

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Date: 27 June 2025

Subject: Proposed Old Trafford Regeneration Area Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC)

Report of: Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Lead for Economy, Business and Inclusive Growth and Tom Stannard, Portfolio Lead Chief Executive for Economy, Business and Inclusive Growth

Purpose of Report

To seek approval from the GMCA to consult on the establishment of a Mayoral Development Corporation in Old Trafford Regeneration area (see Appendix One) enabling it to become the delivery vehicle for regeneration of the area.

It should be noted that a separate paper recommending approval for the designation of a Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ) in the Western Gateway is also being tabled at the GMCA in June. The MDZ will be named The Western Gateway Development Zone (WGDZ). The Western Gateway encompasses the area on the western side of Greater Manchester and is cross boundary between Salford and Trafford.

Recommendations:

The GMCA is requested to:

1. Agree in principle to the creation of an MDC for the regeneration of Old Trafford Regeneration area.
2. Endorse the Mayor undertaking a consultation exercise in respect of the designation of a Mayoral Development Corporation for the Old Trafford Regeneration area.
3. Note that if the principle of an MDC and consultation are approved, GMCA officers will explore with Trafford Council detailed options for an MDC to be created for the Old Trafford Regeneration area, with these matters to be the subject of further Reports in due course.

4. Note that if the principle of an MDC and consultation are approved it is proposed that contact will be made with the relevant Government department to outline proposals for the Old Trafford Regeneration MDC and obtain support for the proposed MDC.
5. Note that a further report will be brought back setting out the outcome of the consultation and further investigation work.

The Mayor of Greater Manchester is recommended to

1. Agree in principle to the creation of an MDC for the regeneration of the Old Trafford Regeneration area.
2. Approve the undertaking of a consultation exercise as described above and in this report.

Contact Officers

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Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

Recommendation - Key points for decision-makers

The GMCA is recommended to:

1. Agree in principle to the creation of an MDC for the regeneration of Old Trafford.
2. Endorse the Mayor undertaking a consultation exercise in respect of the designation of a Mayoral Development Corporation for the f Old Trafford Regeneration area.
3. Agree that GMCA officers can explore with Trafford Council detailed options for an MDC to be created for Old Trafford, with these matters to be decided upon by GMCA and Trafford in due course.
4. Approve the proposal for contact to be made with the relevant Government department to outline proposals for the Old Trafford Regeneration MDC and obtain support for the proposed MDC to be decided upon by GMCA and Trafford Council in due course.
5. Request that a further report be brought back setting out the outcome of the consultation and further investigation work to a future meeting of the GMCA for approval.

Impacts Questionnaire

Impact Indicator	Result	Justification/Mitigation
Equality and Inclusion	G	Delivery of the Old Trafford Regeneration (OTR) project will provide access to homes across a range of types and tenures and high-quality employment opportunities to a part of Greater Manchester which has been relatively economically disadvantaged. The development will also enhance access to social and transport infrastructure for new and existing residents. This proposal recommends a consultation on the delivery route for OTR which gives the affected communities the opportunity to make their views known.
Health	G	Detailed development proposals are to be agreed but the OTR will support the development of high-quality homes and encourage active travel as well as provide high quality services to help improve the health and wellbeing of its residents.
Resilience and Adaptation	G	The OTR boundary covers an areas of already developed land and brownfield sites limiting the need to use greenfield land elsewhere. While the proposals are in the early stages the development will look to improve the quality of housing, green spaces and services to create a thriving community within the OTR area.
Housing	G	Detailed development proposals are to be agreed including final housing numbers. However, the proposal will support the delivery of new homes as part of the OTR project, a proportion of which will be affordable homes of various tenures. It will also support economic development with local employment benefits, enhancing access to and affordability of homes for local residents.
Economy	G	The OTR project is one of Greater Manchester's and the UKs most significant development projects and is a site of international significance. The OTR area, within Trafford Wharfside, presents a remarkable opportunity to create one of Europe's most significant investment and regeneration initiatives. This transformative project promises to dramatically enhance economic performance and quality of life for the region and beyond. It will deliver new housing and employment space with significant associated employment, GVA, and growth implications. Its strategic location has the ability to attract national and international inward investment.
Mobility and Connectivity	G	OTR area will bring significant investment in transport infrastructure to the Western Gateway, including Strategic Road Network and Local Road Network improvements. Alongside this will be enhancement of existing public transport provision and creation of new public transport options and sustainable travel modes serving the new developments. Modern businesses, require high-quality digital connections. The development will be underpinned by provision of this digital infrastructure for both employment and residential uses.
Carbon, Nature and Environment	A	The OTR area is already a significantly developed area with current heavy industrial use which will mean the regeneration of the area will have a less significant environmental impact than developing a Green Field Site. Although, any physical development has unavoidable impacts on the environment, but these will be managed and mitigated as much as possible, and the most material impacts will be largely confined to the delivery phase. Mitigation against long-term environmental impacts will be incorporated into development proposals. Delivery of new low- and zero-carbon homes and commercial premises will improve the average efficiency of properties across Greater Manchester and contribute to the achievement of carbon neutrality by 2038. Detailed development proposals are not fixed but biodiversity enhancement is a mandatory requirement for all new developments.
Consumption and Production		
Contribution to achieving the GM Carbon Neutral 2038 target		Delivery of new low- and zero-carbon homes and commercial premises will improve the average efficiency of properties across Greater Manchester and contribute to the achievement of carbon neutrality by 2038.
Further Assessment(s):		Carbon Assessment
G	Positive impacts overall, whether long or short term.	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		
Buildings	Result	Justification/Mitigation
New Build residential		Details of development proposals are to be determined, however there is an overarching commitment to deliver in accordance with requirements for biodiversity, energy efficiency, and carbon reduction set out in Places for Everyone and GMS.
Residential building(s) renovation/maintenance	N/A	
New build non-residential (including public) buildings		Details of development proposals are to be determined, however there is an overarching commitment to deliver in accordance with requirements for biodiversity, energy efficiency, and carbon reduction set out in Places for Everyone and GMS.
Transport		
Active travel and public transport		Details of public transport and active travel interventions are to be determined but will represent an enhancement over existing.
Roads, Parking and Vehicle Access		Details of development proposals are to be determined but principles of decreased personal vehicle use and increased sustainable transport modes as proportion of overall travel are agreed.
Access to amenities		Details of development proposals are to be determined but principles of decreased personal vehicle use and increased sustainable transport modes as proportion of overall travel are agreed. Allocations within Places for Everyone include local amenity uses alongside residential and employment development, improving access to these services by sustainable modes of transport.
Vehicle procurement	N/A	
Land Use		
Land use		The majority of the land being developed is land which has already had significant previous development including industrial use. New green spaces will be created

Risk Management

As this proposal is an in-principal decision only there are no risk management issues associated with this decision

Legal Considerations

1. It is subject to the requirements of Part 8 Chapter 2 (Mayoral Development Corporations) of the Localism Act 2011 as amended by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (Functions and Amendment) Order 2017.
2. The below table details the process which must be followed under the legislation to designate an area of land as a Mayoral development area and for the establishment of an MDC.

Statutory Consultation	<p>Prior to the Mayor designating land in the GMCA's area as a Mayoral development area the Mayor must consult with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the members of the GMCA who are appointed by the constituent councils; • each MP whose parliamentary constituency contains any part of the area; • the district/ county council whose borough contains any part of the area; • a National Park authority if any part of area is within a National Park; and • any other person the Mayor considers it appropriate to consult.
Report to GMCA	The Mayor must put forward a report to the GMCA proposing to designate an area as a Mayoral development area and gain approval of the GMCA.
Publicity & Notification to Secretary of State	<p>A consultation exercise must be conducted on the proposed MDC as outlined in this report.</p> <p>The designation must be publicised, and the Secretary of State must be notified of the designation and the name of the MDC.</p>
Establishment	Once notified the Secretary of State will, by an order, establish the MDC. The order establishing an MDC is a statutory instrument which is subject to the negative procedure. This means it will automatically become law without a debate by either of the Houses of Parliament provided there is no objection from either House within a 40 day period.

Financial Consequences – Revenue

None

Financial Consequences – Capital

None

Number of attachments to the report: 1

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

N/A

Background Papers

- Greater Manchester's Approach to Delivering Growth Ambitions – 31st January 2025
- Trafford Council Executive Committee – 27th January 2025

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

Bee Network Committee

N/A

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

N/A

1.Introduction/Background

- 1.1 In January 2025, GMCA endorsed the preparation of an updated Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) and an underpinning 10-year Growth & Prevention Delivery Plan ('Delivery Plan'), which brings together priority actions to be delivered over the coming years to realise the GM vision.
- 1.2 A key focus for the Delivery Plan will be the activity required to unlock growth through the successful development and regeneration of our places, working collaboratively with our public and private sector partners. Our collective approach will need to ensure the continuation of a growing global city centre, along with a wider city region of thriving boroughs and vibrant town centres across GM. Fundamental to this will be the delivery of well-connected employment and housing sites with our growth plans benefitting all our residents over the 10-year period.
- 1.3 Old Trafford Regeneration area is a flagship Greater Manchester development that presents a significant regeneration opportunity, being close to Manchester City Centre and opposite MediaCity. The Trafford Wharfside Development Framework aims to create vibrant, interconnected communities where amenities, landmarks, and public spaces are all within a 5-minute walk. This will involve redeveloping brownfield sites into sustainable housing with strong transport links to employment hubs. Essential infrastructure improvements include the Western Gateway scheme, new roads and bus routes, enhanced sustainable transport, and a potential Metrolink expansion to Port Salford. The Old Trafford Regeneration area, within Trafford Wharfside, presents a remarkable opportunity to create one of Europe's most significant investment and regeneration initiatives. This transformative project promises to dramatically enhance economic performance and quality of life for the region and beyond.
- 1.4 The proposed Old Trafford Regeneration MDC site will sit in the proposed Western Gateway Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ). The purpose of the MDZ is to attract investment and growth using incentives and streamlined regulations for the area surrounding Liverpool Road, the M62 corridor and

along the Manchester Ship Canal. Although the MDZ is in its early stages of development, it is necessary to note that it will share geographical areas and objectives with the MDC. Looking ahead, the MDC should implement strategic alignment, collaboration and continued stakeholder engagement with the MDZ to enhance outcomes.

1.5 In January 2025 GMCA endorsed progressing plans to strengthen our delivery capacity through exploring the option for a Mayoral Development Corporation around the Old Trafford Regeneration area. Trafford council agreed that the feasibility and potential benefits of the establishment of a Mayoral Development Corporation within the Old Trafford Regeneration area be explored at their executive committee on 27th January 2025.

1.6 Following this endorsement Deloitte were instructed by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Trafford Borough Council to assess potential delivery vehicle options for the Old Trafford Regeneration area, aiming to identify the choice that would best meet stakeholder needs and project objectives. Following their evaluation, they recommended a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) as the optimal delivery vehicle to support wider regeneration across the Old Trafford Regeneration area-
Appendix 2

2. Mayoral Development Corporations

2.1 Development corporations are important tools for delivering large-scale development, including mixed-use regeneration, transformational urban extensions, and new settlements.

2.2 In the right circumstances, these powerful vehicles can bring a number of advantages to complex projects including:

- The focus, coordination, and consistent delivery of a dedicated body with a specific purpose to develop and deliver a strategic vision for a defined area;
- Highly visible public sector commitment coupled with broad public and private sector expertise at board level as a driver for private investment; and Broad powers to facilitate delivery of the project.

- 2.3 Traditionally, development corporations have been established and led by central government. The Localism Act 2011 set out the parameters for creation of locally-led Mayoral Development Corporations (MDCs), where elected mayors designate MDCs in consultation with their combined authorities.
- 2.4 The Localism Act (2011) gives a regional Mayor the power to designate a Mayoral Development Area subject to public consultation. The powers that can be conferred upon an MDC comprise:
- The provision of new infrastructure.
 - Powers to hold, acquire, develop, improve, or regenerate land and buildings.
 - Powers to provide financial assistance.
 - Subject to a decision of the relevant LA, plan-making and development control powers can be delegated to an MDC, resulting in its own Planning Committee.
 - Subject to a decision of the relevant Local Authority, powers can be delegated to grant discretionary Business Rates relief.
- 2.5 These powers were used by the Mayor of Greater Manchester in September 2019 to establish an MDC for Stockport Town Centre West, in collaboration with Stockport Council and Homes England. The MDC has a clear remit to take forward the GMCA and Stockport Council's ambitious plans for the regeneration of Town Centre West, delivering new homes and growth as well as the long-term vision for the area set out in Stockport Council's Strategic Regeneration Framework. Lessons from the development of the Stockport Town Centre West MDC will be utilised to help deliver the Old Trafford Regeneration MDC at pace.
- 2.6 The GM Mayor will be required to designate an area of land in the GMCA's area as a Mayoral development area. In considering such a designation the GM Mayor must consider the designation to be expedient for furthering economic development and regeneration of the area. The proposed area of the Old Trafford Regeneration MDC is

included at Appendix 1.

3. Old Trafford Regeneration MDC

- 3.1 Given the complexities of delivering the Old Trafford Regeneration area and the long-term nature of the project, it is considered an MDC would be the most appropriate route to drive the timely, cost effective, and high-quality delivery of this transformational flagship development.
- 3.2 A single-location MDC has emerged as the preferred option after Deloitte carried out a Delivery Vehicle Options Appraisal (DVOA) – please see Appendix 2. The exercise highlighted the following benefits from implementing an MDC:
- Delivers a single institutional platform for all regeneration activities.
 - Provides the range of necessary powers and resources to help deliver change.
 - Ability to harness the resources of local and national government to secure maximum efficiency.
 - Capability to create a diverse mix of investment propositions and engage with a range of development partners.
 - Ability to operate long-term (minimum 10 years) due to local and wider political support. This will enable it to span electoral periods and political cycles to ensure investor confidence.
 - A board created to drive forward the vehicle would ensure democratic responsibility and specialist expertise from both the public and private sector.
- 3.3 The creation of a dedicated, long-term yet time-limited organisation for the Old Trafford Regeneration area ensures focused delivery with proper governance and resources, maintaining democratic accountability to the Mayor and the Council while spanning multiple political cycles. This approach provides certainty, attracting public and private sector investment. Additionally, senior leadership expertise at executive and non-executive levels would actively drive forward the development, addressing the scale and complexity of the project.
- 3.4 A single body would set the strategic vision for the Old Trafford

Regeneration area, pooling resources and powers across the public sector to support delivery tasks such as land assembly, master planning, site preparation, and infrastructure development. It would also handle agreements with development and investor partners. This vehicle would position the Old Trafford Regeneration area as a flagship development, enhancing its market appeal and acting as a focal point for inward investment, benefiting the Western Gateway and Greater Manchester as a whole. By addressing these governance and technical considerations, the MDC can be effectively established and aligned with project objectives.

- 3.5 The MDC will collaborate with the Council as Local Planning Authority as a key stakeholder from a plan making and development control perspective. The MDC will be a key stakeholder to all planning applications submitted in the OTR boundary.
- 3.6 Plan making within the OTR boundary will be a joint endeavour with the LPA. Trafford will remain the Local Planning Authority and will retain plan making and development management responsibility.

4. Alternatives to an MDC

- 4.1 Aside from an MDC for Old Trafford Regeneration area, there were several other potential approaches available to support the delivery of this flagship development, Deloitte were commissioned to identify the most suitable delivery vehicles for the Old Trafford Regeneration area and the following options were taken forward for further evaluation after an initial review:
 - Strategic Partnership.
 - Public Sector Delivery Vehicle.
 - Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC).
 - Locally-led Urban Development Corporation (LLUDC).
- 4.2 The shortlisted options derived from the initial longlist were evaluated against a set of delivery requirements and on the basis of the scoring an MDC was the delivery vehicle that best met the requirements. This

stems from the MDC's capacity to drive delivery at pace whilst maintaining accountability and exploring potential enhanced powers that will support the complexity of the programme that includes major infrastructure as well as mixed-use development.

5. MDC Consultation

- 5.1 The Mayor may designate a Mayoral Development Corporation only if consultation has been concluded in accordance with The Localism Act (2011). Authorisation is sought within this Report to endorse the Mayor carrying out this consultation.
- 5.2 The consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Act, which stipulates the following statutory consultees:
- Members of the GMCA;
 - MPs whose parliamentary constituency contains part of the proposed area
 - Each district council whose areas are within the proposed boundary (in this case Trafford); and
 - Any other person whom the Mayor considers it appropriate to consult.
- 5.3 For Old Trafford Regeneration area, similar to the process for the Stockport Town Centre West MDC, the consultation is proposed to be extended to all residents and businesses, and Council Members in the district for the proposed MDC area.
- 5.4 Accordingly, it is proposed that the consultation will also be publicly accessible through the GM Consult engagement platform, providing information about the proposal and appropriate supporting materials which will run for six weeks. The consultation materials will be prepared by Trafford Council and GMCA officers and hosted on the GM Consult website.
- 5.5 It is proposed that the consultation will include:
- Targeted consultation information for businesses and organisations within the proposed designated area.

- Online engagement.

- 5.6 The name and boundary of the MDC will be included as part of the consultation, as follows: Old Trafford Regeneration Mayoral Development Corporation:
- 5.7 At the end of the consultation if the Mayor wishes to proceed, and designate the area as an MDC, the Mayor will notify the Secretary of State, who will then make the Order to establish the MDC.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 Subject to in-principle approval from GMCA and Trafford Councils, GMCA officers, alongside colleagues from the council, will explore the establishment of an MDC.

These explorations will include:

- Governance arrangements, including board composition;
- Resources available to the MDC, principally staff;
- Devolved powers to be taken by the MDC; and
- Development of a Business Plan for the MDC

- 6.2 Statutory consultation will be opened on the 9th July 2025 on the proposals for an MDC as outlined in section 5 as required for formal designation by the Mayor of Greater Manchester and subsequent establishment by the Secretary of State.
- 6.3 The consultation will run for six weeks and after the consultation has concluded, responses will be analysed and a report developed outlining the results from the consultation process as well as the recommendations from the MDC exploration process which will be subject to approval by GMCA and Trafford Council.
- 6.4 In accordance with the Act, The Mayor must have regard to any comments made in response by the consultees; and in the event any comments received are not accepted by the Mayor, the Mayor must

publish a statement giving the reasons for non-acceptance.

- 6.5 Consultation on the Old Trafford Regeneration MDC will allow statutory and additional consultees to provide a response to the proposals, and for these responses to be reflected as part of subsequent work to progress the implementation of the MDC, including the development of a constitution and confirmation of resources.
- 6.6 In alignment with the consultation, the key matters for determination in creation of an MDC for the Old Trafford Regeneration area will be developed further. This work will include details of a developed rationale for intervention; purpose, aims and objectives of the MDC; governance and decision-making; financial considerations; risks and resources. These will be set out in the report to GMCA and Trafford Council.
- 6.7 Subject to the consultation results, if the Mayor decides to go ahead, he will issue a notice he intends to create an MDC for the Old Trafford Regeneration area. The consideration period for the designation of a Mayoral Development Area is 21 days beginning with the day the document proposing the designation of the Mayoral Development Area is laid before GMCA in accordance with the standing orders of GMCA.
- 6.8 Whilst meeting the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 as amended by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Order 2017, we will hope to learn the lessons from establishment of the Stockport MDC and have the Old Trafford MDC in place as quickly as possible.

7. Recommendations

Recommendations are as set out at the beginning of the Report.

Appendix 1 – Proposed boundary

