

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Date: 26th September 2025

Subject: Mayoral Development Corporation for the Stockport Town Centre MDC – Consultation Results & Approval to Designate

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

This report sets out the outcome of the public consultation on the expansion of the Mayoral development area covered by Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) from the area ‘Stockport Town Centre West’ to include the area ‘Stockport Town Centre East’ (see map attached at Appendix One). Reflecting the positive responses to this consultation, it goes on to confirm the GM Mayor’s intention (subject to the support of the GMCA) to move forward with the proposal to designate a new Mayoral development area (covering the whole of Stockport town centre) and notify the Secretary of State of the designation and the name to be given to the new Mayoral Development Corporation, as follows: “Stockport Town Centre Mayoral Development Corporation”.

Recommendations:

The GMCA is recommended to:

1. Note the outcome and responses to the consultation undertaken by the GM Mayor on the proposed expansion of the Stockport Mayoral development area and creation of a new Mayoral Development Corporation to cover this expanded area.
2. Note that Stockport Council Cabinet agreed its support for the proposal set out above at its meeting on 16th September 2025 - **The Member for Stockport is**

asked to confirm at this time if they consent to the designation of the proposed expanded mayoral development area.

3. Give due consideration to the proposal by the GM Mayor to designate this expanded area as a Mayoral Development Area (see map at Appendix One) and notify the GM Mayor within the consideration period if it proposes to reject the proposal.
4. Note that following the expiration of the consideration period, if the GMCA has not rejected the proposal, the GM Mayor intends to take the necessary steps to designate the expanded area as a Mayoral Development Area and to secure the establishment of the new MDC (to be named “Stockport Town Centre Mayoral Development Corporation”) and the dissolution of the existing MDC including any necessary transfer of rights and liabilities.

Contact Officers

Andrew McIntosh, Director of Place

Andrew.McIntosh@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

Recommendation - Key points for decision-makers		
Insert text		
Impacts Questionnaire		
Impact Indicator	Result	Justification/Mitigation
Equality and Inclusion	G	The proposed expansion of the Stockport MDC boundary will expand the scope of the Corporation to provide inclusive opportunities in the new homes it will deliver by providing a range of housing types and tenures. It will also seek to deliver high quality social infrastructure for the benefit of residents of the town centre and surrounding communities, including areas which are ranked in the highest five percent in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation.
Health	G	The expansion of the MDC boundary will widen the scope of the MDC, enabling it to double the number of homes delivered in car-free housing schemes and deliver improved active travel infrastructure across the entire town centre. It will also enable the delivery of both enhanced and expanded public space, designed to provide spaces for connection between people and optimise the positive benefits on peoples health and wellbeing. It will also enable the delivery of social infrastructure, including primary healthcare and community facilities, to support interaction between people and their active participation in the future of their communities. The doubling of the number of homes delivered by Stockport MDC will create new opportunities to expand food provision to communities currently cut off from healthy, affordable sources of support.
Resilience and Adaptation	G	The proposal to expand the area covered by Stockport MDC creates the opportunity to plan and direct investment into the flood risk reduction measures in the town centre through identification and delivery of sustainable urban drainage solutions. These solutions could create flood risk management benefits both for the immediate town centre and for areas further down the Mersey River. The proposals to expand the area covered by Stockport MDC are intended to further improve the vitality of Stockport town centre, increasing footfall and thereby improving sense of safety as well as the incidence of crime. The proposed expansion of Stockport MDC provides an opportunity to identify and drive investment in the quality of the town's green and blue infrastructure in a similar manner to the improvements already seen in Stockport Town Centre West.
Housing	G	The proposals for expanding the area covered by Stockport MDC will see a doubling of the new homes delivered in the town centre, with a proposed target of at least 4,000 new homes by 2040 including affordable homes.
Economy	G	The expansion of the area covered by Stockport MDC is intended to drive footfall to the town centre, supporting the viability and growth of current and new businesses. Proposals include location of anchor institutions in the town centre to support a growing population, including a new secondary school and health hub. These will create significant numbers of good jobs. Stockport MDC has a strong track record of attracting both public and private investment in residential and commercial developments as well as infrastructure. Expanding the area covered by the MDC creates opportunities to secure even greater investment.
Mobility and Connectivity	G	The proposal to expand the area covered by Stockport MDC will increase the town centre population by approx. 6,000. This will increase journeys on the local transport network. However, by delivering these homes in a town centre area well served by public transport and through majority car-free developments, impact on road congestion will be much less than developments in less well connected areas. The proposed expansion of housing delivery will be delivered in line with an emerging Strategic Regeneration Framework for the area which will set out improvements to active travel infrastructure to be delivered alongside residential developments.
Carbon, Nature and Environment	G	The delivery of approx. 4,000 homes in the east of Stockport town centre will generate carbon emissions through the construction. However, long term the homes delivered will be net zero in operation and the sustainable context (access to public transport and active travel networks) will enable residents to make low carbon choices. As with the redevelopment of Stockport Town Centre West it is envisaged that the regeneration of Stockport Town Centre East will generate investment in key ecological assets including the River Mersey and existing parks and green spaces.
Consumption and Production		Opportunities to minimise construction waste and improve resource efficiency will be identified in strategic business plan development for an expanded MDC should the proposal for expansion be approved following consultation.
Contribution to achieving the GM Carbon Neutral 2038 target		An assessment of the proposed development's carbon budget will be undertaken as part of the strategic regeneration framework planning process.
Further Assessment(s): Equalities Impact Assessment and 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.

Risk Management

The proposals outlined in this Report have been developed and, if not rejected, will be implemented in consultation with the existing MDC, Stockport Council and MHCLG to minimise and manage risk, ensure legal compliance and maximise positive outcomes.

Legal Considerations

The existing MDC is a statutory body that was established on 2nd September 2019 by the Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation (Establishment) Order 2019 (SI 2019/104).

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.

The intention is, as outlined in the consultation, to expand the boundary of the area within Stockport that is designated as a Mayoral development area. However, the legislation doesn't contain a process for simply expanding an existing Mayoral development area. As outlined in more detail in the body of the Report, the technical mechanism for the 'expansion' would therefore be to (a) designate a new Mayoral development area (b) establish a new MDC to cover this area and transfer any rights and liabilities; and (c) disestablish the existing MDC.

Financial Consequences – Revenue

There are no direct financial consequences to the GMCA

Financial Consequences – Capital

There are no direct financial consequences to the GMCA

Number of attachments to the report: 2

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

N/A

Background Papers

- Proposed expansion of Stockport Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) – 28 March 2025
- The Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation Strategic Business Plan June 2025-March 2030

- The Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation Strategic Business Plan June 2024 – March 2029
- The Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation's Strategic Business Plan May 2023 – March 2028
- The Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation's Action Plan May 2023 – March 2024

Tracking/ Process

Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution

Yes

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 September 2019, the Greater Manchester Mayor (the GM Mayor) used his devolved powers to establish a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) for ‘Stockport Town Centre West’ (see Appendix One), in collaboration with Stockport Council and Homes England.
- 1.2 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 for the area.
- 1.3 The Strategic Regeneration Framework set out how up to 4,000¹ new homes and 1m sq. ft of new employment floorspace and 5,300 new jobs could be delivered across Town Centre West by 2035.
- 1.4 Since its creation in 2019 Stockport MDC has established itself as a credible and effective regeneration delivery vehicle that has changed perceptions of the town with residents and visitors, the investor and developer markets, and the wider public sector. In this time the MDC has overseen delivery of a range of schemes across both commercial and residential development, infrastructure, and public service transformation. These fully-delivered and on-site schemes are part of a wider ‘first phase’ pipeline that has seen 1,081 new homes and 170,000 sq. ft. of new commercial floorspace complete or move into advanced stages of delivery. The pipeline for future schemes is strong with a further 1,448 homes due to start on site in the next five years.
- 1.5 Recognising this success, in 2024 Stockport Council included ambitious plans to build on this progress in its One Stockport, One Future Plan. The Plan states that:

“Over the next fifteen years we want to build on our regeneration success by becoming a national leader in urban living of the future. Our sights are now turning to the east of the town centre and our district centres where we believe there is potential to deliver an even greater number of new homes, with an emphasis on affordable homes for people at all stages of life. Town centre living at this scale is

¹ It should be noted that the original target number of homes to be delivered in Town Centre West was 3,500, but that this was increased to 4,000 based on success.

rare in the UK but is crucial to the long-term challenge of housing our growing population, breathing life back into our high streets and to achieve net zero.”

- 1.6 In October 2024 the Leader of Stockport Council proposed that the MDC’s scope should be expanded, enabling it to become the delivery vehicle for the housing led regeneration of the entirety of the town centre. This was met positively by the GM Mayor and on 28 March 2025 the GM Mayor, with the support of the GMCA, approved a consultation exercise on the proposal for an expanded MDC.

2. Consultation and responses

- 2.1. The designation of Mayoral Development Corporations is governed in Greater Manchester by the Localism Act 2011 Part 8, Chapter 2, as modified by the Schedule to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (Functions and Amendment) Order 2017 (“The Act”).
- 2.2. As part of the prescribed process, the Act requires the Mayor to consult with members of the GMCA; MPs whose parliamentary constituency contains part of the proposed area; and each district council whose areas are within the proposed boundary, in this Stockport Council.
- 2.3. The GM Mayor may also consult with any other person who he considers it appropriate to consult. In this case, as for the consultation in relation to the existing MDC in Stockport and other MDC proposals, the Mayor decided to make the consultation accessible to the public.
- 2.4. Consultation on the proposal to expand the boundary of the Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development area was undertaken in a six week period between 15th May and 26th June 2025. Key activities included:
 - The consultation was carried out via an online survey, hosted on www.gmconsult.org.
 - The consultation was publicised in the local press, on social media and via GMCA newsletters.
 - Every address within the proposed MDC boundary received a letter inviting them to respond to the consultation.
 - Four drop in sessions were held:
 - Friday 30th May, 5.30 - 8pm - Foodie Friday
 - Saturday 14th June, 10 - 4pm - Makers Market

- Thursday 19th June, 11 - 3pm - Merseyway drop-in (outside Specsavers)
- Wednesday 25th June 10-1pm First Stop Café Brinnington

2.5. The online consultation received 32 responses, of these 71.88% of respondents were Stockport residents.

2.6. The summary of the outcome of the consultation is set out below and a detailed report including responses to issues raised is attached at Appendix Two:

- There was overall broad support for the expansion of the boundary of the Stockport Mayoral development area with 78% (25 people) either agreeing or strongly agreeing that this was the best way to drive forward long term regeneration for the whole of the town centre
- 69% (22 people) agreed that the proposed new boundary (including the areas covered by the Strategic Regeneration Frameworks (SRFs) for Stockport Town Centre East and Town Centre West) was appropriate.
- 72% (23 people) agreed or strongly agreed that planning powers and functions in relation to granting discretionary rate relief should remain with Stockport Council. 9% (3 people) disagreed.
- 17 qualitative feedbacks suggested that proposals could go further; including a broader geographical area, an emphasis on tourism, the need to protect and improve green spaces and ensure sufficient social infrastructure.
- As part of the consultation process, the Member of Parliament for Stockport was engaged regarding the proposed Mayoral Development Corporation who was supportive of the proposed MDC boundary and name.

2.7. Proposed name and boundary - The consultation exercise sought the views of the public, property owners and residents in the area, businesses, and other stakeholders on the proposed expanded boundary for the Mayoral development area from the current area (Stockport Town Centre West) to cover the whole of the town centre area (including Stockport Town Centre East - see Appendix 1) and on the proposed name of 'Stockport Mayoral Development Corporation'.

- 69% (22 people) of respondents agreed with the proposal to expand the boundary of the Mayoral Development Corporation from the current area (Stockport Town Centre West – shown in red below) to cover the whole of the

town centre area (including Stockport Town Centre East- expanding to include the area shown in blue). 22% (7 people) disagreed.

- Respondents who disagreed were invited to add comments on the areas they would like to see included / excluded. Responses included views that areas to the north of the M60 should be included and that the boundary was big enough already.
- In the public consultation the name was proposed as “Stockport MDC”. The responses were broadly supportive (50% agreed or strongly agreed with the proposed name) but there were also a significant proportion of respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed (30%). In the qualitative responses some people flagged concerns that the name was opaque and didn’t help explain what the MDC is or does.
- Stockport Council therefore suggested that the proposed name should be amended to ‘Stockport Town Centre MDC’.

- 2.8. Public consultation on the draft SRF for Stockport Town Centre East was run by Stockport Council in parallel with the GMCA’s consultation on the proposal to expand the Mayoral development area to enable responses to inform both proposals. The final Framework was approved by Stockport Council’s Cabinet on 16th September 2025.

3. Strategic Economic Case

- 3.1 In order to assess the overall economic benefit of the expanded Mayoral development area Stockport Council have developed a Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) for Stockport Town Centre East. The Framework sets out an illustrative masterplan to guide the creation of Stockport’s new neighbourhoods and achieve comprehensive urban regeneration by 2040.
- 3.2 Together the SRFs for Town Centre West and Town Centre East will guide the development of a total of 8,000 new homes alongside services and amenities. The development set out in these Frameworks will drive a transformational impact on the Stockport economy. To capture this impact a combined Economic Impact Assessment has been developed, drawing on the development proposals set out in both documents.

4. Mayor's Response

- 4.1 Development Corporations can be important tools for delivering large-scale development, including mixed-use regeneration, transformational urban extensions, and new settlements. This has certainly been the case in the west of the Stockport Town Centre and, having considered the outcomes achieved to date, the potential benefits of expanding the MDC to a wider area, the consultation responses and the SRF work undertaken by Stockport Council, the GM Mayor is of the view that designation of an expanded Mayoral Development Area is expedient for furthering economic development and regeneration in Greater Manchester and he is minded to proceed with the plans.
- 4.2 That said, reflecting the equivocal responses to the name 'Stockport Mayoral Development Corporation', comments from some respondents about a lack of clarity and Stockport Council's proposal, an alternative name of 'Stockport Town Centre Mayoral Development Corporation' is now proposed.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 During the MDC establishment process in 2019 the GM Mayor was required to designate an area of land within the GMCA's area as a Mayoral development area. The MDC was then established by parliamentary order to cover that area. As per the above, that area is shown edged blue on the Plan at Appendix 1.
- 5.2 Although under legislation it is possible for the GM Mayor to alter the boundaries of a Mayoral development area in order to exclude areas of land that were previously included there are no provisions within the legislation to simply extend an existing Mayoral development area.
- 5.3 Consequently, following engagement with MHCLG it has been confirmed that the technical legal mechanism for the proposed 'expansion' is to (a) designate the existing and expanded area together as a new Mayoral development area (b) establish a new MDC to cover this area and transfer any rights and liabilities to it from the existing MDC (c) disestablish the existing MDC.
- 5.4 In terms of the first step in that process, the GM Mayor may designate the Stockport Town Centre Mayoral development area if he is satisfied that designation is expedient for furthering economic development and regeneration of the area and after

- The Mayor has carried out a consultation in accordance with the Act and had regard to any comments made in response by the consultees; and
- The expiration of the 21 day consideration period where the GMCA has not rejected the proposal.

and with the consent of the Member of the GMCA representing Stockport Council.

5.5 Once the designation is made, the Mayor must:

- Publicise the designation; and
- Notify the Secretary of State of the designation and the name to be given to the MDC.

5.6 Once the Secretary of State has received notification of the designation, they will prepare and lay the appropriate Orders before Parliament under the negative procedure, which means the Orders will come into force and the MDC formally created, subject to no motion from either house to reject the Orders within a specified period, usually 40 sitting days.

5.7 Simultaneously appropriate steps will be taken to prepare for the transfer of rights and liabilities to the new MDC, to implement that transfer and to ensure the dissolution of the current Stockport Town Centre West MDC. That will involve further decisions by the Mayor in due course.

5.8 Work has also been, and will continue to be, undertaken to develop all of the things the new MDC will need if it is established such as the rationale for intervention; purpose, aims and objectives of the MDC; governance and decision-making; financial considerations; risks and resources for the MDC. Much of this builds on the existing arrangements for the Stockport Town Centre West MDC but reflecting, of course, the expanded area and remit. This work is now well developed, and it has strongly informed the Mayor's decision to propose that the designation process continues.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Recommendations are found at the beginning of this report.

Appendix 1 – The extent of the areas of land being ‘Stockport Town Centre West’ and ‘Stockport Town Centre East’

