

## Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Date: 27 October 2023

Subject: Ashton Growth Corridor: Proposed Mayoral Development Zone

Report of: Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, Eamonn Boylan, Chief Executive of GMCA and Transport for Greater Manchester

---

### Purpose of Report

This report seeks approval for and sets out the proposed concept for a Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ) in the Eastern Growth Cluster, to be named Ashton Mayoral Development Zone (AMDZ). The Eastern Growth Cluster is one of six Growth Locations across Greater Manchester that will deliver new mixed use development, create a renewed and vibrant town centre, create and retain jobs, offer better job opportunities, enable training and skill development to increase the number of residents in employment. The AMDZ will be focussed around two principal growth sites: Ashton Moss and Ashton Town Centre, including St Petersfield. The Ashton Growth Corridor presents a unique opportunity to focus on a cluster of growth opportunities which will build on the investment of transport, digital assets and place planning to harness the opportunity presented by the allocation of a major employment site through PfE, the regeneration of the town centre which has surplus public sector owned land assets and the synergy between the two. The cumulative impact of these sites will be to contribute to the objectives of the GM Strategy and emerging Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan which seek to rebalance the GM economy by accelerating the economic growth and competitiveness across the less prosperous areas of GM. Agreement of the Combined Authority is sought to the designation of the Zone, the Governance arrangements and the principles to be covered in the business case.

## Recommendations:

The GMCA is requested to:

1. Approve the designation of a Mayoral Development Zone known as Ashton Mayoral Development Zone (AMDZ).
2. Agree the proposed area of the AMDZ as indicated in Plan 2 attached at Appendix 1.
3. Approve the establishment of the AMDZ Board and give delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer GMCA and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) to agree appropriate representation on the Board in consultation with Tameside Council.
4. Note that the projects within the proposed AMDZ will aim to deliver sustainable forms of development that reflect and deliver the GM Strategy.
5. Note and agree the principles of the business case and development strategy for the MDZ as set out in paragraphs 5.3-5.9 below which the AMDZ Board will refine into the development of a business case for the AMDZ in overseeing the delivery of the growth sites and be brought back to the CA for approval.
6. Note that the current funding resource will be from TMBC's unallocated Levelling Up Capacity Grant with GMCA providing support with officer time.
7. Agree to receive future updates on delivery progress at AMDZ.

## Contact Officers

Andrew McIntosh, Director of Place, [andrew.macintosh@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.macintosh@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

Simon Noakes, Executive Director, [simon.noakes@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:simon.noakes@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

Report authors must identify which paragraph relating to the following issues:

# Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

## Recommendation - Key points for decision-makers

Note that the projects within the proposed AMDZ will aim to deliver sustainable forms of development that reflect and deliver the GM Strategy.

### Impacts Questionnaire

Impact Indicator	Result	Justification/Mitigation
Equality and Inclusion	G	Improvements to sustainable transport connectivity as part of regeneration plans. Any proposals will undergo public consultations. New communities will be delivered in the AMDZ as will job opportunities, having a positive impact on communities.
Health	G	The current area is deprived. Delivery of high paid jobs and opportunities will impact positively on deprivation indicators. The AMDZ will deliver positive change for residents. The delivery of projects in the AMDZ will improve sustainable connectivity. Delivery of projects in the AMDZ will improve physical and digital connectivity bringing people closer to services and facilities in the town centre.
Resilience and Adaptation		
Housing	G	More homes available in sustainable locations
Economy	G	
Mobility and Connectivity	A	Potential to extend dark fibre network in development areas. New employment areas such as Ashton Moss may well impact on road congestion but it is serviced by an existing tram link. AMDZ will aim to improve sustainable transport. The projects in the proposed AMDZ are at early stage in development and a number of issues such as mobility and connectivity will need to be considered further.
Carbon, Nature and Environment	A	Ashton Moss has peat on site but the remediation and delivery of physical works on site is yet to be determined. Regeneration of Ashton TC will improve visual amenity. The impacts on this indicator will be more fully understood and mitigated as the project progress. The intention is that developments are at least policy compliant and will deliver GM aspirations
Consumption and Production	G	Each project in the AMDZ will aim to be delivered using sustainable construction methods, minimising waste and recycling materials where possible.
Contribution to achieving the GM Carbon Neutral 2038 target		Through the procurement and delivery of the projects associated with the AMDZ, there will be a focus on delivering Carbon Neutral ambitions and other GM policy aspirations. A Board will be set up to guide delivery of projects in the AMDZ.
Overall	G	Positive impacts overall, whether long or short term.
Future	A	Mix of positive and negative impacts. Trade-offs to consider.
	R	Mostly negative, with at least one positive aspect. Trade-offs to consider.
	RR	Negative impacts overall.

## Carbon Assessment

Overall Score					
<b>Buildings</b>	<b>Result</b>	<b>Justification/Mitigation</b>			
New Build residential		Projects in the their entirety are not advanced enough. For St Petersfield sustainable design work has been done but potential issues with viability			
Residential building(s) renovation/maintenance	N/A				
New build non-residential (including public) buildings		Project not advanced enough			
<b>Transport</b>					
Active travel and public transport		Projects in the their entirety are not advanced enough, but strategic aspiration for improvement to public transport.			
Roads, Parking and Vehicle Access					
Access to amenities					
Vehicle procurement	N/A				
<b>Land Use</b>					
La	No associated carbon impacts expected.	High standard in terms of practice and awareness on carbon.	Mostly best practice with a good level of awareness on carbon.	Partially meets best practice/ awareness, significant room to improve.	Not best practice and/ or insufficient awareness of carbon impacts.

## Risk Management

The key risks identified include:

- The removal of land at Ashton Moss from the Green Belt needs to be confirmed through the statutory development plan adoption process for Places for Everyone. Failure to remove the site from the Green Belt through the PfE process will make the transformational growth opportunity of the corridor less certain. The Council and landowners are supporting the allocation of the site to support inclusive and sustainable growth that boosts competitiveness of this part of Greater Manchester.
- Some of the principal development sites are in third party land ownership and development may not come forward at pace and for desired use/ development mix. The Council is using its convening and regeneration powers to co-ordinate land owners and is entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with land owners and is securing and investing resources to shape the future quality of place and mix of uses.
- There is insufficient market demand for the commercial, employment and new housing development. This is being mitigated by the public sector working collaboratively to obtain up to date market intelligence and directly engaging with

the market to secure feed- back on emerging masterplan concepts in order to shape a flexible plan framework and demand sensitive strategy.

## **Legal Considerations**

The MDZ is not a legal entity and legal implications apply to projects being delivered. Legal implications relating to individual projects will be considered on a case by case basis.

## **Financial Consequences – Revenue**

Progressing the growth opportunities in the MDZ is likely to require further support from the CA revenue funding surpluses such as Evergreen and Housing Surpluses. Approvals will be sought for the allocation of funding through appropriate business case routes. Current funding resource will be from TMBC's unallocated Levelling Up Capacity Grant.

## **Financial Consequences – Capital**

Delivery of these projects will require significant investment of public and private sector funding from a range of sources. Approval will be sought for any investment of GMCA funding.

## **Number of attachments to the report: 2**

## **Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

**N/A**

## **Background Papers**

- Updated Greater Manchester Strategy.
- Growth Locations Update: Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 17 December 2021.

## **Tracking/ Process**

Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution

No

**Exemption from call in**

Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?

No

**GM Transport Committee**

N/A

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

N/A

# 1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 The GM Strategy and emerging PfE Joint Development Plan seeks to rebalance the Greater Manchester economy by accelerating the economic growth and competitiveness of the northern areas, which includes Tameside in the Eastern Growth Cluster, to a more equal level with the more prosperous centre and southern part of Greater Manchester to improve the income levels and life chances of residents. Following 10 years of persistent austerity and the prevailing economic conditions there is a new urgency to focus on issues and opportunities in this part of the conurbation. The Tameside area of Greater Manchester performs significantly worse overall than the southern areas and this is forecast to continue unless there are co-ordinated interventions to address this.
  
- 1.2 The central theme of PfE is to deliver inclusive growth across the city region, with everyone sharing in the benefits of rising prosperity through making the most of locations and assets best placed to support economic growth; provide quality investment opportunities that help to address disparities and creating places which will be more resilient to climate change. Currently Tameside experiences high levels of deprivation, characterised by relatively low incomes, low house prices, low qualifications, low economic activity, low proportions in higher managerial/professional occupations, and poor average health. Significant interventions will be required to address these issues through the provision of a good supply of high quality development sites, interventions to facilitate and lever town centre regeneration and make use of existing assets and investment in transport connectivity and enhanced digital connectivity at Ashton Old Baths. The urgency to more strongly intervene at scale and in a connected way has been accelerated by the opportunity presented by Government through the publishing of the Levelling-Up White Paper, subsequent Levelling-Up funding opportunities and emerging legislation.
  
- 1.3 Greater Manchester has designated 6 Growth Locations across the sub-region to provide a platform for levelling up across the sub-region, by creating value through new investment and development and in turn ensuring that the resultant benefits and outcomes are experienced across wider Greater Manchester communities. There is a significant cluster of growth opportunity emerging in the East of Greater Manchester in the area that stretches from Ashton through Hyde, across to Godley and

connecting into Hattersley on the edge of the Peak District. This has been agreed as the Eastern Growth Cluster within previous CA reports, see Plan 1 at Appendix 1 attached.

- 1.4 Tameside is located to the east of the city-region and 12 km from Manchester City Centre. The Ashton area is advantageously located to the east of the Regional Centre, with good transport links to it and the Higher Education and Research Centres of Excellence, a good existing business base with a strength in manufacturing ( Location Quotient 2.44) and advanced manufacturing and materials ( Location Quotient 1.13) (specifically ceilings, plastics and textiles) and an emerging opportunity in digital and technology. Whilst there are networks and links to research and innovation organisations there is an opportunity for these to be strengthened. In addition to its strong relationship with Greater Manchester, Ashton also benefits from its position to the west of the Peak District National Park offering a dramatic and attractive landscape setting to the Borough as well as providing an interface with wider rural, environmental and economic opportunities into Yorkshire. The growth location benefits from strong regional and national transport connections with both the M60 and M67 running through the Borough and rail and public transport including the Metrolink connecting into Ashton. These major infrastructure connections provide Ashton with accessibility to the Greater Manchester and Yorkshire conurbations including North Yorkshire (Leeds) and South Yorkshire (Sheffield). Access into Manchester City Centre by rail is achieved with trains from Ashton-under-Lyne station into Manchester Victoria station every hour (in under 15 minutes). Trains to Leeds require a change at Stalybridge with a total journey time duration of c. 1 hour. In addition, Ashton is served by 3 tram stops: Ashton Moss, Ashton West and Ashton-under-Lyne, with the latter being the end of the line. The tram provides direct access into Central Manchester every 12 minutes, with a total journey time of 35 minutes and then continuing west towards Salford Quays/ Eccles.
- 1.5 Positioned between the digital hubs of Manchester and Leeds City Centres and the advanced manufacturing hubs of Lancashire and south Yorkshire makes Ashton a key opportunity to harness the digital, creative and tech sector and advanced materials strengths of Greater Manchester to create an economic growth engine in the east of the City Region.



- 1.6 Proposals include diversifying the range of housing choices, including aspirational housing that will attract and retain skilled workers and entrepreneurs, regenerating town centres and diversifying the range of uses. The proposed AMDZ is located on the eastern edge of the wider growth location.
- 1.7 There is a corridor of growth and regeneration potential in the corridor that runs from Ashton Moss to Ashton town centre. Of particular significance is the opportunity for growth through the completion of St Petersfield, the proposed development of the remainder of land allocated for employment at Ashton Moss East and the release of land from the Green Belt at Ashton Moss West. In addition there is the potential for new residential development at the former Ashton Interchange Site, St Petersfield and other surplus and vacant town centre sites. This corridor has the potential to deliver around 190,000 sq.m. of new employment floorspace, 10,500 quality jobs and circa 1,500 new quality low carbon homes linked to improved sustainable transport which includes proposals to extend the Metrolink, a quality bus corridor and active travel improvements.

## **2. Opportunities for Growth and Regeneration**

- 2.1 The Ashton Growth Corridor has been identified for the range of opportunities and the synergy between them to create growth and cumulatively level up this part of Greater Manchester. As referenced in section 1 above there is significant potential in Ashton Town Centre which benefits from good connection to the regional centre through Metrolink, rail, road and the motorway to the north of the town centre. In addition a new bus Interchange has been developed, freeing up the former site for redevelopment. St Petersfield and Ashton Old Baths has the benefit of Dark Fibre Infrastructure and digital connectivity and offers the potential to create a digital and creative hub. Tameside College and the Council has invested in new efficient office space in the heart of the Town Centre.

- 2.2 The opportunity to harness this strategic infrastructure development in the town centre consists of completing the development of St Petersfield and the regeneration schemes supported by Levelling- Up Funding, specifically the remediation of the former Interchange site, the first stage of refurbishment at Ashton Town Hall and public realm works with a specific focus on Market Square. Linked to these opportunities is a need to provide employment space for existing businesses to modernise and grow and attract new businesses, particularly in the existing sectors that have a strong presence and the potential to grow in the area. The existing proposed Local Plan allocation as Ashton Moss East and through the release of Green Belt land, at Ashton Moss West will provide for significant employment development.
- 2.3 The Growth Corridor provides a synergy between the two areas of opportunity the employment growth site and the town centre. For Ashton Moss to attract the quality of businesses envisaged and retain and attract workers it is necessary that Ashton Town Centre is an attractive centre offering a range of uses that compliment other recent development at Ashton Moss. Similarly the town centre will benefit from the adjacent business growth to support commercial, retail and leisure uses.
- 2.4 St Petersfield is located in the south western part of Ashton town centre and is a landmark development and Tameside's primary quality office development following the first phase of development including the conversion of Ashton Old Baths to form 929 sqm of office space, housing a cluster of digital, creative and technical businesses. The concept masterplan for St Petersfield has been completed and The area is identified for the development of a mix of uses including residential and additional employment space in the form of a hub for the growth of the digital, creative and tech sector in the long term, to complement the completed Ashton Old Baths scheme, whilst also delivering increased town centre residential development in the short term. High quality residential development will provide new sustainable homes, increasing the local population and weaving together living and working environments which will energise the town centre throughout the day and into the evening.
- 2.5 The Council has also secured £19m levelling up funding to regenerate Ashton town centre focussed on enabling works at the vacant former Interchange site, that will unlock potential redevelopment of the Arcades and Ladysmith shopping centre sites to deliver 471 new homes, 1625 sqm (17,500 sq. ft) of retail floorspace supporting

the retention of 8361 sqm (90,000 sq. ft) and the provision of 94,000 sq. ft of commercial floorspace, and the first stage of refurbishment works at the iconic listed Ashton Town Hall. The town centre regeneration will be supported by the provision of improved public realm with a particular focus on Market Square, enhanced and integrated walking and cycling links, strengthening the connections between key areas of the town centre. These schemes are being progressed and the interventions will provide the initial stage in making Ashton Town Centre attractive to existing business and the workforce, attracting new business and attracting workers from St Petersfield and Ashton Moss developments to both live in and use the centre.

2.6 The Ashton Moss site has the potential to deliver transformational change with capacity for around 135,000 sqm of high quality employment facilities including industrial space, R&D laboratories and supporting office and logistics developments. The site is bounded by the M60 motorway to the east with access to J23, Manchester to Leeds heavy rail line to the north, residential properties to the west and A6140 Lord Sheldon Way and Metrolink to the south. The Metrolink line skirts the site's southern edge and several stops are present within the vicinity of the site. In addition, the eastern edge of the site is within 800m of the main town centre boundary for Ashton-under-Lyne and is connected to high speed dark fibre network. Ashton Moss West represents a major opportunity for Tameside and to deliver high quality employment floorspace primarily falling within research and life sciences; health technologies; advanced manufacturing; or materials science. A development framework is currently being finalised by the Council working with the private sector landowners. The site provides a significant opportunity to deliver new employment space for advanced manufacturing and materials uses, alongside greater engagement with Higher Educational Institutions.

2.7 This opportunity will be reinforced by the networks and partnerships already developed that build upon the current strength in Manufacturing and Advanced Manufacturing sectors as well as the opportunity to harness the cluster of digital, creative and technology specialisms based at Ashton Old Baths in the St Petersfield area. An integral component of the strategy to bring forward the site is the partnership between the landowners/ developers, businesses and Colleges to ensure that training support is in place enabling local residents to access jobs created. A

development framework for Ashton Moss is currently being finalised by the Council working with the private sector landowners.

- 2.9 The approach to looking at growth and regeneration at scale, connecting to opportunities for local residents and improved sustainable transport access chimes with Central Government's Levelling-Up White Paper and emerging legislation which proposes to take the radical steps needed to tackle the regional and local inequalities that unfairly hold back communities and to encourage private sector investment aimed at boosting productivity, pay, jobs and living standards.

### **3. Future Opportunity and Programme**

- 3.1 It is vital that all public agencies work collaboratively to deliver a common ambition and plan for this Eastern Growth Cluster growth opportunity to realise its potential. In order to focus and co-ordinate activity so that these ambitions are realised, there is a need to develop new mechanisms, which build on the strong local and Greater Manchester governance and place leadership. This will elevate the profile of opportunity to influence wider stakeholders and tailor and target their funding programmes and priorities to support these local ambitions. The GMCA, Local Authorities and TfGM are committed to the Growth Location concept to deliver this ambition.
- 3.2 Ashton Moss and Ashton Town Centre, including St Petersfield, are major catalysts for growth but require a longer-term vision and strategy to deliver. Whilst significant progress has been made in bringing forward regeneration opportunities in the town centre and promoting further land for development through the statutory development plan process. There remains a need and opportunity to galvanise the pace of regeneration using surplus and underused Council land ownerships as well as those assets of other public sector and private sector land owners. There is also a need to strengthen and widen the range of partnerships and networks to include Health, the local social housing providers, business sector networks and engagement with Higher Education Institutes in the Regional Centre.
- 3.3 There is an ambition to build on the transport investment made. As part of delivering the Bee Network, a new and enhanced public transport offer, alongside the creation of active travel connections, will encourage and facilitate access to employment and

services by sustainable modes, from existing and new residential communities. The CRSTS bid will also support delivery of a new Quality Bus Transit Corridor connecting Rochdale-Oldham-Ashton, alongside proposals to develop a similar scheme connecting Ashton and Stockport. Plans also include a new railway station at Ashton Moss and also investment in cycling and walking routes supported by Mayor's Challenge Fund and Active Travel Fund. Highways improvements will also be delivered that will ensure efficient access into the site from the A6140 Lord Sheldon Way, particularly for business associated transport. Transport proposals will create a safe, walkable and green development. Any highway measures will be delivered to ensure they support the decarbonisation plans of GM.

3.4 TfGM has negotiated significant funding from Department for Transport through the CRSTS programme, towards the ongoing delivery and feasibility of sustainable transport measures alongside developer contributions. However, to achieve this transformational level of connectivity across the area will require further funding contributions to be secured.

3.5 The designation of an MDZ is considered an effective mechanism for accelerating growth to deliver the potential of the area. The programme for the delivery of these sites which achieves the objectives of the growth location will be set out through the development of a Business Case overseen by the Board.

## **4. Proposal**

4.1 Levelling-up requires a focused, long-term plan of action and a clear framework to identify and act upon the drivers of spatial disparity through focussing on the key drivers of place which include: infrastructure, housing and business space; the application and transfer of technology to improve productivity; innovation and skills of the workforce; strong and resilient communities; appropriate financial resources and place leadership by local government organisations. Each of these are individually important but their real significance comes in combination.

4.2 As already identified support from national funding programmes has been secured by the Council to deliver town centre regeneration e.g. Levelling-up funding, UK SPF and TfGM has secured funding through CRSTS and infrastructure funding programmes. In addition, the Combined Authority and Homes England has provided revenue funding to support the delivery of the sites in the Growth Location. The

public sector partnership is working with developers that already have a controlling interest in the land. However, consideration has been given by the local authority to options for a delivery mechanism that will achieve an acceleration of the pace and scale of delivery. It is proposed that the optimal regeneration mechanism for this area is a Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ) as it would:

- assist in strategically focussing development activity across the area.
- align public sector investment to assist in unlocking the area's potential.
- have the profile and ability to create a diverse mix of investment propositions to take to the market and to Government.
- Capitalise fully on the existing strategic infrastructure already in place in the locality to deliver growth and address deprivation challenges in the area.
- have the profile to procure development partners, where this is required, underpinned by land sale agreements or joint ventures between public and private sector partners.
- be able to bring together appropriate experience and capacity in development and place-making from across the public sector, and at Board-level to create the momentum to support delivery of a long-term and complex change programme.
- set in place a time-limited but long-term structure and business plan that would sit outside other organisational contexts and pressures. This would ensure that there was a committed and certain resource set in place to underpin its investment strategy.
- Make full use of the Devolution Deal levers in the area, specifically the Brownfield Housing Fund, Single Settlement relating to Housing and Transport, Influence of the Affordable Homes Programme, and partnership with Network Rail.
- Enable a single place integrated approach for all these key activities and requirements that will optimise the relationships between democratic responsibility and the economic and social priorities of the Mayor, Combined Authority and the Council and other public/private partners. There will be a requirement to report to both Tameside Council and Greater Manchester Combined Authority to ensure that its proceedings can be scrutinised within existing democratic structures.

4.3 Agreement is sought from the CA to approve the designation of a Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ) and it is also proposed that the MDZ be referred to as

Ashton Mayoral Development Zone (AMDZ) and the area as indicated in the shaded grey area at Map 2 attached at Appendix 1. The draft vision for the AMDZ area is for it to be:

“an economic growth engine for the east of Manchester City Region with the potential to strengthen links with Yorkshire offering highly accessible employment opportunities, supported by exceptional further educational institutions and a choice of attractive and affordable homes within a thriving historic market town on the doorstep of the Peak District”.

4.4 The designation of a MDZ will provide a clear mechanism to align public and private sector investment and ensure that there is commitment to the principle to delivering inclusive and sustainable growth across the two sites and the wider town centre. It is envisaged that the Board will comprise at senior partner representation as follows:

- The Leader of Tameside Council.
- The Chief Executive of Tameside Council
- The GM Mayor or his nominated representative.
- A senior Director from TfGM
- A senior Director from Homes England
- A representative from a Higher Education Institution
- A representative from the Health Authority
- A representative from the stock owning affordable Housing Provider in the vicinity of the town centre
- A representative from Central Government e.g. the Regional Director from DHLUC, will be confirmed by the MDZ Board.
- Other independent private sector representatives as appropriate
- The Board will agree the appointment of a Board Chair, from the lead private sector landowners/developers and representatives from the business sector.

4.5 The proposal adheres to the principles that were previously agreed by GMCA when entering into mayoral vehicles, noting that in this instance there is no legal entity proposed.

## **5. Next Steps**

5.1 To advance the objectives below it will be necessary to:

Establish the MDZ Board and supporting Governance Structure and collectively develop priority projects for public sector funding to stimulate change and lever growth.

### **Governance**

5.2 The Ashton Innovation Corridor MDZ Board will be established as set out at paragraph 4.5, with appropriate representation agreed by the Chief Executive Officer GMCA & TfGM in consultation with Tameside Council and will work to support the local authority with the delivery of the strategic sites and provide focus on core deliverables both in terms of specific sites and linkages to surrounding communities. Following establishment, the Board will agree its Key Objectives and a Strategic Business Case.

### **Business Case**

5.3 The Board will develop a Business Case that will achieve the delivery of the Objectives for the area, as noted below.

The high level Objectives will consist of:

- Delivering approximately 190,000 sq.m. of new employment floorspace, 10,500 quality jobs and up to 1500 new quality low carbon homes linked to sustainable Transport by attracting public and private sector investment to support the delivery of employment and residential growth.
- Improve choice of homes, in particular modern energy efficient homes for rent and sale including affordable homes.
- Attract large scale employment in target sectors, with a focus on Advanced Materials and Manufacturing, Health Innovation, Digital, Creative and Media and Clean Growth.



- Grow and diversify the Ashton Town Centre offer including housing, leisure, health and culture, whilst increasing footfall.
- Reduce property vacancy rates in the area by repurposing space to create a more diverse offer in the Town Centre and make better use of existing sites and premises.
- Strengthen and grow the existing businesses within the area.
- Contribute to the delivery of the transport strategy for the area that capitalises on the existing strategic transport infrastructure and enhances connectivity between different parts of the Town Centre, in particular St Petersfield and Ashton Interchange, with improved walking/cycling routes and better quality public realm.
- Contribute to the delivery of the social infrastructure and amenity required to support an increase in the business and residential population of the area and to benefit existing residents.
- Attract public and private sector investment to support the delivery of employment and residential growth.
- Work with partners including Further Education Colleges and Higher Education Institutions to ensure that the local labour force has the skills to meet the need of new and growing businesses, residential and employment growth.
- Ensure that the development of inclusive and sustainable growth of the AMDZ are contributing to the wider regeneration of the Eastern Growth Cluster and Tameside as a whole.
- Through the AMDZ the Council will work closely with the GMCA, TfGM, Homes England, other relevant public bodies and the private sector to achieve its objectives.

5.4 This work will also contribute to the achievement of a range of outcomes, including:

- Increased population living in Ashton.
- Increased vitality and viability of the Town Centre and extended length of stay and spend of visitors.
- Increased council tax and business rates.
- More diverse employment opportunities.
- Enhanced skills and attract higher skilled and higher paid jobs.
- Boost northern competitiveness of Greater Manchester inclusive strategy boosting town centres and northern industrial areas.
- Improvements in health and wellbeing outcomes.

- 5.5 The Business Case will set out and refine the project programme that will be closely aligned to and include the programme for transport improvements.
- 5.6 The AMDZ Board will prepare a Strategic Business Plan for approval by the Council and the GMCA on an annual basis prior to it being adopted formally by the AMDZ Board. By the end of March 2024, it is proposed that AMDZ will deliver against the following objectives:
- A joint Investment Strategy agreed with the Council, GMCA, TfGM, Homes England, GMCA and the other AMDZ Board members.
  - Production of a dynamic delivery pipeline demonstrating how the employment and housing delivery for the area will be achieved over the short, medium and long term.
  - Initial engagement as the AMDZ with other infrastructure partners together to develop an infrastructure roadmap to set out the requirements to enable delivery within the MDZ area.
  - If required, a land acquisition strategy will be developed to support the objectives of the AMDZ vision.
- 5.7 The Business Case will focus on refining the programme for delivery in the three areas of St Petersfield, Ashton Moss and Ashton Town Centre. In doing its work the AMDZ Board will at all times consider how the development of these three areas will benefit the wider Eastern Growth Cluster and Tameside as a whole.
- 5.8 The AMDZ Board will receive future project progress updates and more detailed delivery plans and investment propositions to achieve the development programme. The work programme will also consider the most appropriate longer term delivery mechanisms and identify the need for any further additional analytical and evidence work required, specifically in respect of more clearly articulating the Economic Case and benefits for the AMDZ and seek specific funding for the component projects.
- 5.9 The AMDZ Board will monitor progress against expected benefits from the development. Each project will be supported by a risk register and risk mitigation strategy as part of existing project governance arrangements within Tameside. Key stakeholders will be identified and a communication and stakeholder plan will also be brought to an early meeting of the AMDZ Board. Through regular reporting to the Council's Executive Cabinet and the GMCA there will be transparency and accountability of delivery in the AMDZ.

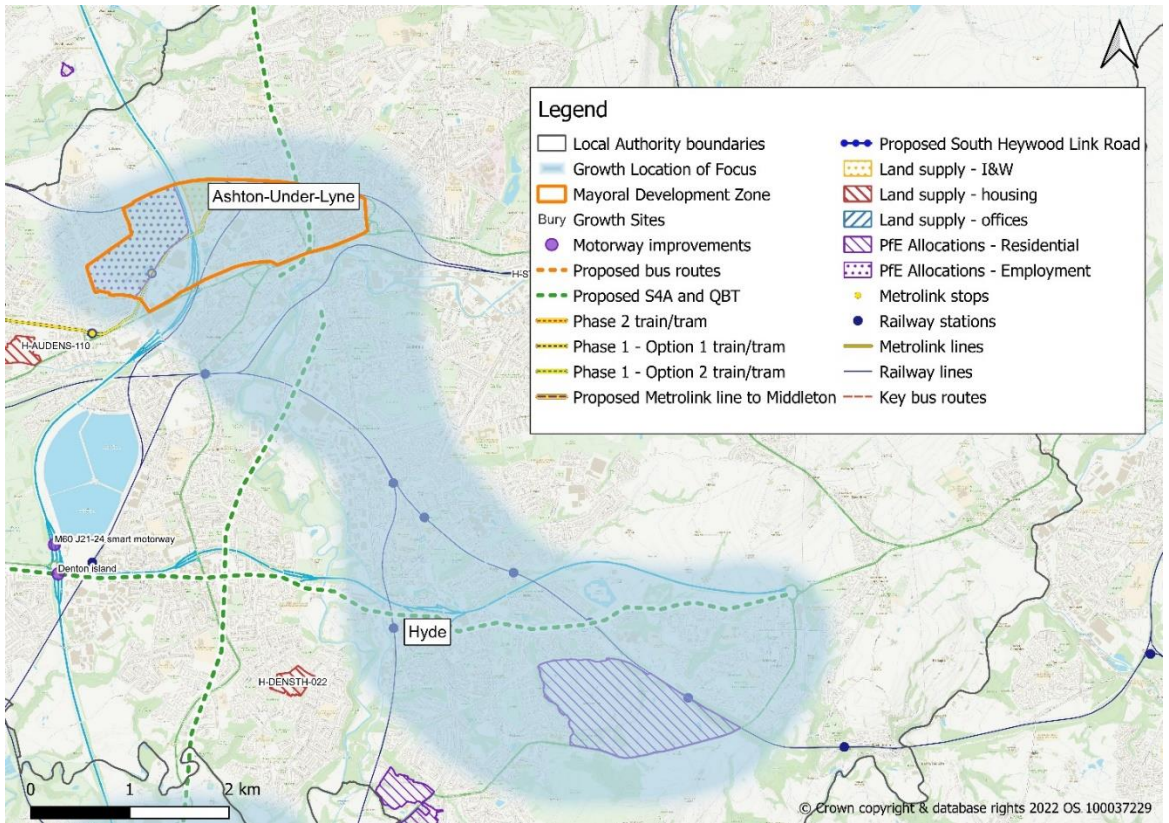
## **6. Recommendations**

6.1 The GMCA is requested to:

1. Approve the designation of a Mayoral Development Zone known as Ashton Mayoral Development Zone (AMDZ).
2. Agree the proposed area of the AMDZ as indicated in Plan 2 attached at Appendix 1.
3. Approve the establishment of the AMDZ Board and give delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer GMCA and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) to agree appropriate representation on the Board in consultation with Tameside Council.
4. Note that the projects within the proposed AMDZ will aim to deliver sustainable forms of development that reflect and deliver the GM Strategy.
5. Note and agree the principles of the business case and development strategy for the MDZ as set out in paragraphs 5.3-5.9 above in which the AMDZ Board will refine a business case for the AMDZ in overseeing the delivery of the growth sites.
6. Note that the current funding resource will be from TMBC's unallocated Levelling Up Capacity Grant with GMCA providing support with officer time.
7. Agree to receive future updates on delivery progress at AMDZ.

### **Appendix 1**

#### **Map 1: Eastern Growth Cluster Growth Location**



**Map 2: Proposed Ashton Growth Corridor MDZ**

