Greater Manchester Spatial Framework

GREATER MANCHESTER'S PLAN FOR HOMES, JOBS

…….. AND THE ENVIRONMENT ?

Mark Burton
Steady State Manchester

Why a GMSF?

The GMSF is not actually a formal requirement: it is something which the local authorities, through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), have deliberately chosen to embark upon. ...

***Central government has been putting pressure on local authorities to produce an up-to-date Local Plan**, bringing them into line with legislative and guidance changes in planning since 2011. Consultation is required on these plans, locally and with neighbouring authorities, through the duty to co-operate. In addition, **to tackle housing shortages local authorities are expected to have in place a five-year pipeline of deliverable housing land**. **Crucially, where a five-year land supply cannot be demonstrated or a Local Plan is deemed out of date, penalties start to apply, from bringing in planning inspectors to determine planning applications to the threat of losing the New Homes Bonus**, a system that rewards local government financially for permitting new housing development. **Where a Local Plan is deemed to be out of date or inadequate, an inspector will judge planning appeals against the permissive wording of the National Planning Policy Framework**, which promotes 'sustainable economic development'.*

*It is in this context that several local authorities in Greater Manchester have struggled to update their plans to the government's timetable, and most have realised that they might struggle to prove they have a deliverable five-year housing land supply in place. **The GMSF is intended to help address the looming problems this raises, in particular the spectre of moving from plan-led development to a developer-led process of planning by appeal, which would be costly for all**.*

Haughton, G. (2018). Learning from the GMSF process. *Town and Country Planning*, (1), 18–21.

The GMSF key impacts, compared.

Key

GMSF 2016 (the previous version)

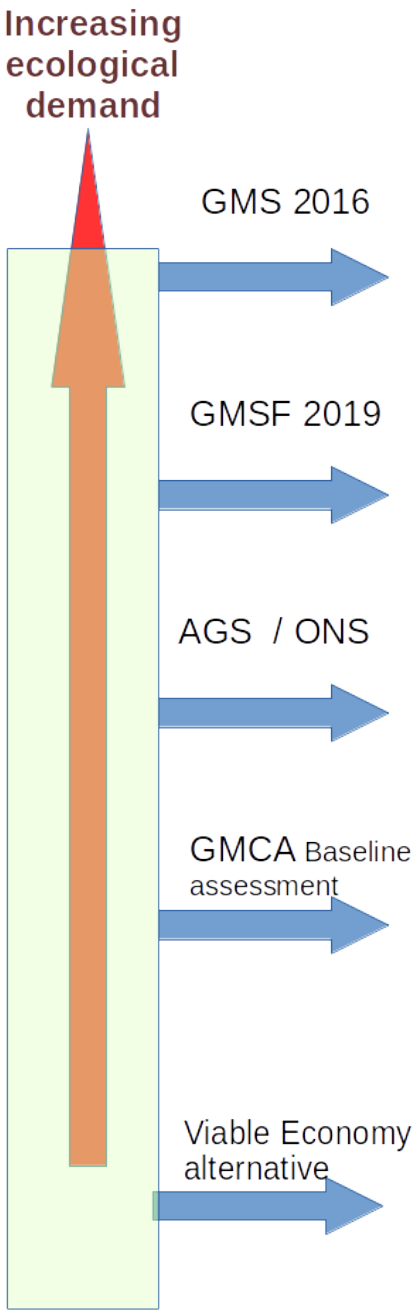
GMSF 2019 (the current draft)

AGS – The GMCA Accelerated Growth Strategy

ONS – 2018 ONS population and household projections

GMCA Baseline Assessment: projection based on current trends plus known risks.

Viable Economy: the post-growth alternative.



3,042,500 people, 227,200 new Homes, 4838 Ha Green Belt Loss (18.68 sq miles). GVA +2.8%p.a.

3,012,052 people, 200,980 new Homes, 2419 Ha net Green Belt Loss (9.34 sq miles) (3379.5 gross, 13.04 sq ml.). GVA +2.3%p.a.

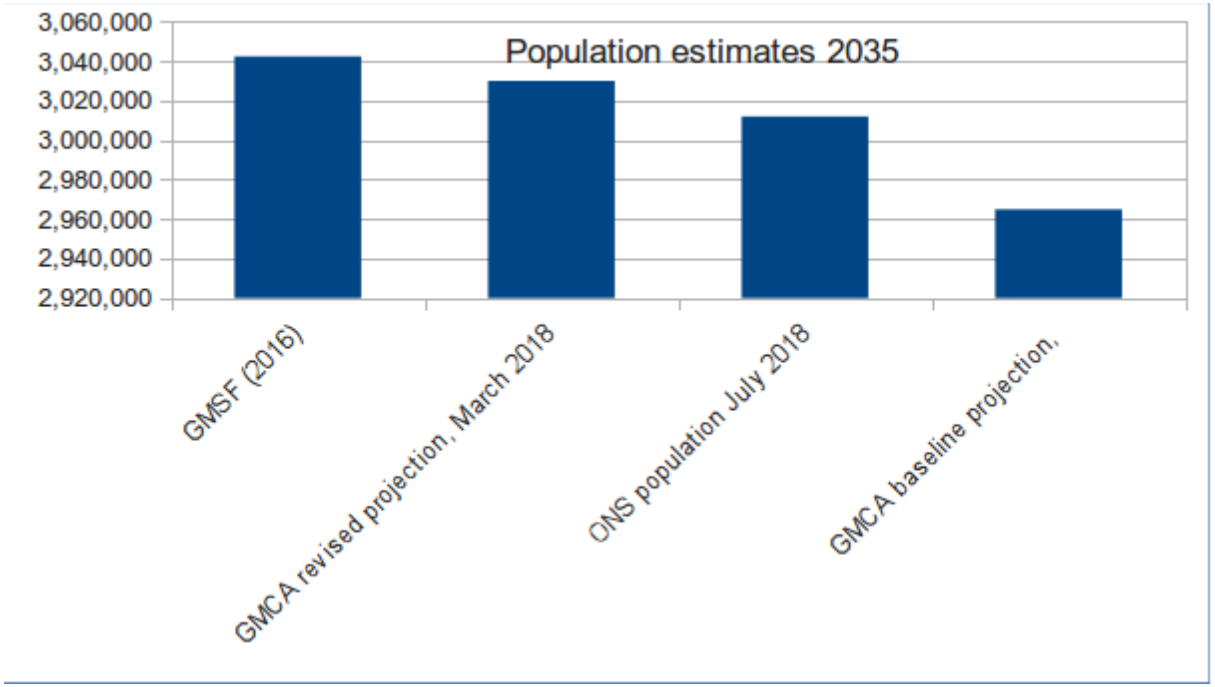
3,012,052 people, 141,034 new Homes, near zero Green Belt Loss from homes but same loss as GMSF2019 from industry GVA +2.3%p.a.

3,012,052 people, 141,034 new Homes, near zero Green Belt Loss from homes lower loss from industry as GVA growth = 1.7%p.a.

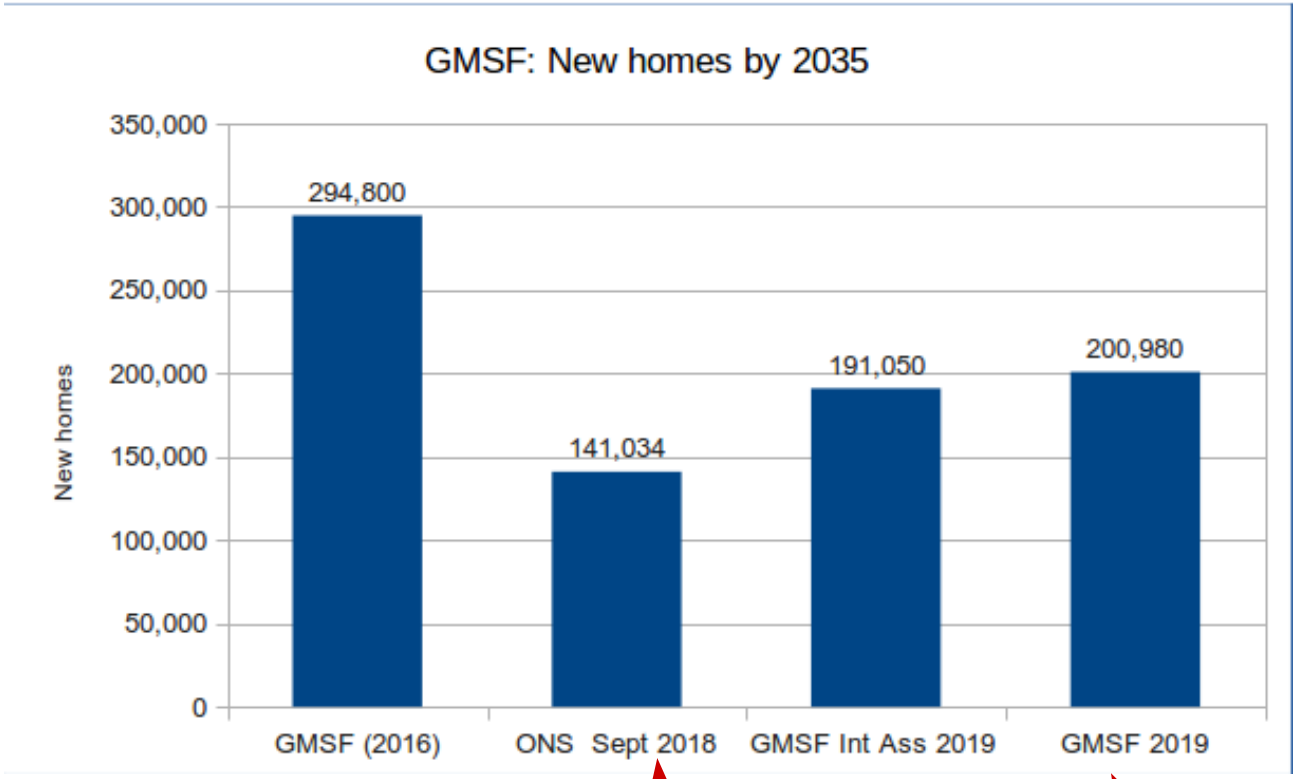
3,012,052 people or fewer, 141,034 new Homes or fewer. Near zero Green Belt Loss from homes. GVA growth =0. No industrial encroachment on green space.

Other green space loss (not Green Belt) 1878 Ha; 7.3 sq ml.

Population forecasts have reduced.



While the number of new homes has decreased from the 2016 draft, GMCA is using the government target which is higher than the latest ONS projection.



The ONS says:

The latest household projections are lower. Does this mean that fewer homes need to be built?

Although the latest household projections are lower than the previously published projections, this does not directly mean that fewer houses are needed in the future than thought. This is because the projections are based on recent actual numbers of households and are not adjusted to take account of where homes have been needed in recent years but have not been available. Therefore, if more homes are built, the increased availability of homes may result in more households forming. The opposite is also true – if fewer homes are built then fewer households are able to form.

Most recent projection from ONS

GMSF: uses government's methodology

GMCA's justification for using the higher housing need figure.

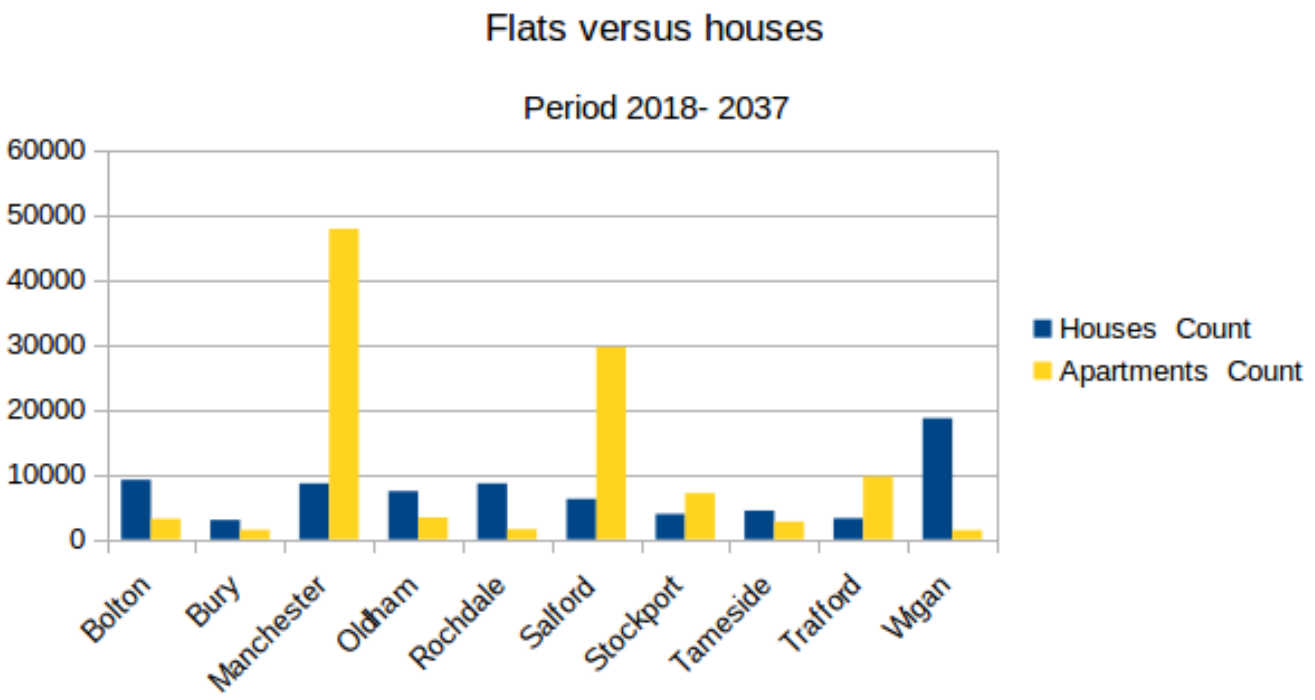
“Paragraph 15 [Government Technical consultation on updates to national planning policy and guidance] states that the standard method for assessing minimum housing need is a starting point for the planning process. Local planning authorities may decide that exceptional circumstances justify the use of an alternative method, but they will need to identify these reasons and can expect them to be tested by the Planning Inspectorate during the examination of their plans.

…

Greater Manchester does not consider that exceptional circumstances exist to justify departure from the standard methodology and therefore the 2014-based household projections have been used as the starting point for the assessment of Local Housing Need.”

GMSF Housing topic paper.

District	Annual housing target 2018-2023	Annual housing target 2024-2037	Annual average housing target 2018-2037
Bolton	520	800	726
Bury	270	580	498
Manchester	2,870	2,870	2,870
Oldham	450	860	752
Rochdale	640	640	640
Salford	1,720	1,720	1,720
Stockport	580	830	764
Tameside	370	500	466
Trafford	720	1,120	1,015
Wigan	1,060	1,150	1,126
Greater Manchester	9,200	11,070	10,578



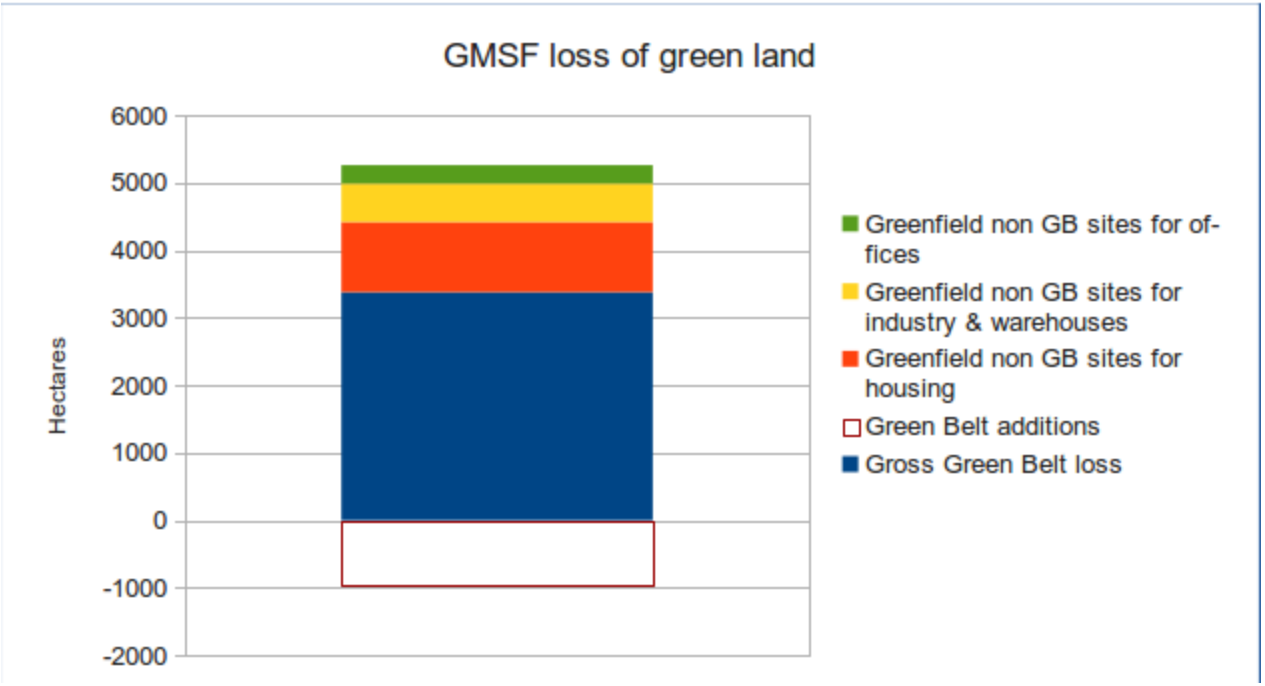
GMSF 2016: people/homes = 1.30
GMSF 2019: people/homes = 1.28

It's not just the Green Belt.

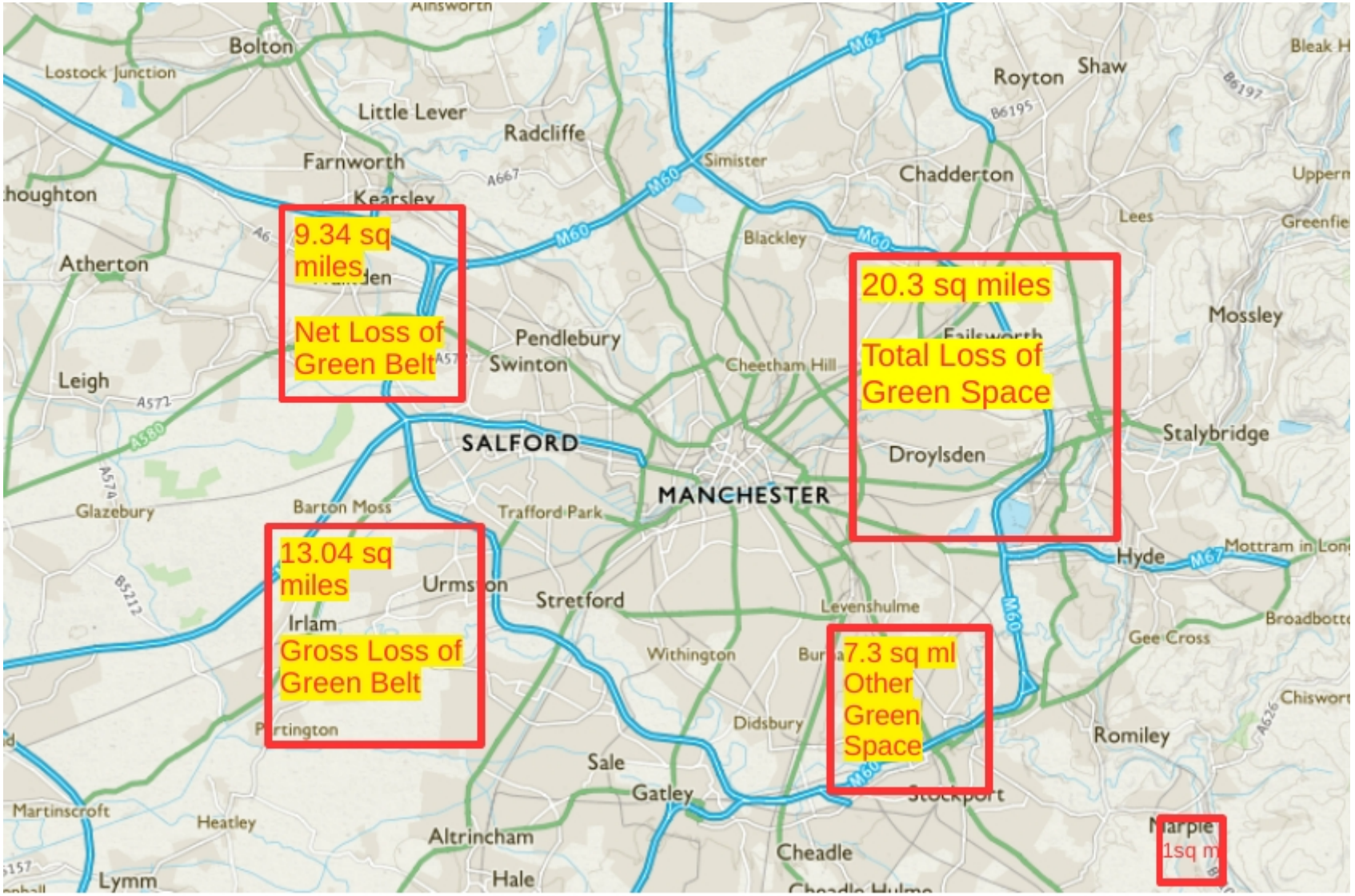
The gross loss of Green Belt is bigger than that quoted – the additions are already green space.

The top three bands are not in the Green Belt.

And some brownfields are green now.

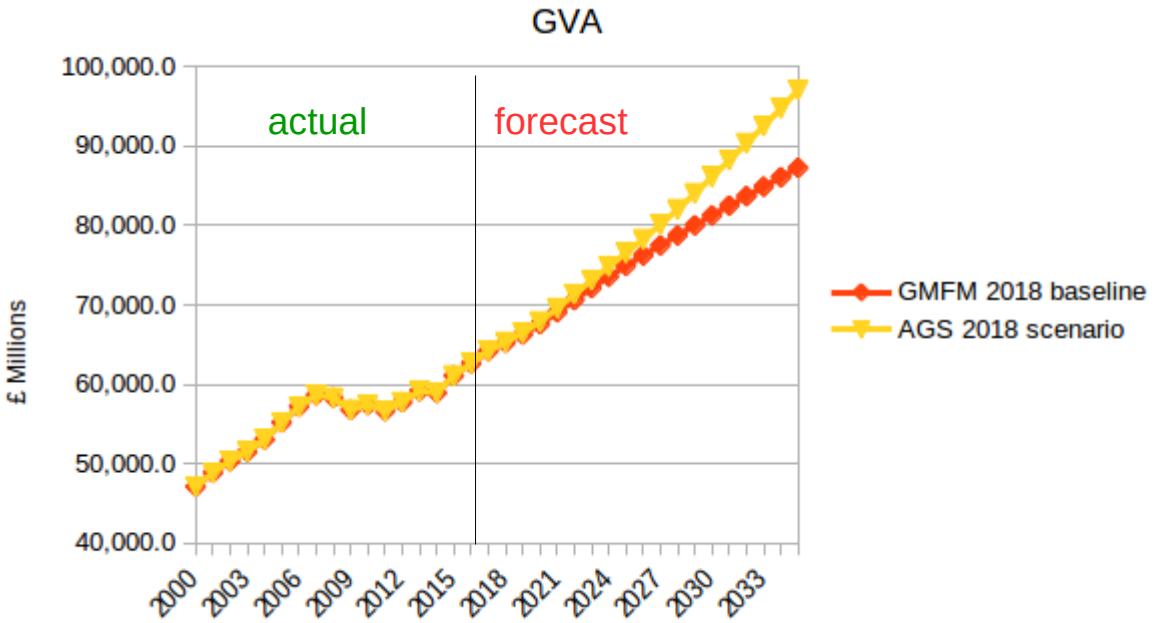


That's quite a lot of green space.



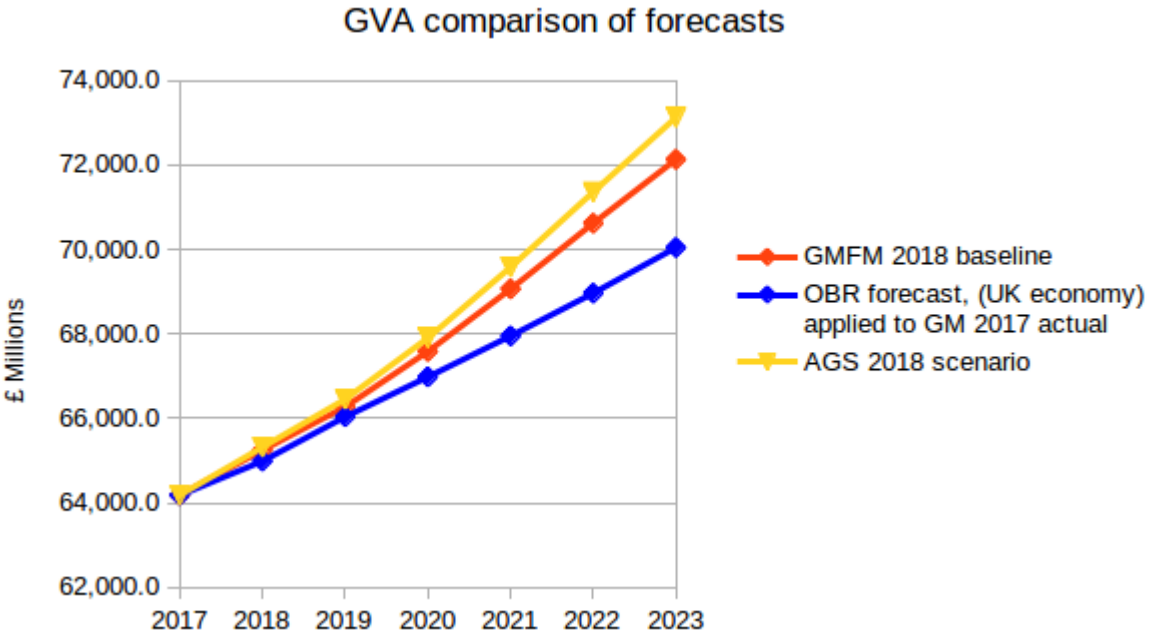
Using 259Ha = 1 sq mile

What assumptions? A high rate of “economic growth”.

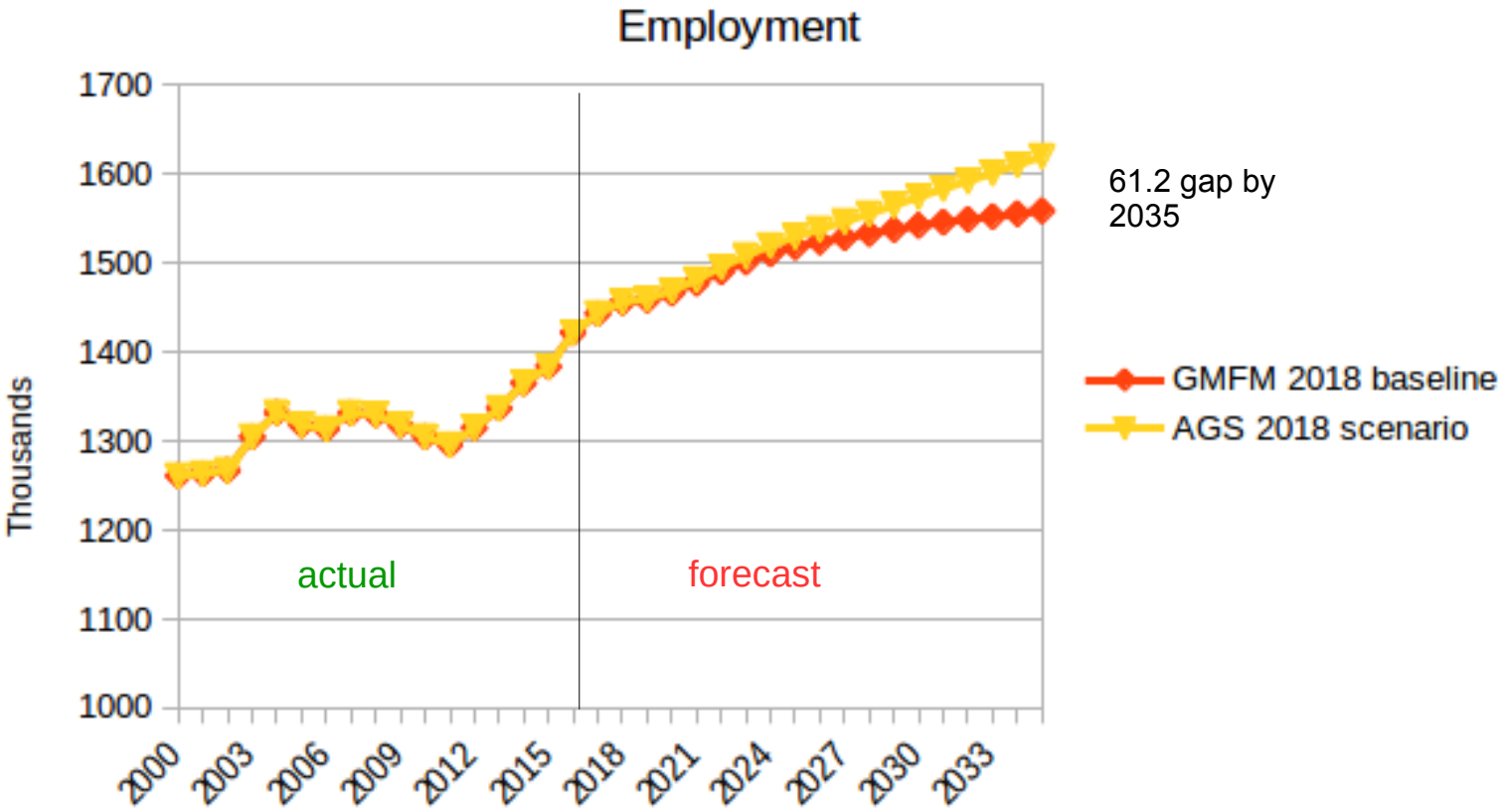


The AGS imposes a significantly higher expectation for GVA growth and hence expansion of population and workplaces.

Greater Manchester is supposed to grow at a rate exceeding the national average.



Here's the prediction for employment.



Policy and Guidance on Green Space.

Alongside recognising the multiple roles that green space plays in improving air quality, reducing flood risk, conserving biodiversity and providing natural spaces for people to walk and cycle, play sports and relax, maintain and increase the ability of Greater Manchester's green infrastructure (trees, forests, peat, soils, green space) to take up and store the maximum amount of CO2 possible.

Tyndall Centre research says we must:

- ***Ensure that land use and forestry achieves net zero cumulative CO2 emissions for the period 2018 to 2100.***

This means:

- **Land use and forestry achieves absolute zero CO2 emissions, on an annual basis, by 2038 aligned with the year of carbon neutrality**
- **Increase the rate of carbon emission reductions and sequestration between 2030 and 2045 and provide a stable rate of sequestration after 2045**
- Achieving net green gain (ie more green space, green roofs, green infrastructure and trees in Greater Manchester) in new developments
- **Protecting, improving and maintaining existing green space and green assets including peat and soils.**

Greater Manchester's Springboard to a Green City Region, 2018

Policy and Guidance on Green Space.

‘Development plan documents must (taken as a whole) include policies designed to secure that the development and use of land in the local planning authority’s area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change’.

Planning Act 2008, cited in GMSF Carbon and Energy Topic Paper, 2019

Paragraph 118 recognises that some undeveloped land can have a critical function of carbon storage and planning policies/decisions need to be mindful of this.

National Planning Policy Framework 2018, cited in GMSF Carbon and Energy Topic Paper, 2019

National Planning Practice Guidance outlines that addressing climate change is one of the core land use planning principles which the National Planning Policy Framework expects to underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. These include the requirements for local authorities to adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change in line with the provisions and objectives of the Climate Change Act 2008, and co-operate to deliver strategic priorities which include climate change
(Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 6-001-20140306).

……

Considering future climate risks when allocating development sites. Paragraph 003 (Reference ID: 6-003-20140612)

National Planning Practice Guidance, cited in GMSF Carbon and Energy Topic Paper, 2019

Framing the problem.

GMSF:
1.5 Economic and population growth will place significant pressure on our infrastructure, roads, public transport, energy and water as well as schools and hospitals. Future climate change pressures will also require the city-region to adapt to bigger shocks and stresses, such as increased heat, drought and flood risk, which may require new sources of funding to be identified. (p. 8)

But we might say:

The escalating ecosystem and climate crisis is increasing pressures on the economic, social and ecological systems on which we depend. The aggressive pursuit of economic and population growth amplify this problem, although growth in some areas (e.g. clean energy and local provisioning) is also going to be necessary.

Futures, utopian and dystopian.

Climate refugees. Likely population pressures internally (e.g. flooding on the Lancashire coast) and from outside (Southern Europe, Australia, Africa....).

But what kind of a city region?

The separate identity of the towns and smaller settlements – running into one another due to in-filling.

More people?
Fewer people?

Population crash?

Population leaves for the country

Food growing – the promise of, and need for, urban horticulture and peri-urban agriculture in an energy descent scenario.

Accelerated growth?

Economic deceleration?

Likely recession, from Brexit, from global economy crash, from geopolitical, climate, and ecosystem shocks.

Retrofit garden city / ruralised suburbia

Energy descent.

Living on a more local scale

Walkability

Greenways, wildlife corridors, woodland as a prime resource.

Smaller housing units?

Eco-regions

GMSF: The good bits.

Having a strategic framework gives some protection against speculative development. All ten authorities and the mayor have to agree it.

Three principles established by the mayor:

- a brownfield-first approach to the release of sites for development
- a new priority on town centres for more residential development
- a new drive to protect the existing Green Belt as far as possible

Effort has been taken to identify more brownfield sites, including small sites.

960Ha (3.7 sq miles) of existing green space designated as Green Belt.

Reduction of housing pressure by 27k homes compared to 2016 GMSF.
Reduced economic and population growth assumptions.

Of the 201,000 new homes, 50,000 would be classed as “affordable” and at least 30,000 for affordable or social rent.

All new development to be net zero carbon by 2028. Presumption against fracking.

Some positive stuff on restoration of landscape and watercourses, though still in process.