



Land at Stakehill, Rochdale Road

Sports Impact Assessment

Prepared for:
Redrow Homes Limited

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Sports Impact Assessment

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Sports Impact Assessment

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Sports Impact Assessment has been prepared by Stantec on behalf of Redrow Homes Limited (the 'Applicant') in support of a Hybrid Planning Application to Rochdale Borough Council ('RBC' / 'the Council') for mixed-use development at Land at Stakehill, Rochdale (the 'Site').
- 1.2 The proposed development comprises up to 1,380 dwellings, mixed-use development, green infrastructure, and sustainable urban drainage.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to develop an understanding of sports provision in the local area including any deficiencies. This information will contribute to informing the planning obligations which the Applicant will need to enter into as part of a Section 106 agreement to offset any increased demand generated by the proposed scheme.

Statement Structure

- 1.4 The following sections of this statement are structured as follow:
- **Section 2 – The Site and Proposed Development:** describes the Site and its surroundings and provides a summary of the proposed development;
 - **Section 3 – Planning Policy Context:** sets out the planning policy context which informs the delivery of sports provision in the Borough and development at the Site;
 - **Section 4 – Existing and Future Playing Pitch Capacity:** this section considers the existing and future playing pitch capacity in Rochdale in the context of future housing growth.
 - **Section 5 – Assessment:** this section considers the impact of the proposed development at Stakehill on sports provision in the Borough in the context of Rochdale Council's evidence base and the Site's planning policy context; and
 - **Section 6 – Summary and Conclusions:** summarises the main findings of the Sports Impact Assessment and provides a conclusion.

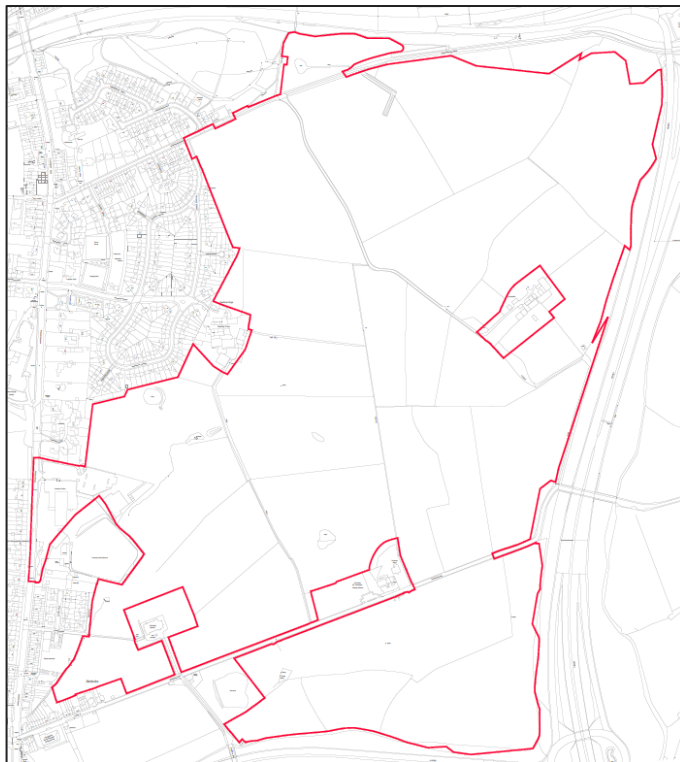


2 The Site and Proposed Development

The Site

- 2.1 The Site extends to approximately 87.52 hectares and largely comprises irregular shaped agricultural field parcels associated with Newhey and Thornfields farms. The application Site is edged red at Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1: Site Location Plan



- 2.2 The Site is situated between the built-up areas of Rochdale and Middleton, adjacent to the communities of Slattocks and Castleton.
- 2.3 The terrain at the Site is undulating and generally slopes from east to west. Significant changes in ground levels are apparent around Thornfields farm at the centre of the Site. At its highest point, the Site measures 180m AOD in the north-east, and its lowest point is 132m AOD at the south-west.

2 The Site and Proposed Development

Proposed Development

- 2.4 The proposed development comprises up to 1,380 residential dwellings, means of access, mixed-use development, green infrastructure, and sustainable urban drainage. The proposed green infrastructure extends to 53% of the Site area and includes substantial opportunities for informal sporting and recreational activities.
- 2.5 The Applicant's vision is to create a new sustainable, high-quality neighbourhood which significantly improves the local housing offer in Rochdale by delivering a range of house types to meet a variety of housing needs, including affordable dwellings, aspirational homes for young people and families, larger higher value homes, and homes for the elderly. Housing development is to be delivered alongside mixed-use development including community facilities.
- 2.6 The scheme has been designed in line with 'garden village' principles, with development set within an attractive landscaped setting. The emphasis on green infrastructure at the Site will enhance the natural environment and offer extensive opportunities for recreation and informal sporting activities.
- 2.7 An overview of all proposed land uses is set out below:
- **Residential:** up to 1,380 dwellings are proposed. The dwelling mix will include a range of housing typologies including apartments/mews blocks, semi-detached, and detached houses. The tenure mix will include a percentage of affordable housing in accordance with the Council's requirements. It is envisaged that development density will be an average density of approximately 35 dwellings per hectare, ranging between 25- 45dph.
 - **Primary School:** Approximately 1.37ha of land has been reserved to accommodate an extension to St John's Primary School.
 - **Mixed-use development:** Approximately 0.33ha of land has been provided to accommodate mixed-use development.
 - **Green Infrastructure:** Proposed green infrastructure at the Site extends to c.46.42ha which equates to 53% of the Site area. The landscape strategy creates a comprehensive green infrastructure network that weaves its way through the whole site, connecting green spaces within the site to each other and to the wider areas of green space beyond the site. The landscape strategy ensures the new and existing communities will enjoy access to high quality, multi-functional open space within a naturalistic/semi-rural setting.
 - **Play Areas:** At the centre of the Site is the proposed Thornfield's Park which will include a large Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) and a Multi-Use Games Area



2 The Site and Proposed Development

(MUGA). In addition, at the Newhey Green and Hilltop Park areas of the Site Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAP) area proposed.

- **Drainage:** Sustainable drainage measures will be integrated into the development to create an appropriate surface water management regime.
- **Pedestrian and Cycle Access:** pedestrian and cycle access to the proposed development can be secured from several points within the surrounding highway network including Thornham New Road to the north and Thornham Lane to the south, formally connecting the Site with Tandle Hill country park to the east. Existing public footpaths crossing the Site will be retained and incorporated into a network of public open space.

Green Infrastructure

- 2.8 Ensuring the proposed development is integrated sensitively into the landscape and providing opportunities for play and leisure is integral to the scheme, reflected in the comprehensive landscaping strategy proposed.
- 2.9 The proposed landscaping scheme is designed to be a network of connected open spaces, greenways, parks, play areas and 'village greens' that thread through the neighbourhood to create a sense of journey and identity based on the site's intrinsic landscape qualities.
- 2.10 Development will have regard to landscape character and contribute to its enhancement, take opportunities to improve access, and replace removed trees at a ratio of 2:1 as a minimum. Over 5km of new hedgerow is proposed to offset the losses required to accommodate the proposed development.
- 2.11 Play areas will follow Play England's best practice guidance, utilising natural features such as landform, rocks and vegetation, together with specialist play equipment to provide stimulating, exciting, accessible play environments for children of all ages.
- 2.12 At the highest point at the Site is the new Hill Top Park, a naturalistic parkland with commanding views over the wider area. East of this area, new woodland provides an ecologically rich edge to the site that connects to and extends adjacent woodland habitats and screens the A627(M) from the site.
- 2.13 Looking south from Hill Top Park, views of the larger park south of Thornham Lane are discernible. This proposed park provides an extensive naturalistic area made up of a mosaic of open water, wetlands, reed beds, species rich grasslands, hedgerows, scrub and new



2 The Site and Proposed Development

woodland with paths and cycle trails winding through it to a hilltop vantage point with extensive views to the east.

- 2.14 Newhey Green will be a local green space at a key community node where the western greenway crosses the spine road marking the location of the Local Centre and a Local Area for Play (LEAP). The green is characterised by naturalistic water features with the spine road crossing through the space.
- 2.15 Thornfield's Park will be a central greenspace in the heart of the new community for the benefit of people and wildlife. It will provide multi-functional open space, ornamental grasslands, community orchards, swales (SUDs), a large Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) that takes advantage of the sloping ground and a MUGA.
- 2.16 Greenways at the Site provide safe, attractive, off-road routes through the Site and link to the existing school. The inclusion of edible species such as hazel nut, apple, pear, plum, blackberry and gooseberry turn these footpaths and cycleways into linear larders with opportunities for foraging as well as food for wildlife.
- 2.17 West of the school, an orchard and space for church parking is safeguarded within a more formal arrangement of large parkland trees.
- 2.18 The above green infrastructure can be quantified as follows (not including the retention of existing green infrastructure or proposed blue infrastructure and tree lined streets):
- Play areas including no. 1 x MUGA, no.1 x NEAP, and no. 2 x LEAP.
 - Mixed broadleaved woodland and native shrubs - 14.5 ha.
 - New species rich native hedgerows - 5,000 lin m.
 - Species rich, wildflower grassland and meadows - 20.0 ha.
 - Nectar rich ornamental grassland - 0.5 ha.
 - Scrub grassland - 2.5 ha.
 - Amenity grassland - 3 ha.
 - Orchards - 0.7 ha.
 - Allotments - 0.3 ha.



2 The Site and Proposed Development

- 2.19 Further information on the proposed development is provided in the accompanying Design and Access Statement submitted in support of the Hybrid planning application. An extract of the Design and Access Statement detailing the proposed green infrastructure is provided at Appendix A.



3 Planning Policy Context

- 3.1 This section of the report summarises national and local planning policy relating to sports provision.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Government in July 2023. It sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.
- 3.3 At paragraph 92, the Government set out how planning policies and decision should enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible sports facilities.
- 3.4 Access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change, as out lined at paragraph 98. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport, and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.

Rochdale Core Strategy

- 3.5 The Core Strategy, adopted in October 2016, sets out the Council's vision for the Borough and its overall development strategy including the amount of new development required and where that development should be focused.
- 3.6 Core Strategy Policy C8 'Community, sport, leisure and cultural facilities' sets out how the Council will support and promote the provision of community, sport, leisure, and cultural facilities by ensuring that development and wider regeneration schemes contribute, through land assembly and financial contributions, to new or improved facilities where development will increase demand and there is a recognised deficiency.



3 Planning Policy Context

Places for Everyone

- 3.7 Places for Everyone is a Joint Development Plan Document being prepared by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) covering 9 local authorities in Greater Manchester including Rochdale. It sets out strategic land allocations for housing and employment as well key infrastructure to support growth.
- 3.8 Although not currently adopted, Places for Everyone is at an advanced stage of preparation having been submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 14th February 2022. Hearing sessions took place between November 2022 and March 2023. Main Modifications to the plan were also published in August 2023. It is therefore at an advanced stage of preparation and a material consideration in decision making.
- 3.9 The Site benefits from a draft allocation for mixed-use development under draft Policy JP Allocation 2 Stakehill, as denoted on the Policies Map which accompanies Places for Everyone.
- 3.10 As set out at draft Policy JP Allocation 2, Stakehill is to create a sustainable high-quality extension to the urban area and accommodate around 150,000 sqm of employment floorspace and around 1,680 residential dwellings to support new jobs within the North-East Growth Corridor. The scale of residential development on the northern part of the allocation provides an opportunity to adopt a 'garden village' approach to create a locally distinctive residential offer.
- 3.11 Provision 19 of draft Policy JP Allocation 2 states that given the scale of the new housing it will be necessary for the proposal to deliver social infrastructure to ensure that the needs of new and existing communities are properly met. The draft policy, which has been informed by up-to-date evidence, does not set out a requirement for sports provision at the Site. For reference, the Main Modifications composite version (August 2023) of draft Policy JP Allocation 2 is provided at Appendix B.
- 3.12 The GMCA's approach to sports provision is set out at draft Policy JP-P 7 'Sport and Recreation'. Sports and reaction facilities will be protected and enhanced by requiring new development to support the achievement of strategic and local plan standards by improving existing facilities commensurate with the demand they would generate.
- 3.13 In the justification text of draft Policy JP-P 7, the GMCA states that:

'The appropriate level of provision will often depend on local circumstances such as the type and scale of demand, and the availability of suitable land... The provision of sports



3 Planning Policy Context

facilities will be determined by individual local authorities through an evidence based rather than standards based approach’ (Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications to the Places for Everyone Plan – Issue 6, August 2023).

Places for Everyone JPA2 Stakehill Allocation Topic Paper

- 3.14 To support the allocation of Stakehill, the GMCA have produced an allocation topic paper setting out the work and considerations which informed its allocation. With respect to the potential to deliver sports provision at the Site, the GCMA set out how:

‘Rochdale Council currently has an approach that seeks to focus formal sports provision in playing pitch ‘hubs’ across the borough. Therefore, it may be more appropriate to deal with formal sports provision through an off-site contribution to improve existing facilities. The most appropriate approach will be considered through ongoing masterplanning and at the planning application stage (paragraph 16.3).’



4 Existing and Future Playing Pitch Capacity

- 4.1 This section considers the existing and future playing pitch capacity in Rochdale in the context of future housing growth.

Rochdale Playing Pitch Strategy 2016 -2026

- 4.2 The Rochdale Playing Pitch Strategy assesses current and future demand for formal sports pitches in the borough over the 10-year period from 2016 to 2026 and is the Council's evidence base underpinning its allocations in Places for Everyone. It provides a framework for resource prioritisation and informed planning decisions.

- 4.3 The key aims of the strategy are:

- an up-to-date audit and review of all the outdoor sports assets and outdoor facilities including those managed by others.
- A vision for the future improvement and prioritisation of playing pitches (including ancillary facilities).
- A series of recommendations which provide a strategic framework for the improvement, maintenance, and development of the playing pitch stock.
- A series of sport-by-sport recommendations which provide a framework for sport led improvements to provision.
- A prioritised area-by-area action plan (where action is deemed necessary).

- 4.4 In total over 300 pitches have been reviewed and assessed and consultation has been undertaken with over 500 playing teams, education establishments, leagues, and governing bodies.

- 4.5 The Borough has been sub-divided into four 'Townships' to allow a more localised analysis of sports provision, with the Site located within the Township 'Rochdale Area D'. A summary of sports provision capacity in Area D is provided below.

Rochdale Area D - Summary of Baseline Sports Provision

Football – grass pitches

- 4.6 There is spare capacity across adult and mini pitches currently and when factoring in future demand. Currently there is spare capacity across junior pitches but this changes to a position of overplay (deficiencies) when factoring in future demand.

3G Pitches

- 4.7 There are 5 artificial grass pitches in Rochdale, 3 of which are full sized. No deficiencies are identified though capacity is limited on some sites.



4 Existing and Future Playing Pitch Capacity

Cricket

- 4.8 There are 5 cricket clubs in Area D. There are no capacity issues and there is sufficient capacity to meet current and future demand.

Rugby Union

- 4.9 There is one rugby union club in the area which is currently overplayed. Site capacity could be enhanced through improved maintenance.

Rugby League

- 4.10 There is sufficient capacity overall to meet current and future demand for rugby league pitches.

Hockey

- 4.11 There is sufficient capacity to meet current and future demand.

Strategy Recommendations

- 4.12 The Council put forward a number of recommendations to address deficiencies in formal playing provision including improving existing provision and focusing sports provision at a 'sports hub' in each Township Area. For Rochdale Area D, the identified sports hub is Firgrove.
- 4.13 At Firgrove, the Council identify that the changing accommodation is in need of an upgrade to assist with club satisfaction and player retention.

Future Demand - Places for Everyone

- 4.14 The future demand set out in the Playing Pitch Strategy does not take account of the additional demand that would be generated by housing growth set to come forward at the Site by virtue of Places for Everyone draft Policy JP Allocation 2. In contributing to the delivery of draft Policy JP Allocation 2, the current application seeks permission for up to 1,380 dwellings which would equate to an additional 3,450 residents in the locality (2.5 residents per dwelling).
- 4.15 Using the Sport England Sport Facility Calculator, a planning tool which helps to estimate the amount of demand for key community sports facilities that may be generated by a given population, it is estimated that the Stakehill scheme will generate additional demand for 0.11 of an artificial grass pitch.

Summary

- 4.16 In the context of existing provision and estimated future demand, deficiencies in sports provision in Township Area D Rochdale can be summarised as follows:
- There is a deficiency in junior grass football pitches when factoring in future demand.
 - The rugby union pitch at Moorgate is currently overplayed.



5 Assessment

- 5.1 This section considers the impact of the proposed development at Stakehill on sports provision in the Borough in the context of Rochdale Council's evidence base and the Site's planning policy context.

Our Methodology

- 5.2 To establish an appropriate level of sports provision at the Site, this Sports Impact Assessment has been informed by the following methodology:

- **The Council's up-to-date evidence base** – The Council's Rochdale Playing Pitch Strategy (2016) provides the most up-to-date information with respect to current and future demand for formal sports pitches in the Borough. The strategy covers the 10-year period from 2016 to 2026 and is therefore the Council's evidence base underpinning its allocations in Places for Everyone including at Stakehill. It sets out how there are deficiencies in certain types of sports provision in the Borough, with additional pressure anticipated from future housing growth. The Council put forward a number of recommendations to address deficiencies in formal playing provision including improving existing provision and focusing sports provision at 'sports hub' in each Township Area. The sports hub in the Rochdale Township Area D is Firgrove.
- **Adopted Planning Policy Context** – The Council's approach to delivering sports provision in the Borough is set out at Core Strategy Policy C8 'Community, sport, leisure and cultural facilities'. Policy C8 sets out how the Council will ensure that development and wider regeneration schemes contribute through land assembly and financial contributions to new or improved facilities where development will increase demand and there is a recognised deficiency.
- **Emerging Places for Everyone** – The Site benefits from a draft allocation for mixed-use development under Places for Everyone draft Policy JP Allocation 2 Stakehill. Topic Paper 'Places for Everyone JPA2 Stakehill Allocation' which informed the allocation policy confirms that Rochdale Council's approach to delivering sports provision is to be focused at 'hubs' across the borough and that it would be more appropriate to deal with formal sports provision requirements through an off-site contribution to improve existing facilities. This is reflected in provision 19 of draft Policy JP Allocation 2 which requires social infrastructure to be delivered but stops short of stating that sports provision at the Site is required.

Proposed Development at Stakehill

- 5.3 The proposed Stakehill development has taken full account of the above methodology and seeks to deliver appropriate leisure and recreational activities at the Site.
- 5.4 As set out at Section 2, the proposed Stakehill scheme is being brought forward in conjunction with a comprehensive landscaping strategy which extends to approximately 53% of the Site area. The landscaping strategy offers a wide range of opportunities for leisure and recreational activities and includes a MUGA and 3ha of amenity grassland. The landscaping strategy therefore offers significant opportunities for informal sporting activities for a variety of age groups.
- 5.5 In formulating the proposed development and associated landscaping strategy, careful consideration has been given to the site-specific requirements of draft Policy JP Allocation 2 Stakehill. An assessment of how the proposed scheme responds to the site-specific policy requirements is set out in the accompanying Planning Statement which concludes that all requirements have either been met or are intended to be met as part of a planning condition or Reserved Matters application.
- 5.6 It is acknowledged that the proposed development would generate some additional demand for formal sports provision. However, in light of the Council's strategy to focus future playing pitch provision on hub sites, and how this strategy has informed the site-specific requirements of draft Policy JP Allocation 2 Stakehill, it was decided that it would be appropriate to address demand for additional formal sports provision via an off-site financial contribution.
- 5.7 The Site is located within Township Area D – Rochdale. The sports hub in this area as set out in the Playing Pitch Strategy is Firgrove. The strategy identifies that the changing facilities at Firgrove are in need of upgrading in order to assist with club satisfaction and player retention. The Council also state that it is an aspiration to introduce floodlights at Firgrove.
- 5.8 In addition, the Playing Pitch Strategy identifies a deficiency in junior grass football pitches when factoring in future demand. This could be addressed by converting spare capacity at existing adult and mini football pitches. The capacity of the rugby union pitch at Moorgate could also be enhanced through improved pitch maintenance.
- 5.9 There are therefore existing sports facilities in Area D which require investment to improve and enhance their offer. Consistent with the Council's playing pitch strategy, it is proposed that a financial contribution be secured via a Section 106 to contribute to the improvement of these facilities.

5 Assessment

- 5.10 Sport England's Sports Facility Calculator is a starting point for determining an appropriate financial contribution for sports provision and should be qualified against local evidence. It is envisaged that the Applicant and Council will provide an appropriate agreement to secure planning contributions for sports provision via a Section 106 Planning Obligation. The Heads of Terms of that agreement are not known at this stage and will be managed through negotiation with the Council during the determination of the planning application.



6 Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1 Rochdale Council's evidence base establishes that there are deficiencies in some types of sports provision across the Borough. The pressure on existing sports facilities is set to increase in the future as a result of housing growth.
- 6.2 Where development will increase demand for sports provision, the provision of new and improved facilities can be secured via financial contributions, as set out at Core Strategy Policy C8.
- 6.3 The Site is allocated for mixed-use development under Places for Everyone draft Policy JP Allocation 2 Stakehill. The delivery of sports provision is not a requirement of the draft allocation policy, as Rochdale Council considered it more appropriate to deal with formal sports provision through an off-site contribution to improve existing facilities at sports hub sites across the Borough.
- 6.4 The Site is located within Township Area D – Rochdale. The Playing Pitch Strategy identifies existing sports provision within Area D which are in need of investment. Consistent with the Council's playing pitch strategy, it is proposed that a financial contribution be secured via a Section 106 to contribute to the improvement of these facilities.
- 6.5 It is envisaged that the Applicant and Council will provide an appropriate agreement to secure planning contributions for sports provision via a Section 106 Planning Obligation. The Heads of Terms of that agreement are not known at this stage and will be managed through negotiation with the Council during the determination of the planning application.

Appendix A – Green Infrastructure Extract from Design and Access Statement



6.4. LANDSCAPE AND OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

The specific principles for the design of the landscape/ open space is set out in the Design Code submitted in support of this application.

The overall aims of the landscape strategy is to:

- » Provide a beautiful naturalistic setting for the existing and new communities.
- » Retain and enhance existing landscape features of value.
- » Support and enhance biodiversity by introducing a variety of ecological habitats
- » Provide space for recreation and leisure activities.
- » Deliver a range of play experiences and offer multi-generational activities that are accessible, inclusive and suit all abilities.
- » Improve access to the surrounding countryside.
- » Create attractive active routes for pedestrians and cyclists to reduce car use.
- » Improve health and well-being by encouraging outdoor activity, contact with nature and informal opportunities for social interaction.
- » Provide opportunities for food growing.
- » Provide for flood management.
- » Address the impacts of, plan for, and help mitigate the effects of, climate change.

6.4.1. Landscape and Open Space Policy Requirement/ Provision

Provision of Recreational Open Space in New Housing SPD (2008) requires 1 ha of local open space (including play space) per 1,000 population. 'Local open space' excludes space designed for outdoor sport.

The proposed development comprises up to 1,380 dwellings which, based on an average 3.7 bedrooms per dwelling has the capacity to accommodate around 5,106 people at an occupancy rate of 1 person per bedroom. This would generate an open space requirement of **5.1ha**

Public Open Space Provision (Illustrative Landscape Strategy)

The approximate area of public open space shown on the Illustrative Strategic Landscape Plan (excluding highway verges) is **c.45.8 ha**.

The illustrative strategic landscape scheme for the Site creates a variety of public open spaces, offering a range of functions from walking and informal recreation to habitat creation and play.

All the open spaces are intended to contribute to the quality and character of the place and improve the quality of life of residents through access to open space, contact with nature, social interaction and opportunities for food growing and foraging.

The public open space network comprises the following areas (see Design Code for further details):

- 1 The entrance area
- 2 Slattocks Parkland
- 3 Newhey Green
- 4 Greenways
- 6 Thornfield's Park
- 7 The Wetlands
- 8 The Woodlands
- 13 Hill Top Park
- 17 Thornham Park

Landscape and biodiversity

The area of public open space provided and the proposed naturalistic approach to landscape will enhance biodiversity through the creation of a range of new habitat types throughout the Site.

Details of the habitats shown on the Illustrative landscape Strategy can be found within the Design Code.



FIGURE 32: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

6.5. LANDSCAPE SPACES AND FUNCTION

6.5.1. Entrance Area, Slattock's Parklands and Newhey Green

The Entrance Area will be an attractive green entrance to the new neighbourhood off Rochdale Road.

Formal lines of trees will lead the eye into the Site to a naturalistic area of open water and (SuDS) wetland where a footbridge crosses the existing brook and leads people to Slattock's Parklands.

Slattock's Parklands will be an area of green space that acts as both a buffer between, and a resource to be shared by the new and existing communities. Areas include: Cricket meadow, Church Fields, Church pond (SuDS), Grange Brook (SuDS), St John's Meadows, St John's Orchard, Allotment extension and a potential area for church use.

Newhey Green will be a local green space at a key community node where the Western Greenway crosses the spine road marking the location of the Local Centre and a Local Equiped Area for Play (LEAP). The green is characterised by naturalistic water features (SuDS) with the spine road crossing through the space.

The play area will utilise the existing brook and willow carr, to create an exciting space that encourages children of all ages to explore and interact with nature.





6.5.2. Thornfield's Park and Bio Gardens

Thornfield's Park will be a central greenspace in the heart of the new community for the benefit of people and wildlife. It will provide multi-functional open space, ornamental grasslands, community orchards, swales (SuDS), and a large Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) that takes advantage of the sloping ground and includes a MUGA.

The Bio Gardens create a linear space along the Central Greenway following the route of the existing PRoW. The route will pass through a variety of small, ornamental spaces created from 'rain gardens' (SuDS) and 'pictorial meadows' providing a rich source of nectar and pollen for wildlife.

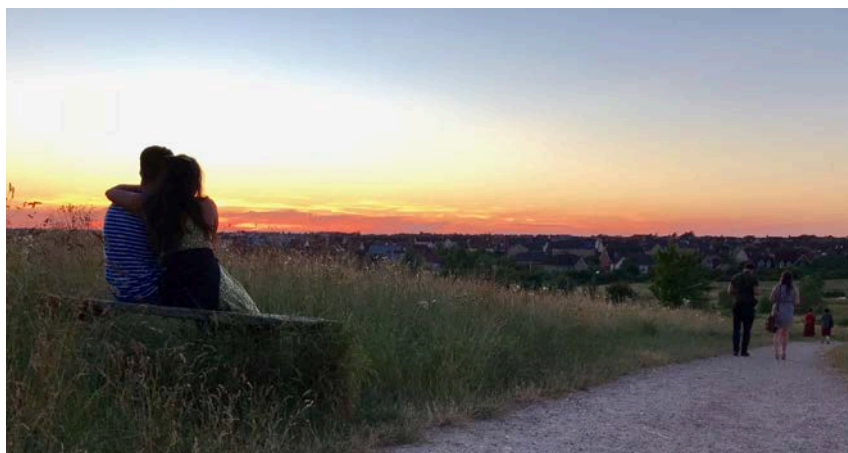


6.6.2. Hilltop Park

A semi-natural parkland that will be a key landmark in the new neighbourhood. The existing slopes will be retained as a key feature of the Site. The existing species rich grasslands will be retained on the slope and extended through the creation of new wild flower meadow on the top.

Paths will wind up the slope and curve through the meadows leading people to a lookout area with extensive views in all directions, but most notably views to the east.

A local equipped area for play (LEAP) will be located on the slope to take advantage of the unique play opportunities that this creates.



6.6.3. Thornham Park

An extensive naturalistic area made up of a mosaic of open water, wetlands, reed beds, species rich grasslands, hedgerows, scrub and new woodland with paths and cycle trails winding through it to a hill top vantage point with extensive views to the east. There will be a small, informal car park in the west of the area off Thornham Lane.

The area opposite St John's School will provide opportunities for outdoor teaching and Forrest School activities with the whole site being multifunctional open space for wildlife, informal recreation and education.



6.6.4. The Greenways (Landscape Corridors)

A series of safe, attractive, accessible off-road routes connecting to the school, the local centre, Newhey Park and the off Site PRow network.

These naturalistic corridors retain and follow the existing public footpaths through the Site. Existing hedgerows will be retained and enhanced along the routes with native species and edibles to create a 'linear larder' for both people and wildlife.



6.6.5. Landscapes for food

Orchard areas: These will be within both Slattock's Parkland and Thornfield's Park. They will include native and cultivar species set within meadow grassland to support wildlife.

Allotments: Space is reserved within Slattock's Park for an extension to the existing allotment area adjacent to the Site, should this be requested by the community.

Foraging: The Greenways will include edible species such as blackberry, gooseberry, hazel nut, within the hedges, as well as, fruit bearing tree species such as apple, pear and plum.

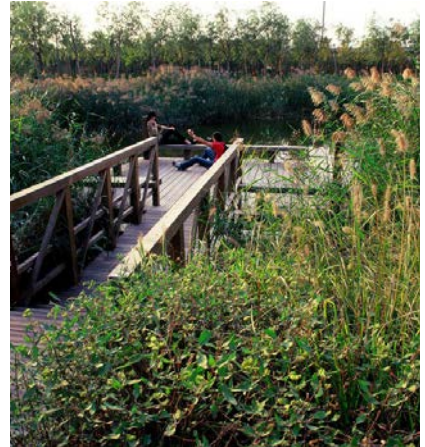


6.6.6. Retained ponds, new (SuDS) ponds and wetlands

A series of ponds and wetlands including:

- » Newhey Green
- » Grange Brook
- » Newhey Water
- » Thornham wetlands
- » Thornham Water
- » School Pond and
- » Areas within Thornfields Wood and Thornham Park

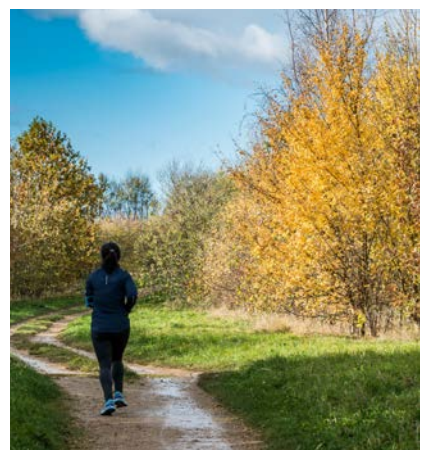
The ponds and wetlands will be designed to provide multiple functions: attenuation (SuDS), habitat creation and enhancement, informal leisure, education and attractive features to enhance the sense of place.



6.6.7. Woodlands

Extensive areas of new woodland with ponds (SuDS), glades and grassland fringe will be established around the northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the Site. These will extend areas of existing woodland habitat into the very heart of the new community.

They enhance habitats and biodiversity as well as providing visual screening, shelter from winds, areas for informal recreation, whilst providing an attractive setting for the new community.



6.7. PLAY POLICY REQUIREMENT AND PROVISION

Provision of Recreational Open Space in New Housing SPD (2008) requires play facilities to the following standards:

- » 400 – 899 bedrooms: LEAP + facilities for older children (such as a MUGA).
- » 900+ bedrooms: NEAP with multi-use games area + facilities for younger children (such as LEAP).

The policy refers to the Fields In Trust (FIT) guidance, which sets out the benchmark standards for LEAPs, NEAPs and MUGAs.

6.7.1. Play Provision

The proposed development will include the following play areas:

- » **Newhey Green:** LEAP (c.1,000 m²)
- » **Thornfields Park:** LEAP/NEAP (c. 2,000m²)
- » **Thornfields Park:** MUGA (c.2,000m²)
- » **Hilltop Park:** LEAP (c.1,500m²)

The approx size of each facility exceeds policy requirements, and the plans opposite show the location of the play areas and the walking distances from the centre of each.

Incidental Play

Incidental play features will also be distributed amongst the green infrastructure to provide further points of interest.

Trim trails will be provided with outdoor exercise equipment, creating looping trails of varying lengths through Thornfield's Park, Hill Top Park, along the Grenways and through other areas of public open space.

Incidental, naturalistic features such as grass mounds, tree trunks and rocks will provide informal play opportunities along the Greenways and throughout the open spaces.

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FIGURE 33: LOCATION OF NEAP / MUGA AND MAXIMUM DISTANCE TO HOUSING AREA



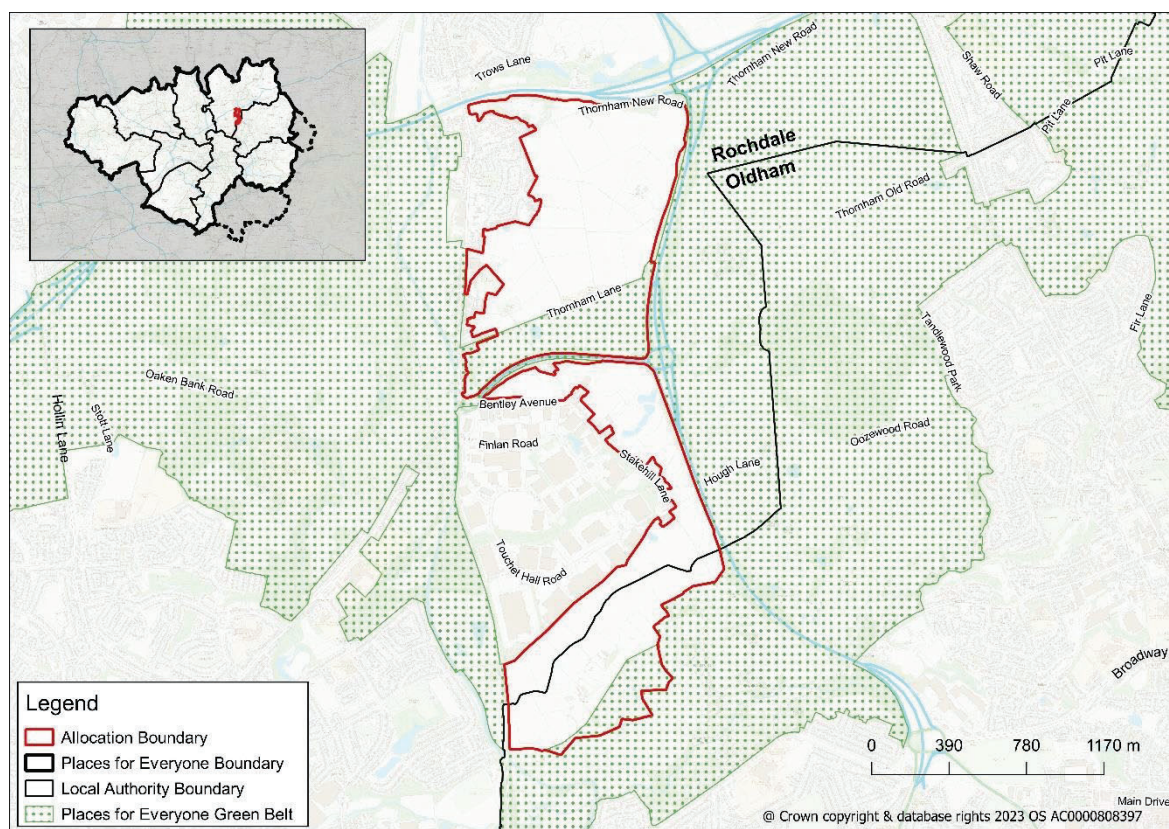
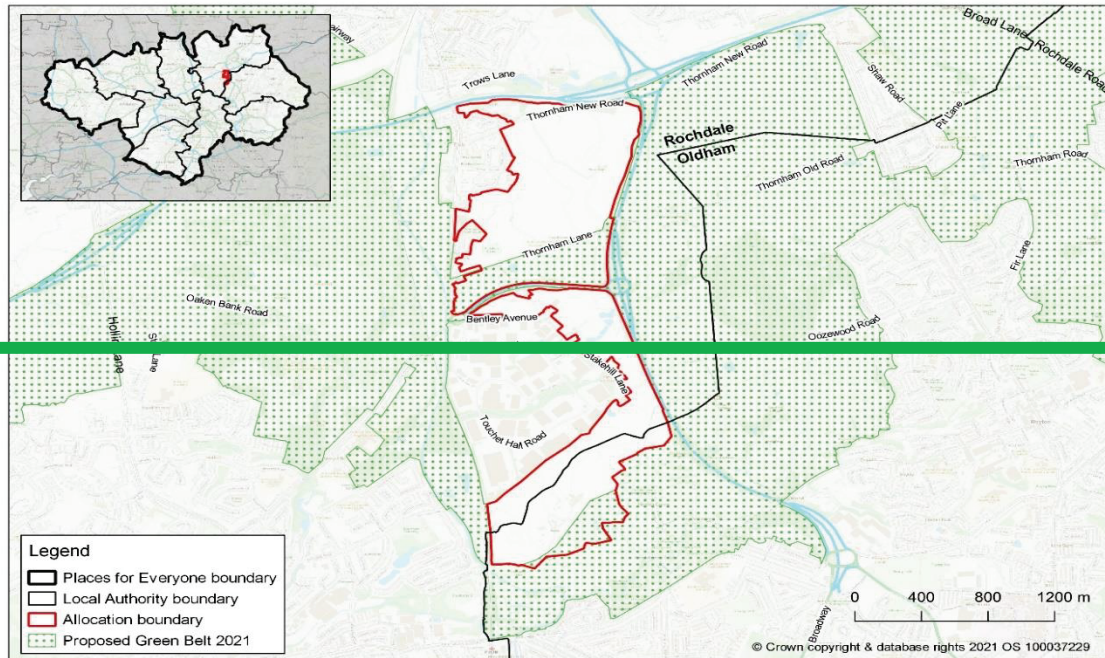
FIGURE 34: LOCATION OF LEAPs WITH 400M WALKING DISTANCE SHOWN

**Appendix B – Places for Everyone draft Policy JP Allocation 2 Stakehill
(Composite Version, August 2023)**



Policy JP Allocation 2 Stakehill

Picture 11.6 JPA 2 Stakehill



Development at this site will be required to:

1. Deliver around 150,000 sqm of high quality, adaptable, ~~employment~~ floorspace for industrial and warehousing within a 'green' employment park setting, with a focus on suitable provision for advanced manufacturing and or other key ~~growth~~economic sectors, taking advantage of its accessible location and proximity to Junction 20 of the M62, and complementing the other opportunities within the North-East Growth Corridor;
2. Provide around 1,680 high quality homes, including larger, higher value properties, to support the new jobs created within the North-East Growth Corridor and create a sustainable and high-quality extension to the urban area. This includes making provision for affordable housing in accordance with relevant local plan requirements;
3. Achieve excellent design and sustainability through masterplanning and the use of design codes for the whole site to ensure comprehensive development. This will include the need for an infrastructure phasing and delivery strategy in accordance with policy JP-D1. The scale of the residential development on the northern part of the allocation provides an opportunity to adopt a 'garden village' approach to create a locally distinctive residential offer;
4. ~~Ensure that the design of the scheme preserves or enhances the setting of~~ Take appropriate account of relevant heritage assets, and their settings, ~~including~~ the listed St John's Church and war memorial in accordance with policy JP-P2 ~~in-line with the findings and recommendations of the Historic Environment Assessment (2020) in the Plan's evidence base and any updated assessment submitted as part of the planning application process~~;
5. Protect and enhance archaeological features and where appropriate carry out archaeological evaluation in the form of geophysics, field walking and trial trenching for areas specified in the Stakehill Historic Environment Assessment 2020 to understand where especially significant archaeology must be preserved in situ;

6. Have regard to views from Tandle Hill Country Park to the east which lies within Pennine Foothills (West /South Pennines) landscape character type. This should reflect and respond to the special qualities and sensitivities of the key characteristics of this landscape character type in accordance with policy JP-G1 in terms of the design, landscaping and boundary treatment in order to minimise the visual impact as much as possible;
7. Make provision for compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt within and in the vicinity of the site in accordance with policy JP-G2. This should include improvements to the retained areas of Green Belt ~~Retain a strategic area of Green Belt~~ between the A627(M) spur and Thornham Lane and in the south of the site ~~to maintain separation between the urban areas of Rochdale and Middleton;~~

New criterion: Define and/or strengthen the boundaries of the Green Belt around/within the site such that they will comprise physical features that are readily recognizable and likely to be permanent, in particular separating the development area and land to be retained as Green Belt to the south;
8. Make provision for new and improved sustainable transport and highways infrastructure having regard to the indicative transport interventions set out in Appendix D in accordance with policy JP-C7. Support the delivery of improved public transport to and within the area to promote more sustainable travel and improve linkages to the employment opportunities from surrounding residential areas;
9. ~~Contribute to the proposed new railway station at Slattocks which is currently being investigated by TfGM and ensure that new development is designed in a way to maximise the benefits of the new rail station through the creation of high quality walking and cycling routes;~~
10. ~~Provide good quality walking and cycling routes to connect to new and existing residential areas and local transport hubs in order to encourage sustainable short journeys to work and promote healthier lifestyles;~~

- ~~11. Provide appropriate access to electric vehicle charging infrastructure and cycle storage;~~
- ~~12. Provide financial contributions to mitigate impacts on the highway network identified through a transport assessment;~~
13. Improve access arrangements in and around Stakehill Industrial Estate to assist in the separation of residential and employment traffic as much as possible and to make appropriate provision for lorry parking;
14. Ensure that the existing settlements and pockets of housing are taken fully into account through the masterplanning of the area;
15. Deliver high quality landscaping and green and blue infrastructure within the site both to enhance the attractiveness of the scheme and provide opportunities for recreation to both residents and people working in the area. This should include making provision for biodiversity, taking appropriate account of the Rochdale Canal Site of Special Scientific Interest, along with the existing brooks and ponds within the site, in accordance with policy JP-G9. ~~This should include good quality boundary treatment, particularly on the boundary separating the development area and land to be retained as Green Belt to the south to provide an attractive defensible Green Belt boundary;~~
- ~~16. Retain and where possible enhance areas of biodiversity within the area, notably the Rochdale Canal Site of Special Scientific Interest, along with the existing brooks and ponds within the site;~~
17. Carry out a project specific Habitats Regulation Assessment in relation to the Rochdale Canal for planning applications of 1,000 sqm / 50 dwellings or more;
18. Development of the residential element of the site will be expected to make financial contributions for offsite additional primary and secondary school provision to meet needs generated by the development in accordance with policy JP-P5. ~~Contribute and make provision for additional primary and secondary school places to serve the development. In addition, the~~ This will include provision of land ~~and financial contributions~~ to deliver the expansion of

Thornham St John's Primary School located within the allocation will also be required;

- ~~19. Given the scale of the new housing provision it will be necessary for the proposal to deliver social infrastructure to ensure that the needs of new and existing communities are properly met; and~~
20. Incorporate appropriate noise and air quality mitigation taking account of the M62 and A627(M) motorway corridors; and

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

Justification

- 11.44** Stakehill provides a significant opportunity for both Oldham and Rochdale to contribute to the future economic growth of Greater Manchester, capitalising on its proximity and connectivity to the motorway and rail network. It has the potential to provide a significant contribution to the sub-regional requirement for employment floorspace within key ~~growth~~economic sectors and attract additional investment and economic activity to the area. The scheme will also generate a range of benefits for the local and wider economy. It would involve the loss of Green Belt, however, it offers an excellent location, as part of the North-East Growth Corridor and Northern Powerhouse with connections through to Liverpool and Leeds. The level of housing provided will contribute towards the delivery of our housing need, diversifying our housing stock and supporting the proposed employment opportunities across the North-East Growth Corridor and elsewhere.
- 11.45** The location of the housing and employment development within the allocation takes account of existing land uses and the potential to separate out residential and industrial traffic. The residential development will be focused to the north of Thornham Lane and to the south of the A627(M)