



## Green and Blue Infrastructure Statement

Land at the corner of Ashton New Road and Grey Mare Lane.  
Proposed residential development of 82 No. new Affordable Homes

Job No 22.049 Document 1092  
March 2025

**Contents**

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Green and Blue Infrastructure
- 3. Conclusion

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Statement

This Green and Blue Infrastructure Statement has been prepared by Bowker Sadler on behalf of the Applicant, Great Places Housing Group, to support a planning application for the erection of a predominantly 6 storey building comprising 82 apartments and associated landscape.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 defines Green Infrastructure as:

“A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.”

A green and blue strategy prepared by Manchester City Council seeks to build on the investment already seen to date in the city’s Green Infrastructure, and the understanding of its importance in helping to create a successful city, with a vision for Green and Blue Infrastructure over a 10-year period (2015- 2025) This vision sets out that:

“By 2025 high quality, well maintained green and blue spaces will be an integral part of all neighbourhoods. The city’s communities will be living healthy, fulfilled lives, enjoying access to parks and greenspaces and safe green routes for walking, cycling and exercise throughout the city. Businesses will be investing in areas with a high environmental quality and attractive surroundings, enjoying access to a healthy, talented workforce. New funding models will be in place, ensuring progress achieved by 2025 can be sustained and provide the platform for ongoing investment in the years to follow.”

The Manchester Green and Blue Strategy comprises the following 3 documents.

- ‘Manchester’s Great Outdoors- a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester (2015-25)’
- ‘Stakeholder Implementation Plan: Working together to improve Manchester’s GI- 2015-18’
- ‘Implementation Plan Refresh 2021-25’

To help achieve the aspirations of the strategy vision, there are 4 key objectives set out in the original Implementation plan (2015-18) and in the ‘Refresh document (2021-25), these are:

**Objective 1** -. Improve the quality and function of existing Green and Blue Infrastructure, to maximise the benefits it delivers, focusing on:

- River valleys and canals
- Parks Trees and woodland
- Gardens
- Other land
- Healthier and resilient communities
- Protecting and enhancing ecology

**Objective 2** - Use appropriate Green and Blue Infrastructure as a key component of new developments to help create successful neighbourhoods and support the city’s growth, by:

- Embedding GI in developments of any scale across the city, including retrofit.
- Embedding GI into key plans and policies
- Embedding GI into key strategic regeneration and infrastructure projects
- Embedding GI in developments of any scale across the city
- Embedding GI into city centre development and planning initiatives

**Objective 3** - Improve connectivity and accessibility to Green and Blue Infrastructure within the city and beyond, focussing on:

- Green routes – neighbourhoods and travel routes
- Blue routes – canals and river valley routes
- Cross-boundary links

**Objective 4** - Improve and promote a wider understanding and awareness of the benefits that Green and Blue Infrastructure provides to residents, the economy and the local environment, with a focus on:

- Improving monitoring
- Increased research
- Equitable engagement and involvement
- Showcasing best practice

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Statement (cont.)

The vision recognises that all Manchester’s communities and sectors of the economy will benefit from ongoing investment in Green Infrastructure and is designed to allow all stakeholders in the city to understand how and where they can play their part in its delivery and enjoy the benefits that will come as a result. The strategy identifies headline actions for each objective, providing a framework for all stakeholders in the city, from the Council and other large organisations, to developers, to residents and communities, to identify how they will be able to contribute to the city’s Green Infrastructure.

This Statement therefore seeks to describe how the Proposed Development and its context within wider Strategic Regeneration Frameworks (SRF’s), responds to the Manchester Green and Blue Strategy and its core objectives.

This Statement should be read in conjunction with the following drawings and documents:

- Design and Access Statement, Prepared by Bowker Sadler
- Planning Statement prepared by Bowker Sadler
- Preliminary Ecological Assessment prepared by AN Ecology
- BNG Strategy prepared by AN Ecology
- Transport Statement prepared by SK Transport Consultant
- Drainage Strategy prepared by Sutcliffe

1.2 Summary of the Proposals

The proposals comprise a 3 to 6 storey residential building with roof terrace and high-quality landscape, both of which have been designed to draw upon the aspirations and sustainability targets of national and local planning policy, specifically:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024
- Manchester Core Strategy (2012)
- Places for Everyone Plan (2024)
- Manchester Residential Quality Guidance 2017
- Grey Mare Lane Regeneration Masterplan (2024)

The site is in Bradford, which is located to the north of Beswick, south/ west of the Eastlands campus, and east of Holt Town/ Ancoats. Manchester city centre is approximately 20 mins walk to the west. The site is well connected to public transport with bus stops along Ashton New Road and the Velo Park tram stop approximately 5 min walk to the east, which links to the city centre and Ashton under Lyne

Key components of Green and Blue Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development include:

- A communal garden with a variety of trees and plants.
- Close proximity (5 min. walk) to Ashton canal.
- Close proximity to Phillips Park (10 min. walk)
- Close proximity to Clayton Park (10 min. walk)

Key components of Green Infrastructure associated with the wider SRF’s, including the Holt Town NDF (HTNDF) and specifically the Grey Mare Lane Regeneration Masterplan (GMLRM) include:

A network of pedestrian priority streets and ‘green routes’ that include trees and planting (GMLRM)

The potential improvement / creation of a network of green spaces along the Ashton canal and River Medlock including the creation of Confluence Park (as part of the strategic proposals of the HTNDF)

2.0 Green and Blue Infrastructure

2.1 Application of the Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy

The Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy sets out four objectives for Green Infrastructure across the City. For completeness, this Statement sets out each of the objectives and where applicable describes how the design of the Proposed Development meets the objectives set by the strategy.

**Objective 1:** Existing Green and Blue Infrastructure

Applicable to the Proposed Development- yes

Summary of justification- The site currently contains modified grassland and urban trees, with some small, developing areas of scrub.

**Objective 2:** New Development

Applicable to the Proposed Development- yes

Summary of justification- Proposals for the site constitute ‘new development’ with opportunity to introduce new Green Infrastructure.

**Objective 3:** Connectivity and Accessibility

Applicable to the Proposed Development- yes

Summary of Justification- As a new development (that forms part of the wider GMLRM), there is opportunity to provide permeable, safe and attractive green routes that promote walking and cycling.

**Objective 4:** Understanding and Awareness

Applicable to the Proposed Development- Yes, although this objective will not be discussed in this statement (see justification)

Summary of Justification- Although applicable to the proposed development, this statement discusses ‘designed’ proposals for Blue and Green Infrastructure the site. This objective largely covers policy, research and awareness pertaining to Green Infrastructure.

2.2 Proposed Green and Blue Infrastructure

Each of the objectives set out above are accompanied by a series of ‘Headline Actions’, as set out within the within the Manchester Green and Blue infrastructure Strategy. Each of the actions associated with the relevant objectives will now be discussed.

**Objective 1:** Existing Green Infrastructure

**Headline Action 5:** Trees and woodlands: effective and appropriate tree and woodland management and planting.

The proposed development retains the ‘majority’ of existing mature trees and integrates them within a considered hard/ soft landscape strategy, which includes replacement tree planting and a residents’ communal garden space.

To Ashton New Road the ‘avenue’ of street trees is retained as an important ‘green’ edge to the northern boundary and integrated with the proposed building frontage and ‘entrance’ landscape. To the eastern edge of the site mature trees are retained as an integral element to the existing pedestrian link from Ashton New Road to Newcombe Close.

**Objective 2:** New Development

**Headline Action 1** – Embed green infrastructure as part of residential developments

The Proposed Development comprises a residential development and where possible seeks to embed green infrastructure into the development.

The proposal includes the retention of the existing amenity grassland and majority of trees along Ashton New Road, retaining a valuable wildlife corridor and creation of new communal garden which will offer quality, amenity space for residents using a range of species to promote ecology and greater bio-diversity in the area.

The west elevation apartment patios will have native Hornbeam hedging providing a natural privacy screen for residents between public and private areas and habitats for local wildlife. The ornamental planting adjacent to these areas contributes to the creation of a comfortable urban environment for the residents.

The ornamental beds proposed in the communal garden, perimeter of the car park and ground floor apartments use a mix of evergreen and semi-evergreen species that provide year-round interest, essential food, shelter, and habitats for local wildlife that contribute to a healthier eco-system. These is a combination of shade and sun tolerant species that withstand the urban conditions where the development is located. Species include Berberis, Choisya, Hebe, Bergenia, Geranium, Liriope and Sedum.

Around the site perimeter a mix of native and non-native trees are proposed that frame the building and integrate it into the surrounding vernacular. Species include Betula, Carpinus and Quercus provide valuable habitat and food sources for birds, mammals, and insects. The ornamental cherry trees located in the communal garden with its abundant blossoms provide a significant food source for pollinators.

2.0 Green and Blue Infrastructure

2.2 Proposed Green and Blue Infrastructure (cont.)

All Ground floor apartments will have ‘own front doors’ with associated small private terraces/ front gardens which offers opportunity for container planting and residents to incorporate bird feeders that will support the local bird population and ecosystem.

76 of the 82 upper floor apartments will have a generous balcony, providing private amenity and the opportunity for additional ornamental/ vegetable planting, growing space, bird feeders, that will further enhance the site’s ecosystem and wellbeing of the residents.



Fig. 1 Proposed Site Plan and landscpae

## 2.0 Green and Blue Infrastructure

## 2.2 Proposed Green and Blue Infrastructure (cont.)

The GMLRM identifies key opportunities, constraints and challenges inherent with the development site as follows:

- 'The green buffer to the perimeter of the estate is both an asset and an issue with its connections to the wider setting. Introducing new permeability and visibility with some new built development could enhance this setting.'
- 'Poor surface highways to all streets of Grey Mare Lane Estate present a poor public landscape and environment and greening and upgrading the streets will help to create a unified improved look and feel across the site.'
- 'Rethinking Grey Mare Lane into a re-established and redesigned primary street to create an improved and upgraded highway infrastructure including cycleways, SUDS, green pockets and narrower road.'
- 'Connect Newcombe Close directly onto Grey Mare Lane and close-up the connection to Hopedale Close.'
- Access: Newcombe Close is proposed to be realigned to connect directly to Grey Mare Lane to simplify vehicle movement within the estate. Vehicle access should be provided from Newcombe close.
- Trees: There are a number of existing trees to the perimeter of the site which should be retained wherever possible. Any removals should be re-provided in-line with MCC policy'

The basis of the proposal responds to the GMLRM aspirations to activate the streetscape of Grey Mare Lane and Ashton New Road and Newcombe Close, bringing activity and life to this important Gateway site, thus enhancing connectivity between the Grey Mare Lane estate and the wider area.

Specifically, new public realm will provide a link along the southern boundary of the site between Grey Mare Lane and Newcombe Close. (see Figs 1 and .2)



Fig. 2 Development guidance diagram (courtesy of GMLRMP)

## 2.0 Green and Blue Infrastructure

### 2.2 Proposed Green and Blue Infrastructure (cont.)

#### Objective 3: Connectivity and Accessibility

**Headline Action 2:** Green routes: greening transport routes (e.g. tramlines, footpaths, cycle routes, roads, rail corridors, disused railway lines) to encourage walking and cycling, reduce flood risk and provide attractive corridors for wildlife.

The proposals will promote an enhanced pedestrian and cycle environment, compatible with the aspirations of the GMLRM. The new building creates active frontages to Grey Mare Lane and Ashton New Road add the proposed link between Grey Mare Lan and Newcombe Close. The site is well served by active travel routes (as illustrated by the TfGM active travel map) and summarised as follows:

- The footways in the vicinity of the site are of adequate width and that controlled and uncontrolled crossings are in place at suitable locations.
- The development will deliver a pedestrian link between Newcombe Close and Grey Mare Lane and will reinstate the footway on the site frontage at a width of 2m.
- Cycle parking is provided for residents and visitors.
- Figure 3. shows that the streets nearby are 20mph routes that create a suitable environment for pedestrians and cyclists.
- The Key Route Network (Ashton New Road forms part of this) routes providing access from the masterplan to the wider network include wide footways and marked cycle routes on Ashton New Road and Ashton Old Road, and footways and cycleways with segregation on Alan Turing Way.
- Access can be gained to Route 60 of the National Cycle Network and the traffic free Route 86 to the north of the site. These routes allow access to the areas to the north of the city and the city centre, respectively.

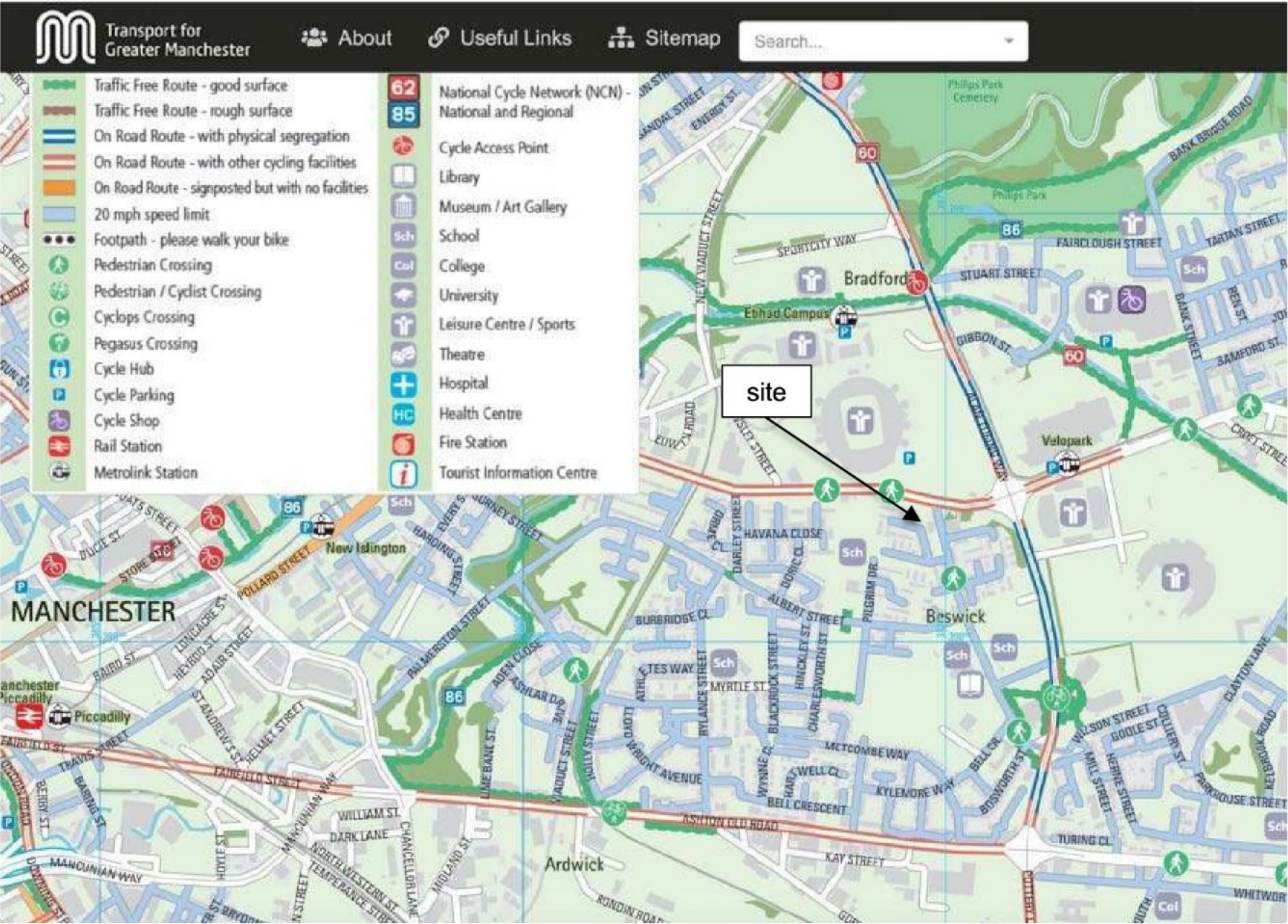


Fig 3- TfGM active travel map

2.0 Green and Blue Infrastructure

2.2 Proposed Green and Blue Infrastructure (cont.)

The site will also benefit from and contribute to improved cycle and bus routes proposed as part of the GMLRM. See Fig. 4

The Proposed Development is also supported by a drainage strategy which sets out the most appropriate sustainable drainage opportunities for the site.

**Headline Action 3:** Working with neighbouring authorities to improve access and connectivity

A programme of consultation with the local authority and general public was carried out during the production of the GMLRM. Consultation has also been undertaken as part of the preparation of the development proposal.

THEMES //

- Bring new cycleways into the heart of the masterplan to promote health and wellbeing
- Connect the site into the existing wider network of cycle and active travel routes including the bus and tram links
- Address parking issues within the estate to discourage fly parking for match days and events
- Formalise parking for dwellings within the estate and reduce the demand on overlooked parking courtyards
- New development should provide in curtilage car parking with associated EV charging points.
- Identify where existing streets could be redesigned to accommodate on street parking or areas for more parking
- Improve the overall pedestrian network of footways across the site to enhance the pedestrian experience

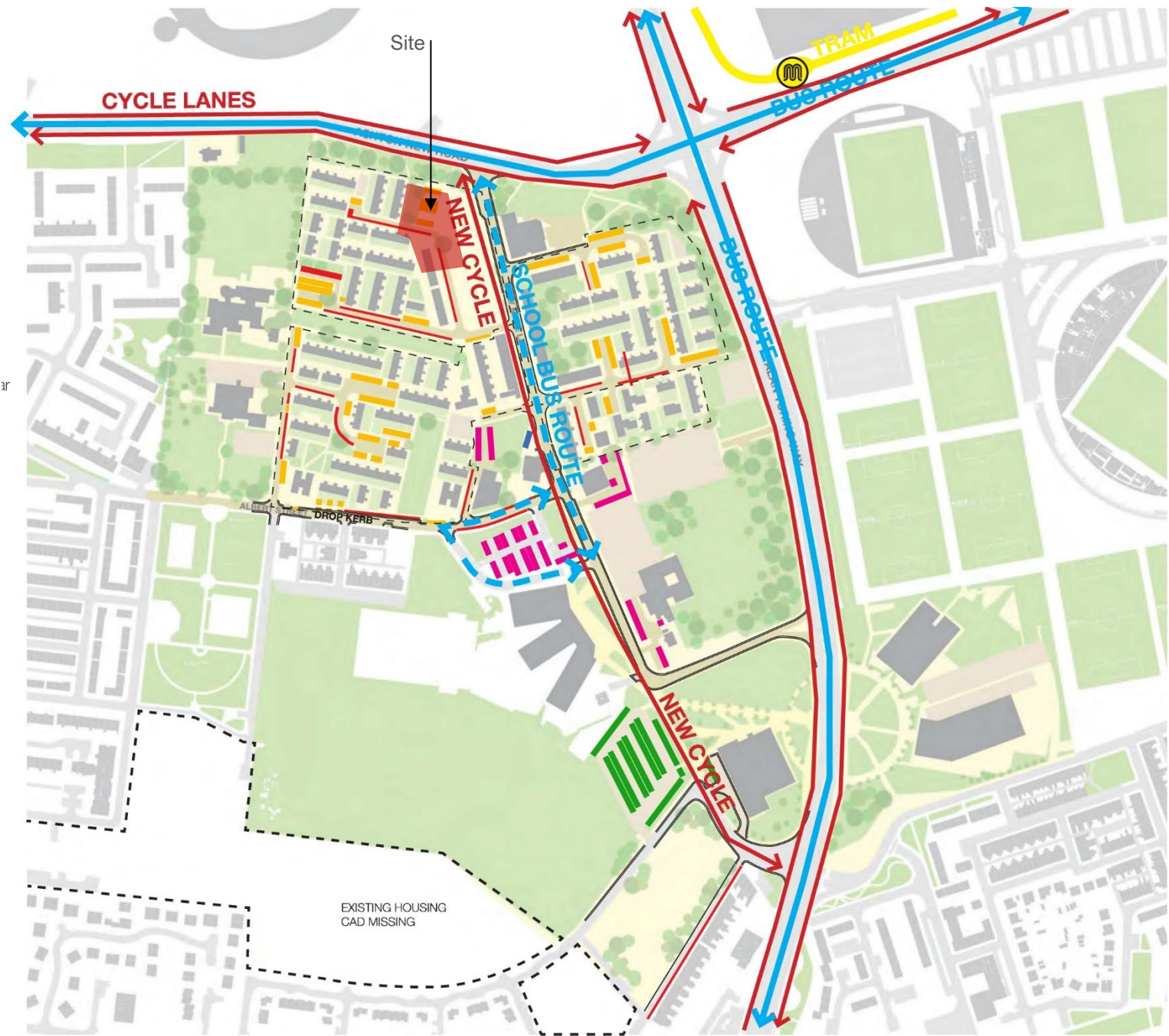


Fig 4- Active Travel proposals – courtesy of the GMLRM

2.0 Green and Blue Infrastructure

2.2 Proposed Green and Blue Infrastructure (cont.)

Action 4: Use active and sustainable transport to access green infrastructure in the city and beyond

As outlined previously, the site sits to the north of Beswick, south/ west of the Eastlands campus, and east of Holt Town/ Ancoats. Manchester city centre is approximately 20 mins walk to the west. The site is well connected to public transport with bus stops along Ashton New Road and the Velo Park tram stop approximately 5 min walk to the east, which links to the city centre and Ashton under Lyne. The site sits within a short distance (10/15min walk or 10min bike ride) to a series of blue and green infrastructure assets, specifically; the Ashton canal and river Medlock, Phillips Park and the Clayton Vale Bike Trail (all within 10/15min walk or 10min bike ride to the north). See Figs. 5 and 6.

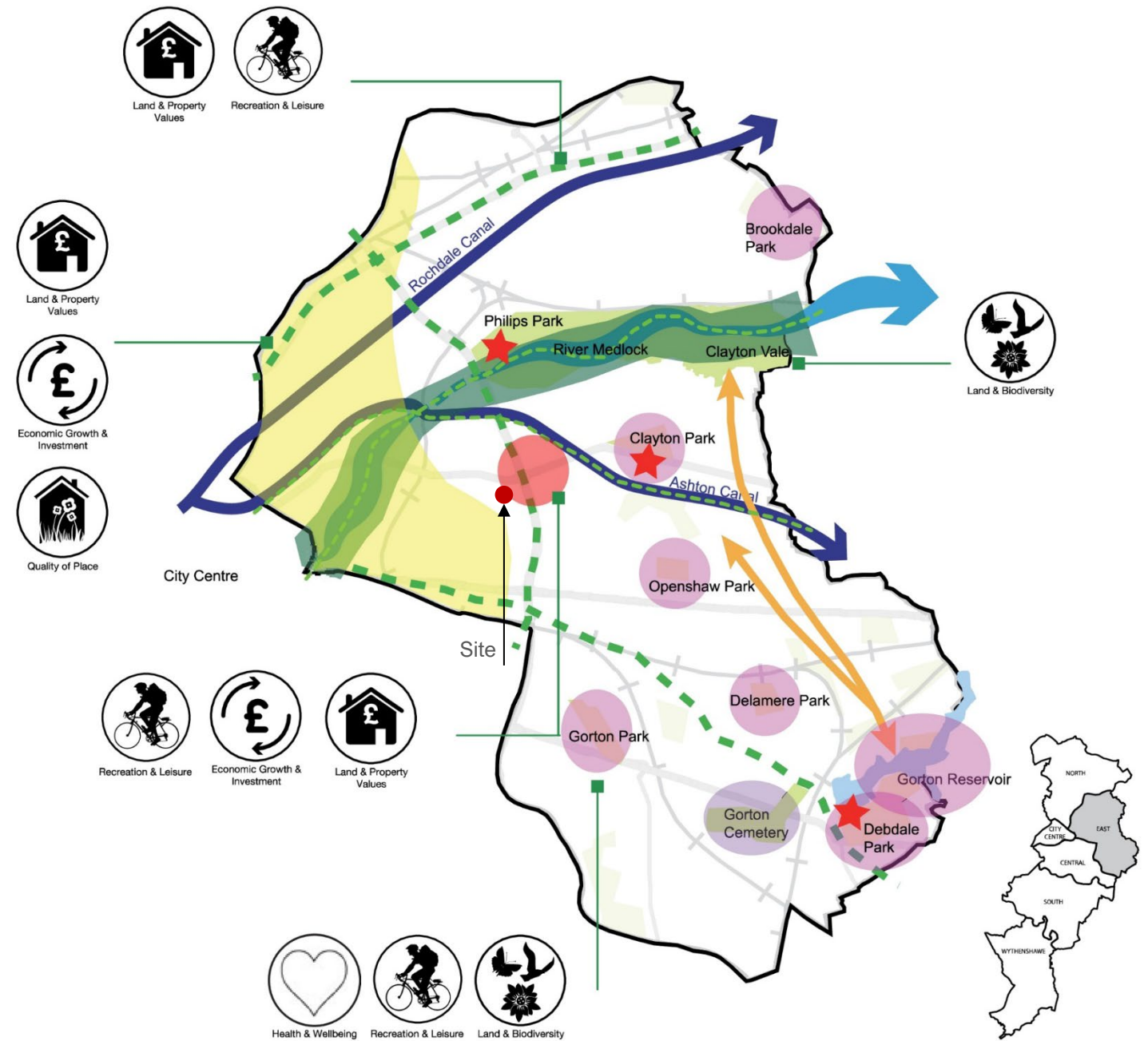


Fig 6- Site location in the context of the 'opportunities' diagram(Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Statement) for the 'East Area' of the city.

3.0 Conclusion

The proposed development demonstrates a carefully considered approach to Green and Blue Infrastructure, both as a site level, given the constraints of the site, and at a strategic level as part of the wider GMLRM, HTNDF and the aspirations of the Manchester Green and Blue Strategy

Three of the four core Objectives within the Manchester Green and Blue Strategy are considered to be applicable to the development. Of the three applicable Objectives, it can be demonstrated that the relevant Headline Actions are positively recognised at both a site level and a strategic level.

The Green and Blue Infrastructure to be embedded into the proposed development will ensure that it is effective from the outset. The proposed landscape will active the ground floor level, assisting the built form to integrate with the existing context and retained mature trees. The communal garden will provide a high-quality private space for residents to enjoy. Ground floor ‘terraces’ to apartments and generous balconies at upper floors will provide private amenity space and the opportunity for residents to foster small growing spaces. In line with the vision of the GMLRM, the proposed development will ensure that quality of the pedestrian environment around the building is improved, creating an environment that is attractive, comfortable and practical, and an actively overlooked pedestrian connection is established between Grey Mare Lane and Newcombe close.

As the proposed planting establishes and matures and the proposals of the wider GMLRM are delivered, the Green Infrastructure characteristics of the site will continue to enhance and become more effective.

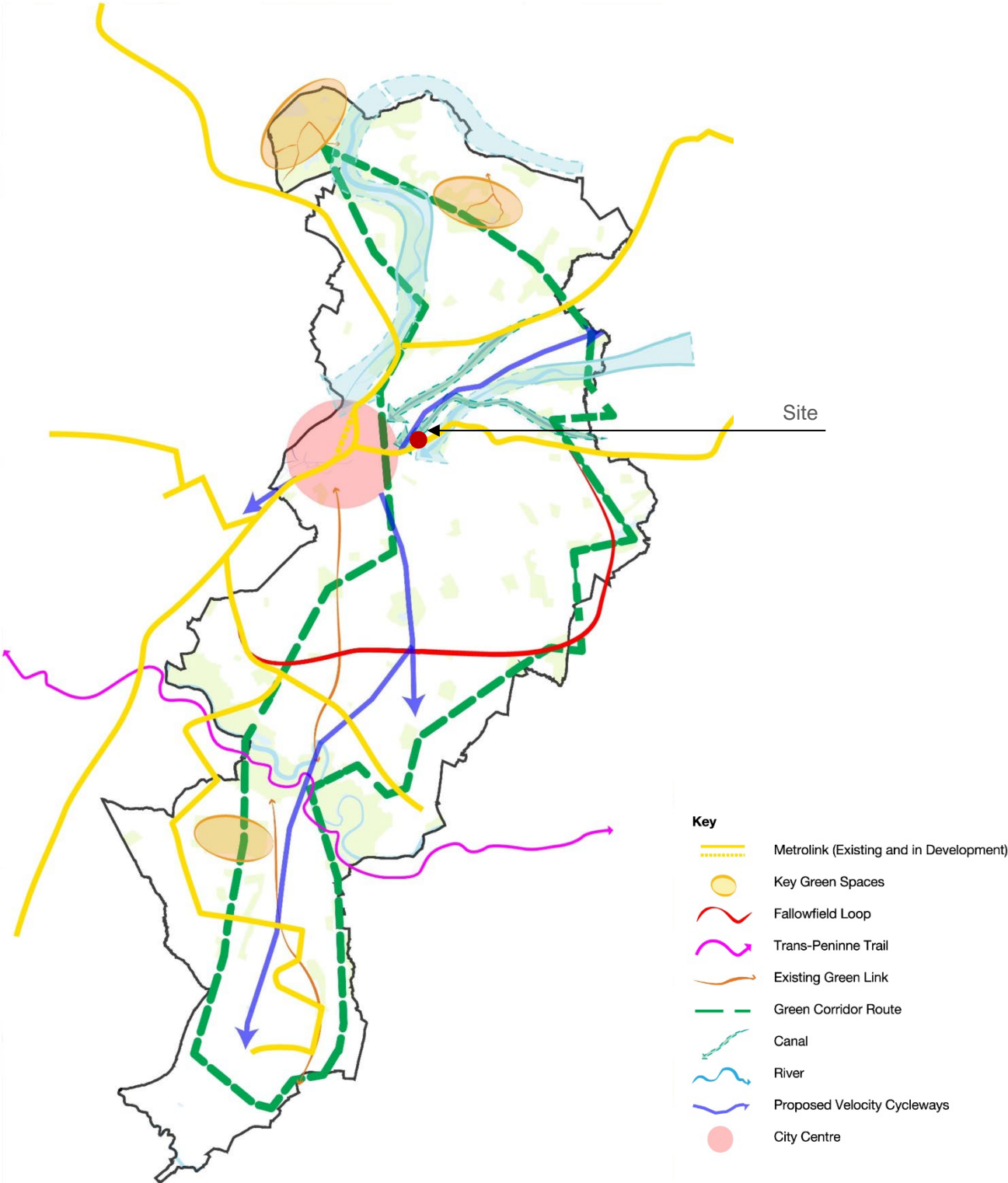


Fig 6- Site location in the context of the 'Connectivity and Accessibility' diagram (Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Statement)