

## How many homes do we need in Greater Manchester and where?

It has been argued that Greater Manchester has a choice. Either build on the green belt and have more high rise in the city centre, or have insufficient new homes for an expanding population. Let's examine this claim.

The [Greater Manchester Spatial Framework](#) (GMSF) suggested that there was a need to build 227,200 new homes over 20 yrs or 11,360 per year (according to its favoured "Accelerated growth scenario").

The CPRE commissioned an independent demographer who [concluded](#), having corrected for errors like double counting, that "The Housing Target *".. should be 9,894 dwellings per annum, 197,885 over the 20-year plan period. This includes a 5% buffer and is in line with past delivery and within the ten Local Authorities' current five year land supplies."*

So here is the **GMSF projection**:

District	Total Requirement	Average Annual Requirement	Houses (%)	Flats (%)
Bolton	16,800	840	85	15
Bury	12,500	625	85	15
Manchester	55,300	2,765	15	85
Oldham	13,700	685	85	15
Rochdale	15,500	775	90	10
Salford	34,900	1,745	30	70
Stockport	19,300	965	75	25
Tameside	13,600	680	80	20
Trafford	23,100	1,155	60	40
Wigan	22,500	1,125	90	10
Total for GM	227,200	11,360	55-60	45-40

GM Spatial Framework: Table 8.1 Housing requirement

A simple revision of the above table to the **CPRE projection**, with population estimates corrected would be as follows.

District	Total Requirement	Average Annual Requirement	Houses (%)	Flats (%)
Bolton	14632	732	85	15
Bury	10887	544	85	15
Manchester	48165	2408	15	85
Oldham	11932	597	85	15
Rochdale	13500	675	90	10
Salford	30397	1520	30	70
Stockport	16810	840	75	25

Tameside	11845	592	80	20
Trafford	20119	1006	60	40
Wigan	19597	980	90	10
Total for GM	197885	9894	55-60	45-40

What about empty homes? [The current number of vacant homes in Greater Manchester: is more than 11,000](#). This would still suggest a need for new build to keep pace with demographic change.

Since in GMSF, 72% (163,584) of new home construction is on brownfield sites, therefore 63,616 on Greenfields, these CPRE figures would imply 34,301 on Greenfield sites, **other things being equal** (i.e. using the figure of 163,584 built on Brownfields which GMSF believes feasible).

But are other things equal? *“Previously local authorities across Greater Manchester achieved between 80%-90% brownfield development.”* (CPRE) Applying this range to the GMSF target would mean 181,760 to 204,480 on Brownfields and 45,440 to 22,720 on Greenfield sites.

Assuming that these higher levels on brownfield sites could be achieved (and there is evidence of under-identification of brownfield sites) and then applying them to the downwardly revised total target this would mean a Brownfield shortfall of 16,125 units (at 80%) or a surplus of 6,595 homes (at 90%).

None of this takes into account the option of increased medium-rise development. This is a “missing element” in UK cities, which sprawl considerably more than their continental counterparts. See Stuart MacDonald's discussion ([video and slides](#) from 1hr:36m) at Manchester council for this argument. The “missing in-between” is a key flaw in the [argument](#) put forward by Manchester's leader Sir Richard Leese, that there is a simple choice between high rise in the city centre or green belt sprawl.

## Conclusions

**If** we combine,

- 1) corrected population projections,
- 2) feasibly higher levels of brownfields construction,
- 3) more medium rise construction (i.e. greater density, both new build and building up from existing stock/foundations),

*then there is likely to be **no need to build on green fields.***

## Sources:

CPRE (2017) Response to the Draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework.

<http://www.cprelancashire.org.uk/news/current-news/item/2400-greater-manchester-spatial-framework>

GMCA (2016) Draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework.

<https://gmsf.objective.co.uk/file/4222688>

Manchester Evening News (14 October, 2016) More than 11,000 empty homes in Greater Manchester.

<http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/property/more-11000-empty-homes-greater-12020628>