Topography, geology and drainage

- Landform generally flat or gently undulating, with elevation generally ranging from 0-30 metres AOD. It rises to over 100m in places, e.g. at Lostock Junction and Hunger Hill (Bolton), Ashton Moss (Tameside) and on the edge of Unsworth (Bury).
- Underlying bedrock geology of Coal Measures (mudstones, siltstones, sandstones) overlain by fluvio-glacial sands and gravels with pockets of peat and clay.
- Floodplain landscape, often poorly drained, with numerous brooks, occasional small reservoirs and a large number of ponds, flashes and ditches.
- Soil quality is variable; restored agricultural land typically has thin, sandy, poorly drained soils (Grade 3 or Grade 4) whereas areas of reclaimed mossland have rich, peaty soils, some of which are of high agricultural productivity (Grade 1 or Grade 2).

Land use and field patterns

- Land use largely reclaimed lowland farmland, mainly arable but with some pasture, interspersed with distinctive areas of remnant mossland.
- Areas of lowland farmland have a pattern of medium to large scale fields, generally defined by gappy hedgerows, with few hedgerow trees. Field are of post medieval (e.g. south of Lostock and Lostock Junction), 18th, 19th and 20th century origin.
- The mosslands are a simple, ordered landscape divided geometrically into a series of small to large sized fields with deep, open drainage ditches as field boundaries, interspersed with moss woodlands. Field are of post medieval (e.g. Warburton Park), 18th, 19th and 20th century origin.
- Some recreational provision including golf courses.

Semi-natural habitats and woodland cover

- Remnant mosslands and large geometric moss woodlands are an important nature conservation resource, and many are locally designated as Sites of Biological Interest (SBI).
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) at Red Moss (Bolton), Brookheys Covert (Trafford), Highfield Moss (Wigan) and Astley and Bedford Mosses (Wigan), the latter of which is also a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- In lowland farmland areas there are small pockets of woodland, either on small steep-sided valleys, along motorway edges or associated with settlement edges. Areas of willow and alder carr fringe wetlands, which include ponds, flashes and ditches.
- Farmland is drained by narrow brooks e.g. Middle Brook at Lostock (Bolton) and Whittle Brook at Unsworth (Bury), which contribute to the network of wetland habitats within the landscape.

Archaeology and cultural heritage

- In ancient times, the mosses were regarded as "*dangerous wildernesses*"[1], and the unstable nature of the moss deterred the early development of settlement and roads, reflected in a current lack of development in contrast to surrounding settled areas.
- Mosses were also strategically important barriers to forces moving north or south e.g. in 1745 the Jacobite army was diverted towards Manchester at Wigan, rather than heading south across the mossland.
- Urban expansion and past widespread coal extraction has resulted in a fragmentation of the mosslands. Remnant spoil heaps and former railway corridors are now important for wildlife and recreation.
- Conservation Areas at Warburton and Dunham Woodhouses in Trafford, both containing a number of Listed Buildings including the Grade I listed Old Church of Saint Werburg in Warburton. Grade II* Listed Buildings include Morley's Hall, Light Oaks Hall (Wigan) and Buckley Hill Farmhouse (Tameside).
- Scheduled Monuments include a promontory fort on the Glaze Brook at Great Woolden (Trafford) and a moated site at Morley's Hall (Wigan).

Settlement, road pattern and rights of way

- In lowland farmland areas, settlement comprises small villages along country lanes, and scattered farmhouses.

[1] Agathoclis Beckmann for Wigan Council (March 2009) Wigan: A Landscape Character Assessment. Page 278.

- In the mosslands, farm buildings are located along the long, straight lanes at the edge of the mosses.
- Straight lanes known as 'rides' are often higher than the mossland (due to peat shrinkage), and are sometimes emphasises by trees and scrub.
- Parts of the landscape are influenced by large scale industrial and commercial development, housing, motorway corridors and railway lines e.g. large scale commercial development at Middlebrook (Bolton), Heywood (Rochdale), M60 at Clifton Moss (Bolton/Salford). There is also evidence of past mineral and extractive industries.
- Public footpaths tend to run along field boundaries. Some long distance routes cross the landscape, including the Trans Pennine Trail and National Route 62 at Dunham Massey and the Middle Brook Valley Trail at Lostock. There are small areas of Open Access land (moss and woodland).

Views and perceptual qualities

- Views tend to be internal due to the flat or gently undulating, low-lying nature of the land, with surrounding development often forming the backdrop. Overhead lines form prominent vertical elements e.g. crossing Barton Moss (Salford) and Carrington Moss (Trafford).
- Some distant views from elevated areas of farmland e.g. from Lostock Junction south across Chew Moor to the opposing settled ridge and from Lostock north to the Pennine Foothills at Rivington in Chorley / Blackburn with Darwen.
- Some wide, sweeping views across mossland areas are available from local high points, e.g. motorway flyovers and bridges over canals.
- There are some views south from Trafford into neighbouring Warrington and Cheshire East districts, across the Bollin Valley.
- The mosslands have a sense of remoteness, with few buildings and roads in poor condition, some of which terminate in dead ends. Mists and fogs are common on cooler nights. The sense of remoteness can be perceived as unsettling.
- Motorways are audibly and visually dominant in some areas, reducing tranquillity e.g. the M61 at Chew Moor and the M62 at Irlam/Barton.

Intactness and condition

This is a rural landscape and one which provides an important sense of separation between distinct settlements and urban areas. In the lowland farmland areas there is a mixture of pasture and arable cultivation, and field boundaries tend to be defined by gappy hedgerows or post and wire fencing. In the mosslands, productive peaty soils have led to there being large arable fields, defined by drainage ditches and reinforced with geometric moss woodlands.

In places the landscape is strongly influenced by large scale industrial and commercial development, motorway corridors and railway lines, and there is also evidence of past mineral and extractive industries. Conversely, some parts of the mosses have a remote feel, due to a combination of few buildings and tracks in poor condition, some with dead ends. Overhead lines stand out in some of the flatter mossland areas.

Large parts of the mosslands contain important semi-natural habitat, protected as SSSI. Red Moss SSSI (Bolton) is one of only a few examples of lowland raised mire in Greater Manchester, currently classed as in unfavourable recovering condition as work continues to restore wetland habitats following past drainage. Brookheys Covert (Trafford) has a diverse range of woodland and wetland and is in favourable condition. Highfield Moss (Wigan) raised mire is in unfavourable recovering condition, as grasses and leaf litter are restricting the growth of desired plant species and one area has been drying out. Astley and Bedford Mosses (Wigan), also a SAC, is an area of lowland raised mire, mostly in unfavourable recovering condition with ongoing scrub removal and ditch blocking to raise water levels.

Landscape sensitivity assessment

Criteria	Description	Sensitivity Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	• Landform generally flat or gently undulating resulting in a feeling of scale and openness, particularly in the mosslands. • Elevation ranges from approximately 0-30m to over 100m AOD in some areas of farmland (e.g. Lostock Junction and Hunger Hill in Bolton, Ashton Moss in Tameside and on the edge of Unsworth in Bury). • Mosslands have a simple, geometric pattern with variable scale fields, separated by drainage ditches and large moss woodlands. • Lowland farmland areas are more irregular and overlain by a medium scale field pattern delineated by gappy hedgerows. • Small-scale landscape elements include hedgerows and ditches.	**M**
Natural character	• Land use largely arable with some pasture, interspersed with remnant areas of mossland. • Large, geometric areas of moss woodland are ecologically important, many designated as SBI and some as SSSI. • Astley and Bedford Mosses (Wigan) is a SSSI and SAC. • Small pockets of woodland are found in lowland farmland areas. • Small brooks drain the landscape and there are numerous small ponds and flashes fringed by alder and willow carr.	**M**
Historic landscape character	• Field are of post medieval, 18th, 19th and 20th century origin. • Distinctive geometric landscape pattern in the mosslands. • Topography and geology led to widespread coal extraction which has also influenced the character of the landscape. • Conservation Areas are located in the south at Warburton and Dunham Woodhouses (Trafford), the former containing a Grade I listed church. • Grade II* Listed Buildings at Morley's Hall and Light Oaks Hall (Wigan) and Buckley Hill Farmhouse (Tameside). • Scheduled Monuments at Great Woolden (Trafford) and Morley's Hall (Wigan).	**M**
Form, density and setting of existing settlement/ development	• In mossland areas, farmsteads are located along long, straight roads at the edge of the moss. • Elsewhere scattered farmsteads and small, historic villages are located along rural lanes. • Surrounding housing and large scale industrial / commercial development has a strong influence in some areas e.g. at Middlebrook in Bolton • The more elevated parts of the LCT (e.g. at Lostock) form part of the setting of overlooking settlements. • In a number of places, this LCT provides an important sense of separation and naturalistic buffer between distinct settlements and urban areas.	**M**
Views and visual character including skylines	• Internal views are common due to the typically flat or gently undulating and low lying topography, with surrounding development often forming the backdrop. • Some distant views are available from elevated areas of farmland e.g. from Lostock Junction south across Chew Moor to the opposing settled ridge and from Lostock north to the Pennine Foothills at Rivington in Chorley / Blackburn with Darwen. • Some wide, sweeping views across mossland areas are available from local high points, e.g. from motorway flyovers and bridges over canals. • Views south from Trafford into neighbouring Warrington and Cheshire East districts, across the Bollin Valley. • Overhead lines form prominent vertical elements in some areas.	**M**
Access and recreation	• Public footpaths tend to follow field boundaries. • Some long distance walking and cycling routes including the Trans Pennine Trail and National Route 62, and the Middle Brook Valley Trail. • Small areas of Open Access land (moss and woodland). • Frequent golf courses.	**L-M**
Perceptual and experiential qualities	• Mossland areas have a sense of remoteness, sometimes perceived as unsettling. • Motorways are visually and audibly dominant in some areas, reducing tranquillity.	**M**

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity

Landscape Character Type level						
Development scenario	Sensitivity					
2-3 storey residential housing developments			**M**			
Commercial/industrial developments			**M**			

Elevated areas which are widely visible from the surrounding landscape (e.g. Lostock Junction and Hunger Hill in Bolton, Ashton Moss in Tameside and on the edge of Unsworth in Bury) are judged to be of **moderate-high** sensitivity to both development scenarios.

Parts of the mossland are designated as SSSI. These include Red Moss (Bolton) in LCA 11, Brookheys Covert (Trafford) in LCA 44, Highfield Moss and Astley and Bedford Mosses (Wigan) in LCA 1, the latter of which is also internationally designated as a SAC. It is judged that these areas, due to the importance of their semi-natural habitats and contribution to landscape character, would be of **moderate-high** sensitivity to residential and commercial / industrial development.

Special landscape qualities and key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the special landscape qualities and key features/attributes that would be sensitive to change (e.g. as a result of development):

- Elevated parts of the LCT which are widely visible and form the setting to neighbouring urban areas e.g. at Lostock Junction and Hunger Hill in Bolton, Ashton Moss in Tameside and on the edge of Unsworth in Bury.
- Remnant mosslands and moss woodlands, many of which are designated locally as SBIs.
- Nationally important SSSI-designated habitats, including at Red Moss (Bolton), Brookheys Covert (Trafford), Highfield Moss (Wigan) and Astley and Bedford Mosses (Wigan), the latter of which is also a SAC.
- Small pockets of woodland in farmed areas, on small steep-side valleys, settlement edges or along motorways.
- Network of brooks, drainage ditches, occasional small reservoirs and wetland areas surrounded by carr woodland.
- The simple, open and ordered nature of the mosslands, which provides a contrast to surrounding dense urban and industrial development and is evidence of the cultural associations of the mosslands.
- Distinctive mossland 'rides' which are sometimes emphasised by scrub and trees.
- Conservation Areas at Warburton and Dunham Woodhouses in Trafford.
- Listed Buildings including the Grade I listed Old Church of Saint Werburg in Warburton, Grade II* listed Morley's Hall and Light Oaks Hall in Wigan and Grade II* listed Buckley Hill Farmhouse in Tameside.
- Scheduled Monuments including a promontory fort on the Glaze Brook at Great Woolden (Trafford) and a moated site at Morley's Hall (Wigan).
- Recreational opportunities in the form of public footpaths and long distance walking and cycling routes, including the Trans Pennine Trail and National Route 62.
- Panoramic views from elevated areas of rolling farmland, e.g. from Lostock Junction south across Chew Moor to the opposing settled ridge and from Lostock north to the Pennine Foothills at Rivington in Chorley / Blackburn with Darwen.
- Wide, sweeping views across the mossland from local high points e.g. motorway flyovers and bridges over canals.
- Views south from Trafford into neighbouring Warrington and Cheshire East districts, across the Bollin Valley.
- The sense of separation that the landscape provides between distinct settlements, and role as a rural backdrop to development.
- Important pockets of relative remoteness and tranquillity – valued in the wider urban context.

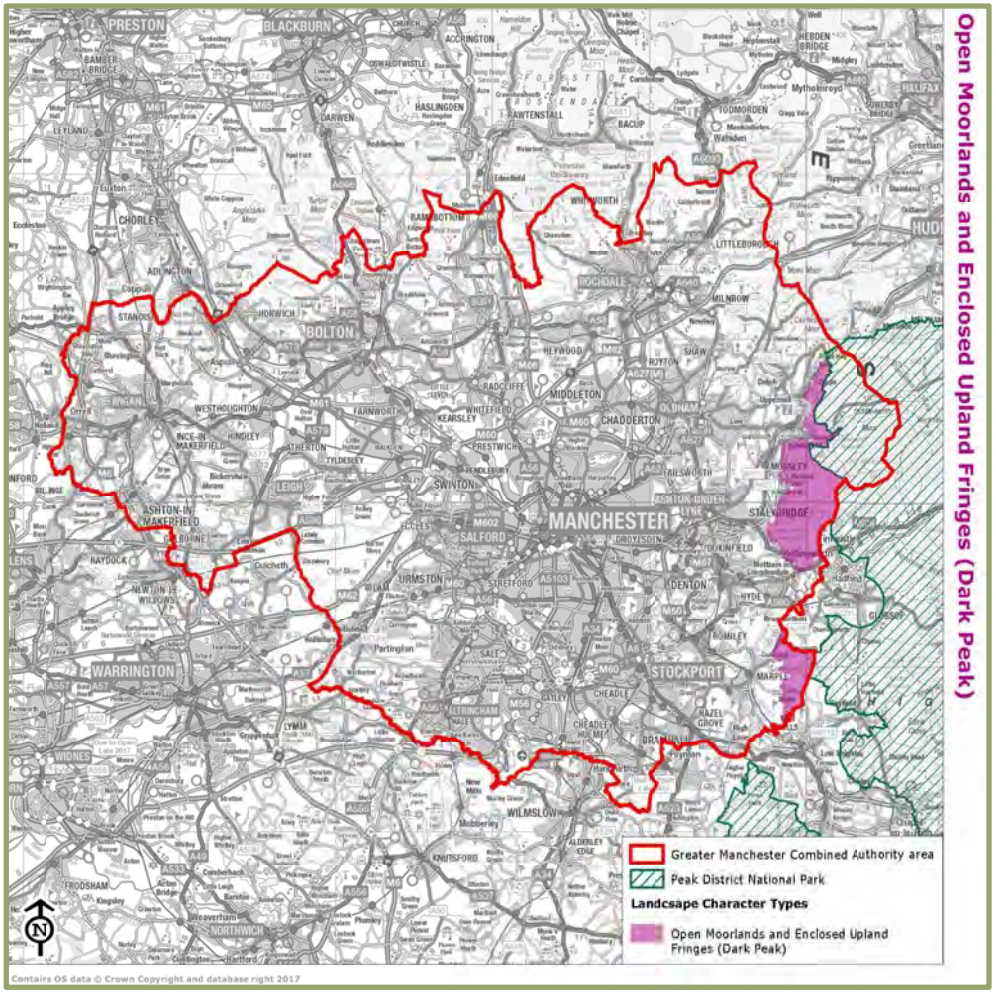
Guidance and opportunities for future development and landscape management / enhancement

Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Type include:

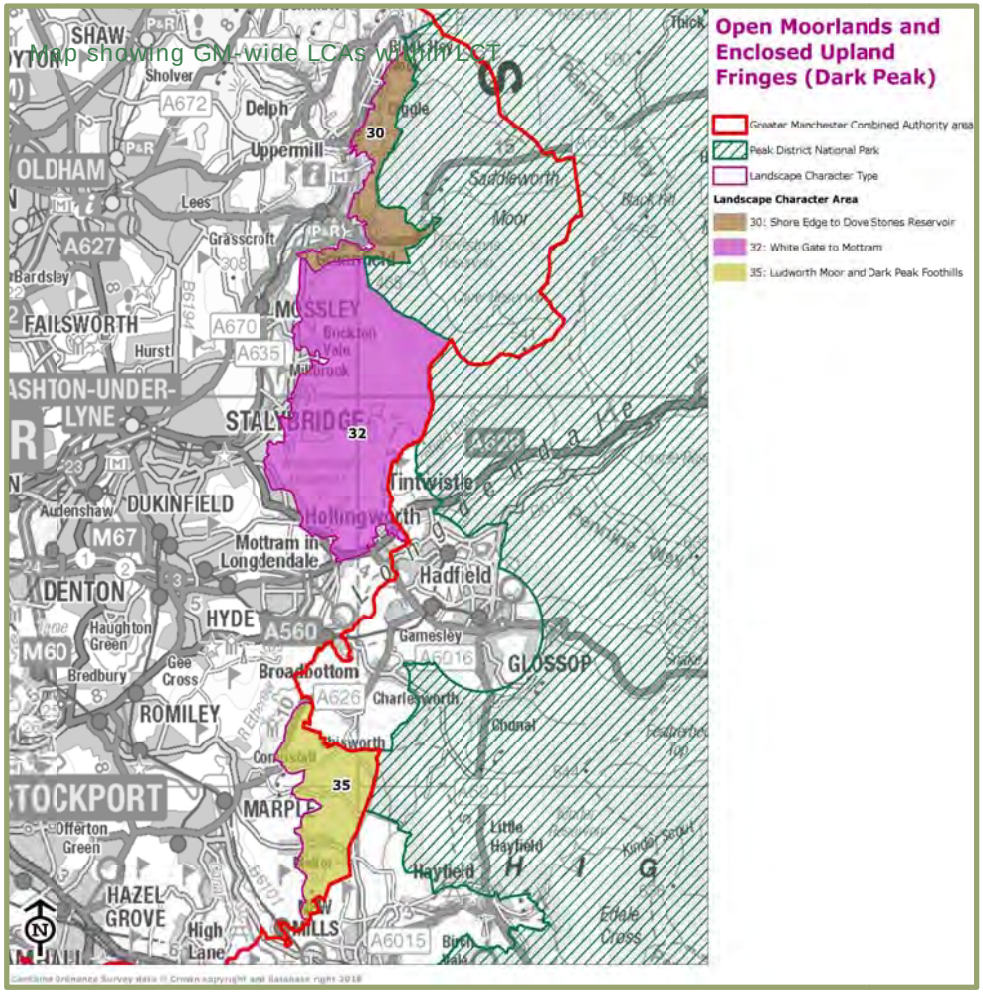
- Avoid siting development on highly visible skylines e.g. elevated areas on the urban fringe including at Lostock Junction, Hunger Hill, Ashton Moss and Unsworth.
- Maintain open and long ranging views across the mossland from local high points, and long ranging views from more elevated areas of lowland farmland.
- Ensure that the sense of separation the landscape provides between distinct settlements is retained.
- Utilise areas of existing woodland (e.g. moss woodlands, valley woodlands, woodland along settlement edges) to integrate new development into the landscape, avoiding sites designated for their nature conservation importance.
- Protect areas of semi-natural habitat, including mosses and moss woodlands, which are locally designated as SBIs or nationally protected as SSSIs. Seek to enhance these where possible and provide linkages to form robust habitat networks.
- Conserve and manage the mosslands, including those areas which form part of SBIs and LNRs, to avoid drying and erosion. Consider the potential to restore less productive areas of farmland to lowland raised bog habitat where possible.
- Restore and enhance areas of deteriorating farmland including additional, species-rich, hedgerow planting to fill gaps and replace post and wire fencing. Reintroduce hedgerow trees where appropriate.
- Protect areas of moss woodland, which provide important semi-natural habitat and contribute to the distinctive geometric character of the mosslands. Utilise the screening effects of existing woodland to integrate development into the landscape where possible.
- Conserve and manage existing woodlands to encourage habitat diversity, using locally appropriate species and protecting from grazing during establishment.
- Improve the condition of the mossland 'rides', and restore ditches and field boundaries in the mosslands to improve grassland biodiversity.
- Consider additional woodland planting to enhance landscape structure, soften the urban fringe, screen industrial areas and reduce the noise and visual impacts of motorway corridors, where appropriate.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology and subsequent knock-on effects, such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off.
- Ensure any new development respects the character and historic qualities of the Conservation Areas at Warburton and Dunham Woodhouses.
- Conserve and protect the setting of important heritage assets, including the Grade I listed Old Church of Saint Werburg in Warburton, the promontory fort at Great Woolden (Scheduled Monument) and moated site at Morley's Hall (Scheduled Monument).
- Consider the impact of overhead lines where these are proposed, and mitigate the impact of existing lines where appropriate.
- Enhance existing public access and provide new informal recreational provision e.g. by creating circular routes with connections to canal tow paths, using derelict railways lines where possible. Tie in with proposals for a "Carbon Trail"[2] under the Carbon Landscape project.
- Improve signage, interpretation and waymarking at areas used for informal recreation, with parking provision where appropriate.
- Ensure that any development is in keeping with the mainly rural character of the landscape in terms of form, density and vernacular.
- Retain the quiet and tranquil character of the mosses by discouraging inappropriate land uses and development.

[2] http://carbonlandscape.org.uk/carbon-trail

LCT: Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (Dark Peak)



Map showing GM-wide LCAs within LCT



This Landscape Character Type (LCT) is found in Oldham, Tameside and Stockport Districts.

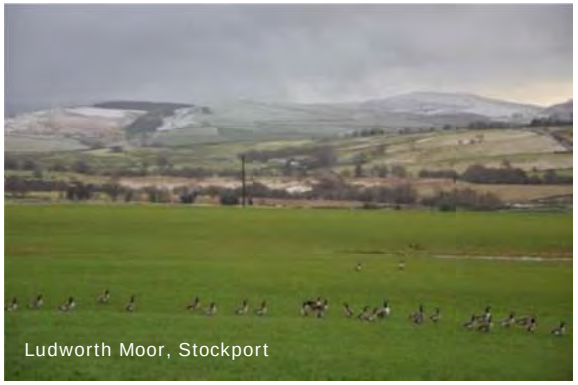
Representative photographs


Mellor Moor, Stockport


Walkerwood Reservoir looking towards Harridge Pike


Minor watercourse draining into the Tame below, Oldham


Traditional gritstone farm buildings, Tameside


Ludworth Moor, Stockport


Pony keeping near Mudd, Tameside


Upland fringe pastures below Harridge Pike, Tameside


Recreational users at Dove Stone Reservoir, Oldham


Looking west into the upland fringes of Stockport

Landscape character description

Key characteristics

Topography, geology and drainage

- An elevated upland landscape comprising large expanses of open moorland fringed by strongly undulating upland pastures rising up from the adjacent river valleys to the west.
- Elevation generally rises to the east of the LCT to meet the Peak District National Park, reaching 497m AOD at Hoarstone Edge (Tameside).
- Landscape drained by multiple springs and minor water courses originating from the uplands, flowing into a number of reservoirs and river valleys at lower elevations (including the Tame and Etherow).
- Majority underlain by Millstone Grit sandstones, siltstones and mudstones, with rocks from the Pennine Coal Measures Formation defining the geology of Stockport (supplemented by bands of Millstone Grit).
- Peat associated with the high moorland, with glacial till found at lower elevations – both deposited in the Quaternary period.
- Away from the areas of peat on the high moor, soils are generally silty loams often subject to seasonal waterlogging. Agricultural land is classed as Grade 4 or 5 (poor productivity).

Land use and field patterns

- Open moorland used for rough grazing (predominantly by sheep) with areas remaining under traditional management for grouse.
- Enclosed land comprising sheep-grazed semi-improved pastures and hay meadows. Fragments of heathland and grass moor are rough grazed. Pony paddocks occur nearer to the settled valleys.
- A strong, intricate pattern of moorland intakes, ranging from regular Parliamentary enclosures to more irregular post-medieval piecemeal enclosures and former open medieval systems on lower slopes.
- A network of gritstone walls creates a distinctive pattern and provides unity with rugged vernacular buildings. Lines of trees, lengths of fencing and hedgerows also form boundaries.
- Other land uses include reservoirs (including Brushes and Walkerwood Reservoirs at Stalybridge Country Park and part of Dove Stone Reservoir) and the quarry at Buckton Vale.

Semi-natural habitats and woodland cover

- Landscape supports a rich mosaic of upland habitats, including heather moorland, wet and dry heathland, blanket bog, acid grassland, rush pasture/purple moor grass, scrub and wooded cloughs.
- Boar Flat (Tameside) falls within the wider Peak District Moors SPA, South Pennine Moors SAC and Dark Peak SSSI in recognition of important heathland, blanket bog and sessile oak woodland habitats.
- Off the moor, traditionally managed species-rich hay meadows, disused quarries and wetlands (e.g. ponds, reservoirs and wet meadows) provide further wildlife interest and habitats for birds.
- Significant coverage of Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs), with Local Nature Reserves at Brushes Valley and Stalybridge Country Park. Dove Stones Reservoir is managed as a RSPB reserve.
- Small bands of broadleaved and mixed woodland trace watercourses, with lines of trees often found along stone walls. Shelterbelts and woodland planting screen farm buildings and settlements.

Archaeology and cultural heritage

- Cairns situated in elevated skyline positions on the open moorland, including a Scheduled Monument at Ludworth Intakes (Stockport). The moorland peat deposits are also likely to contain a rich record of preserved prehistoric archaeology.
- Buckton Castle Scheduled Monument lies on the edge of Buckton Moor – a ringwork and site of a 17th century beacon. Brown Low prehistoric bowl barrow and Robin Hood's Picking Rods (thought to be the remains of a Mercian cross) are also scheduled (Stockport).
- Disused quarries provide evidence for a rich industrial heritage, with coal mining relics in Stockport. A group of 17th century cottages and loom workshops at Higher Kinders (Stockport) are Grade II* Listed.
- Landmark historic buildings include the Grade II* church of St Chad and the 17th century Mellor Hall in Stockport.
- Conservation Areas at Moorend, Carrbrook, St Chad's Church (Saddleworth), Holly Grove and Diglea include clusters of Grade II Listed buildings displaying a strong gritstone vernacular. Listed farmhouses, barns and cottages are found throughout the upland fringe landscape.

Settlement, road pattern and rights of way

- Only occasional isolated dwellings or abandoned farmsteads are found across the open moor.
- A dispersed settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads, occasional short terraces of cottages and clustered hamlets / villages in sheltered locations defines the upland fringe landscape.
- A network of narrow lanes enclosed by stone walls connects farms and the settlements. The A635, A57 and A627 link the Peak District to the east with Greater Manchester to the west.
- Open Access Land covers the moorland. Multiple rights of way and former packhorse routes cross the fringe areas, including the Pennine Bridleway, Standedge Trail, Tameside Trail and Cown Edge Way.

Views and perceptual qualities

- The landscape evokes a strongly rural, remote and 'Dark Peak' feel with gritstone walls, rugged traditional farms, sheep grazed pastures and bleak, exposed moorland.
- Close visual relationships between the lower fringe landscapes and the mill heritage in the valleys below, with the large mills and prominent chimneys characterising many views.
- Elevation affords expansive views west over Greater Manchester, with tall tower blocks often featuring. To the east, the moorlands blend into those of the adjacent National Park, emphasising contrasting wild and remote qualities.

Intactness and condition

This is a remote, highly rural landscape with few modern influences. Character and perceptions are strongly influenced by the elevated open moorlands rising up to the Peak District National Park beyond. These open and often desolate moorlands contrast with the intricate patterns of moorland intakes and pastures featuring strong visual relationships with the settled areas below.

Issues impacting on landscape condition include frequent derelict sections of gritstone wall gapped up or completely replaced by fencing; a prevalence of horse keeping in the upland fringe landscapes (with associated over-grazed paddocks sub-divided by white pony tape or wooden fencing); and the creeping influence of nearby urban areas at lower elevations, with a gradual erosion of traditional land use practices and views/noise of traffic and activity detracting from otherwise remote, upland qualities. SAC/SSSI-designated rough grassland and heath habitats at Boar Flat are currently assessed as in unfavourable recovering condition, with species-poor heathland but signs of regeneration and continued importance of the mosaic of habitats for snipe and curlew.

Landscape sensitivity assessment

Criteria	Description	Sensitivity Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	• An elevated upland landscape. • Large expanses of open moorland fringed by strongly undulating upland pastures rising up from the adjacent river valleys to the west. • Stone walls, trees and gritstone buildings create small scale elements in the fringe landscapes, whilst the open moorland has few small-scale landscape elements.	**H**
Natural character	• A rich mosaic of upland habitats, including heather moorland, wet and dry heathland, blanket bog, acid grassland, rush pasture/purple moor grass, scrub and wooded cloughs. • Boar Flat (Tameside) falls within the wider Peak District Moors SPA, South Pennine Moors SAC and Dark Peak SSSI. • Traditionally managed species-rich hay meadows, disused quarries and wetlands (e.g. ponds, reservoirs and wet meadows) interspersed with semi-improved pastures. • Significant SBI coverage, with LNRs at Brushes Valley and Stalybridge Country Park. Dove Stone Reservoir is managed as a RSPB reserve. • Other land uses include reservoirs and the abandoned quarry at Buckton Vale.	**M-H**
Historic landscape character	• A strong, intricate pattern of moorland intakes, ranging from regular Parliamentary enclosures to more irregular post-medieval piecemeal enclosures and former open medieval systems on lower slopes. • High archaeological potential of the peat deposits on the open moor. • Cairns situated in elevated skyline positions on the open moorland, including a Scheduled Monument at Ludworth Intakes (Stockport). • Scheduled Monuments at Buckton Castle, Brown Low prehistoric bowl barrow and Robin Hood's Picking Rods • Strong industrial heritage reflected in disused quarries, coal mining relics, weavers' cottages and views to mills in adjacent valleys. • Distinctive millstone grit vernacular reflected in buildings and stone walls, with a number of Listed Buildings throughout. • Main Conservation Areas at Moorend, Carrbrook, St Chad's Church (Saddleworth), Holly Grove and Diglea.	**M-H**
Form, density and setting of existing settlement/ development	• Only occasional isolated dwellings or abandoned farmsteads are found across the open moor. • Dispersed pattern of scattered farmsteads, occasional short terraces of cottages and clustered hamlets / villages in the upland fringe. • The landscape forms a dramatic upland backdrop to large parts of urban Greater Manchester, transitioning to the Peak District National Park beyond.	**H**
Views and visual character including skylines	• Strong visual relationships between the moorland intakes and unenclosed open moorlands. • Frequent long views out over the urban settlements that nestle within the valley bottoms, often featuring industrial heritage features such as prominent mill buildings and chimneys. Tower blocks also break the horizon. • Open moorlands form a dramatic eastern edge to Greater Manchester, in combination with the Dark Peak behind. • Historic features marking skylines, including the St Chad's church tower, cairn at Ludworth Intakes, Buckton Castle and Brown Low bowl barrow.	**H**
Access and recreation	• The moorlands are Open Access Land, linking across to the adjacent open moors of the Peak District National Park. • A strong network of rights of way and paved former packhorse routes defines the enclosed landscapes, including the Pennine Bridleway, Standedge Trail, Tameside Trail and Cown Edge Way. • Stalybridge Country Park is a popular destination for nearby urban communities, as is the nature reserve and reservoir at Dove Stone (which extends into the National Park).	**H**
Perceptual and experiential qualities	• A strongly rural, remote and 'Peak District' feel with gritstone walls, rugged traditional farms, sheep grazed pastures and bleak, exposed moorland. • Urban fringe influences and visual associations with adjacent urban areas dilute these qualities at lower elevations.	**M-H**

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity

Landscape Character Type level					
Development scenario	Sensitivity				
2-3 storey residential housing developments				**M-H**	
Commercial/industrial developments					**H**

The open, unenclosed moorlands and areas immediately adjacent to the Peak District National Park are also judged as of **high** sensitivity to housing developments. **It is therefore of paramount importance that the guidance below is closely followed when residential development proposals are considered within these parts of the landscape (and for all parts when considering commercial/industrial developments).**

Special landscape qualities and key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the special landscape qualities and key features/attributes that would be sensitive to change (e.g. as a result of development):

- Its elevated, open character with prominent (largely undeveloped) skylines forming a backdrop to views from valley settlements and the wider Greater Manchester conurbation.
- The landscape's visual and character connections with the Peak District National Park, which lies immediately adjacent to the east.
- The mosaic of internationally, nationally and local designated habitats, including heather moorland, blanket bog, acid grassland, rush pasture/purple moor grass, hay meadows, scrub and wooded cloughs.
- Open, sweeping skylines sometimes punctuated by wind-blown trees and historic features including the tower of the Grade II* church of St Chad, cairn at Ludworth Intakes, Buckton Castle and Brown Low bowl barrow (all Scheduled Monuments).
- Strong pattern of 18th/19th century intakes, post-medieval piecemeal enclosures and medieval field systems marked by traditional gritstone walls.
- Industrial heritage reflected in disused quarries, coal mining relics, weavers' cottages and views to mills in adjacent valleys.
- Unifying vernacular of traditional millstone grit farms and cottages, with small villages and clusters of buildings situated in sheltered locations often fringed by trees (with Conservation Areas at Moorend, Carrbrook, St Chad's Church (Saddleworth), Holly Grove and Diglea).
- Important opportunities to access and enjoy the landscape, including large areas of Open Access Land, lengths of the Pennine Bridleway, Standedge Trail, Tameside Trail and Cown Edge Way, and popular reservoirs at Stalybridge Country Park and Dove Stone.
- Strong rural qualities and an overriding sense of isolation and remoteness.

Guidance and opportunities for future development and landscape management/enhancement

Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Type include:

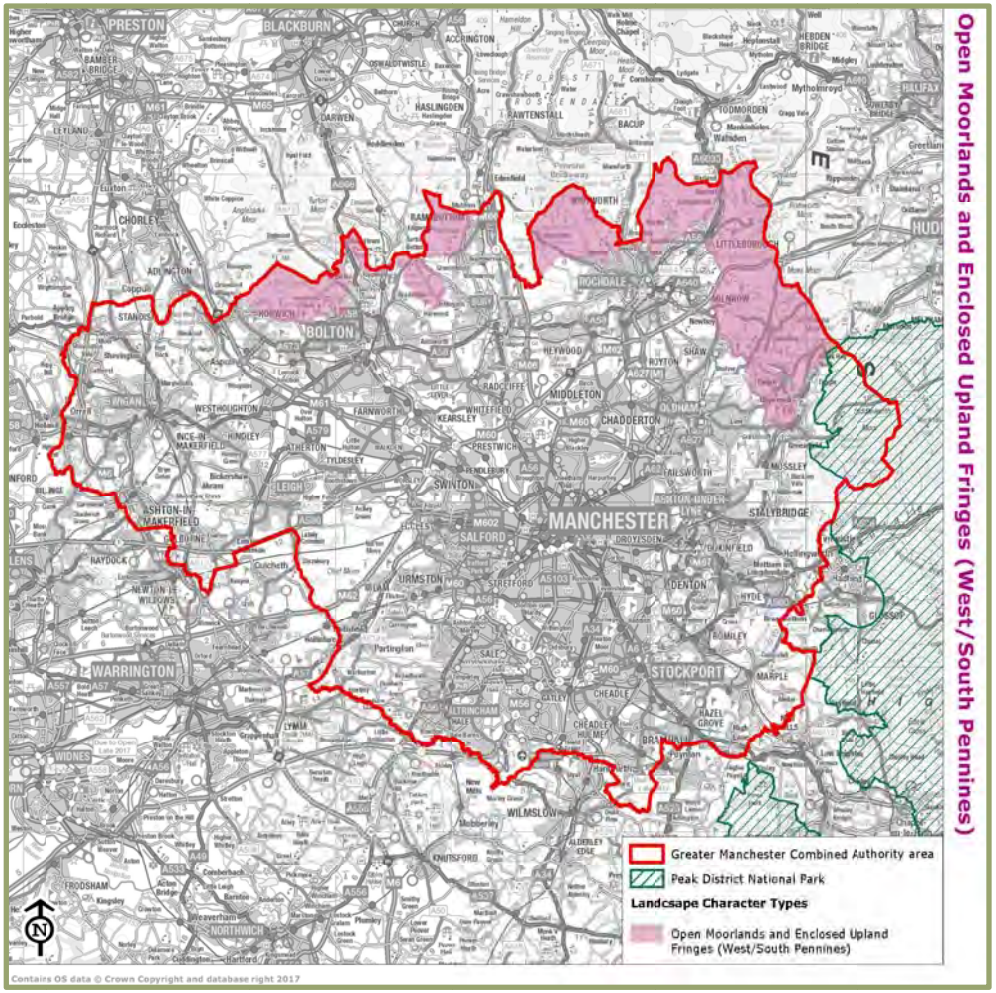
- Avoid siting any development within the open moorland and areas on the immediate edge of the Peak District National Park.
- In keeping with current settlement pattern – utilise dips in the landform and existing or new tree/woodland cover to integrate limited new development into the landscape.
- New housing development should replicate traditional vernacular styles and materials (Millstone Grit).
- Ensure any new development respects the character and historic qualities of the Conservation Areas at Moorend, Carrbrook, St Chad's Church (Saddleworth), Holly Grove and Diglea.
- Strengthen and restore the dry stone wall network, using locally-sourced Millstone Grit and reflecting characteristic building styles.
- Protect and where possible enhance semi-natural habitats and networks, including heather moorland,

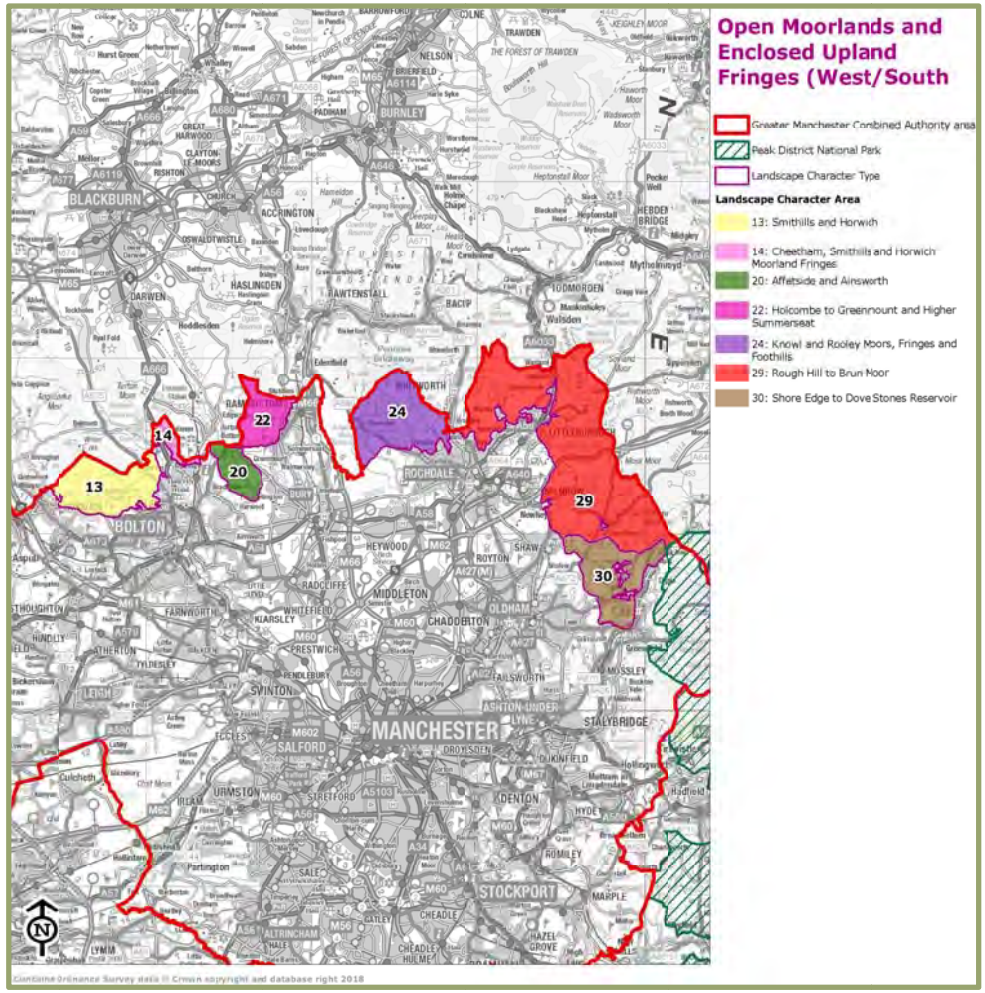
blanket bog, acid grassland, rush pasture/purple moor grass and traditionally managed hay meadows.

- Encourage the natural regeneration of woodland and restoration of wetland habitats fringing the stream valleys, slowing water flow before it enters the Tame and Etherow valleys below.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology and subsequent knock-on effects, such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off.
- Ensure any new development does not dilute the strong field patterns associated with the upland fringe landscape and its characteristic moorland intakes.
- Conserve open, sweeping skylines which form a backdrop to views from valley settlements and Greater Manchester more widely.
- Conserve and protect the setting of important heritage assets, including the Grade II* church of St Chad, cairn at Ludworth Intakes, Buckton Castle and Brown Low bowl barrow.
- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of the Peak District National Park, including its beautiful views, sense of tranquillity and dark night skies, and the vital benefits that flow beyond its boundary[1].
- Protect long, uninterrupted views from higher ground over the mill settlements in the valleys below, and Greater Manchester communities beyond.
- Protect the overriding rural, remote and often bleak 'Dark Peak' characteristics of the landscape.

[1] Taken from the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23 (Final consultation draft, March 2018)

LCT: Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (West/South Pennines)





This Landscape Character Type (LCT) is found in Bolton, Bury, Rochdale and Oldham Districts.

Representative photographs



View of houses in Delph, nestled into a stream valley



View of the historic village of Wardle, with the church spire and pylons forming dominant features



Large wind turbines dominate the skyline on Knowl Moor



Masts located on high ground near Height Barn, north of Ainsworth



The site of a disused quarry remains visible in the landscape north of Summit



Incised clough containing the small stream of Red Brook



Grassland pasture fields enclosed by gritstone walls, transitioning to unenclosed moorland habitats beyond



Watergrove Reservoir, with mixed woodland and unenclosed moorland visible in the distance



Farmland near the village of Holcombe, with Peel Tower visible on the skyline

Landscape character description

Key characteristics

Topography, geology and drainage

- An elevated, upland landscape rising up to the higher Pennine moorlands/plateaux in the north and east of Greater Manchester. The landform was formed by glacial action and is widely varied and locally distinct, with broad sweeping uplands, areas with dramatic folds, terraces and slopes and occasional stream valleys.
- Underlying bedrock geology of Pennine Coal Measures (mudstones, siltstones, sandstones) and Millstone Grit. The uplands are characterised by expansive peat deposits.
- Generally, soil fertility is poor; the majority of agricultural land is classed as Grade 4 or 5.
- Small streams and brooks drain the uplands into numerous reservoirs. Some also drain into major rivers including the River Tame and River Irwell.

Land use and field patterns

- Higher elevations characterised by unenclosed open moorland used for rough grazing (predominantly by sheep). Large-scale wind farms occupy some of the higher moorland areas, notably Knowl Moor (Scout Moor Wind Farm) and Shore Moor. A military Danger Zone is located on the edge of Holcombe Moor.
- Upland fringes comprise semi-improved grassland pasture enclosed by a network of gritstone walls (with some replacement by post and wire fencing). Enclosures form a patchwork of small irregular and larger rectangular fields, including Parliamentary enclosures.
- Land use in the upland fringes is primarily sheep and cattle farming, with some remnants of unimproved upland pastures. Localised areas are used for horse and pony paddocks.
- Past and present quarrying activity has left frequent imprints on the landscape. A number of these sites have been restored as semi-natural habitat and some serve as destinations for recreational activity e.g. Crompton Moor. Golf courses form occasional features close to the urban edge.
- Reservoirs also form valued recreational destinations with visitor facilities, including Watergrove Reservoir and Ogden Reservoir. Smithills Country Park covers a large area around Smithills Moor.

Semi-natural habitats and woodland cover

- Rich mosaic of upland habitats including heather moorland, blanket bog, acid grassland and wet and dry heathland. Extensive areas are internationally or nationally designated for their nature conservation value, including the South Pennine Moors SPA/SAC/SSSI/SBI and West Pennine Moors SSSI.
- Within the enclosed upland fringes, disused quarries, reservoirs, broadleaved valley woodlands, species rich grassland and wetlands are often locally designated as Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs).
- On the whole, woodland is sparse on the unenclosed uplands. Coniferous/mixed plantations are associated with reservoirs and quarries. Tracts of broadleaved woodland clothe the sides of valleys. Trees also feature along field boundaries within the enclosed upland fringe.

Archaeology and cultural heritage

- Important archaeological landscape containing Scheduled remains including a Blackstone Edge Roman Road, a Roman Fort (near Castle Shaw) and Scheduled Bowl Barrow (near Knarr Barn). The peat deposits on the uplands are also likely to contain a rich record of preserved prehistoric archaeology.
- Evidence of the industrial heritage of the area, with numerous disused quarries and mines. Near to settlements, mills and chimneys form frequent landmarks.
- The enclosed landscape contains a number of historic settlements, many of which are designated as Conservation Areas with clusters of Listed Buildings, including prominent churches.
- Inspirational landscape, with well-known cultural associations. The open moorland provided inspiration for Ted Hughes (from neighbouring Calderdale) and poet Ammon Wrigley. Monuments including Peel Tower (Grade II listed) are located in elevated locations.

Settlement, road pattern and rights of way

- Remote with a lack of development within the open moors. The upland fringes have a sparsely settled character, with traditional millstone grit stone-built farms, dispersed cottages and houses and several historic villages with a unifying stone vernacular.
- Occasional halls, manors and country residences are also scattered throughout the landscape, including Smithills Hall (Grade I Listed) in Bolton District and Shore Hall (Grade II* Listed) in Rochdale District.
- Relatively sparse road network, with farms and settlements linked by minor roads and tracks. Some larger routes cross the landscape, including the M62 and numerous A-roads.
- Forms an attractive, undeveloped remote backdrop to and has a strong visual relationship with nearby urban areas.

- The unenclosed moorlands include large areas of Open Access Land. Long distance routes pass through the LCT, including the Pennine Way National Trail, Rochdale Way and Rotary Way, which link to a strong rights of way network. Many routes crossing the moorland are based on historic packhorse routes.

Views and perceptual qualities

- Long, panoramic views are afforded by the high elevation of the landscape. There is often intervisibility with the dramatic Dark Peak moorlands of the Peak District National Park, particularly in the eastern parts of the LCT.
- The landscape evokes a strongly rural, remote and continuation of character of the Pennine uplands with gritstone walls, traditional farms, sheep grazed pastures and rough moorland.
- The unenclosed moorland is characterised by muted colours with subtle colour changes. The landscape is strongly influenced by the changeable weather conditions.
- This landscape is often associated with a sense of openness, remoteness and isolation. This perception can be broken in places by views of urban development and the presence of intrusive modern features including the M62 motorway.
- Wind turbines and pylons/overhead lines punctuate the mostly open and undeveloped skylines. Masts are a feature of higher ground and are occasionally found in clusters.
- Within the stream valleys, there is a contrasting sense of enclosure due to topography and woodland cover.

Intactness and condition

The uplands and upland fringes are a remote, highly rural landscape. Generally the landscape is intact with an important mosaic of textured semi-natural upland habitats on the unenclosed moorland and grassland traditionally managed by sheep grazing in the enclosed fields. It forms a continuation of character from the wider Pennine upland landscapes, including the Dark Peak area of the Peak District National Park.

Issues which impact on intactness and condition include stone-wall boundary loss and subsequent replacement by post and wire fencing and urban fringe influences adjacent to development, including the proliferation of horse keeping in some localised areas (with associated structures and features including pony tape). Large-scale wind turbines and pylon lines form dominant features on the otherwise undeveloped skylines. Active quarrying operations introduce noise and movement, which detract from the remote and tranquil qualities of the landscape. Litter (particularly along roads and in car parks) and fly tipping are also issues within this landscape. Some areas are frequently used for illegal off-roading (predominantly with dirt bikes and quads) resulting in damage to important habitats. Wildfires also impact upon the intactness and condition of semi-natural habitats. Designated habitats on the unenclosed moorland of the South Pennines are mostly in ‘unfavourable recovering’ condition. Areas within the West Pennine Moors SSSI vary in their condition from ‘unfavourable – no change’ to ‘favourable’. Restorative works and active management are regularly undertaken on large areas of the moorland to improve habitat condition.

Landscape sensitivity assessment

Criteria	Description	Sensitivity Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	• Elevated upland landscape, created via glaciation. Carved by intricate valleys containing streams and brooks. • Upland fringes are overlain by a patchwork of small-scale irregular and medium–scale rectilinear enclosures. • On upper slopes, the landscape is open and large scale, with features limited to large reservoirs and wind turbines. • The upland fringes contain a higher density of small-scale features on enclosed land including trees, stone walls and buildings.	**H**
Natural character	• Rich mosaic of upland habitats including heather moorland, blanket bog, acid grassland and wet and dry heathland. Extensive areas are internationally or nationally designated for their nature conservation value, including the South Pennine Moors SPA/SAC/SSSI/SBI and West Pennine Moors SSSI. • On the enclosed upland fringes, land use is primarily semi-improved pastures used for sheep and cattle grazing with limited areas of horsiculture. • Numerous SBIs, protecting habitats including reservoirs, broadleaved valley woodlands, species rich grassland and wetlands. • Bands of broadleaved (including some ancient) and mixed woodland tracing watercourses and cloaking the sides of stream valleys. Mixed woodland is also present as screening around quarries. • Hawthorn hedges are located along some field boundaries.	**M-H**
Historic landscape character	• Field origins include regular-shaped parliamentary enclosures and smaller scale 18th and 19th century piecemeal enclosures. • High archaeological potential of the peat deposits on the open moor. • Nationally important Scheduled Monuments at Blackstone Edge Roman Road, Castleshaw Roman Fort and a Bowl Barrow near Knarr Barn. • Occasional historic halls and manor houses including Smithills Hall (Grade I and within a Grade II Registered Park and Garden) and Shore Hall (Grade II*). • The enclosed landscape contains a number of historic settlements designated as Conservation Areas with clusters of Listed Buildings. • Evidence of industrial heritage throughout, including former quarries and mining pits, mill buildings and chimney stacks.	**M-H**
Form, density and setting of existing settlement/ development	• Settlement is limited to scattered farms and houses, often constructed of a distinctive millstone grit vernacular. The open moorland is generally devoid of buildings. • The nucleated historic settlements are nestled into the lower ground associated with the stream valleys. • The upland fringes and unenclosed uplands beyond provide an undeveloped and often dramatic rural backdrop and setting to adjacent urban areas.	**H**
Views and visual character including skylines	• Expansive, panoramic views across the urban conurbation of Greater Manchester and to adjacent moorland areas including those within the Peak District National Park to the east. • Characterised by open, expansive skylines. These are broken by features including masts, pylons (and associated overhead lines) and large-scale wind turbines (e.g. Shore Moor). • Church spires and towers in villages are often prominent, while occasional chimneys provide evidence of the area's industrial past. • Hill and moorland summits are occasionally marked by structures including Peel Tower on Harcles Hill (Grade II) and the Bishop Park Monument.	**M-H**
Access and recreation	• Some of the many reservoirs and former quarries within the LCT form popular visitor destinations, e.g. Watergrove Reservoir and Ogden Reservoir. • Smithills Country Park covers a large area around Smithills Moor in Bolton District. • Large swathes of the upland moorland are Open Access Land. The remainder of the landscape is served by a dense network of footpaths/bridleways including the Pennine Way National Trail, Rochdale Way and Rotary Way. • Some of these routes are based on paved packhorse trails which provided historic routes across the moorland. • A number of golf courses are located near to the urban fringe.	**H**
Perceptual and experiential qualities	• Strong sense of remoteness and isolation. This perception can be broken in places by dominating views of urban development and the presence of intrusive modern features including large-scale wind turbines, the pylon lines/overhead wires, masts, active quarrying operations and the M62 motorway. • The landscape evokes a strongly rural, remote and continuation of the character of the Pennines, with gritstone walls, traditional farms, sheep grazed pastures and rough moorland. • The landscape is exposed and windswept and perceptual qualities are changeable depending on weather conditions.	**M-H**

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity

Landscape Character Type level					
Development scenario	**Sensitivity**				
2-3 storey residential housing developments				**M-H**	
Commercial/industrial developments					**H**

The open unenclosed moorland areas would be of **high** sensitivity to any type or scale of development.

Within LCA 30: Shore Edge to Dove Stones Reservoir, Harrop Edge and locations which are directly adjacent to the Peak District National Park are judged as of **high** sensitivity to both development scenarios considered as part of this assessment. This is due to the highly prominent, widely visible character of these areas. Their location close to the Peak District National Park means that development could have an adverse effect on the special qualities of the protected landscape. **It is therefore of paramount importance that the guidance below is closely followed when development proposals are considered in these parts of the landscape.**

Special landscape qualities and key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the special landscape qualities and key features/attributes that would be sensitive to change (e.g. as a result of development):

- The large scale uplands shaped by glaciation into locally distinctive landforms and carved by intricate stream valleys which contrast with the broad landscape.
- Internationally and nationally important mosaic of semi-natural habitats including heather moorland, blanket bog, acid grassland and wet and dry heathland. Large parts of the unenclosed uplands are designated as part of the South Pennine Moors SPA/SAC/SSSI/SBI and West Pennine Moors SSSI.
- Tracts of ancient woodland along stream cloughs, which form important habitats within the sparsely wooded landscape and create a sense of enclosure which contrasts with the experience of the open moor.
- The strongly rural character, with much of the landscape traditionally managed by sheep grazing.
- The sparsely settled landscape, with settlement mostly limited to scattered farms, occasional rows of houses and small historic villages (many of which are Conservation Areas) constructed of a unifying gritstone vernacular which are nestled into the stream valleys.
- The distinct regular field pattern of small irregular fields and regular shaped Parliamentary moorland intakes enclosed by gritstone walls.
- The setting of valued heritage assets within and adjacent to landscape, including Scheduled Monuments, historic churches, Conservation Areas and areas of historic parkland with associated halls/manors.
- Evidence of the past industrial heritage of the area throughout the landscape, including old mills and chimneys and disused quarries and mines – some now restored for the benefit of recreation/semi-natural habitat.
- The importance of the uplands for recreation activity, with large areas of the moor providing Open Access Land and many of the reservoirs forming visitor destinations. The landscape is accessible by a number of Rights of Way, including the Pennine Way National Trail, Rochdale Way and Rotary Way.
- Expansive, panoramic views from the uplands, including views across Greater Manchester.
- The prominent and mostly undeveloped skylines which are widely visible from across the Greater Manchester urban conurbation.
- Monuments are visible on skylines including the Grade II Listed Peel Tower and the Bishop Park Monument. These provide a sense of place and orientation within the landscape.
- The landscape's strong sense of remoteness and isolation (particularly on the unenclosed moorlands) which contrasts with the vast urban conurbation of Greater Manchester.

- The location of eastern parts of the landscape adjacent to the Peak District National Park. Here there are high levels of intervisibility and a continuation of character with the nationally protected landscape.

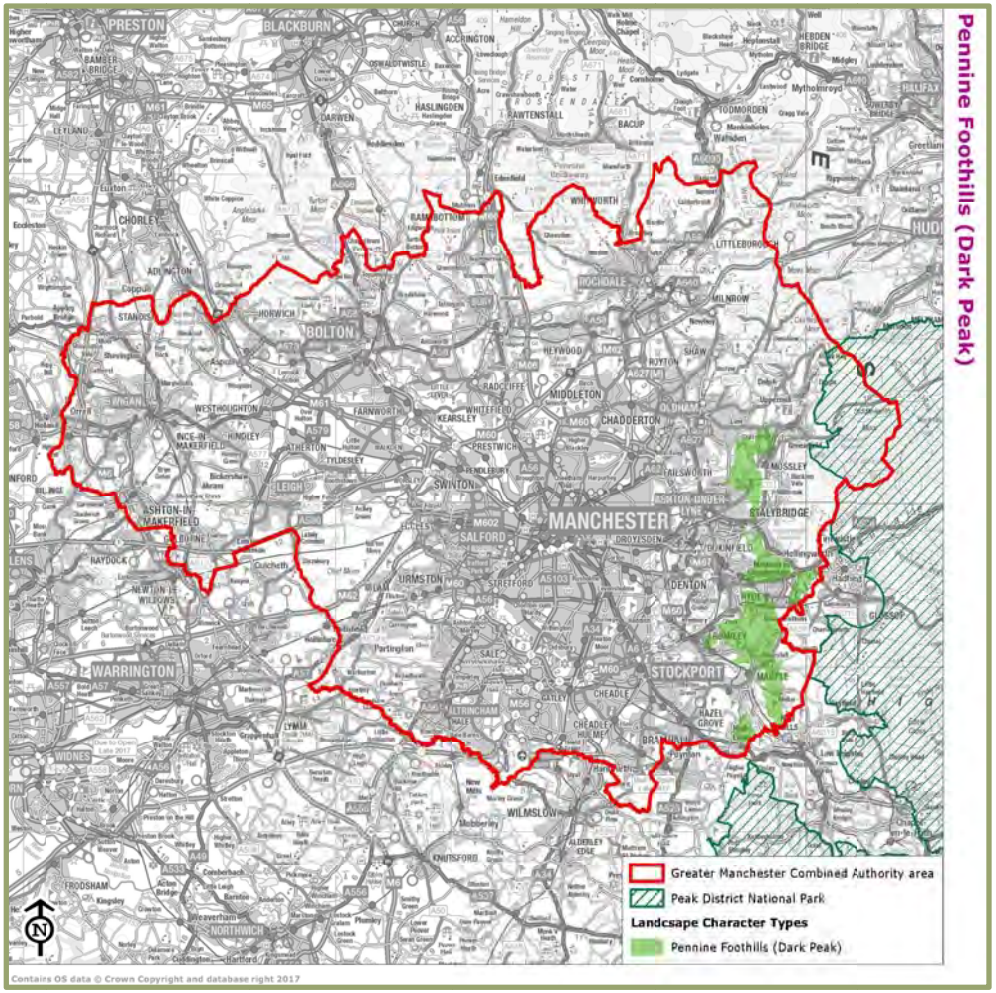
Guidance and opportunities for future development and landscape management / enhancement

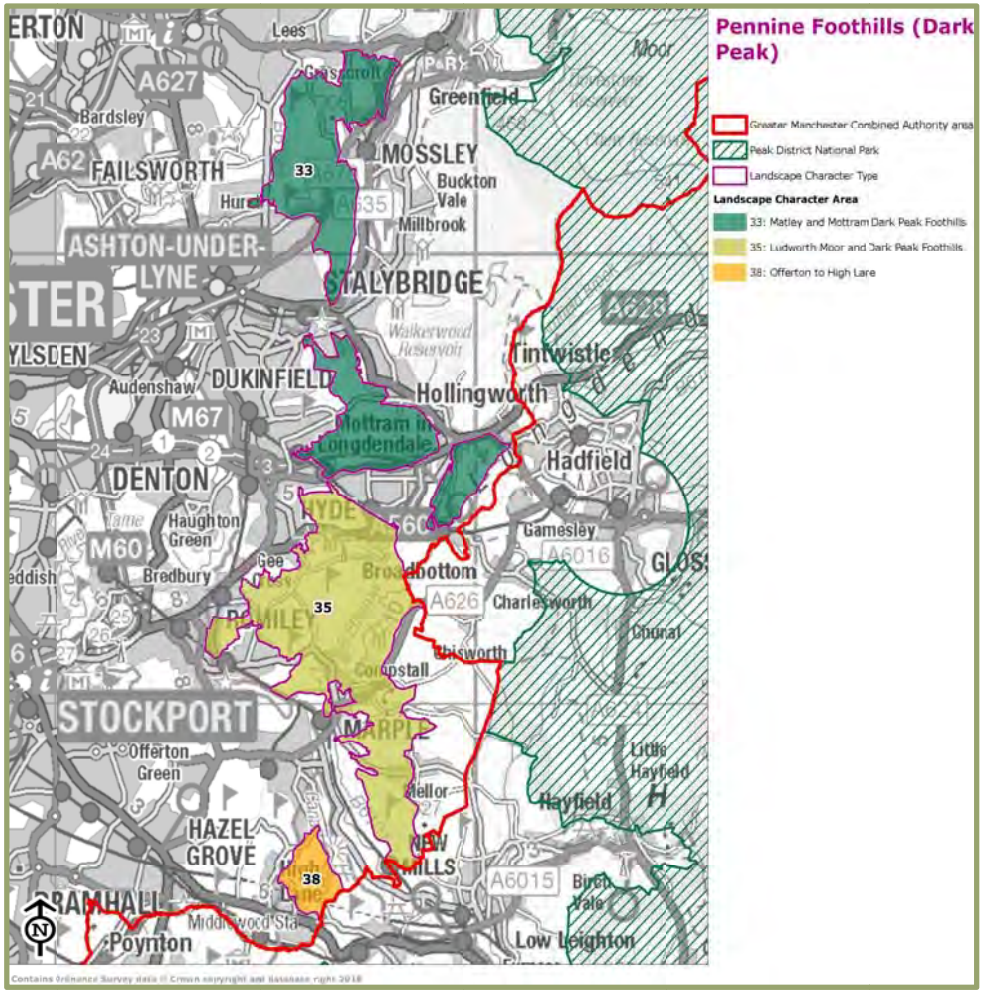
Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Type include:

- Avoid siting any development on the unenclosed upland moorland and in areas on the immediate edge of the Peak District National Park. Also avoid development on steeply sloping areas or on complex landforms.
- Ensure that the design of any development is in-keeping with existing form, size and vernacular of the area, replicating traditional styles and materials where possible. Avoid any large scale developments due to the overall sparse settlement character.
- Protect and where possible enhance the valued mosaic of semi-natural habitats, including internationally designated areas of heather moorland, blanket bog, acid grassland and wet and dry heathland. Conserve semi-natural habitats within the upland fringe including broadleaved woodland, species rich grassland and wetlands.
- Seek to restore the landscape structure of the enclosed upland fringe areas through the ongoing maintenance of the distinctive gritstone walls and the restoration of areas which have been damaged or deteriorated.
- Utilise existing woodland cover to integrate any development into the landscape.
- Ensure that any required road upgrades are in-keeping with the existing character of the narrow tracks and lanes.
- Ensure the visual character of the landscape is retained. Avoid development where it would be prominent on the broad, sweeping skylines. Protect long, uninterrupted views from higher ground over the mill settlements in the valleys below, and Greater Manchester communities beyond.
- Conserve and protect the setting of valued heritage features, including the Scheduled remains at Blackstone Edge Moor, Castleshaw and Knott Hill, Smithills Hall and Park and Garden, historic villages and numerous historic buildings including churches and country houses.
- Retain the important recreation function of the landscape, which is important both locally and to the wider region.
- Protect the overriding rural, remote characteristics of the landscape. Ensure that the traditional management of the landscape continues, part sheep grazing.
- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of the Peak District National Park, including its beautiful views, sense of tranquillity and dark night skies, and the vital benefits that flow beyond its boundary[1].
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology and subsequent knock-on effects, such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off which may impact on nearby major rivers including the River Tame, River Roch and River Tonge.

[1] Taken from the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23 (Final consultation draft, March 2018)

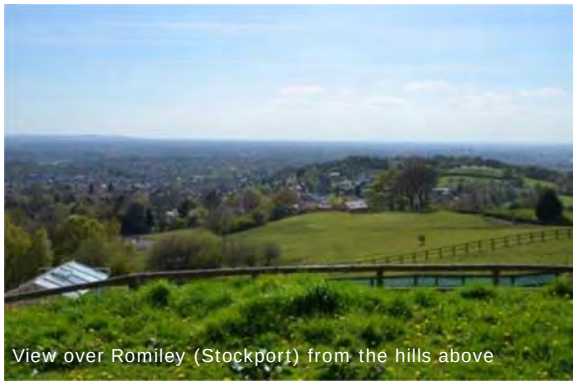
LCT: Pennine Foothills (Dark Peak)





This Landscape Character Type (LCT) is found in Oldham, Tameside and Stockport Districts.

Representative photographs


View over Romiley (Stockport) from the hills above


Werneth Low war memorial above Hyde and Dukinfield


The fringes of Stalybridge from Harrop Edge


Grade II St George Church, Mossley, visible through low cloud from the hills to the south


View to the moorland hills behind Marple Bridge


View across Oldham to the South Pennines beyond


Hartshead Pike Tower, Tameside


View across Mossley towards the Dark Peak fringe


View into Hyde from Werneth Low (Stockport)

Landscape character description

Key characteristics

Topography, geology and drainage

- Complex landscape with intricate steeply sloping land climbing up from the intersecting river valleys of the Tame, Medlock, Etherow and Goyt. It transitions to the Dark Peak upland fringes to the east.
- Land rises to open, elevated hill summits and ridgelines such as Werneth Low, affording strong visual connections to surrounding upland and urban landscapes. Elevation exceeds 300m above Capstone (Stockport) and Holly Bank (Oldham).
- Drained by multiple springs, brooks and cloughs forming tributaries to the main valleys below.
- Landscape underlain by bands of mudstones, siltstones and sandstones from the Carboniferous period – with rocks from the Millstone Grit group in the east grading to Pennine Coal Measures to the west.
- Bedrock overlain by glacial till and glaciofluvial deposits, producing sandy and clayey loams. Agricultural land is classed as Grade 3 or 4.

Land use and field patterns

- Farmland is predominantly pastoral; a mix of dairying and semi-improved sheep pastures on higher slopes. Horse paddocks also feature, particularly in areas closer to low-lying settlement.
- Fields are enclosed by hedgerows, lines of fencing and gritstone walls on higher ground. Tree lines following boundaries, particularly at lower elevations, bring a sense of enclosure and texture.
- Varied field pattern; small, irregular fields of medieval origin, post-medieval piecemeal enclosures of differing shapes and sizes and regular Parliamentary and 20th century agglomerated fields.
- Other land uses include a number of golf courses, popular Country Parks at Etherow and Werneth Low and a number of publicly accessible nature reserves.

Semi-natural habitats and woodland cover

- Cloughs cloaked in broadleaved and mixed woodland, including ancient woodland, snake through the intricate landscape adding colour and texture. Many are designated as Sites of Biological Interest.
- Nature reserves found at Knot Hill (wetlands, grassland, ancient woodland), Eastwood (clough woodland and ponds) and Werneth Low County Park, with a mosaic of woodland, grassland and ponds.
- Compstall Nature Reserve is nationally designated as a SSSI for its woodland, wetland and open water habitats. Other wildlife habitats throughout include ponds, flushes and wet pastures.

Archaeology and cultural heritage

- Conservation Areas at Lydgate, Mottram, Compstall, Mill Brow, Mellor and Brook Bottom, with clusters of listed buildings including village churches, vernacular farmhouses, cottages and mill buildings.
- Mottram includes the Grade II* Listed church of St Michael & All Angels and nearby village cross.
- A number of stone-built farm buildings, barns and cottages throughout the LCT are also Grade II listed, as is the prominent local landmark of Hartshead Pike Tower in Tameside.
- Disused quarries, views to mill buildings and chimneys in nearby valleys, and the Macclesfield Canal (Conservation Area) provide evidence for the area's industrial heritage.

Settlement, road pattern and rights of way

- The foothills are hemmed in by urban areas at their bases, including the suburbs of Oldham, Mossley, Ashton-under-Lyne, Dukinfield, Stalybridge, Hyde, Romiley and Marple.
- Within, settlement is generally limited to occasional hamlets, small clustered historic villages, dispersed farms and cottages. Some linear spread of development is evident on the edges of Marple Bridge.
- Landscape crossed by a rural network of minor lanes and farm tracks, with occasional main roads linking the adjoining urban areas, including the M67 north of Hattersley.
- Fields crossed by a dense network of pubic rights of way, with links to nearby communities. Long distance recreational routes include the Tameside Trail, Tame Valley Way and the Cown Edge Way.
- Open Access Land is found at Werneth Low Country Park (Tameside) and the Holly Bank ridge above Mossley Brow.

Views and perceptual qualities

- Elevated points, including the two Werneth Low ridgelines, afford expansive views over the sprawling urban lowlands, often featuring mill chimneys, tower blocks and industrial warehouses.
- Strong visual relationships with the surrounding South Pennines and Dark Peak moorlands and foothills; collectively forming a contrasting dramatic, remote edge to Greater Manchester.
- Strong rural and sometimes remote qualities eroded by the presence of neglected farmland and anti-social behaviour (e.g. fly tipping) on urban edges, along with the background noise of traffic on nearby busy roads.

Intactness and condition
This rural landscape sits on the immediate doorstep of urban communities, evidenced by the presence of urban fringe land uses such as golf courses and over-grazed pony paddocks, detracting from the traditional farmed 'Dark Peak' character of the wider area. Views to and sounds from nearby urban development and transport infrastructure result in associated impacts on perceptions of tranquillity and remoteness. Issues relating to current condition largely relate to a decline in the management of component landscape features, including a significant fragmentation or complete loss of sections of characteristic gritstone walls and hedgerows in favour of fencing; anti-social behaviour evident in fly-tipping and litter in verges; neglect of traditional farms, with an abandonment or lack of management of agricultural land (e.g. used for storage, overgrown due to a lack of grazing), traditional farm buildings falling into a state of disrepair, and the introduction of non-vernacular buildings and structures. Characteristic clough woodlands have similarly suffered from a lack of management, with Compstall Nature Reserve SSSI now classed as in 'unfavourable recovering' condition - an invasion of non-native species being addressed through conservation grazing and clearance programmes. Despite these issues, intact areas of Dark Peak character are retained, with a pleasing pattern of pastures, dry stone walls and snaking clough valleys underpinned by traditional farming communities. Strong visual relationships with the moorlands of the South Pennines and the Peak District National Park reinforce a connection with the uplands (strengthened by good opportunities for access and enjoyment), combining to result in Greater Manchester's distinctive landscape setting.

Landscape sensitivity assessment

Criteria	Description	Sensitivity Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	• Complex upland fringe landscape with intricate steeply sloping land climbing up from the valleys of the Tame, Medlock, Etherow and Goyt. • Land rises to open, elevated hill summits and ridgelines, to over 300m AOD in parts. • To the east it transitions to the higher upland fringes of the Dark Peak. • Varied field pattern; small, irregular fields of medieval origin, post-medieval piecemeal enclosures of differing shapes and sizes and regular Parliamentary and 20th century agglomerated fields. • Small-scale landscape elements formed by stone walls, fences, trees and buildings.	**M-H**
Natural character	• Agricultural land is predominantly pastoral; a mix of dairying, beef cattle grazing and semi-improved sheep pastures on higher slopes. • Cloughs cloaked in broadleaved and mixed woodland, including ancient woodland. Many are designated as Sites of Biological Interest. • Nature reserves found at Knot Hill (wetlands, grassland, ancient woodland), Eastwood (clough woodland and ponds) and Werneth Low County Park, with a mosaic of woodland, grassland and ponds. • Compstall Nature Reserve is nationally designated as a SSSI for its woodland, wetland and open water habitats. • Other wildlife habitats throughout include ponds, flushes and wet pastures.	**M**
Historic landscape character	• Varied field pattern; small, irregular fields of medieval origin, post-medieval piecemeal enclosures of differing shapes and sizes and regular Parliamentary and 20th century agglomerated fields. • Conservation Areas at Lydgate, Mottram, Compstall, Mill Brow, Mellor and Brook Bottom, with clusters of Grade II listed buildings. • Mottram includes the Grade II* Listed church of St Michael & All Angels and nearby village cross. • A number of Grade II listed stone-built farm buildings, barns and cottages throughout. • Disused quarries and views to the mill heritage of the nearby valleys and the Macclesfield Canal (Conservation Area).	**M**
Form, density and setting of existing settlement/ development	• Foothills hemmed in by urban areas, including Oldham, Mossley, Ashton-under-Lyne, Dukinfield, Stalybridge, Hyde, Romiley and Marple. • As such, this LCT provides an immediate rural backdrop to settlement, forming a character transition to the upland fringe and open moorlands above. • Within, settlement is generally limited to occasional hamlets, small clustered historic villages, dispersed farms and cottages. • Some linear spread of development is evident on the edges of Marple Bridge.	**M-H**
Views and visual character including skylines	• Elevated points, including the two Werneth Low ridgelines, afford expansive views over the sprawling urban lowlands, often featuring mill chimneys, tower blocks and industrial warehouses. • Strong visual relationships with the surrounding South Pennines (including prominent wind farms) and Dark Peak moorlands and foothills. • Wooded cloughs create contrasting enclosed areas with limited views.	**H**

	• Important local landmarks on skylines include church towers/spires, Hartshead Pike Tower and the Werneth Low war memorial (Tameside). • Prominent pylon lines mark some skylines (e.g. cutting through LCA 34), and telecommunications masts feature on some hill summits.	
Access and recreation	• Fields crossed by a dense network of pubic rights of way, with links to nearby communities. • Long distance recreational routes include the Tameside Trail, Tame Valley Way and the Cown Edge Way. • Open Access Land is found at Werneth Low Country Park (Tameside) and the ridgeline of Holly Bank above Mossley Brow. • Golf courses occur in several locations.	**M-H**
Perceptual and experiential qualities	• Strong rural and sometimes remote qualities. • These are eroded by the presence of neglected farmland, fragmented field boundaries, traditional farm buildings in a state of disrepair and anti-social behaviour (e.g. fly tipping) on urban edges. • Tranquillity is impacted by the background noise of traffic on nearby busy roads, including the M67.	**M**

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity

Landscape Character Type level

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
2-3 storey residential housing developments			**M**		
Commercial/industrial developments				**M-H**	

Steep upper slopes and land at the highest elevations, including the prominent ridgelines at Werneth Low (the Country Park in Tameside and the separate ridge on the Stockport/Tameside border – both in LCA 35), Holly Bank, Hough Hill, Mottram Hill and above Oldham Golf Club (LCA 33) and above Capstone (LCA 38) would be of **high sensitivity** to any scale or type of development. This is due to their visual prominence from long distances, functions as undeveloped skylines above lower-lying urban areas, and their intervisibility with the moorlands of the South Pennines and Peak District National Park. **Therefore it is of paramount importance that the guidance below is closely followed when development proposals are considered in these locations.**

Special landscape qualities and key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the special landscape qualities and key features/attributes that would be sensitive to change (e.g. as a result of development):

- The open ridgelines and hill summits providing panoramic views across urban areas and the uplands of the South Pennines and Dark Peak (Peak District National Park). These elevated landforms create undeveloped, distinctive skylines.
- Complex and often intricate landform, especially where associated with cloughs and tributaries.
- Important semi-natural habitats including broadleaved, mixed and ancient woodland, wetlands, grasslands and ponds – with many SBIs and SSSI land at Compstall Nature Reserve (Stockport).
- Traditional pastures contained by gritstone walls and hedgerows, including surviving areas of small, medieval fields.
- Historic rural villages, some evidencing their mill heritage with clusters of Grade II listed buildings. Conservation Areas at Lydgate, Mottram (with Grade II* church), Compstall, Mill Brow, Mellor and Brook Bottom.
- Grade II listed stone-built farm buildings, barns and cottages found throughout.
- Historic landmarks on skylines including church towers/spires, Hartshead Pike Tower and the Werneth Low war memorial (Tameside). Mill buildings and chimneys featuring strongly in views to adjacent valley landscapes.
- The opportunities the landscape provides to nearby urban communities for access and recreation,

including Werneth Low Country Park (Tameside) and lengths of the Tameside Trail, Tame Valley Way and the Cown Edge Way.

- Pockets of tranquillity and remoteness with strong visual and character connections to the upland edge of Greater Manchester.

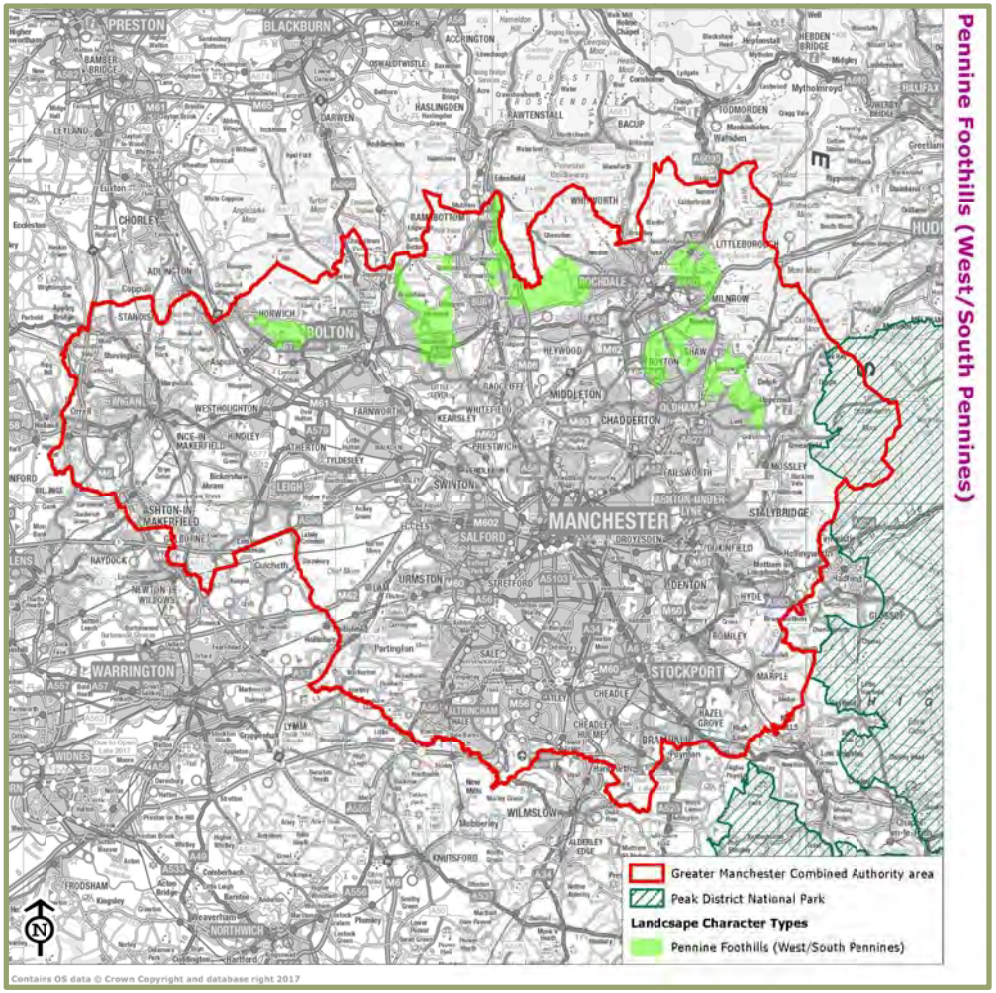
Guidance and opportunities for future development and landscape management/enhancement

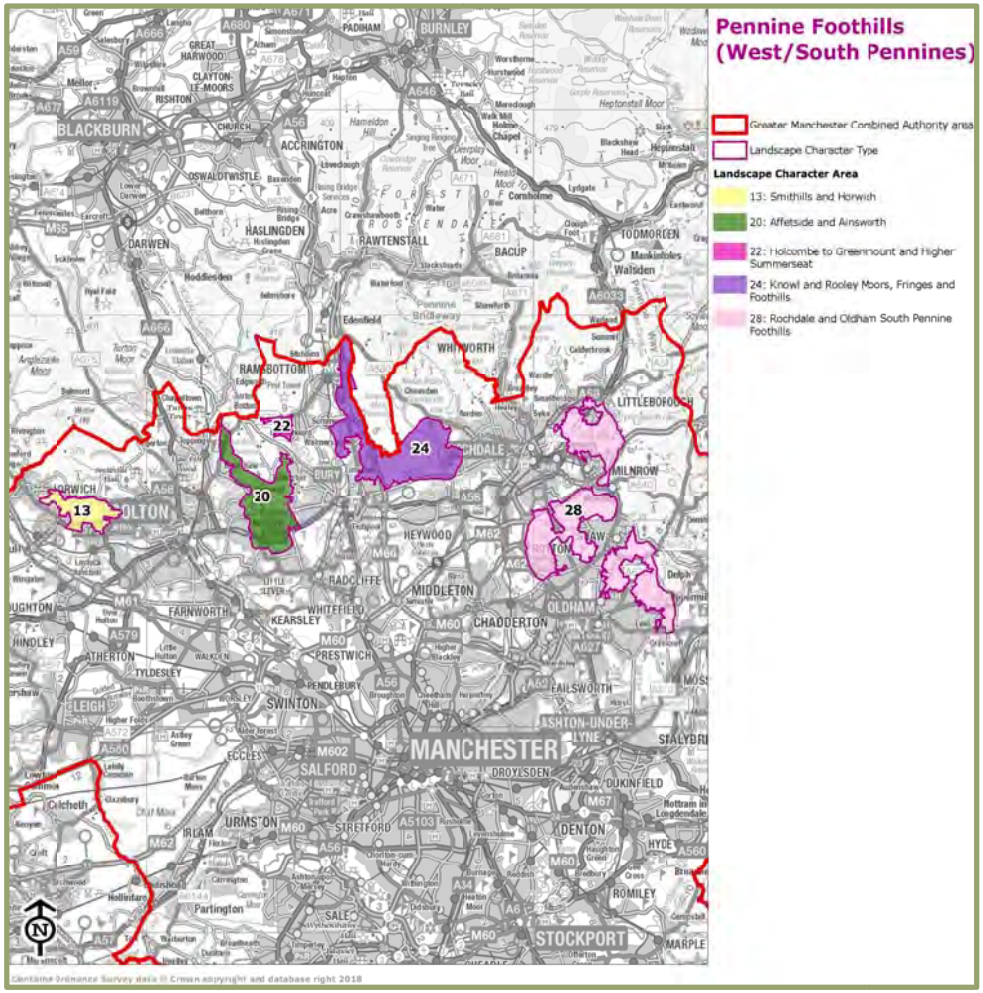
Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Type include:

- Avoid siting any development on the highly prominent, elevated ridgelines and hill summits of the LCT, including Werneth Low (the Country Park in Tameside and the separate ridge on the Stockport/Tameside border), Holly Bank, Hough Hill, Mottram Hill, above Oldham Golf Club and above Capstone.
- Protect the landscape's role as an immediate rural hinterland and backdrop to the adjacent urban areas of Oldham, Mossley, Ashton-under-Lyne, Dukinfield, Stalybridge, Hyde, Romiley and Marple.
- Conserve expansive views from elevated land to the distinctive remote moorlands of the Peak District National Park and South Pennines, as well as visual connections with important mill heritage features at lower elevations.
- Protect the character and setting of historic landmarks, including Hartshead Pike Tower, church spires/towers (including the Grade II* church at Mottram) and Werneth Low war memorial.
- Protect and enhance the landscape's contribution to the character and setting of Conservation Areas at Compstall, Mill Brow, Mellor and Brook Bottom, with their concentrations of Listed Buildings.
- Protect the wider LCT's important relative sense of tranquillity and remoteness with a dispersed pattern of stone-built farms and cottages, including a number of Grade II Listed buildings.
- Protect and where possible enhance the landscape's semi-natural habitats in association with new development, including ancient and broadleaved woodlands, wetlands, ponds and grasslands.
- Utilise areas of tight valley landform and woodland cover to integrate new development into the landscape, avoiding sites designated for their nature conservation importance.
- Encourage the natural regeneration of woodland and wetland habitats within valleys (as well as new planting/habitat restoration) to improve their function in flood prevention and preventing diffuse pollution.
- Strengthen the stone wall and hedgerow network, using local gritstone for walls and locally prevalent and climate resilient species for hedges. Any new boundaries should reflect local characteristics, including the planting of a new generation of hedgerow trees.
- Ensure any new development does not further dilute the areas of surviving historic field patterns, particularly those of medieval origin.
- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of the Peak District National Park, including its beautiful views, sense of tranquillity and dark night skies, and the vital benefits that flow beyond its boundary[1].
- Respect local building styles and materials in new housing developments, seeking to reflect these in their design and build (particularly the use of local stone).
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off).
- Improve and enhance sustainable opportunities for access and enjoyment by nearby communities, such as a more attractive gateway into Etherow Country Park at Compstall (Stockport) and additional promoted multi-user access points, particularly linking to urban areas and adjacent landscapes.

[1] Taken from the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23 (Final consultation draft, March 2018)

LCT: Pennine Foothills (West/South Pennines)



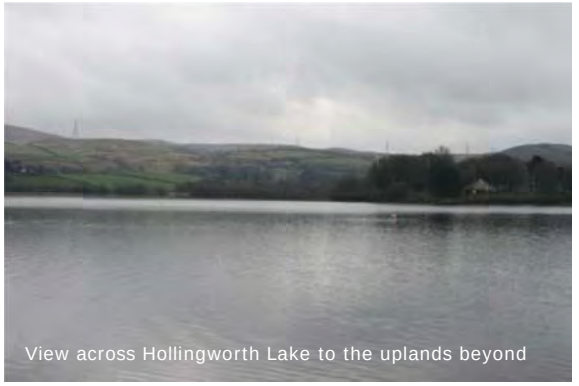


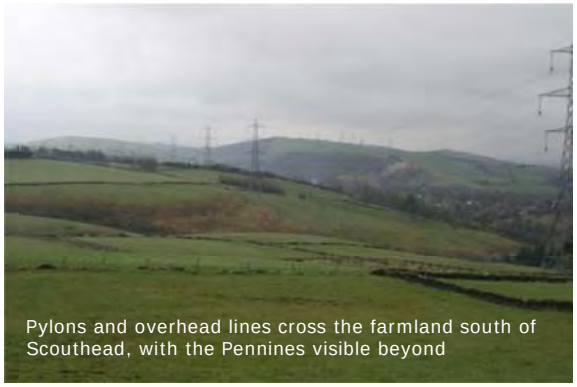
This Landscape Character Type (LCT) is found in Bolton, Bury, Rochdale and Oldham Districts.

Representative photographs


View to chimney stacks on the edge of Breightmet


The hilltop War Memorial in Tandle Hill Country Park


View across Hollingworth Lake to the uplands beyond


Pylons and overhead lines cross the farmland south of Scouthead, with the Pennines visible beyond


Wet grassland and broadleaved woodland habitats, with a mast dominating the skyline


Modern housing at Smithy Bridge, locally prominent on the skyline


Birtle brook Retirement Village, a converted mill


View from Besom hill across Oldham and Rochdale with large wind turbines visible on the moor


View from Grotton Hall across the Oldham to the uplands beyond. A pylon breaks the skyline.

Landscape character description

Key characteristics

Topography, geology and drainage

- Transitional landscape sloping up from the northern fringes of Greater Manchester towards the uplands of the South and West Pennines.
- Strongly rolling and undulating topography punctuated by locally distinctive hills and carved by intricate stream valleys. Elevation ranges from 100 to over 350 metres AOD at Besom Hill.
- Primary underlying geology of Pennine Coal Measures, with areas of Millstone Grit overlain with glacial till deposits. Soil fertility is generally poor, with much of the LCT defined as Grade 4 agricultural land, with some pockets defined as Grade 3.
- Streams drain through cloughs to a number of reservoirs, although these are generally smaller than those on higher ground within the Unenclosed Uplands and Fringes LCT.

Land use and field patterns

- Land use is dominated by lush semi-improved grassland pastures enclosed by a mix of gritstone walls, hedgerow boundaries and post and rail fencing. Horse paddocks are often found adjacent to settlement.
- Varied small-medium scale enclosures, divided by a mixture of field boundaries including gritstone walls, hedgerows and post and rail fencing. Field are predominantly piecemeal post-medieval enclosures, with some modern agglomeration.
- Various other land uses, including quarries and reservoirs and frequent recreational facilities such as golf clubs. Country Parks are located at Tandle Hill (Oldham District) and Hollingworth (Rochdale District).

Semi-natural habitats and woodland cover

- Numerous semi-natural habitats scattered throughout the farmland including woodland, grassland, heathland and streams/brooks, some of which are locally designated as Sites of Biological Importance.
- Well wooded landscape with extensive tree and woodland cover with trees in stream valleys, along field boundaries and avenues of trees along roads. Tracts of dense broadleaved woodland also define cloughs, including large areas of ancient woodland.
- Reservoirs including Hollingworth Lake (designated as a Site of Biological Importance) enhance the nature conservation interest and are important for wintering waterfowl.

Archaeology and cultural heritage

- Numerous Conservation Areas reflecting the historic character of settlements, including Ainsworth, Nangreaves, Stone Breaks, Clegg Village and Riding Gate which contain clusters of Listed Buildings.
- A number of historic buildings are scattered throughout the landscape including Grade II* Listed Buildings including Clegg Hall, Grotton Hall and Birchinley Manor Farmhouse.
- Evidence of the area's industrial heritage in the form of old mill buildings, chimneys, disused quarries and mines and the Rochdale Canal.

Settlement, road pattern and rights of way

- Settlement mainly comprises scattered traditional stone farmsteads and halls, with some small groups of dwellings including Victorian terraces. The largest settlement is Ainsworth, located between Bury and Bolton. The foothills provide an important separation function between distinct urban areas.
- Numerous footpaths and bridleways cross and provide access to the landscape from nearby urban areas and also link to the moorlands. These include the Rotary Way, Oldham Way and Rochdale Way.
- Road pattern mainly comprises minor winding lanes and tracks connecting farms. Occasionally, more major routes cross through the LCT, including the M62 and several A-roads.

Views and perceptual qualities

- Variable visual character depending on topography and vegetation cover; there are long views across the urban conurbation to the West and South Pennine uplands beyond where vegetation allows. Areas within the Peak District National Park are visible from some vantage points. Other areas are visually enclosed due to valleys or vegetation which creates wooded skylines.
- Occasionally, masts and pylons/overhead lines intrude on the wooded skylines. Other intrusive modern influences include the M62 motorway and prominent views of urban development, including tower blocks breaking horizons.
- Other skyline features including chimneys, the war memorial in Tandle Hill Country Park and views to monuments on higher ground within the uplands including Peel Tower and Bishop Park Monument.
- Windswept and exposed on higher ground as the landscape transitions to the upland fringe. This contrasts with the sheltered, enclosed feel of the valleys which have limited views in and out.
- Areas with relatively high levels of tranquillity despite the close proximity of urban development and major infrastructure e.g. Tandle Hill Country Park.

Intactness and condition
Despite the close proximity of urban development, this is a strongly rural and traditional working landscape characterised by pasture fields, reservoirs and wooded stream cloughs with a transitional, upland fringe feel. Trees are frequent and provide a naturalistic quality to the landscape and characterise skylines. Locally designated habitats actively managed for the benefit of wildlife are found throughout the foothills landscape. Some former industrial and agricultural buildings have been converted to new uses, often retaining traditional features. The deterioration of stone walls is visible in many places, with supplementation by post and wire fencing frequently occurring. Adjacent to settlements, there are often urban fringe influences including areas of horsiculture with associated structures and pony tape and numerous golf courses. Within the wooded stream valleys, invasive species are present including large areas of rhododendron which outcompete native vegetation. Anti-social behaviour including fly tipping and litter has an adverse effect on the landscape in some localities. Pylon lines and masts form intrusive modern features on the skyline, while noise and movement introduced by transport infrastructure can detract from the rural qualities and sense of tranquillity in the landscape.

Landscape sensitivity assessment

Criteria	Description	Sensitivity Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	• Strongly rolling and undulating landscape, rising towards the South and West Pennine Uplands. • Punctuated by locally distinctive hills (reaching a maximum elevation of 356 metres AOD) and carved by intricate stream valleys. • The overlying field pattern is small-medium in scale. • Frequent small-scale features occur throughout the landscape, including trees, stone walls, hedgerows and buildings. These contrast with larger-scale features including pylons and masts.	**M-H**
Natural character	• Land use is largely semi-improved pastures used for traditional sheep grazing. • Well wooded character with extensive tree and woodland cover with trees in stream valleys (including tracts of ancient woodland) and along field boundaries. • Semi-natural habitats include woodland, grassland, heathland and streams/brooks. A number of these are locally designated as Sites of Biological Importance, including Hollingworth Lake. • Areas of wet grassland often occur on lower ground.	**M**
Historic landscape character	• Conservation Areas including Ainsworth, Nangreaves (Mount Pleasant), Stone Breaks, Clegg Village and Riding Gate which contain clusters of Listed Buildings. • Other historic buildings are scattered throughout the foothills, including a number of Grade II* listed halls and farm houses. • Evidence of industrial heritage including frequent mill buildings, chimneys and the remnants of mines and quarries. • Fields are mostly of post-medieval origin, with some 20th century boundary loss and field agglomeration.	**M**
Form, density and setting of existing settlement/ development	• A sparsely settled landscape. Settlement mainly comprises scattered traditional farmsteads and halls, small groups of dwellings and the larger village of Ainsworth. Mix of traditional vernacular and modern houses. • Immediate undeveloped backdrop and upland fringe setting to adjacent large urban areas, as well as small villages/scattered dwellings within the LCT. • In a number of places, this LCT provides an important sense of separation between distinct settlements and urban areas.	**M-H**
Views and visual character including skylines	• There are long views across the urban conurbation to the dramatic uplands beyond where the topography and vegetation cover allows. These views include the uplands of the Peak District National Park from some vantage points. • The frequent trees create wooded skylines, while mill chimneys and church towers/spires form landmark built features on the skyline. • Occasional overhead pylon lines and telecommunications masts are intrusive features on skylines. • Some elevated locations are marked by monuments e.g. Tandle Hill. There are also views to features on the adjacent uplands including Peel Tower (Grade II Listed). • Prominent views to nearby residential and industrial development in Greater Manchester, including tower blocks and large-scale warehouses.	**M-H**
Access and recreation	• Dense network of footpaths and bridleways provide access between urban communities and the adjacent uplands. The LCT contains parts of the Oldham Way, Rotary Way and Rochdale Way.	**M-H**

	• The road network is relatively sparse and mostly limited to minor roads and tracks. Occasional A-roads and the M62 cross through the landscape. • Golf courses are a frequent feature within the landscape. • Reservoirs form popular recreation destinations, including Hollingworth Lake. • Pockets of Open Access Land are located on higher ground and within some valleys. Country Parks are located at Tandle Hill and Hollingworth.	
Perceptual and experiential qualities	• Highly varied perceptual qualities which are dependent on the elevation of the landscape, vegetation cover and the proximity of urban development. • Strong rural and upland fringe qualities despite the close proximity of urban development. These qualities are broken locally by pylon lines/overhead wires and masts which form occasional features. • The foothills have a strong visual and perceptual connection within the surrounding uplands.	**M**

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity

Landscape Character Type level					
Development scenario	Sensitivity				
2-3 storey residential housing developments			**M**		
Commercial/industrial developments				**M-H**	

Areas of steep and/or complex landform, distinct hills, and prominent ridgelines would be of **high sensitivity** to any type or scale of development. These include (but are not limited to) Besom Hill, Tandle Hill, the ridgeline south of Bentgate, Strine Dale, Wood Brook (all within LCA 28), north of Harwood (LCA 20) and Green Hill (LCA 30). These areas are highly prominent, widely visible from existing urban areas and the surrounding uplands and provide an undeveloped setting to development. **It is therefore of paramount importance that the guidance below is closely followed when development proposals are considered within these parts of the landscape.**

Special landscape qualities and key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the special landscape qualities and key features/attributes that would be sensitive to change (e.g. as a result of development):

- The strongly undulating landform punctuated by distinctive hills and carved by intricate stream valleys.
- The undeveloped skylines, including both wooded and open skylines. Some hill summits are punctuated by monuments which form landmarks in the wider landscape (e.g. Tandle Hill). The views to landmarks in adjacent landscapes (e.g. Peel Tower on the adjacent uplands) are also distinct.
- The distinct field pattern of enclosures demarked by a mixture of gritstone walls and hedgerows.
- The sparsely settled traditional rural character of the landscape, with scattered farms and houses and occasional settlements constructed of a local stone vernacular, a number of which are designated as Conservation Areas.
- Pockets of upland habitats amongst the pasture fields. Locally designated habitats including broadleaved woodland, wet grassland and wetlands (including Hollingworth Lake SBI).
- Areas of woodland including tracts of ancient woodland along stream corridors. Creating wooded skylines and a sense of visual enclosure.
- The undeveloped backdrop and the sense of separation that the landscape provides between distinct settlements.
- Views to and from the Peak District National Park and the surrounding South and West Pennines which overlook the landscape.
- Important recreational value of the landscape with important networks of public rights of way including Rotary Way, Oldham Way and Rochdale Way and destinations including Tandle Country Park and

Hollingworth Country Park.

- Features relating to the industrial heritage of the area including chimneys and mill buildings. Chimneys form distinct skyline features.
- Long views afforded from higher ground which reach across Greater Manchester and to the surrounding uplands.
- Pockets of tranquillity and remoteness despite the close proximity of urban development.

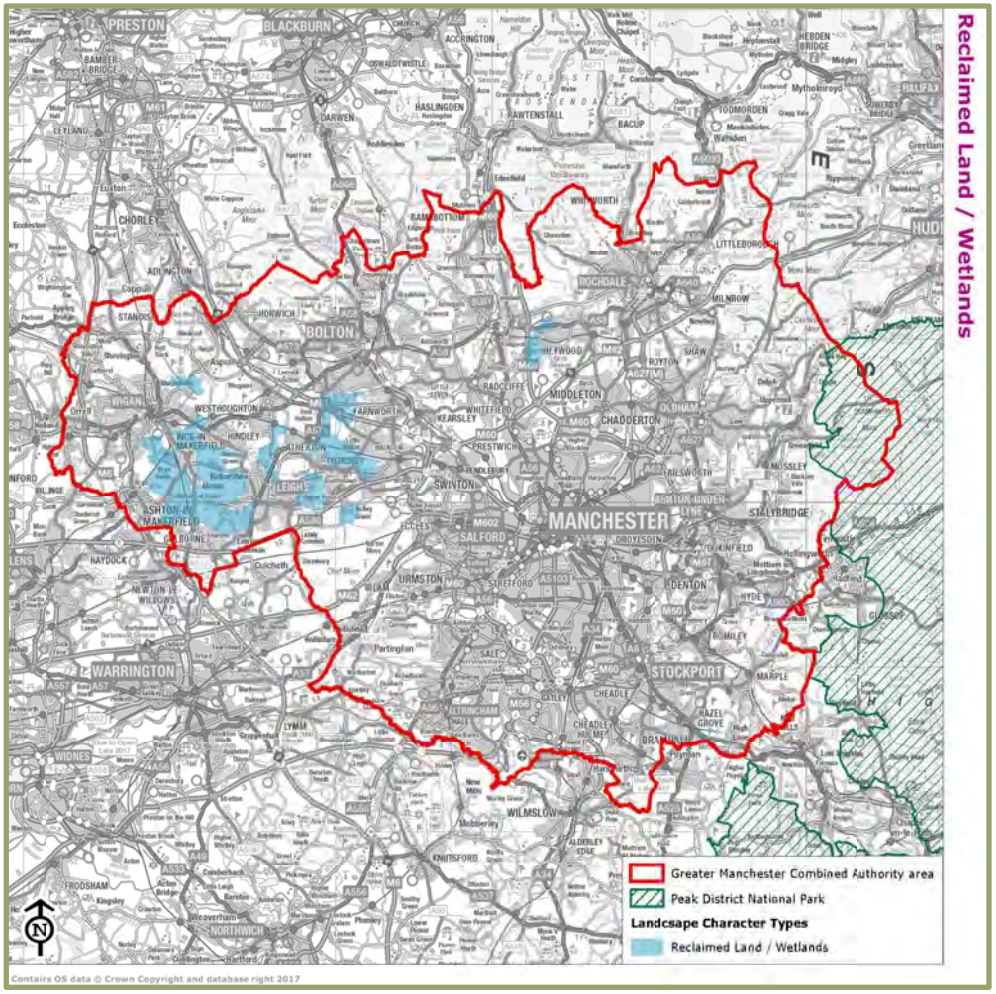
Guidance and opportunities for future development and landscape management / enhancement

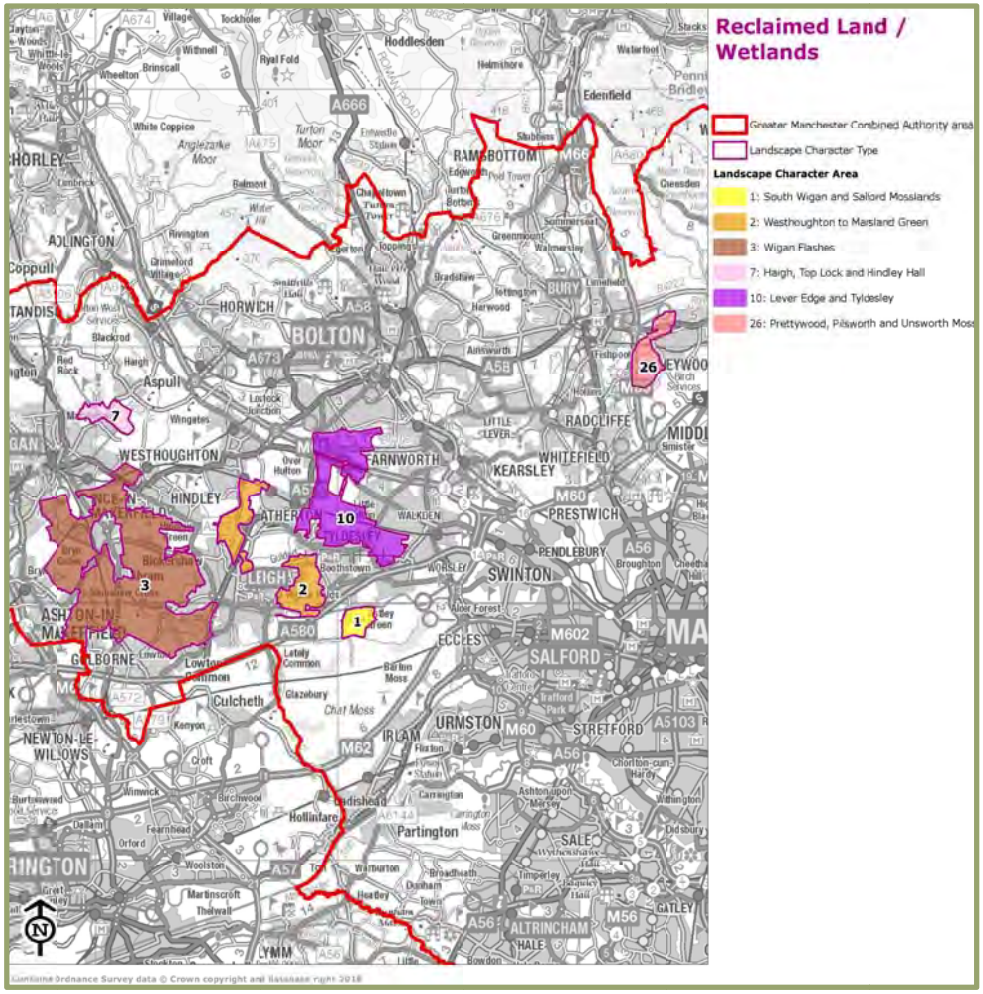
Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Type include:

- Avoid areas of the landscape with distinct or complex landforms, including the locally prominent hills and intricate stream valleys, including Besom Hill, Tandle Hill, the ridgeline south of Bentgate, Strine Dale and Wood Brook.
- Ensure that the sense of separation the landscape provides between distinct settlements is retained.
- Retain the role of the landscape as an undeveloped backdrop to existing development.
- Strengthen the stone wall and hedgerow network, using local gritstone for walls and locally prevalent and climate resilient species for hedges. Any new boundaries should reflect local characteristics, including the planting of a new generation of hedgerow trees.
- Utilise areas of undulating landform and woodland cover to integrate new development into the landscape, avoiding sites designated for their nature conservation importance.
- Protect areas of semi-natural habitat including woodland, grassland and heathland which are locally designated as Sites of Biological Importance. Seek to enhance these where possible and provide linkages to form robust habitat networks.
- Protect areas of broadleaved woodland (particularly ancient woodland) which provide important semi-natural habitat and create wooded skylines. Utilise the screening effects of existing woodland to integrate development into the landscape where possible.
- Encourage the natural regeneration of woodland and wetland habitats within valleys (as well as new planting/habitat restoration) to improve their function in flood prevention and preventing diffuse pollution.
- Ensure that any development is in keeping with the form, density and vernacular of existing buildings. Avoid any large scale development to retain the sparsely settled character of the landscape.
- Protect the setting of important heritage assets within the landscape, including Conservation Areas/Listed Buildings.
- Retain the important recreational function of the landscape. Seek to improve public rights to way to encourage sustainable travel. Join up and promote multi-use routes to major destinations within the landscape including Hollingworth Country Park and Tandle Hill Country Park.
- Retain the distinct visual character of the landscape, including views to monuments on skylines which form local landmarks (including Tandle Hill War Memorial and Peel Tower), church spires and chimneys.
- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of the Peak District National Park, including its beautiful views, sense of tranquillity and dark night skies, and the vital benefits that flow beyond its boundary[1].
- Reinforce the structure of the landscape, through strengthening the stone wall and hedgerow network, using local gritstone for walls and locally prevalent and climate resilient species for hedges. Any new boundaries should reflect local characteristics, including the planting of a new generation of hedgerow trees.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off).

[1] Taken from the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23 (Final consultation draft, March 2018)

LCT: Reclaimed Land /Wetlands





This Landscape Character Type (LCT) is found in Wigan, Bolton, Bury and Rochdale Districts.

Representative photographs


Carr woodland, Amberswood, Wigan


Pennington Flash Country Park, Wigan


Urban edge at Heady Hill, Rochdale


Housing at New Manchester, Wigan


Peaty soils at Edge Fold, Bolton


Top Lock, Wigan


Railway at Heap Bridge, Bury


Farmland near Four Lane Ends, Bolton


Wetland at Amberswood Common, Wigan

Landscape character description

Key characteristics

Topography, geology and drainage

- Landform generally flat to gently undulating overall, with some locally distinctive artificial landforms as a result of past mineral extraction and landfill (e.g. at Lower Green and Higher Folds in Wigan and Pilsworth in Bury).
- Low-lying, typically 20-30m AOD, with some areas rising to between 120m and 165m AOD e.g. south of Aspull (Wigan), Edge Fold / Lever Edge (Bolton) and Prettywood (Rochdale).
- Underlying bedrock geology of Coal Measures (mudstones, siltstones, sandstones) overlain by fluvio-glacial sands and gravels with pockets of peat and clay.
- Network of lowland wetland habitats and open water bodies (flashes), the latter formed as a result of coal mining subsidence and inundation. Low-lying basin areas drained by rivers and brooks, e.g. Hey Brook, Wigan.
- Soils have been heavily influenced by glacial till deposition resulting in clay loam. Agricultural land is mostly classed as Grade 3 with some small areas around Wigan classed as Grade 4.

Land use and field patterns

- Network of lowland wetland habitats and large scale open water bodies (flashes), surrounded by a matrix of mixed farmland (pasture and cereal crops).
- Some areas of land have a neglected appearance or are in the process of being restored e.g. Landfill site at Lower Green, Astley (Wigan). Others have been recently restored for recreational use e.g. Cutacre Country Park (Bolton).
- Mainly medium scale, rectangular fields delineated by a network of drainage ditches and species poor hedgerows. Fields are of post-medieval (e.g. at Marsland Green, Hulton, Daisy Hill, Lightshaw Hall), 18th, 19th or 20th century origin.

Semi-natural habitats and woodland cover

- Bryn Marsh and Ince Moss Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in Wigan supports some of the best swamp and tall fen vegetation in Greater Manchester, as well as important populations of dragonflies and breeding birds; and Abram Flashes SSSI (also Wigan) is of importance for breeding birds.
- Mosaic of habitats including open water, reed beds, wet meadows, lowland fen and carr scrub on reclaimed land, supporting wetland species including birds. Many areas recognised by local designation as Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs), and some are also Local Nature Reserves (LNRs).
- Naturally regenerated carr woodland associated with wetland areas also forms part of SBIs and LNRs. Some plantation woodland is also found across the landscape e.g. along motorway corridors.

Archaeology and cultural heritage

- A landscape profoundly influenced by its industrial past, which includes surface coal mining, sand and clay extraction and peat extraction, providing a sense of time-depth.
- Many former industrial areas have been reclaimed, now forming important areas for recreation and wildlife e.g. Pennington Flash Country Park (Wigan) and the recently formed Cutacre Country Park (Bolton).
- Evidence of the area's industrial legacy include large former cotton mills, pit ventilation shafts, spoil heaps and water filled subsidence, connected by associated railway sidings, canals and roads.
- There are some, mostly Grade II, Listed Buildings across the area, including farmhouses and public houses. Lightshaw Hall in Wigan is Grade II* listed.

Settlement, road pattern and rights of way

- Settlement mainly comprises rural hamlets and farmsteads, with some traditional red-brick 'Moss Cottages'. Dense surrounding urban and large scale industrial development provides sharply defined boundaries to the LCT, forming the skyline in many views.
- Roads, railways and canals bisect the landscape, often on raised embankments to protect them from subsidence.
- A network of public footpaths mainly follows tracks and lanes, occasionally crossing fields. Long distance walking and cycling routes follow canals and former railway corridors e.g. the Leeds and

Liverpool Canal Walk and National Route 55.

- There is some Open Access land (heathland and woodland), and there are Country Parks at Pennington Flash (Wigan) and Cutacre (Bolton).

Views and perceptual qualities

- In lower-lying areas views tend to be restricted by landform, although there are some open views across large water bodies e.g. at Wigan Flashes including Pennington Flash.
- Some distant views from higher open ground at the urban edge are available e.g. south-west over the Wigan conurbation from Top Lock, south from Lever Edge (Bolton) over farmland to the Wigan/Salford conurbation and north-west from the A58 at Prettywood across the Roch Valley to the West Pennines.
- Areas are often overlooked by surrounding urban and industrial areas, particularly from higher ground e.g. at Lever Edge (Bolton), resulting in reduced perceptions of tranquillity. A sense of tranquillity can be experienced in the Wigan Flashes.

Intactness and condition

This is a rural landscape but one which remains influenced by its industrial legacy and proximity to surrounding urban and industrial areas. Some parts of the LCT provide an important sense of separation between distinct settlements and urban areas. A network of locally and nationally important wetland habitats, some formed as a result of past mineral extraction, provides ecological and recreational value, and a sense of naturalness and tranquillity can be experienced within them. In the Bryn Marsh and Ince Moss SSSI, Bryn Marsh and 'The Triangle' are assessed as being in favourable condition, Champion's Mire (bog) which was re-wet in 2004, is unfavourable recovering and Ince Moss is unfavourable declining, due to the presence of invasive species. The grasslands of the Abram Flashes SSSI are assessed as being in unfavourable recovering condition, as works are ongoing to maintain areas of open water and control invasive species.

Mixed farmland surrounds the wetland areas, with field boundaries formed by drainage ditches, post and wire fencing or hedgerows in decline. Some areas have a neglected appearance; others are in the process of being restored. Surrounding urban and large scale industrial development on the fringes of the LCT contributes to the degraded appearance of some areas.

Landscape sensitivity assessment

Criteria	Description	Sensitivity Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	• Landform generally flat to gently undulating, with some locally distinctive artificial landforms associated with mineral extraction and/or landfill. • Generally low-lying, between 20-30m AOD, although with some more elevated areas rising to over 120m AOD. • Medium scale field pattern, with some large scale open water bodies. • Small-scale landscape features include drainage ditches, hedgerows and naturally regenerating woodland.	**M**
Natural character	• Land use largely mixed farmland • An important network of lowland wetland habitats and open water bodies on reclaimed land, some of which are recognised as SBIs and LNRs. • Some naturally regenerating carr woodland associated with wetland areas, also forming part of SBIs and LNRs. • There are two SSSIs along the Hey Brook corridor in Wigan (Bryn Marsh & Ince Moss SSSI and Abram Flashes SSSI).	**M-H**
Historic landscape character	• Fields are of post-medieval (e.g. at Marsland Green, Hulton, Daisy Hill, Lightshaw Hall), 18th, 19th or 20th century origin. • Evidence of the area's industrial legacy includes large former cotton mills, pit ventilation shafts, spoil heaps and water filled subsidence, connected by associated railway sidings, canals and roads. • A scattering of Listed Buildings, mainly comprising farmhouses and the occasional manor/hall, including the Grade II* Lightshaw Hall in Wigan.	**L-M**
Form, density and setting of existing settlement/ development	• Rural hamlets and farmsteads, with some traditional red-brick 'Moss Cottages'. • Dense surrounding urban development and large scale industrial complexes provide sharply defined boundaries to the LCT. • Many parts of the LCT provide an important sense of separation between distinct settlements and urban areas.	**L-M**
Views and visual character including skylines	• Distant views tend to be restricted from low-lying and relatively flat areas although open views across large water bodies are available. • Some views out across the Greater Manchester conurbation from areas of higher ground e.g. south-west over the Wigan conurbation from Top Lock, south from Lever Edge over farmland to the Wigan/Salford conurbation and north-west from the A58 at Prettywood across the Roch Valley to the South Pennines. • Skylines are typically formed by the surrounding urban edge. • The low-lying landscape is typically overlooked, but not visually prominent from surrounding urban areas.	**L-M**
Access and recreation	• Network of public footpaths including long distance routes which follow canals and former railway corridors. • Some open access land (heathland and woodland). • Country Parks at Pennington Flash and Cutacre are valued destinations for local communities.	**M**
Perceptual and experiential qualities	• A rural landscape but one which is heavily influenced by its industrial past, providing a sense of time depth. • The proximity to and visual dominance of surrounding urban and industrial areas impacts on levels of perceived tranquillity. • Some wetland and woodland areas provide a sense of tranquillity and naturalness e.g. the Wigan Flashes.	**L-M**

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity

Landscape Character Type level					
Development scenario	Sensitivity				
2-3 storey residential housing developments		**L-M**			
Commercial/industrial developments			**M**		
Elevated areas of farmland including the area south of Aspull in Wigan (part of LCA 7), Edge Fold / Lever Edge in Bolton (part of LCA 10) and Prettywood in Rochdale (part of LCA 26) are judged to be of **moderate** sensitivity to housing development because of their elevation and role in providing separation between settlements.					
Notes on any variations in landscape sensitivity, by Landscape Character Area					
LCA 3: Wigan Flashes					
2-3 storey residential housing developments			**M**		
Commercial/industrial developments			**M**		
Explanation for variance in sensitivity from overall LCT scores: The Wigan Flashes LCA is judged to be of **moderate** sensitivity to both housing and commercial/industrial developments because its wetland and woodland areas provide ecological and recreational value and make a significant contribution to landscape character. There are two SSSIs within the LCA; Bryn Marsh and Ince Moss and the Abram Flashes. Owing to its size, there are parts of the LCA with a more rural and tranquil feel, where urban and industrial influences in the surrounding area are less perceptible.					

Special landscape qualities and key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the special landscape qualities and key features/attributes that would be sensitive to change (e.g. as a result of development):

- Elevated parts of the LCT which are widely visible from, and form the setting to, neighbouring urban areas e.g. south of Aspull (Wigan), Edge Fold / Lever Edge (Bolton) and Prettywood (Rochdale).
- The sense of separation that the landscape provides between distinct settlements.
- Nationally important habitats at Bryn Marsh and Ince Moss SSSI and Abram Flashes SSSI, located along the Hey Brook in Wigan.
- Network of rivers / brooks, open water bodies and lowland wetland habitats, including carr woodland, which are recognised for their ecological value as SBIs or LNRs.
- Evidence of the areas' industrial past, where these contribute positively to its character e.g. pit ventilation shafts and former cotton mills.
- Listed Buildings across the area, including the Grade II* listed Lightshaw Hall in Wigan.
- The Leeds and Liverpool Canal and former railways which now provide long distance walking and cycling routes including the Canal Walk and National Route 55.
- Restored industrial landscapes which now provide an important recreational resource, such as the newly created Cutacre Country Park (Bolton) and the 200-hectare Pennington Flash Country Park (Wigan).

- Views across open water bodies including Wigan Flashes and Pennington Flash, where a sense of naturalness and tranquillity can be experienced.
- Distant views from areas of higher ground at the urban edge: south-west across Wigan from New Springs / Top Lock (Wigan); south from Lever Edge (Bolton) across Wigan / Salford; and north-west from Prettywood (Rochdale) to the Pennine Foothills.

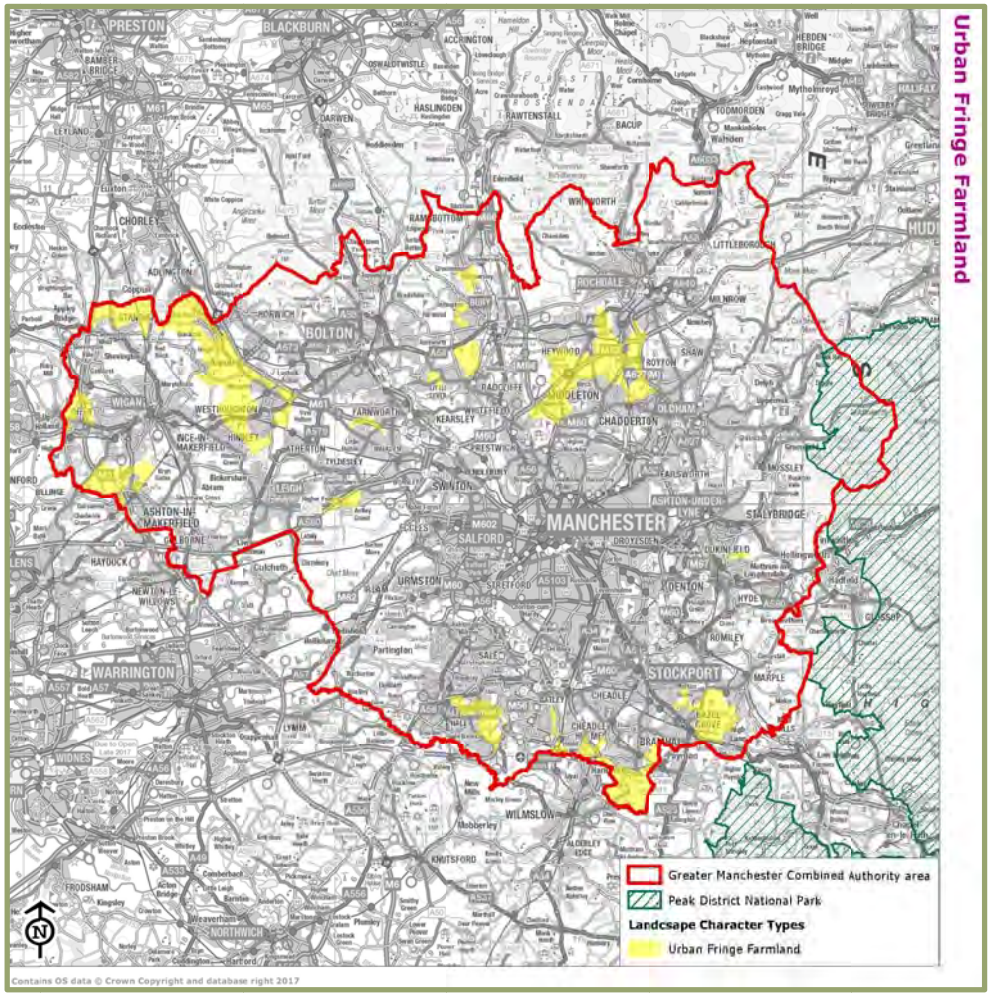
Guidance and opportunities for future development and landscape management / enhancement

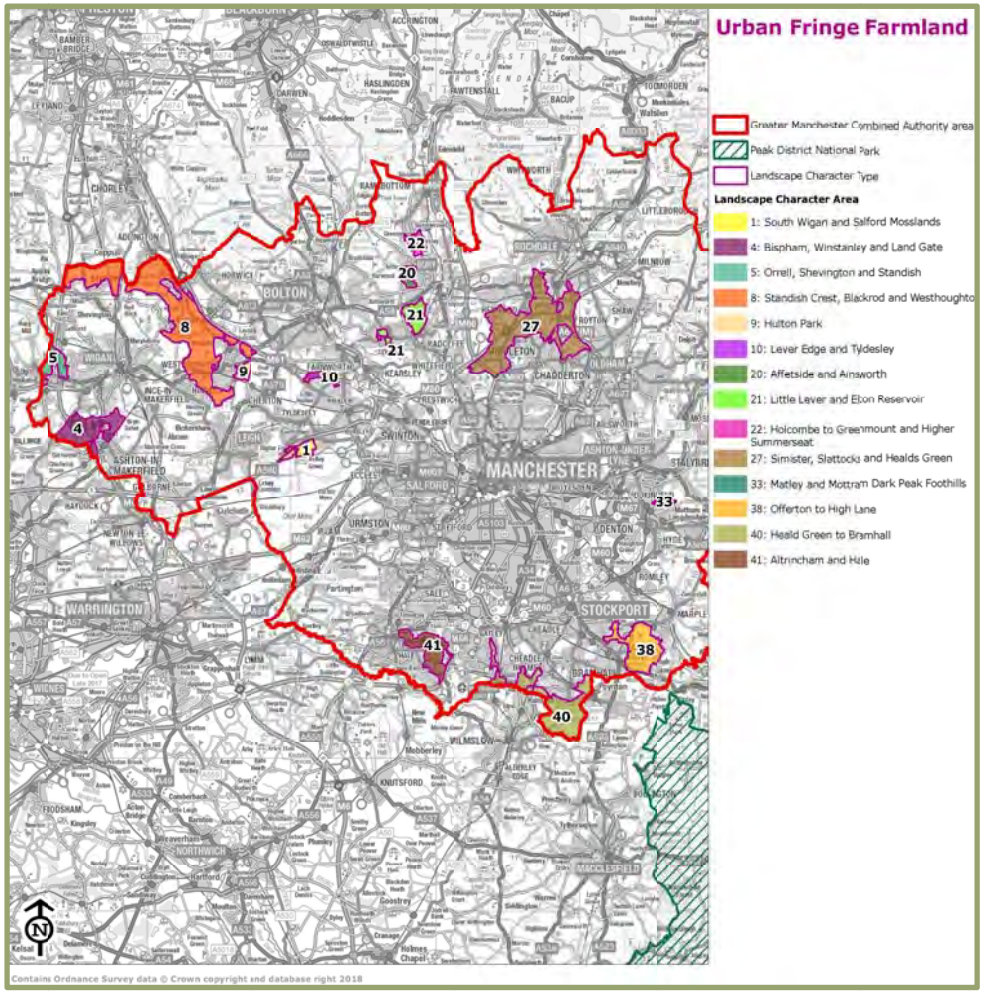
Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Type include:

- Avoid siting development on highly visible areas which form the skyline in views e.g. elevated areas on the urban fringe including south of Aspull (Wigan), Edge Fold / Lever Edge (Bolton), Pilsworth (Bury) and Prettywood (Rochdale).
- Ensure that the sense of separation the landscape provides between distinct settlements is retained.
- Ensure that any development is in keeping with the mainly rural character of the landscape in terms of form, density and vernacular.
- Utilise areas of existing woodland to integrate new development into the landscape, avoiding sites designated for their nature conservation importance.
- Protect areas of semi-natural habitat, including open water bodies, lowland wetland habitats and wet woodlands, which are locally designated SBI or nationally protected as SSSI. Seek to enhance these where possible and provide linkages to form robust habitat networks. Develop a catchment-wide strategy for managing wetland areas.
- Conserve and manage existing woodlands to encourage habitat diversity, using locally appropriate species and protecting from grazing during establishment.
- Consider additional woodland planting to enhance landscape structure, soften the urban fringe, screen industrial areas and reduce the noise and visual impacts of motorway corridors, where appropriate.
- Restore and enhance areas of deteriorating farmland including additional, species-rich, hedgerow planting to fill gaps and replace post and wire fencing. Reintroduce hedgerow trees where appropriate.
- Control the colonisation of invasive species, in particular Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed in wetland areas.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology and subsequent knock-on effects, such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off.
- Conserve and protect important elements of industrial heritage, to retain the area's cultural identity e.g. pit ventilation shafts, canal architecture.
- Encourage the removal of eyesores such as derelict structures.
- Enhance existing public access and provide new informal recreational provision e.g.by creating circular routes with connections to the canal tow path, using derelict railways lines and field boundaries (rather than cutting through fields) where possible. Tie in with proposals for a "Carbon Trail"[1] under the Carbon Landscape project.
- Improve signage, interpretation and waymarking at areas used for informal recreation, with parking provision where appropriate.
- Conserve the sense of naturalness and tranquillity which can be experienced in many of the wetland areas e.g. Wigan Flashes.
- Maintain open and long ranging views across the Greater Manchester conurbation from elevated parts of the urban fringe e.g. at New Springs / Top Lock (Wigan), Lever Edge (Bolton) and Prettywood (Rochdale).

[1] http://carbonlandscape.org.uk/carbon-trail

LCT: Urban Fringe Farmland





This Landscape Character Type (LCT) is found in Wigan, Bolton, Bury, Salford, Trafford, Rochdale, Oldham, Manchester, Tameside and Stockport Districts (all Greater Manchester authorities).

Representative photographs



Arable fields with gappy hedgerows and views of the settlement edge and Pennine Hills, Wigan



Pastoral field with hedgerow replaced by post and wire fencing, Wigan



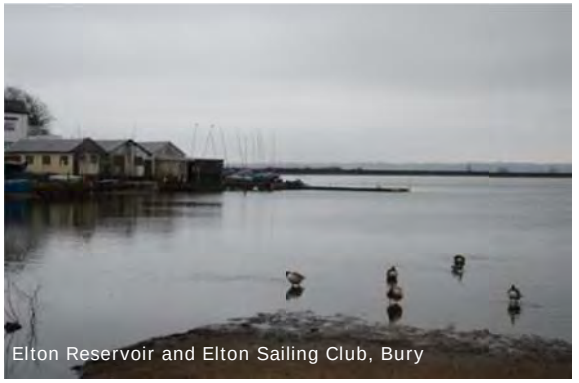
Degraded landscape with removal of boundary features, Wigan



Motorways with large embankments passing through undulating farmland, Rochdale



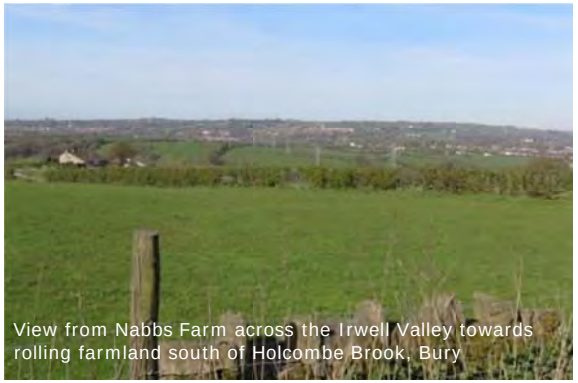
Smaller field of pasture with robust boundaries in the flatter Mersey Basin, Trafford



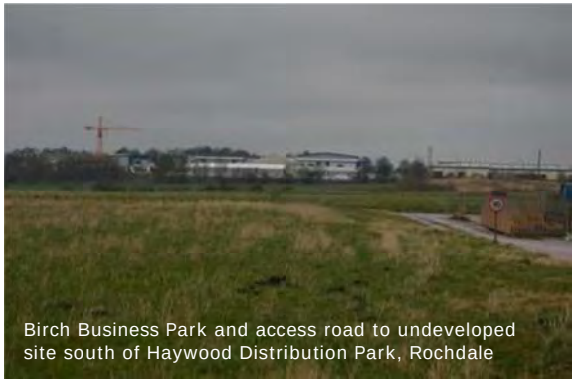
Elton Reservoir and Elton Sailing Club, Bury



Unused Brackley Municipal Golf Course, south of Farnworth, Salford



View from Nabbs Farm across the Irwell Valley towards rolling farmland south of Holcombe Brook, Bury



Birch Business Park and access road to undeveloped site south of Haywood Distribution Park, Rochdale

Landscape character description

Key characteristics

Topography, geology and drainage

- Rolling landscape with elevation ranging between 30 and 250m AOD. The landform becomes gentler as it falls towards the floodplains of the rivers Mersey and Bollin (from 10 to 60m AOD).
- Elevated farmland to the north and east, close to the Pennine and Dark Peak foothills, mainly comprising undulating hills and valleys.
- Landform dissected by narrow, often steep sided wooded cloughs, and drained by a network of streams and ponds (of local ecological value) throughout.
- Underlying bedrock geology at higher elevations dominated by Pennine Coal Measures mudstones, siltstones and sandstones. The Mersey and Bollin floodplains comprise sandstones of the Wilmslow and Chester formations, as well as deposits from the Sidmouth Mudstone Formation.
- Glacial till and fluvial deposits overlay the bedrock, creating the rolling landform.

Land use and field patterns

- Variable land use, with the more elevated land in the north and east typified by lower grade agricultural land used for dairy farming, horse grazing and sheep rearing. Pockets of dry heath, acid grassland and moorland fringe are also present.
- Pastoral land characterised by small and medium sized fields, forming various patterns from rectilinear to distinctive web shaped originating from Parliamentary enclosure.
- Flatter, more fertile floodplain areas give rise to a mix of pasture and arable cultivation. Fields tend to be larger with subtle boundary features, with occasional small pasture fields to the east of Altrincham.
- Field boundaries comprise often gappy, species-poor hedgerows with occasional established clumps of hedgerow trees. Post and wire fencing replaces hedges in many locations, whilst occasional stone walls provide definition at higher elevations, but many are in a degraded condition.
- Frequent recreational land uses with sports fields and golf courses located close to the urban edge. The manicured lush greens of the courses contrast sharply with areas of semi-improved grazing land.
- The open farmland contrasts strongly with adjoining residential and industrial urban areas, often forming a rural buffer to the Pennine and Dark Peak foothills.

Semi-natural habitats and woodland cover

- Open landscape with sparse woodland cover generally limited to isolated plantation woodland, hedgerows and the steep cloughs that bisect the rolling farmland.
- A small number of Ancient Woodlands (e.g. Oaken Bank Wood and Glade Wood within Hopwood Woodlands Local Nature Reserve (LNR), Rochdale) provide important habitats and wildlife corridors.
- Established clumps of hawthorn and dog rose line some of the field boundaries and highways, with some incorporating mature broadleaved trees.
- Other SBI-designated habitats include areas of dry heath, acid and of species rich grassland. Elton Reservoir, south-east of Bury, remains a legacy of the area's industrial past and is an important site for water fowl. Flashes also form locally important wetland habitats of industrial origin.

Archaeology and cultural heritage

- The Trans-Pennine railway, dismantled railway routes and canals serve as a reminder of the area's industrial past; the importance of the Macclesfield Canal is reflected in its Conservation Area status.
- Scheduled Monuments limited to moated sites north-west of Broadoak Farm (near Marple), another at Arley Hall east of Standish, and Astley Green Colliery engine house and headgear.
- Birch village (Rochdale) and part of Summerseat (Bury) are Conservation Areas. The landscape also forms part of the setting to a number of other Conservation Areas on its doorstep.
- Grade II Listed Buildings sparsely scattered throughout. The LCT includes the Grade II* Listed Brandlesholme Old Hall (Bury), Hopwood Hall (Rochdale) and Old Manor Farm (Stockport).

Settlement, road pattern and rights of way

- Generally a dispersed pattern of scattered farmsteads and individual dwellings constructed of locally sourced gritstone. Occasional small settlements are linked by local roads and winding country lanes.
- In some areas settlement takes the form of 20th century ribbon development strung along roads. Some industrial development and distribution parks are also located close to major roads.
- A network of major road and rail routes, including the M62, M61 and A627(M) motorways, form

dominant features with extensive cuttings, embankments, bridges and junctions.

- Numerous rights of way and cycle routes permeate the landscape, linking to the surrounding urban areas. The Rotary Way and Rochdale Way are long distance footpaths connecting to the local network.
- Disused railway lines provide recreation and nature conservation corridors, including in Wigan and the Midshires Way in Stockport.

Views and perceptual qualities

- In general the more elevated, rolling farmland has an exposed and open character with little sense of enclosure and strong visual connections with surrounding landscapes.
- Views within the floodplains are typically restricted by hedgerows, hedgerow trees and development, creating a more enclosed landscape with pockets of seclusion and relative tranquillity.
- Wide panoramic views from high points over the Greater Manchester conurbation contained within a bowl dramatically flanked by the South/West Pennines and the Peak District National Park.
- Long views towards the coastal plain to the west stretch as far as Fiddler's Ferry Power Station near Widnes.
- Historic mills with tall chimneys and warehouses also form landmarks on the skyline.
- Transport corridors and pylon lines are very apparent, with the lack of tree cover within the rolling open farmland leaving the large roads and motorway visually exposed and audible.

Intactness and condition

This is a predominantly rural landscape of typically low grade pasture land and semi-improved grassland associated with stock rearing and rough grazing. The elevated farmland in the north and east is a generally open and exposed containing few settlements, however some areas are strongly influenced by the visual presence of the adjoining urban edge and by numerous tall pylon lines and major road and rail routes which bisect the landscape. Other areas are quieter and host a smaller network of winding country lanes connecting dispersed and isolated dwellings. Woodland is generally sparse, though the lower-lying and flatter south contains tree belts and tall hedgerows which provide pockets of seclusion. The influence of adjoining urban areas has eroded and fragmented some of traditional land uses, with industrial buildings, distribution centres and golf courses detracting from rural qualities. The noise of traffic and activity along the motorways and fast moving traffic along A and B roads weaken the sense of rural tranquillity, as does the fairly regular noise of planes overhead, particularly closer to Manchester Airport in the south. Field boundaries comprise predominately species poor hedgerows that are often gappy and in some have been replaced by post and wire fencing. Other signs of physical deterioration include derelict sections of dry stone wall gapped up or completely replaced by fencing; a prevalence of horse keeping on urban fringe (with associated over-grazed paddocks); and evidence of anti-social behaviour such as fly tipping and littering.

Landscape sensitivity assessment

Criteria	Description	Sensitivity Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	• The landform close to the Pennine and Dark Peak foothills is often strongly undulating, rising to a height of 250m AOD. • Within the lower lying floodplain areas the landform is flatter and gently sloping between 10 – 60m AOD. • The rolling elevated farmland is generally very open and windswept with a simple pattern of pastoral fields defined by subtle boundary features. • The elevated farmland is generally large in scale but with pockets of smaller scale within incised valleys. • Lower lying farmland areas are more irregular and overlain by a medium scale field pattern separated by gappy hedgerows that add a degree of complexity.	**M**
Natural character	• Land use is largely semi-improved pastoral farmland with occasional arable fields in lowland and floodplain areas. • The rolling landscape is sparsely wooded and dominated by grazing land with relativity poor levels of biodiversity. • Some isolated pockets of ancient and riparian woodland of ecological value (e.g. Hopwood Woodlands LNR). • Semi-natural areas of dry heath and acid grassland and some fields of species rich grassland are present and form important SBI-designated habitats for local wildlife. • Established clumps of hawthorn line some of the field boundaries, with some incorporating mature stands of broadleaf trees to offer a naturalistic character to the farmland.	**M**
Historic landscape character	• 18th and 19th century parliamentary enclosure create a semi-regular field patterns across the rolling farmland. • Dry stone walls delineate small pastures at higher elevations and provide a more traditional field pattern. Many are in poor repair. • Few Scheduled Monuments within the LCT – those that are present are two moated sites and Astley Green Colliery engine house and headgear. • A scattering of Grade II and II* listed buildings, mainly comprising manor houses and historic farmsteads. • Birch Village, part of Summerseat and the Macclesfield Canal Conservation Areas are located within the LCT; it also forms part of the setting to others. • Other industrial relicts are important evidence of past activities and land use.	**L-M**
Form, density and setting of existing settlement/ development	• Relatively sparsely populated rural area with a scattered pattern of farms and small settlements linked by lanes and some larger roads. • Some areas are strongly influenced by adjoining urban areas with ribbon development along roads, utility infrastructure and large electricity overhead lines intruding into the rural landscape. • An extensive transport network with rail, large roads and motorways has a dominating influence in some areas. • Away from major transport networks there are quieter areas with local roads connecting dispersed settlements and isolated dwellings. • Industrial developments are located near to major roads and the large Birch Service Station is located along the M62. • The landscape forms a rural backdrop and important separation function between discrete urban areas, preventing coalescence.	**M-H**
Views and visual character including skylines	• A predominantly elevated, rolling farmland with open and expansive views over the Greater Manchester conurbation. • Views in lower lying areas are generally more contained by hedgerows and buildings. • The tower blocks of central Manchester are visible on the horizon. • Historic mills with tall chimneys and warehouses also form landmarks. • The rural character is often interrupted by a network of large electricity pylons extending high above the skyline as they rise up and over Pennine and Dark Peak foothills.	**M**
Access and recreation	• Network of public rights of way, long distance footpaths and cycle routes and, closer to the urban edge, informal desire lines. • Many areas close to the urban edge are used for recreation with amenity grassland associated with golf courses and large areas of playing fields.	**M-H**
Perceptual and	• Some areas retain strongly rural characteristics with historic field patterns and traditional stone farmsteads and dwellings.	**M**

experiential qualities	• The rolling elevated farmland has an exposed open character. • Pockets of seclusion and rural tranquillity are present within the lower lying areas, although these are largely open. • Major transport corridors severely detract from these qualities in places, introducing visual and aural impacts. • The rural character is further weakened by a network of large electricity pylons which extend urban influences. • The urban edge is almost always evident although in places a lack of development and relative inaccessibility provide a feeling of remoteness. • Anti-social behaviour, including fly-tipping, evokes a sense of neglect and urban fringe character in locations close to the urban edge.	

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity

Landscape Character Type level					
Development scenario	Sensitivity				
2-3 storey residential housing developments			**M**		
Commercial/industrial developments				**M-H**	

Steeper slopes and land at higher elevation along the Pennine and Peak fringes would have **moderate-high** sensitivity to residential housing developments and **high** sensitivity to commercial/industrial developments) due to visual prominence of this rural landscape from surrounding areas. Such areas include elevated land near Thronfields Farm and Chadderton Heights to the immediate west of the A627(M), the site of Dukinfield Golf Club in Tameside (LCA 33), land along the western edge of Hawk Green and High Lane in Stockport (LCA 38), and the western and southern slopes of Pennington Hill (LCA 8, Wigan) upon which Blackrod sits.

Areas on the immediate urban edge and adjacent to main roads and motorways typically have a lower sensitivity to both scenarios, due to the strong influence development already has on the rural qualities of the landscape. Areas in Wigan particularly affected include land between the urban edge of Westhoughton and the M61, land adjacent to Astley and the A580 (both LCA 8), and land set between the urban edge of Farnworth and the M61 (LCA 10).

Notes on any variations in landscape sensitivity, by Landscape Character Area					
LCA 22: Holcombe to Greenmount and Higher Summerseat					
2-3 storey residential housing developments				**H-M**	
Commercial/industrial developments					**H**

Explanation for variance in sensitivity from overall LCT scores: This LCA lies between Brandlesholme and Holcombe Brook, to the north of Bury. The undeveloped farmland within the LCA comprises elevated land on the Pennine fringe and forms the edges of the incised Irwell Valley to the east and Kirklees Valley to the west. The LCA is highly sensitive to any scale or type of development due to is visual prominence in long distance views and function as the undeveloped skyline of the Irwell Valley (with associated Summerseat and Brooksbottom Conservation Areas) and the Kirklees Valley. It is therefore assessed as of **moderate-high** sensitivity to housing and **high** sensitivity to commercial/industrial developments.

Because of the sensitivity of this LCA, it is of paramount importance that the guidance below is closely followed when development proposals are considered within the landscape.

LCA 27: Simister, Slattocks and Healds Green (Oldham)					
2-3 storey residential housing developments			**M**		
Commercial/industrial developments			**M**		

Explanation for variance in sensitivity from overall LCT scores: The urban farmland between Heywood and Middleton is judged to have a **moderate** sensitivity to commercial/ industrial development (in addition to the housing scenario) as it lies adjacent to and 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 a strong influence, detracting from the rural qualities of the landscape. However, the more elevated land in the east of this LCA (around Thornfields Farm) would be more sensitive to development due to its visual prominence from areas to the west.

LCA 40: Heald Green (Stockport) to Bramhall					
2-3 storey residential housing developments		**L-M**			
Commercial/industrial developments		**L-M**			

Explanation for variance in sensitivity from overall LCT scores: This LCA is already strongly influenced by urban land uses, housing and industrial developments (including new developments on brownfield land), major transport infrastructure and the sounds/movements of air traffic associated with Manchester Airport. It is therefore of **low-moderate** sensitivity to both development scenarios, providing the guidance below is followed. Please also refer to the Stockport Landscape Character Assessment (2018).

Special landscape qualities and key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the special landscape qualities and key features/attributes that would be sensitive to change (e.g. as a result of development):

- Locations of elevated, open character with some prominent rural skylines forming a backdrop to views from adjacent urban areas.
- Areas of complex, undulating landform cut by distinctive steep wooded cloughs.
- Locally important semi-natural habitats and networks, including pockets of ancient and riparian woodland (e.g. Hopwood Woodlands LNR), patches of dry heath and acid grassland, remnant semi-natural grasslands, ponds and flashes.
- Intact lengths of gritstone walls, hedgerows and tree clumps along field boundaries forming ecological networks and bringing definition to the 18th and 19th century and post-medieval field patterns.
- Unifying vernacular of stone-built traditional farms and cottages, with some listed buildings including the Grade II* Brandlesholme Old Hall (Bury), Hopwood Hall (Rochdale) and Old Manor Farm (Stockport).
- Conservation Areas at Birch Village, Summerseat and the Macclesfield Canal, and the role the landscape plays as a rural setting to adjacent Conservation Areas.
- Industrial relicts, including disused railway lines, canals, mill buildings and the nationally designated Astley Green Colliery engine house and headgear.
- Two medieval moated sites near Marple and Standish which are nationally designated as Scheduled Monuments.
- Large areas defined by a sparse pattern of scattered stone-built farmsteads, individual properties and small settlements, linked by winding country lanes.
- Opportunities to access and enjoy the rural landscape, including the long distance footpaths (Rochdale Way, Rotary Way, Middlewich Way), cycle routes and a strong public rights of way network crossing the farmland and emanating from adjacent urban areas.

- The LCT's strong visual connections with foothills and uplands of the West/South Pennines and Peak District National Park, which lie to the north and east of Greater Manchester.
- Pockets of relative remoteness and tranquillity, including in the lower-lying south where robust hedgerows and lines of trees provide enclosure; elevated points in the north and east creating a sense of exposure.
- The LCT's role as an immediate rural backdrop to development and its important function in separating discrete urban areas, preventing coalescence.

Guidance and opportunities for future development and landscape management / enhancement

Guidance and opportunities to consider within this Landscape Character Type include:

- Avoid siting any development on the highly prominent, elevated and very sparsely settled land in the elevated north and east. Conserve open, undeveloped skylines.
- Utilise dips in the landform, including valley slopes, and existing tree/woodland cover to integrate new development into the landscape.
- Protect and where possible enhance semi-natural habitats and networks, including pockets of ancient and riparian woodland (e.g. Hopwood Woodlands LNR), patches of dry heath and acid grassland, remnant semi-natural grasslands, ponds and flashes.
- Strengthen and restore the dry stone wall and hedgerow network in association with any new development, reflecting local characteristics (choice of stone and building style; hedgerow species and management regimes). Encourage the restoration of traditional boundaries where fencing is present.
- Ensure any new development does not dilute the strong field patterns associated with the landscape.
- Respect local building styles and materials in new housing developments, seeking to reflect these in their design and build (particularly the use of local gritstone).
- Conserve the character and setting of the Conservation Areas at Birch Village, Summerseat and the Macclesfield Canal, as well as the role the landscape plays as a rural setting to adjacent Conservation Areas.
- Conserve remaining industrial relicts, including disused railway lines, canals, mill buildings and the nationally designated Astley Green Colliery engine house and headgear.
- Protect the setting and integrity of the two moated sites within the LCT which are Scheduled Monuments.
- Explore opportunities to develop unused Brackley Municipal Golf Course, south of Farnworth, for habitat creation with possible links with The Northern Forest initiative[1].
- Explore opportunities to re-route the Rotary Way long distance footpath though Brackley Municipal Golf Course and thus avoid crossing over the M61.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). This landscape is part of the wider catchment of a number of Greater Manchester's main river valleys.
- Encourage woodland creation schemes on areas of low grade agricultural land, including through the Northern Forest initiative. Woodland planting along motorways and staggered blocks of planting should be used to help screen views of traffic and reduce noise.
- Conserve the rural road network, ensuring any new highway design minimises unnecessary signage and lighting and reflects local characteristics (e.g. road verges/boundaries).
- Protect the pockets of tranquillity and relative remoteness associated with the landscape, and the role the LCT plays as a rural backdrop and buffer between discrete urban areas.
- Conserve key views and intervisibility with the South/West Pennines and Dark Peak foothills, upland fringes and open moorlands.

[1] See the Government's news announcement for the initiative at https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-northern-forest-gets-government-backing

Appendix 1

Landscape Character Type Maps

Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study

Salford District

URMSTON

STRETFORD

Trafford District

TRAFFORD

SALE

ALTRINCHAM

HALE

Manchester District

Stockport District

CHEADLE

CHEADLE HULME

GATLEY

Wythenshawe

Cheshire East

Carrington

Ashton upon Mersey

Sale Water Park

Chorlton cum Hardy

Withington

Didsbury

Heaton Mersey

Northenden

Sharston

Manchester Airport

Styal

Handforth

Rostherne

Bucklow Hill

Tatton Dale

Morley

Morley Green

Davenport Green

Woodhouse Park

Timperley

Broadheath

Sinderland Green

Dunham Woodhouses

Dunham Town

Dunham Massey Hall

Dunham Park (Deer Park)

Little Bollington

Arthill

Booth Bank

Ashley

Stanley Green

Gillbent

Due to open Late 2017

Terminal 1

Terminal 2

M56

M60

M63

M67

M602

M66

A6144

A5145

A5103

A560

A538

A34

A555

A556

A50

A5081

A6010

B5093

B5166

B5158

B5178

B5358

B5569

B5167

B5147

B5149

B5146

B5095

B5094

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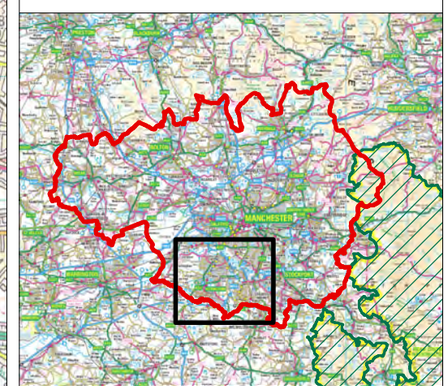
CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIGX_10169_Individual_LCT_A3L 31/05/2018

Landscape Character Types

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority area
- Local Authority boundary
- Peak District National Park

Landscape Character Types

- Broad Urban Fringe Valleys



Map Scale @A3: 1:50,000

LUC

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Source: GMCA, Natural England, LUC

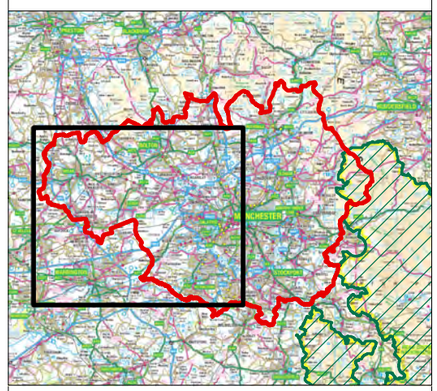
Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study

Landscape Character Types

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority area
- Local Authority boundary
- Peak District National Park

Landscape Character Types

- Historic Parks and Wooded Estate Farmland



Map Scale @A3: 1:107,000

LUC

GMCA

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CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIGX_10169_Individual_LCT_A3L 31/05/2018

Source: GMCA, Natural England, LUC

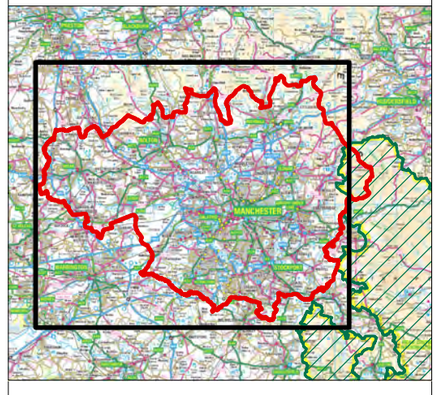
Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study

Landscape Character Types

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority area
- Local Authority boundary
- Peak District National Park

Landscape Character Types

- Incised Urban Fringe Valleys



Map Scale @A3: 1:160,000

LUC

GMCA

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CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIGX_10169_Individual_LCT_A3L 31/05/2018

Source: GMCA, Natural England, LUC

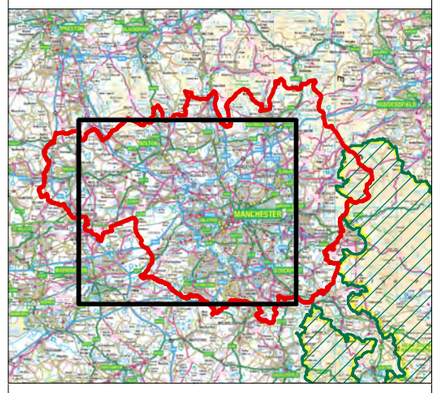
Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study

Landscape Character Types

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority area
- Local Authority boundary
- Peak District National Park

Landscape Character Types

- Mosslands and Lowland Farmland



Map Scale @A3: 1:111,000

LUC

GMCA

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CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIGX_10169_Individual_LCT_A3L 31/05/2018

Source: GMCA, Natural England, LUC

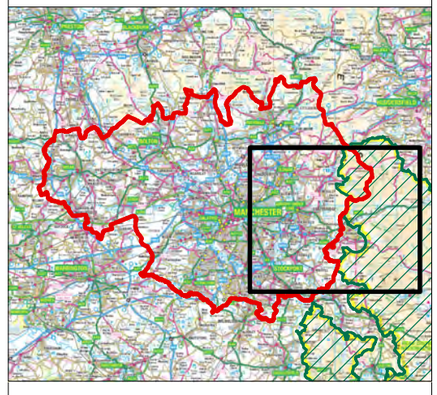
Greater Manchester
Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study

Landscape Character Types

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority area
- Local Authority boundary
- Peak District National Park

Landscape Character Types

- Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (Dark Peak)



Map Scale @A3: 1:87,000

LUC

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

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CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIGX_10169_Individual_LCT_A3L 31/05/2018

Source: GMCA, Natural England, LUC

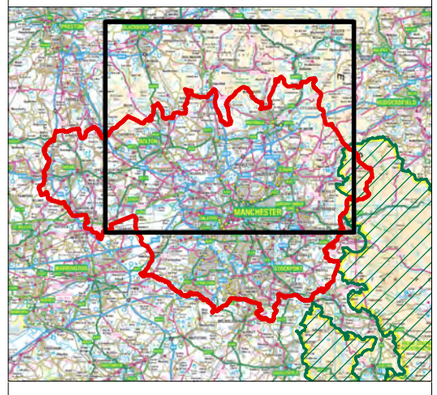
Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study

Landscape Character Types

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority area
- Local Authority boundary
- Peak District National Park

Landscape Character Types

- Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (West/South Pennines)



Map Scale @A3: 1:127,000

LUC

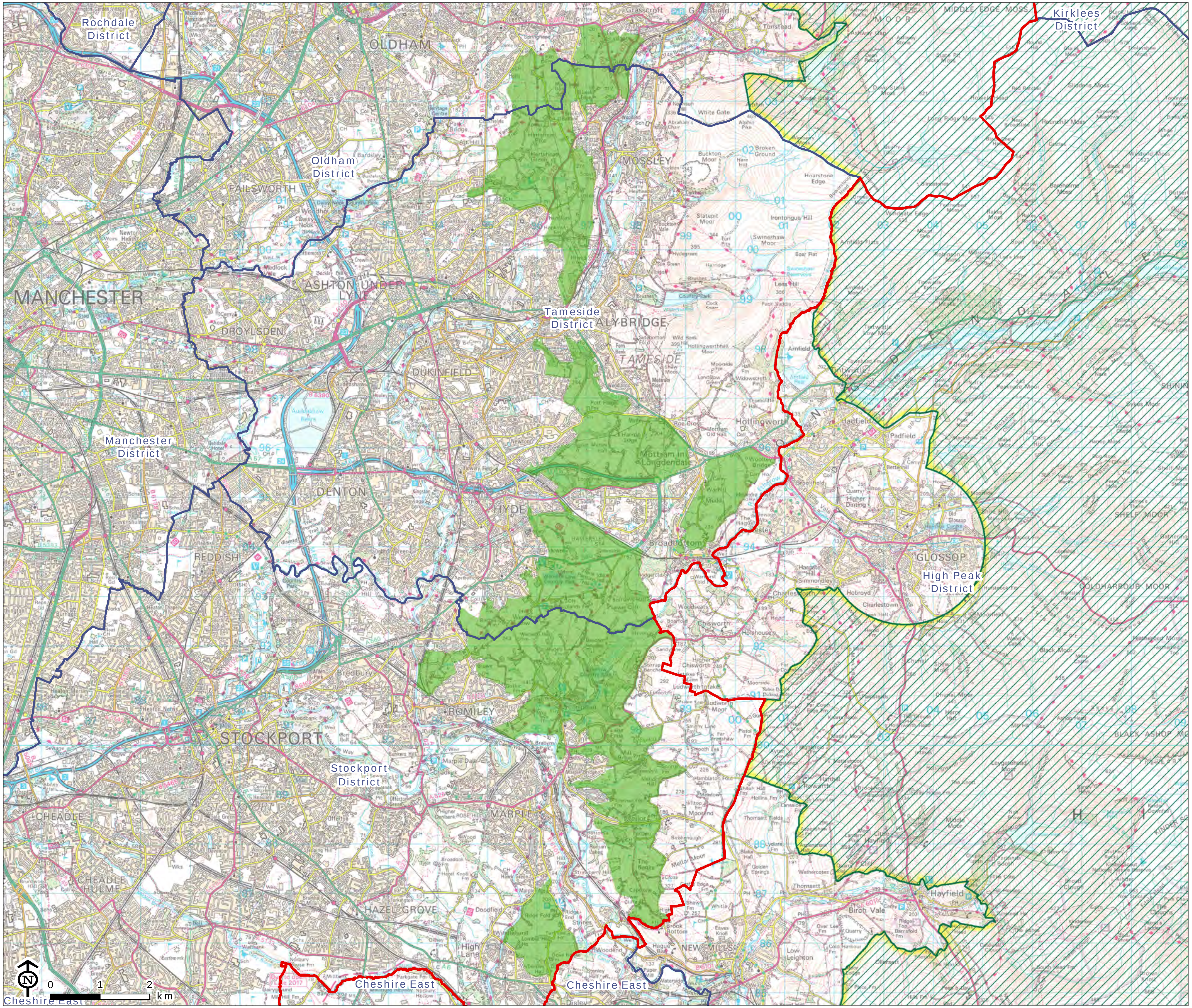
GMCA

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Source: GMCA, Natural England, LUC

Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study



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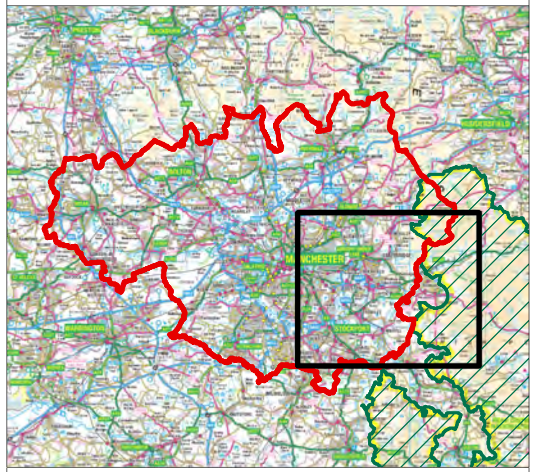
CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIGX_10169_Individual_LCT_A3L 31/05/2018

Landscape Character Types

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority area
- Local Authority boundary
- Peak District National Park

Landscape Character Types

- Pennine Foothills (Dark Peak)



Map Scale @A3: 1:75,000

LUC

GREATER MANCHESTER GMCA COMBINED AUTHORITY

Source: GMCA, Natural England, LUC

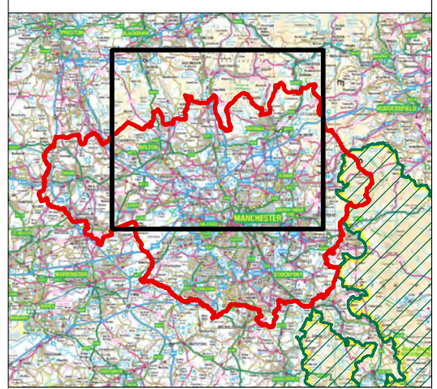
Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study

Landscape Character Types

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority area
- Local Authority boundary
- Peak District National Park

Landscape Character Types

- Pennine Foothills (West/South Pennines)



Map Scale @A3: 1:108,000

LUC

GMCA
GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

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Source: GMCA, Natural England, LUC

Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study

Blackburn with Darwen

Rossendale District

Rochdale District

Chorley District

Blackburn with Darwen

Bolton District

Bury District

Wigan District

Salford District

Trafford District

Manchester District

St. Helens District

Warrington

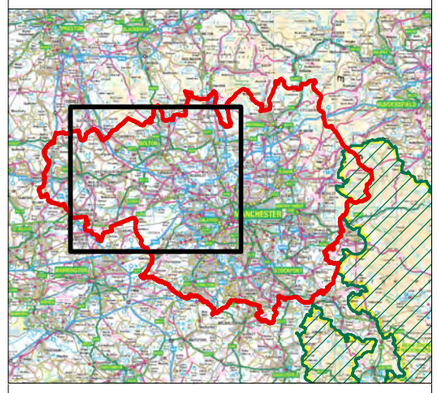
0 1 2 km

Landscape Character Types

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority area
- Local Authority boundary
- Peak District National Park

Landscape Character Types

- Reclaimed Land / Wetlands



Map Scale @A3: 1:87,000

LUC

GMCA

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Source: GMCA, Natural England, LUC

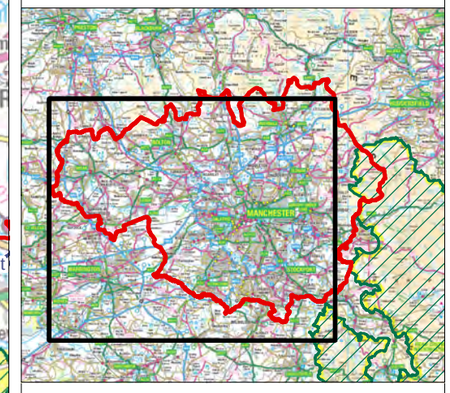
Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study

Landscape Character Types

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority area
- Local Authority boundary
- Peak District National Park

Landscape Character Types

- Urban Fringe Farmland



Map Scale @A3: 1:146,000

LUC

GMCA

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CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIGX_10169_Individual_LCT_A3L 31/05/2018

Source: GMCA, Natural England, LUC

Appendix 2
Data and literature list

GIS Information

Data used within the report, including data collated in the GIS database is shown in the Table below.

Dataset	Owner
General	
Ordnance Survey 1:25K	Ordnance Survey
Ordnance Survey 1:50K	Ordnance Survey
Vector map local	Ordnance Survey
National Parks	Natural England
Aerial photography	ESRI
Landscape and geology	
National Character Areas	Natural England
Dark skies	CPRE
Tranquillity	CPRE
North West Regional Landscape Character Types	Natural England
Landscape Character Areas	Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
Landscape Character Areas	Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council
Landscape Character Areas	Bury Metropolitan Borough Council
Landscape Character Areas	Salford City Council
Landscape Character Areas	Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council
Fault Geology	British Geological Survey
Superficial Geology	British Geological Survey
Bedrock Geology	British Geological Survey
Geology: dykes	British Geological Survey
Heritage and historic landscape character	
Registered Battlefields	Historic England
Registered Parks and Gardens	Historic England
Scheduled Monuments	Historic England
Listed Buildings	Historic England
Conservation Areas	Greater Manchester Combined Authority
Greater Manchester Historic Landscape Characterisation	Archaeology data service
Local Historic Landscape Character	Archaeology data service
Biodiversity and woodland	
Priority BAP Habitats	Natural England
Local Nature Reserves	Natural England
National Nature Reserves	Natural England
Site of Special Scientific Interest	Natural England
Ramsar	Natural England
Special Protection Area	Natural England
Special Area of Conservation	Natural England
Local Wildlife Sites/Sites of Biological Importance	Greater Manchester Local Authorities
Ancient woodland	Natural England
National Forest Inventory	Forestry Commission
Access and recreation	
Country Parks	Natural England
Open access land	Natural England
National trails	Natural England
Railway stations/ lines	OS OML

Roads	OS OML
Cycling routes	Sustrans
National Trust access land	National Trust
Green space	Ordnance Survey
Open space	Greater Manchester Local Authorities
Hydrology	
Water courses/lakes	OS OML
Flood Zone 3	Environment Agency
Flood Zone 2	Environment Agency
Planning	
Manchester Green Belt	Greater Manchester Local Authorities
Site allocations	Greater Manchester Combined Authority
Administrative boundaries	Ordnance Survey

Key literature sources

A Landscape Character Appraisal of Bolton. Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council. 2001.

Bolton Council Open Space, Sport & Recreation Study. Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd for Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council, 2007.

Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy. Bury Council, February 2015

Bury Landscape Character Assessment. Bury Council, 2009.

Cheshire East Landscape Character Assessment. LUC for Cheshire East Council, 2018.

Draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework. Greater Manchester Combined Authority, October 2016.

Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan. Greater Manchester Biodiversity Project, 2009.

Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan Document. Association of Greater Manchester Authorities, April 2012.

Greater Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Stockport District Report. The Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit. 2011.

High Peak Borough Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document. High Peak Borough Council, March 2006.

National Character Area Profile 51: Dark Peak. Natural England

National Character Area Profile 54: Manchester Pennine Fringe. Natural England

National Character Area Profile 55: Manchester Conurbation. Natural England

National Character Area Profile 56: Lancashire Coal Measures. Natural England

National Character Area Profile 61: Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain. Natural England

North West Landscape Character Framework – Regional Landscape Character Types and Areas. Countryscape for Natural England, August 2009.

Oldham Local Development Framework Landscape Character Assessment. Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, 2009.

Oldham Local Development Framework Open Space Study. Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, 2006.

Peak District National Park Landscape Character Assessment. Peak District National Park Authority, 2009.

Rochdale Township Green Infrastructure Action Plan. Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council, September 2013.

Salford City Council Greenspace Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (Consultation Draft). Salford City Council, June 2017.

Salford City Council Landscape Character Assessment. Salford City Council, 2007.

Stockport Borough Council Open Space Assessment. Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd for Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council, August 2017.

Stockport Landscape Character Assessment. Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council. 2006 (Reviewed 2011).

Stockport Town Centre Urban Green Infrastructure Enhancement Strategy. Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council, January 2015

Tameside District Council PPG17 Open Space Study. Knight, Kavanagh & Page (KKP) for Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, August 2010

The Carbon Landscape Landscape Character Assessment. The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire Manchester & North Merseyside. 2015.

The Carbon Landscape: Interpretation Report. Great Manchester Wetlands Partnership, 2014.

The Natural Environment- Priority Green and Blue Infrastructure. Greater Manchester Combined Authority, October 2016.

Trafford Landscape Assessment. Borough of Trafford, 2000.

Trafford Metropolitan Borough Supplementary Planning Guidance Landscape Strategy. Trafford Metropolitan Borough, 2004.

Urban Greenspace in Rochdale MBC. TEP for Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council, 2008.

Wigan Borough Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision and Needs Assessment. Wigan Council, 2017

Wigan Local Plan Core Strategy. Wigan Council, adopted September 2013.

Wigan: A Landscape Character Assessment. Wigan Council, 2009.

Wigan's Biodiversity - An Audit of the Biodiversity Resource within the Borough. TEP for Wigan Council, 2010.

Appendix 3
Intervisibility mapping

Non-Technical Note

These figures illustrate the relative visibility of a grid of points placed across the Manchester landscape character areas, illustrating the locations where ground level is most visible (red) and least visible (blue). The map is based on a bare-ground terrain model (**Figure A.1**). This model did not take account of the screening effect of buildings or trees. GIS based analysis draped a 500m grid of points over the landscape and calculated the number of other points from which each point could theoretically be seen. For **Figure A.2**, the modelling took account of the screening effect of buildings and trees, which refined the areas identified as having greater relative prominentce within the wider landscape.

Note

Intervisibility analysis calculates number of points visible from each location. The points are arranged in a 500 m grid covering the whole of the study area. The viewshed is calculated to 0 m for each point, from a height of 2 m above ground level.

The terrain model is derived from OS Terrain 5 (a bare-earth model). For **Figure A.2**, forestry was added (with a 30 m height) from the Forestry Commission's National Forest Inventory (NFI) data to show forestry obstructions, buildings were added from Emu Analytics data.

Earth curvature and atmospheric refraction have been taken into account.

Greater Manchester
Landscape Character
and Sensitivity Study

Figure A.1: Relative intervisibility of land within and surrounding Greater Manchester (bare ground model)

Greater Manchester Combined Authority area

Local Authority boundary

Level of intervisibility

High

Low

Non Technical Note

This figure illustrates the relative visibility of a grid of points placed across the Manchester landscape character areas, illustrating the locations where ground level is most visible (red) and least visible (blue). The map is based on a bare-ground terrain model.

Note

Intervisibility calculates number of points visible from each location. The points are arranged in a 500 m grid covering the whole of the study area. The viewshed is calculated to 0 m for each point, from a height of 2 m above ground level.

The terrain model is derived from OS Terrain 5 (a bare-earth model).

Map Scale @A3: 1:180,000

0 5 10 km

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CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC AppendixA1_10169_r1_Intervisibility_OST5_A3L 06/07/2018

Source: Emu Analytics, FC, GMCA, LUC

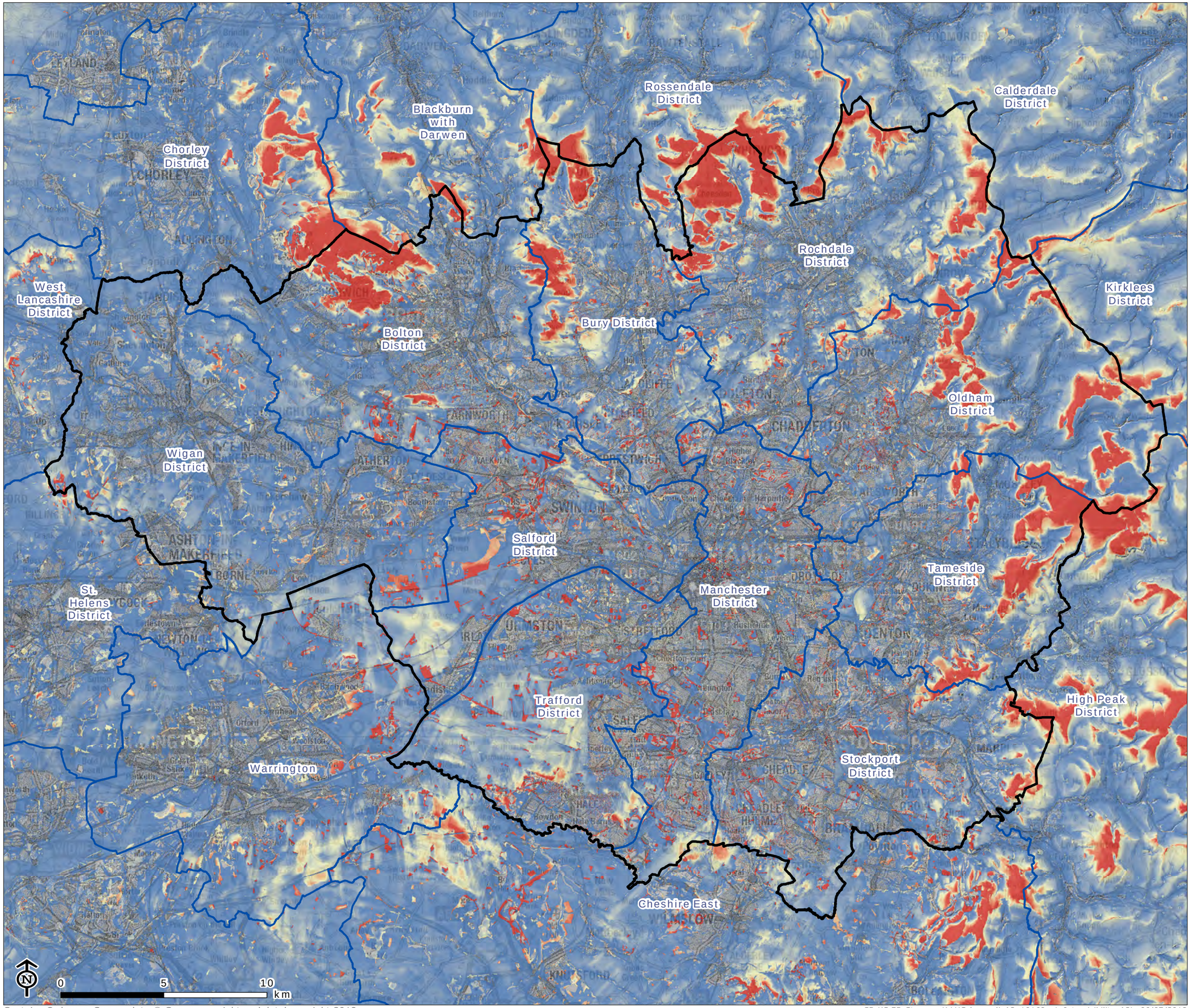


Figure A.2: Relative intervisibility of land within and surrounding Greater Manchester (including buildings and forestry)

Greater Manchester Combined Authority area

Local Authority boundary

Level of intervisibility

High

Low

Non Technical Note

This figure illustrates the relative visibility of a grid of points placed across the Manchester landscape character areas, illustrating the locations where ground level is most visible (red) and least visible (blue). The map is based on a bare-ground terrain model with forestry and buildings added.

Note

Intervisibility calculates number of points visible from each location. The points are arranged in a 500 m grid covering the whole of the study area. The viewshed is calculated to 0 m for each point, from a height of 2 m above ground level.

The terrain model is derived from OS Terrain 5 (a bare-earth model). Forestry was added (with a 30 m height) from the Forestry Commission's National Forest Inventory (NFI) data to show forestry obstructions, buildings were added from Emu Analytics data.

Earth curvature and atmospheric refraction have been taken into account.

Map Scale @A3: 1:180,000

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CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC AppendixA2_10169_r1_Intervisibility_A3L 06/07/2018

Source: Emu Analytics, FC, GMCA, LUC