



## **DESIGNATION OF FLIXTON NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM AND BOUNDARY AREA: SUBMISSION TO TRAFFORD COUNCIL.**

### 1. Introduction:

This submission constitutes the application by My Flixton Neighbourhood Planning Group to Trafford Council (as local planning authority) to formally designate (1) Flixton Neighbourhood Forum and, (2) the neighbourhood boundary area associated with this.

### 2. Submission Structure:

The structure of the submission is as follows:

- Overarching introduction (this document). This explains the status and structure of the submission.
- Main submission, part 1: Case for designation of Flixton Neighbourhood Forum. This consists of a detailed statement in support of designating this body for neighbourhood planning purposes. This is accompanied by three Appendices as follows: Appendix 'A' - Membership List, Appendix 'B' - Flixton Neighbourhood Forum Constitution, and Appendix 'C' – Flixton Neighbourhood Plan: Vision and Objectives. The purpose of Part 1 is to make the case for the designation of the forum.
- Main submission, part 2: Case for designation of Flixton neighbourhood boundary. This consists of a narrative of the proposed boundary area,

together with maps identifying its extent and relevant features; which together make the case for the proposed neighbourhood boundary area.

- Each part of the submission forms a separate document, with appendices and fully referenced. References appear in footnotes and in the combined bibliography at the end of the full submission.

### 3. Legal Framework:

This submission is made in accordance with the provisions of the following legislation:

Section 61F (5) of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The Localism Act 2011 (Part 6, Chapter 3, Section 116).

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

Further information regarding the relevant parts of the above legislation and how requirements arising from this have been addressed are described within later sections of this document.

### 4. Acknowledgements.

Planning Aid (England) regional representatives Julian Jackson and Cedric Knipe have provided helpful advice on process and content. Additionally, the Group gratefully acknowledges helpful informal advice and mentor support kindly provided by Mike Shields CBE, Chair of the former Altrincham Town Centre Business Neighbourhood Forum Working Group.

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Maps of boundary area	Included as a separate attachment.

**MAIN SUBMISSION PART 1: DESIGNATION OF FLIXTON NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM.**

1. Introduction:

Part 1 of this submission constitutes a formal application for the designation of Flixton Neighbourhood Forum, for the purposes of neighbourhood planning; as set out within relevant legislation.

This should be read in conjunction with Main Submission Part 2, entitled ‘Narrative Accompanying Flixton Neighbourhood Boundary Submission’; which outlines the case for establishing the neighbourhood boundary area to which the Flixton Neighbourhood Forum relates.

2. Legal framework:

Section 61F (5) of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (hereafter: TCPA 1990) states that:

“A local planning authority may designate an organisation or body as a neighbourhood forum if the authority is satisfied that it meets the following conditions—

(a) it is established for the express purpose of promoting or improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of an area that consists of or includes the neighbourhood area concerned (whether or not it is also established for the express purpose of promoting the carrying on of trades, professions or other businesses in such an area),

(b) its membership is open to—

- (i) individuals who live in the neighbourhood area concerned,
- (ii) individuals who work there (whether for businesses carried on there or otherwise), and
- (iii) individuals who are elected members of a county council, district council or London borough council any of whose area falls within the neighbourhood area concerned,

(c) its membership includes a minimum of 21 individuals each of whom—

- (i) lives in the neighbourhood area concerned,

- (ii) works there (whether for a business carried on there or otherwise), or
- (iii) is an elected member of a county council, district council or London borough council any of whose area falls within the neighbourhood area concerned,
- (d) it has a written constitution, and
- (e) such other conditions as may be prescribed.<sup>1</sup>

The Localism Act 2011 (Part 6, Chapter 3, Section 116) contains further provisions relating to Neighbourhood Planning, including a general updating of the provisions of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.<sup>2</sup>

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 state that:

“Where an organisation or body submits a neighbourhood forum application to the local planning authority it must include—

- (a) the name of the proposed neighbourhood forum;
- (b) a copy of the written constitution of the proposed neighbourhood forum;
- (c) the name of the neighbourhood area to which the application relates and a map which identifies the area;
- (d) the contact details of at least one member of the proposed neighbourhood forum to be made public under regulations 9 and 10;
- and
- (e) a statement which explains how the proposed neighbourhood forum meets the conditions contained in section 61F (5) of the 1990 Act.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, a range of sources provide advice and guidance on the implementation of these provisions. This includes guidance on neighbourhood planning available from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local

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<sup>1</sup> Town and Country Planning Act 1990 c. 8 Part III Neighbourhood development orders Section 61F; <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/section/61F>

<sup>2</sup> Localism Act 2011 c. 20 PART 6 CHAPTER 3; <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/part/6/chapter/3>

<sup>3</sup> The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 No. 63, 7PART 3, Regulation 8 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/regulation/8/made>

Government, as well as through other bodies such as the Local Government Association, Locality and the Royal Town Planning Institute.<sup>4</sup>

### 3. Background to the application

In October 2017 a group of residents met for the first time to consider establishing a neighbourhood forum for Flixton. This meeting followed the first draft of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework, which had led to several concerns locally. Arising from these concerns was a desire for residents to have greater control and input regarding local planning matters affecting their area.

A working group of volunteers (hereafter: 'the Group') was formed, and an initial plan of work was agreed. The Group identified two initial priorities as being central to the proposition of developing a neighbourhood plan. These were: Firstly: the need to ascertain the level of support within the local community for the development of a neighbourhood plan. Secondly: the need to identify and define an appropriate neighbourhood boundary area.

The Group contacted other neighbourhood planning groups to seek advice about their own experiences. This included the Altrincham Town Centre Neighbourhood Forum, which given that both Altrincham and Flixton share the same local planning authority was particularly relevant. Whilst the Altrincham Group had developed a Business Neighbourhood Plan focussing on the regeneration of the town centre, and the project within Flixton centred on a community-based initiative, it was clear that there was a significant amount of useful experience which could be shared.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, several key

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<sup>4</sup> See: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 'Guidance Neighbourhood planning, Designating a neighbourhood area' (6 March 2014 Updated 13 September 2018); <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#designating-a-neighbourhood-area>; Local Government Association, Planning Advisory Service, 'Briefing Note on Neighbourhood Area and Neighbourhood Forum Designations' (March 2015); <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/area-and-forum-designatio-814.pdf>; My Community – Locality, 'Establishing a neighbourhood forum Creating the right constitution for your community' (2015), p. 3; <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/Establishing-a-neighbourhood-forum-1.pdf>; Planning Aid England, Royal Town Planning Institute, 'How to set up a neighbourhood forum: Putting the pieces together' (undated).

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.myaltrincham.org/>

representatives of the Altrincham Town Centre Neighbourhood Forum kindly agreed to meet to share their experience of the process of developing the Business Neighbourhood Plan Forum for Altrincham Town Centre, which was adopted by Trafford Council in November 2017.<sup>6</sup>

Additionally, the Group sought professional guidance through Planning Aid England, who have provided helpful advice and have attended some of the public meetings held to discuss the Group's ideas.<sup>7</sup> Finally Trafford Council Planning Service was also informed of the group's intentions. Meetings have taken place with Council officers in order to explain ideas, seek feedback and to promote a positive working relationship, prior to any formal submission being made.

Finally, the Group contacted Planning Officers at Trafford Council, which as local planning authority, has responsibility for consideration of the Group's proposals for a neighbourhood forum and plan. As part of these contacts a copy of a draft version of this Comprehensive Submission was shared with Council Planning Officers, who provided informal feedback on the content. This informal feedback concerned two aspects of the draft Comprehensive Submission Document. These were: Firstly, the line of the proposed plan boundary. Secondly, the draft objectives of the neighbourhood plan, specifically relating to local housing needs. The Group has considered both areas of feedback, where appropriate with the help of its advisers. The outcome is discussed within Part 1 Section 4, and Part 2 Section 4 below.<sup>8</sup>

#### 4. Work carried out so far.

The Group has undertaken work to progress the project.

As stated above, initial priorities have been to assess the extent of support for the establishment of a neighbourhood forum within Flixton, and to identify a

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.trafford.gov.uk/planning/strategic-planning/local-plan/altrincham-neighbourhood-business-plan.aspx>

<sup>7</sup> Royal Town Planning Institute, 'About Planning Aid England'; <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/about-planning-aid/>

<sup>8</sup> See this document pp. 10 – 12 and 38 – 39 respectively.

suitable boundary area to be covered. The latter is described in the accompanying narrative document.

In relation to the formation of a neighbourhood forum, the group has done the following:

*Engagement through public meetings:*

The Group has held public meetings on 7th June, 19th September and 28th November 2018, and 11th April and 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 respectively.

At these meetings support for, establishing a neighbourhood forum has been assessed. The clear and overriding conclusion arising from all these sessions is that those attending support the idea of establishing a neighbourhood forum for developing a neighbourhood plan for Flixton.

During meetings held on 28th November 2018, and 11th April 2019 attendees were specifically asked to indicate whether they would be prepared to become a member of a neighbourhood forum, and if so to complete a membership form, containing their name, address and other contact information. Prior to these events all elected members representing wards encompassed within the neighbourhood area boundary were contacted by email to introduce the proposition of forming a Neighbourhood Forum and inviting them to become members of this.<sup>9</sup> The elected members concerned represent two of the three Council wards affected.

*Use of Social Media:*

The Group has used its Website and Facebook pages to promote and publicise its work, and to seek new members of the neighbourhood forum. This has included emailing all those who have expressed an interest to invite them to complete a forum membership form.

*Speaking to individuals and groups:*

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<sup>9</sup> Email from Stephen Harper to Councillors John Reilly, Brian Shaw, Graham Whitham, Jonathan Coupe, Paul Lally, Simon Thomas, Joanne Harding, Kevin Proctor and Catherine Hynes; 9 September 2018, 13.08; Subject: 'Neighbourhood Planning Comes to Flixton'.



An ongoing part of the work of the Group within has been to continue to promote the concept of a Flixton neighbourhood plan. This has involved speaking to residents, either individually or in groups. For example, group representatives had a stand at the Flixton Festival in August 2018 and participated in the public consultation evening led by Trafford Council Regeneration and Growth Team and the Arup Group, held at Flixton House on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2019 to consider the future of the former William Wroe golf course.

In addition, meetings have been held with local school and church leaders to assess their interest in, and support for a neighbourhood plan for Flixton. These meetings have all been positive, with those involved expressing interest in the work of the Group, as well as support for the development of a neighbourhood plan for Flixton.

*Engaging through its newsletter:*

The Group has produced two editions of its newsletter 'Update' providing information to residents about a neighbourhood plan for Flixton.<sup>10</sup> These have also been used at introductory meetings, where the Group has been invited to discuss its plans.

In conclusion, it is clear from the response of residents attending public meetings, or who have responded to social media and email communications, that there is general agreement that a neighbourhood forum should be established, to prepare a neighbourhood plan for Flixton.

It should be noted that these activities have been undertaken with minimal resources. This is because the Group decided that pending a decision on its designation it would not be reasonable to make an application for grant funding available to support neighbourhood planning processes.

*Devising a forum constitution to address requirements:*

A constitution has been prepared which addresses requirements expected of a neighbourhood forum. This has been devised based on the use of a template available through Locality and information published by other

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<sup>10</sup> MFNPG, 'Update – Feb 2019' (January 2019); 'Update: Summer 2019', (August 2019).

organisations which make available advice on neighbourhood planning. Further, the Group has examined examples of good practice from other neighbourhood forums, including the Constitution for Altrincham Town Centre Business Neighbourhood Plan.<sup>11</sup> These have been adapted to include matters specifically relevant to Flixton; for example, incorporating the Group's Vision and Objectives Statement devised from information gathered through public meetings. A copy of the Vision and Objectives Statement is attached as Appendix 'C' to this document.

### *Liaising with Council Planners*

As described within section 3 above, The Group shared its draft proposals for the neighbourhood forum and plan boundary with Trafford Council Planning Officers. Informal feedback arising from this has been considered by the Group and is addressed within this final version of the Combined Submission.

As stated in section 3, above, Trafford Council Planning Officers provided informal feedback concerning the objectives of the plan, which appear within Appendix C to Part 1 of this submission.<sup>12</sup> The feedback concerned Objective 1, which concerns housing needs within the boundary area.

The feedback highlighted the Council's approach to calculating housing needs for neighbourhood plans, which the Group was advised as a starting point would be based on an unadopted government consultation document.<sup>13</sup>

This document sets out several considerations concerning how local authorities might allocate housing need figures for neighbourhood plans. The Council's feedback directed the Group to paragraph 99 which states that "The proposed formula is simply to take the population of the neighbourhood planning area and calculate what percentage it is of the overall population in the local planning authority area. The housing need figure in the

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<sup>11</sup> Locality, 'Establishing a Neighbourhood Forum, A Toolkit for Neighbourhood Planners' (undated); <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/How-to-establish-a-neighbourhood-planning-forum-20190103.pdf>; Locality, 'Resources for community organisations (undated); <https://locality.org.uk/services-tools/resources/resources-for-community-organisations/>; Business Neighbourhood Plan for Altrincham Town Centre, Constitution; <http://www.myaltrincham.org/userfiles/downloads/altrincham-neighbourhood-plan-forum-constitution-amended-july14.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Email correspondence Helen Pickering to Barbara Harper, 04 July 2019 15:44, Subject: RE: Neighbourhood Planning.

<sup>13</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government, Planning for the right homes in the right places: consultation proposals (September 2017).

neighbourhood planning area would then be that percentage of the local planning authority's housing need."<sup>14</sup>

In the light of this Planning Officers suggested the Group might reconsider the inclusion of the current objective, as they felt this was unclear which sites would be allocated to meet housing needs within the area proposed for designation for the neighbourhood plan.

Group Response: The Group has considered these comments with the support of its advisors.

Firstly, The Group notes that paragraph 100 of the Government consultation document states that: "This approach would provide the starting point for neighbourhood planning groups in determining their response to meeting their housing need."<sup>15</sup> – implying that factors other than the proposed formula referred to earlier could also form part of the process for determining housing need within a neighbourhood area.

Secondly, the Group recognises that at such an early stage in its work, where housing needs within the proposed neighbourhood area have yet to be assessed, it would not be appropriate to allocate a housing need figure. This could only be done once the necessary evidence is available following an assessment of housing needs, along with the options to address this. In the light of this the Group has revised its objectives to reflect the need for the plan to assess the need for additional housing within Flixton and to identify sites to meet identified need.

Thirdly, the Group has revised the constitution of the proposed neighbourhood forum to ensure this includes provisions which enable the plan to be kept under review.<sup>16</sup> This means that should the need arise following housing needs and/or sites being identified within the neighbourhood area, it would be possible for the forum to agree to revise the plan objectives to reflect these. Accordingly, the plan could be updated as required in the light of evidence, once this is available.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid, paragraph 99, p. 32.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, paragraph 100, p. 32

<sup>16</sup> See Appendix 'B', 3 (c).

Fourthly, the Group has also taken the opportunity to revise other aspects of the plan objectives in line with the approach described above, ensuring these are more realistic and achievable.

5. How the designation application meets legislative requirements:

This section of the paper explains how legislative requirements referred to within section 2 above, have been addressed. This is as follows:

(1) The Forum is established meet specified express requirements.

*[TCPA 1990 Section 61F (5) (a)].*

The draft constitution applicable to the Forum contains provisions which meet all express purpose requirements set out within the legislation referred to. Accordingly, the Group considers that these requirements are met.<sup>17</sup>

(2) Forum membership is open to a range of individuals who either live, work, or who are elected members within the area concerned.

*[TCPA 1990 Section 61F (5) (b)].*

The Forum constitution contains provisions regarding membership which meet these stated requirements.<sup>18</sup>

(3) Forum membership consists of a minimum of 21 individuals [TCPA 1990 Section 61F (5) (c)].

To date 37 individuals who live, work, or who are elected members representing wards within the proposed neighbourhood boundary, have become Full Members of the Flixton Neighbourhood Forum. The individuals concerned have all completed membership forms confirming their willingness to become forum members and their entitlement to do this.

A further 8 individuals who do not meet the criteria for full membership of the Forum have become Affiliate Members.<sup>19</sup> This

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<sup>17</sup> My Flixton Neighbourhood Planning Group, 'Flixton Neighbourhood Plan: Constitution', Section 3, available as Appendix 'B' within this document, see pp. 21 - 23.

<sup>18</sup> My Flixton Neighbourhood Planning Group 'Flixton Neighbourhood Forum Constitution', Section 5, available as Appendix 'B' within this document, see pp. 22 - 23.

<sup>19</sup> It should be noted that the Constitution of Flixton Neighbourhood Forum allows two groups of members. The first group who are Full Members is composed of those who live, work, or who are elected members from wards

means that a total of 45 individuals are currently members of the Forum, of whom 37 qualify in accordance with the description set out within the legislation referred to above. These individuals come from a variety of backgrounds, providing many potential skills for the forum.

A list of members (Full and Affiliate), including details of addresses is provided in Appendix 'A' to this paper. From this, the Group considers that applicable requirements are met.

- (4) The Forum has a written constitution. [*TCPA 1990 Section 61F (5) (d)*].

The Group has prepared a constitution for the Flixton Neighbourhood Forum as required above.

This was considered and agreed at a meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 to which all Neighbourhood Forum Members were invited. All attendees supported the proposed constitution and revised plan objectives.

Accordingly, the Group considers that the requirements of this part of the legislation will be met.

- (5) Details of the name of the proposed neighbourhood forum. [*Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 No. 637 PART 3 Regulation 8 (a)*].

The Group confirms that the name of the proposed forum is: 'The Flixton Neighbourhood Forum'. This is included within the Constitution (see Appendix 'B', paragraph 1, page 14).

- (6) A copy of the written constitution of the proposed neighbourhood forum. [*Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 No. 637 PART 3 Regulation 8 (b)*].

A copy of the Constitution is attached as Appendix 'B' to this paper. See also paragraph 5.4 (above).

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within the neighbourhood forum boundary. These members have full voting rights on all matters relating to the Forum, its Working Groups and Committees. The second group consists of Affiliate Members. This category of membership allows individuals or groups from outside the boundary area to become involved in the work of the Forum. Affiliate Members do not however have voting rights. (Further details see My Flixton Neighbourhood Planning Group 'Flixton Neighbourhood Forum Constitution', Section 5, available as Appendix 'B' within this document, see pp. 22 - 23. .

- (7) Details of the name of the neighbourhood area to which the application relates and a map which identifies the area.  
*[Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 No. 637 PART 3 Regulation 8 (c).*

The Group confirms that all of information required under this part of the regulations is provided within the accompanying Neighbourhood Boundary Narrative document.

- (8) Information regarding the contact details of one member of the proposed neighbourhood forum to be made public under regulations 9 and 10. *[Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 No. 637 PART 3 Regulation 8 (d).*

The Group confirms that Mr P. Ashworth has consented to have his name and details listed as required. Mr Ashworth's details are available within Appendix 'A': Membership List.

- (9) A statement which explains how the proposed neighbourhood forum meets the conditions contained in section 61F (5) of the 1990 Act. *[Neighbourhood Planning General Regulations No. 637 PART 3 Regulation 8 (e).*

The Group confirms that information contained within this document and within the accompanying Neighbourhood Boundary Narrative document constitutes the statement required in connection with this section of the regulations.

A copy of the constitution intended to be applicable to the Flixton Neighbourhood Form is available at Appendix 'B' to this document – see pages 21 – 28 below.

## 6. Planned forum working arrangements.

As will be appreciated, at this stage these are contingent on the Flixton Neighbourhood Forum being designated by Trafford Council in its role as local planning authority.

However, the Group can confirm that:

- (1) The constitution is subject to full and final approval at a Special Annual General Meeting of the Forum, which will take place once the Council has confirmed that both the Forum and boundary have been formally designated.  
However, at an informal meeting with Forum Members held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 all present confirmed support for the constitution and revised plan objectives.
- (2) Once the Neighbourhood Forum has received formal designation an Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held for the purposes of approving the Constitution and appointing officers. This meeting will take place within two months of the Forum being designated as the appropriate body to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan and thereafter 12 to 15 months after the previous AGM.<sup>20</sup>
- (3) The Flixton Neighbourhood Forum will then commence work necessary for the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the area. It will do this in accordance with its Constitution and will work in liaison with the local planning authority, with which it intends to maintain good working relations.

#### 7. Future membership development.

The Group recognises the importance of maintaining a viable and active membership, which is essential for the preparation and delivery of a Neighbourhood Plan for Flixton.

The Group will therefore undertake ongoing work to increase its membership and to attract people with the necessary skills to come forward and take part in its work.

As Forum membership open to all who live within the boundary the Group will also seek to ensure that this reflects all parts of the area inside the neighbourhood boundary.

#### 8. Conclusions.

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<sup>20</sup> See My Flixton Neighbourhood Planning Group 'Flixton Neighbourhood Forum Constitution', Section 8 (f), (iv), p. 6) – available as Appendix 'B' attached to this paper.

This paper has demonstrated how work undertaken by the Group to date meets all requirements to enable the Flixton Neighbourhood Forum to be designated by Trafford Council as local planning authority



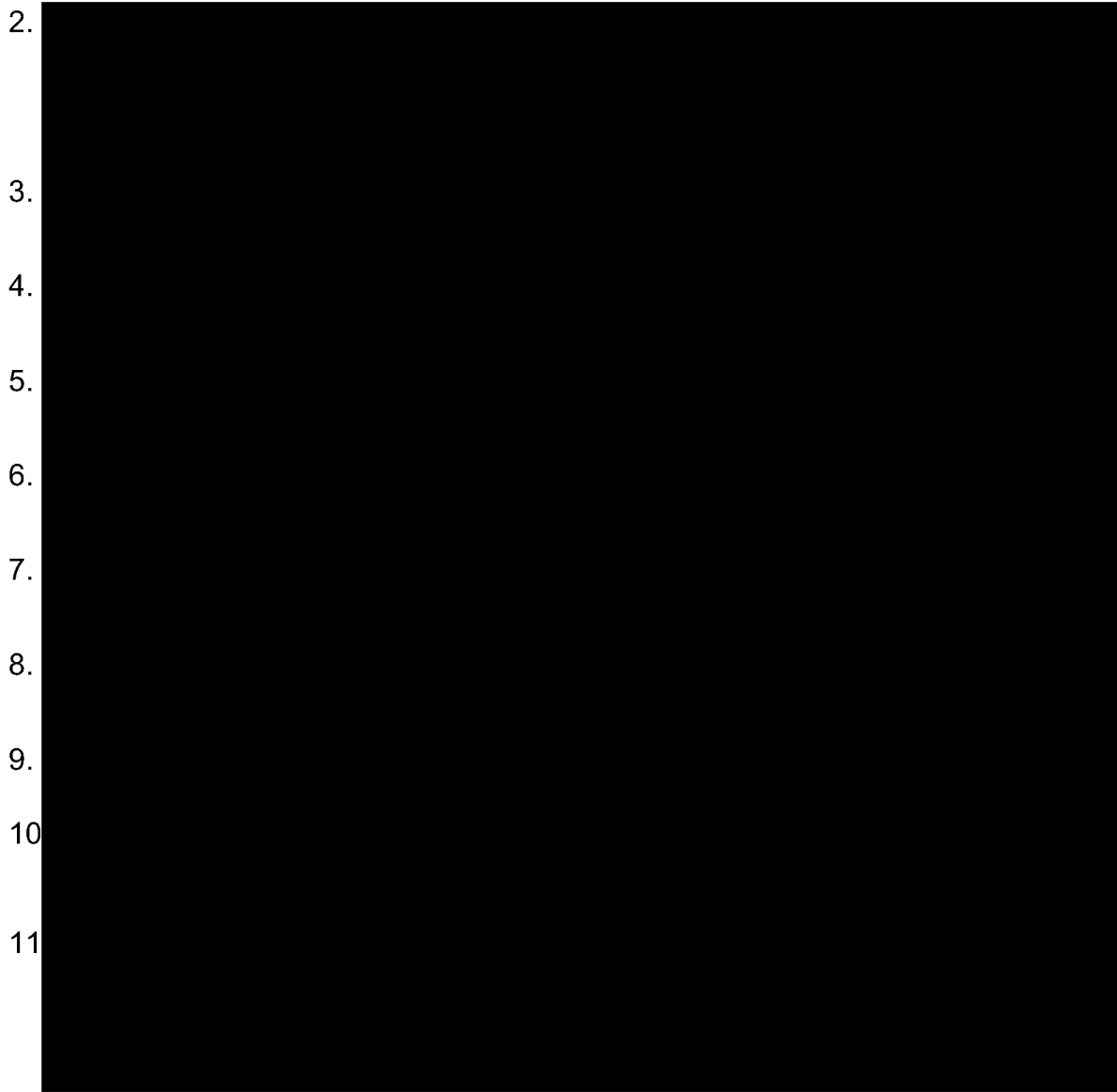
**APPENDIX 'A':**

**MEMBERSHIP LIST** <sup>21</sup>

**FLIXTON NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM: MEMBERSHIP LIST**

**CATEGORY 1: FULL MEMBERS:**<sup>22</sup>

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Home/Work Address:</b>	<b>Status:</b>	<b>Other Details:</b> <sup>23</sup>
1. Paul Ashworth	6 Franklyn Ave M41 8QX	Resident	Co-founder and campaigner: Save Flixton Green Belt.



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<sup>21</sup> Correct as at 1 May 2019.

<sup>22</sup> These are individuals who reside, work, or who are elected members within the neighbourhood boundary area, and who, as a result, have voting rights within the Flixton Neighbourhood Forum.

<sup>23</sup> Where provided.

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**CATEGORY 2: AFFILIATE MEMBERS: <sup>24</sup>**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Home/Work Address:</b>	<b>Status:</b>	<b>Other Details:</b>
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**APPENDIX 'B':**

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<sup>24</sup> These are individuals who live outside the neighbourhood boundary area and who as a result do not have voting rights within the Flixton Neighbourhood Forum.

## **FLIXTON NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM: CONSTITUTION**

### **1. NAME:**

The name of the Forum shall be the Flixton Neighbourhood Forum (the Forum).

### **2. AREA OF BENEFIT:**

The area in which the Forum will pursue its objects is the Flixton Neighbourhood Area, which is the area agreed by its members as identified in the attached plan at Appendix A of this constitution, hereafter referred to as Flixton.

This is the area designated by Trafford Council for which the Forum will produce a Neighbourhood Plan.

### **3. OBJECTS:**

**The basic Purpose of the Flixton Neighbourhood Forum is:**

- (a) To prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for Flixton, based on the agreed vision and objectives statement,<sup>25</sup> and to secure its acceptance by the area and by Trafford Council. The Forum will work within Trafford Council's approved planning framework when preparing the Neighbourhood Plan.
- (b) To promote or improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of Flixton for the benefit of the community of residents, businesses and visitors.
- (c) To keep the final Neighbourhood Plan under review, monitoring progress wherever possible, with the longer term aim of preparing an updated version as required.
- (d) To seek to represent the prevailing views of the local population of Flixton, collated through engagement with all parts of the community, and to see those views incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan to guide the development of the area in line with the wishes of local residents.
- (e) To foster the goodwill and involvement of the whole community, inclusive of all ages, gender, ethnicity, faith, political affiliation, health and sexual orientation, by encouraging community spirit and pride in Flixton.

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<sup>25</sup> The agreed vision and objectives statement is included at 'Appendix C' within this document, see pp. 29 - 31.

(f) To develop a framework through which to manage and influence positive development and support beneficial change within Flixton in a sustainable manner.

(g) To reflect the unique character of Flixton as the historic core of our community; which provides a great place in which to live.

#### **4. VALUES:**

All members of The Forum will aim to follow the 'Nolan Principles' of public life. That is, they will act with:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- and seek to promote these values by Leadership and example.

#### **5. MEMBERSHIP:**

(a) Membership is open to any person who lives or works in Flixton.

(b) The Forum shall have a minimum of 21 members before any decision on neighbourhood planning may be proposed or implemented.

(c) Membership will aim to be representative of the different sections of the community and businesses in Flixton.

(d) Ward Councillors and the Member of Parliament may be members of the Forum but not members of the Working Group.

(e) Affiliate membership (non-voting) is open to: any individual resident within the M41 postcode area, friends' groups, and amenity societies and associations, from within the Area, and collectively described herein as 'Organisations', as approved at an Annual General Meeting (AGM). A list will be maintained by the Secretary and updated from time to time as necessary. Inclusion on the list would not require constitutional change.

(f) All Members (full or affiliate) are required to comply with the rules of the Forum and the Constitution.

(g) Where it is considered that the membership of an individual is detrimental to the aims and activities of the Forum, the Working Group may decide to suspend or terminate a membership, subject to approval, at an Annual General Meeting, of the Forum.

(h) Any member of the Forum may resign his/her membership by notifying the Secretary.

(i) The Secretary shall maintain a list of members.

## **6. DAY TO DAY OPERATIONAL POWERS OF THE FORUM**

As required to undertake its objectives the Forum will be able to:

(a) Invite and receive contributions and raise funds, where appropriate, to finance the work of the Forum, and maintain a bank account to manage such funds.

(b) Employ staff as necessary to conduct agreed Forum activities. No employee shall be a member of the Forum or Working Group.

(c) Take out any contracts deemed conducive to the Forum and its aims and objectives.

(d) Establish working groups, which will include a Neighbourhood Planning Group, consisting of Forum members.

(e) Take any form of action that is lawful which is necessary to achieve the objects, including entering into any contracts which it may see fit.

## **7. MANAGEMENT:**

### **7.1. There will be a Working Group, responsible for:**

(a) The pursuit of the objects defined at Clause 3 of this Constitution.

(b) Working in partnership with other groups and organisations that will help to achieve the objectives of the Forum.

(c) Publicising and promoting the work of the Forum and organising meetings, workshops, events or seminars as required.

(d) Ensuring the Forum is a non-party political organisation.

(e) Carrying out any other activities necessary to achieve the objectives of the Forum, subject to these receiving necessary approvals in accordance with this constitution.

### **The Working Group:**

(e) Shall consist of not less than four (4) and no more than ten (10) Forum members.

(f) Subject to the provisions of clauses 6 (l), 6 (o) and 6 (p), below, Affiliate members may be members of the Working Group and may also be officers of the Forum.

(g) Working Group members will be elected for a period of one year but may stand for re- election at the Annual General Meeting.

(h) Shall meet as often as is required but no less than four (4) times per year.

(i) Working Group members and employees should declare any business or financial interests in or impinging on Flixton.

### **7.2. Officers of the Forum:**

(j) The Forum shall elect officers consisting of:

(i) The Chair;

(ii) The Vice Chair

(iii) The Treasurer;

(iv) The Secretary.

(k) Forum officers will be elected for a period of one year but may stand for re- election at the Annual General Meeting.

(l) The Forum shall be able to establish any other officer roles which it considers necessary to carry out its business. Any such officers shall be elected in accordance with the provisions of clause 7.2 (k), above.

### **7. FINANCE:**

(a) All monies acquired by the Forum, including grants, donations, contributions and bequests, shall be paid into an account operated by the Working Group in the name



of Flixton Neighbourhood Forum. All funds must be applied solely to the objects of the Forum and for no other purpose.

(b) Any deeds, cheques etc relating to the Forum's bank account shall signed by at least two (2) approved signatories. These signatories must be non-recipients.

(c) Expenses incurred on behalf of the Forum may be reimbursed subject to approval by the Chair. Any expenses incurred by the Chair to be approved by the Treasurer. Cheques payable to either the Chair or Treasurer cannot be signed by the recipient

(d) The Treasurer shall be accountable for all Forum income and expenditure and will ensure funds are utilised effectively and that the Forum remains solvent.

(e) The Treasurer shall maintain full and accurate accounting records, which will be open for examination at any stage by Forum members.

(f) An annual financial report shall be reviewed and signed off by two (2) non-Committee members and shall be presented at the AGM.

(g) The Forum's accounting year shall run from 1 April to 31 March.

## **8. MEETINGS OF THE FORUM:**

(a) The Forum shall meet at least four (4) times a year to discuss Forum plans including actions, progress to date and to consider future developments.

(b) The Secretary shall give at least fourteen (14) days' notice of any meeting that will include details of the place where the meeting is to be held and the start time. Wherever possible, the agenda and any supporting papers will be distributed at least ten (10) days before the meeting. The meeting shall also be publicised in the area to non-members.

(c) The quorum for a Forum meeting will be ten (10) members.

(d) It shall be the responsibility of the Chair or Vice Chair to conduct all meetings or to appoint a deputy.

(e) The Secretary must ensure that a true and accurate record is made of all meetings, which will be made available to members and interested parties.

(f) The Annual General Meeting (AGM):

- (i) Shall take place no later than three (3) months after the end of the financial year;
- (ii) At least twenty-one (21) days' notice must be given;
- (iii) Items for the proposed Agenda maybe submitted by members in writing to the Secretary at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.
- (iv) A first AGM will be held within two months of The Forum being designated as the appropriate body to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan and thereafter 12 to 15 months after the previous AGM.
- (v) The second and subsequent AGM's will consider the Annual Report of work done by the Forum in the previous year presented by the Chair; the accounts for the Forum; where necessary, a review of any of the rules and policies of the Forum and any other business announced in the AGM agenda
- (g) Special General Meetings may be called by the Working Group or on receipt of a written request by five (5) members of the Forum.
- (h) With the exception of affiliate members, all members are entitled to one (1) vote in person at any Forum meeting. In the case of a tied vote, the chair of the meeting shall have a casting vote.
- (i) Affiliate members are not entitled to vote at any Forum meetings, committee meetings, working parties of groups.

## **9. CONDUCT OF FORUM MEETINGS**

The following rules apply to all meetings of The Forum including public and committee meetings:

- (i) Each meeting will have a chair who will usually be the Chair of The Forum, or the Vice Chair. If neither the chair or the vice chair is present, the members present will elect a Chair for that meeting. The chair of the meeting will ensure that the business of the meeting is transacted in an orderly and timely way.

(ii) All meetings will endeavour to make decisions by consensus, but in the case of a vote, decisions are made by simple majority of those present and eligible to vote. If the vote is tied, the chair of the meeting has a second, casting vote.

(iii) All members of The Forum are entitled to speak at meetings, and, at Public Meetings, all members of the public are entitled to speak. The chair of the meeting has the power to impose time limits on speeches.

(iv) All members of The Forum shall act in meetings in the best interests of The Forum and in line with the 'Nolan Principles' set out in 4. above. Members should not use their position to seek preferential treatment for themselves, relatives or members of their household. At any meeting, if a member could be perceived to gain a personal pecuniary or non-pecuniary advantage from the outcome of a decision of the meeting on any matter being considered by the meeting, the member must declare their interest (which may include membership of an organisation, ownership of land and property, ownership of a business etc), and not take part in the discussion or any vote on the matter in question. All such declarations of interest shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and be publicly available.

## **10. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING:**

(a) Any proposal to undertake, consult on or submit to the local planning authority for approval of a Neighbourhood Plan shall be subject to a vote of the Forum.

(b) All consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan will be open to all Flixton residents and businesses whether members of the Forum or not.

(c) The Forum shall publicise the neighbourhood planning process, seek the views of the community at large and make an accurate record of the outcome of the consultations.

(d) The Working Group, on behalf of the Forum, shall be required to work with the local planning authority and any independent experts and advisers on the neighbourhood plan as required.

## **11. AMENDMENTS:**

The constitution may be amended at an Annual General Meeting of the Forum and no such Motion or Amendment shall take effect unless it is passed by a majority of

not less than two-thirds of those present and voting. In the case of an exact Two Thirds to One Third split, then the Chair shall cast a deciding vote.

**12. INDEMNITY:**

Officers and members of the Forum, Working Group or other Sub Committee or Group shall not be liable for any loss suffered by the Forum because of the discharge of their respective duties on its behalf, except such as arise from their own respective wilful default.

The Forum may seek insurance cover, or other provision, through the Local Authority, or any independent institution to protect its members and officers from any action which may arise from the legitimate exercise of the functions of the Forum.

**13. DISSOLUTION:**

The Forum may be dissolved by the members by a majority vote at an Annual General Meeting. Prior to dissolution any assets or remaining funds after debts have been paid shall be returned to their providers or transferred to local charities or similar groups at the discretion of the Working Group.

**14. FORUM DURATION AND REVIEW:**

In accordance with the Act, the Forum’s designation ceases to have effect at the end of a period of 5 years.

A formal review of the functions and achievements of the Forum shall be carried out no later than 3 calendar months before the end of this period and, following consultation with its members, the Forum shall decide whether it wishes to continue, amend, or dissolve itself (including applying for designation for a further 5-year period if considered appropriate).

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This constitution was adopted at a public meeting held in ... on ...

Signed: ..... [Interim Chair]

Signed: ..... [Committee Member]

## **APPENDIX 'C':**

### **FLIXTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN: VISION AND OBJECTIVES**

#### **Plan Vision Statement:**

“The Plan will seek to provide the framework for managing the use, form and content of proposed development, to secure beneficial and sustainable change within Flixton over the Plan period.

The Plan aims to reflect the unique character of Flixton, developed over the last 500 hundred years, so that it will continue to provide an attractive place to live.

The Plan will assess the need for, and the nature of, additional housing accommodation over the Plan period and define policies to facilitate the provision of the necessary mix of high-quality housing to meet those assessed needs.

The Plan will support, and where appropriate propose the development of adequate sustainable infrastructure (local roads, cycleways, pedestrian routes, and parking provision), and public transport.

The Plan will also try to accommodate the provision of a varied offering of retail outlets including shops, leisure related outlets, community services and community-based activities.

The Plan will endeavour to ensure that all these facilities, including the required housing developments, are set within an appropriate infrastructure of high-quality green spaces including parks, recreational areas and wildlife habitats which support health and well-being.”

## **Plan Objectives:**

### Objective 1: Accommodating Additional Housing:

- To assess the need for additional housing within Flixton, including the nature of housing required to meet assessed needs.
- To seek to identify housing sites which sustainably meet assessed needs, where possible and as appropriate within the area.
- To develop policies to facilitate the provision of a mix of high-quality housing within Flixton.
- To define policies/controls which ensure that housing development reflects the local vernacular whilst reinforcing its own identity.

### Objective 2: Seeking to Protect Vital Green Spaces:

- To do all we can to ensure that Flixton has sufficient and appropriate green spaces to meet requirements and to retain the character of the area.
- To seek to maintain and protect the extent of the Green Belt, parks, recreational areas and green spaces, and enhance wildlife habitats.
- To support the preservation of Flixton's distinctive tree lined and verged streetscapes.
- To fully recognise the important role our green infrastructure plays in the health and wellbeing of Flixton.

### Objective 3: Supporting Adequate Sustainable Traffic and Transportation

#### Infrastructure:

- To support the provision of adequate and sustainable road infrastructure and traffic management within the area.
- To support developments which meet identified needs sustainably and which facilitate connectivity.
- To support measures which mitigate any adverse impact of traffic, particularly around schools at peak times.

- To support the provision of adequate and safe facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, including footpaths and cycle routes; promoting the connectivity of cycle ways both within and outside Flixton - in line with the principles of 'Beelines' Greater Manchester's cycling and walking infrastructure proposal.
- To support the provision of public parking which meets local needs sustainably.
- To support public transport provision which meets local needs, providing connectivity both within the area and to nearby urban centres.

Objective 4: Supporting a Polycentric Retail Offer to Meet Resident's Needs:

- To develop policies which support the provision of appropriate local retail facilities, including shops, bars, pubs and restaurants to meet community needs.
- To devise policies which aim to ensure that local retail facilities are sited appropriately to meet demand and required standards of behaviour and neighbourliness.

Objective 5: Being a Welcoming Community with Facilities which meet residents' needs.

- To be a welcoming community which promotes the common interests of all.
- To support the provision of sufficient community facilities to meet local needs.

Objective 6: Conserving and Promoting Local History and Heritage.

- To seek to ensure that all development reflects and supports approved Conservation Areas.
- To assess local heritage assets important to Flixton's past and support the conservation of these for the future; including local listing where appropriate.
- To seek to widen the appreciation of Flixton's historic core facilitating a wider understanding of the areas' history and heritage.

# **MAIN SUBMISSION PART 2: NARRATIVE ACCOMPANYING PROPOSED FLIXTON NEIGHBOURHOOD BOUNDARY SUBMISSION.**

## **1. Introduction**

This narrative provides a written description of the proposed neighbourhood boundary. The narrative is accompanied by maps illustrating the extent of the area intended to be covered.

The narrative explains the rationale for the proposed boundary and provides brief details of how this been developed and validated through several public meetings attended by residents of the area.

The narrative and maps constitute a formal application for the designation of the neighbourhood boundary area, in accordance with applicable legislation.

The paper should be read in conjunction Main Submission Part 1: 'Designation of Flixton Neighbourhood Forum' which appears above.

It should be noted that a summary of the applicable legal framework is provided within main Submission Part 1. Specifically, however, this narrative is intended to address requirements of The Localism Act 2011 (Part 6, Chapter 3, Section 116), and The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (c).

## **2. Flixton as a place.**

Flixton as a place has a clear identity. Some of the factors which help to form this are briefly described below:

The geography of Flixton is determined by the nearby confluence of the Rivers Mersey and Irwell (now the Manchester Ship Canal) limiting access to the area and making Flixton rather remote. For example, according to the Victoria County History, Flixton was always: "out of touch with the old main roads from Manchester to Warrington and to Chester".<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> 'The parish of Flixton', in A History of the County of Lancaster: Volume 5, ed. William Farrer and J Brownbill (London, 1911), pp. 42-45. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lancs/vol5/> [accessed 24 March 2019].



Flixton is probably the oldest part of the wider area which today comprises Urmston, Flixton and Davyhulme.<sup>27</sup> St Michael's Church, which dates to the 12th century, was the main parish church for the entire area until the late nineteenth-century when other local parishes were formed to meet the needs of a growing population.<sup>28</sup>

Flixton's historic centre is based around the old village, which centres on St Michael's Church, and nearby Flixton House. The historic centre contains a total of nine listed buildings.<sup>29</sup> This part of Flixton is a designated Conservation Area.<sup>30</sup>

According to the Victoria County History, Flixton "has had a quiet and uneventful history". However Flixton came to greater prominence during the 1820's as a result of the footpaths case, which involved a legal battle over the unlawful stopping up of paths and roadways by local landowner and magistrate Ralph Wright, against the opposition of his neighbours and tenants.<sup>31</sup> Wright was later labelled as one of the "tyrants of the fields" for his actions, perhaps constituting an early description of the importance of Flixton's surroundings to its inhabitants.<sup>32</sup>

Following the building of the Cheshire Lines Railway through the area in 1872, Flixton was transformed into a middle-class railway suburb of Manchester.<sup>33</sup> Further housing development during the inter-war years and later, remodelled Flixton into the largely residential area it is today.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> 'Townships: Urmston', in *A History of the County of Lancaster: Volume 5*, ed. William Farrer and J Brownbill (London, 1911), pp. 50-56. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lancs/vol5/pp50-56> [accessed 23 March 2019]; [http:// St Michael, Flixton, 'History, Restoration, Conservation. A potted history of the Church', www.stmichaelsflixton.co.uk/index.php/12](http://www.stmichaelsflixton.co.uk/index.php/12) [accessed 24 March 2019].

<sup>28</sup> 'The parish of Flixton', in *A History of the County of Lancaster: Volume 5*, ed. William Farrer and J Brownbill (London, 1911), pp. 42-45. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lancs/vol5/pp42-45> [accessed 23 March 2019].; <http://www.stclementsonline.co.uk/our-history/> [accessed 23 March 2019].

<sup>29</sup> Trafford Council, 'Listed Buildings Planning and Building Control' (June 2009), pp. 2 – 4, 7. <https://www.trafford.gov.uk/planning/planning-for-householders/docs/register-of-listed-buildings-updated-april-2008.pdf> [accessed: 12 April 2019].

<sup>30</sup> Trafford Council, Flixton Conservation Area—Supplementary Planning Document SPD5.18a, Conservation Area Management Plan – October 2016. <https://www.trafford.gov.uk/planning/strategic-planning/docs/November-2016/caa-camp-Flixton-Oct-2016.pdf> [accessed 12 April 2019].

<sup>31</sup> 'The parish of Flixton', in *A History of the County of Lancaster: Volume 5*, ed. William Farrer and J Brownbill (London, 1911), pp. 42-45. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lancs/vol5/pp42-45> [accessed 24 March 2019]; D H. Langton, *A history of the parish of Flixton, with a short sketch of the adjoining hamlet of Davyhulme* (Manchester: Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council, 1991), pp. 108 – 109; Richard Lawson, *A history of Flixton, Urmston, and Davyhulme* (Urmston: 1898), pp. 77 – 78; Roger Sidaway, *Resolving Environmental Disputes: From Conflict to Consensus* (London: Earthscan, 2005), p. 17.

<sup>32</sup> Archibald Prentice, *Historical sketches and personal recollections of Manchester; intended to illustrate the progress of public opinion from 1792 to 1832* (Manchester: 1851), pp. 192 – 194

<sup>33</sup> Russell Haywood, *Railways, urban development and town planning in Britain, 1948-2008* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 237 – 238.

<sup>34</sup> Steven Dickens, *Urmston Flixton and Davyhulme Through Time* (London: Amberbey Publishing, 2013); Michael Billington, *The Story of Urmston, Flixton and Davyhulme* (Stroud: The History Press, 2018), pp. 7, 222 – 237.

Just outside the Flixton boundary is the site of the former Shell Chemicals plant, and the power station within Carrington, which can be seen on the skyline. Carrington is a location with important implications for the future of Flixton, as under the GMSF this will become the site of New Carrington, effectively a new township within Trafford, consisting of up to 10,000 (6,100 within the life of the current draft GMSF plan) new homes.<sup>35</sup> This will have particular implications for traffic and public transport in the Flixton area. The M60 Motorway and the Trafford Centre and associated developments lie fairly close to Flixton but are outside the boundary.

Flixton has a total of eight schools within its area. These comprise two high schools, one special school, four primary schools, and one independent school. Four of these schools are in very close proximity to each other, clearly defining this part of Flixton as an 'educational quarter'.<sup>36</sup>

Flixton still has areas with a more remote feel about them. For example, one can still gain a sense of isolation when undertaking a stroll around Jack Lane nature reserve, part of Wellacre country park. A walk to the end of Irlam Road passes former cottages, more modern housing and old farm buildings, but takes you nowhere – the ferry which once crossed over the Manchester Ship Canal towards Irlam no longer operates.<sup>37</sup>

Flixton also has some areas which are relatively unknown to its residents. For example, the large parcel of land which lies close to Mersey View, proximate to the former brickworks and south of the railway line is privately owned; with no public access. This site, known as Flixton Eea lies, in a bend of the river, forming a peninsular, consists of agricultural land, small businesses, as well as disused sewage beds which are the home to wildlife.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 'Greater Manchester's Plan for Homes, Jobs and the Environment (spatial framework)' revised January draft 2019, 'Strategic Allocations in Trafford, Policy GM Allocation 45, New Carrington' (Manchester: GMCA, 2019), pp. 344 – 348. <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing/greater-manchester-spatial-framework/gmsf-full-plan/>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.trafford.gov.uk/residents/schools/schools-in-trafford/schools-in-trafford.aspx/> [accessed 23 March 2019].

<sup>37</sup> Manchester City of Trees, 'The Mersey Valley', <http://www.cityoftrees.org.uk/mersey-valley/> [accessed 23 March 2019].

<sup>38</sup> Urmston Urban District Council Newsletter, Summer 1969; Heritage Trees, City of Trees Team, 'Wellacre County Park and Jack Lane Nature Reserve' (undated), [https://heritagetrees.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/at\\_wellacreparkandjacklanereserve.pdf](https://heritagetrees.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/at_wellacreparkandjacklanereserve.pdf) [accessed 12 April 2019].

Flixton has many green spaces from the former William Wroe golf course and its linked playing field area, to Woodsend Field and to the Wellacre country park. There are also several other smaller green areas within the Flixton boundary, which all add to its green nature.

The maintenance of Flixton's green character closely aligns with Natural England's objectives for the Mersey Valley. These include sustainably managing "its historic environment and landscape character ... to further the benefits provided by a healthy natural environment, as a framework for habitat restoration and for public amenity."<sup>39</sup>

Additionally, the existence of Flixton's valuable green areas accords fully with the latest version of the proposed GMSF, which aims to support Greater Manchester's green assets by seeking to: "protect and enhance green infrastructure (the wider network of green ... features which make a huge contribution to quality of life, promote good mental and physical health, create liveable spaces and support economic growth)".<sup>40</sup> These green areas of Flixton therefore not only benefit local residents, but are of wider value to the Greater Manchester conurbation as a whole.

Finally, from talking to many residents within the area, it is clear that they feel proud to describe themselves as 'Flixtonians'; showing how resonance with the locality, also contributes to their own individual sense of identity.

### 3. The proposed boundary described.

The proposed boundary can be viewed on maps provided by the Group.

It should be noted that the boundary line on Davyhulme Road and Bowers Avenue does not extend across the entire road but keeps to the side most proximate to the Davyhulme Golf Course and Trafford General Hospital sites. This means that only properties on one side of these roads fall within the plan boundary. In all other cases where the boundary line runs down a road, properties on both sides of the road are within the boundary.

In narrative form the position is as follows:

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<sup>39</sup> Natural England, 'National Character Area profile 60. Mersey Valley' (Natural England 2013), p. 19

<sup>40</sup> Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 'Greater Manchester's Plan for Homes, Jobs and the Environment (spatial framework)', revised January draft 2019 (Manchester: GMCA, 2019), p. 128, para. 8.2.

- Flixton is bounded on two sides by the River Mersey and the Manchester Ship Canal (MSC) respectively. These two physical features each form part of the boundary as described further below.
- The boundary line runs from the confluence of the two waterways, along the MSC, to the point at which the Bent Brook (BB) flows into the MSC.
- On the land- side the boundary commences at the point at which the BB joins the MSC and follows the course of the BB to Woodsend Road/Davyhulme Road.
- After this, the boundary runs along Davyhulme Road as far as Bowers Avenue.
- The boundary then runs along Bowers Avenue to its junction with Moorside Road - The boundary therefore encompasses the entire sites of Trafford General Hospital and Davyhulme Golf Club. Both sites fall within the boundary.
- The boundary continues along Moorside Road as far as Bowfell Circle (the Curzon roundabout).
- At this point, the boundary then leaves Moorside Road and runs along Princess Road.
- The boundary then travels along a short stretch of Flixton Road up to the intersection with Stamford Road.
- The boundary then runs along Stamford Road up to the footbridge over the railway line.
- The boundary then crosses the railway line at this point and continues along the public footpath running at the rear of Longfield Avenue (the latter which is not included) up to the point at which the footpath emerges onto Church Road.
- The boundary then runs down the rear of Barnfield in line which continues along the watercourse which joins Old Ees brook and follows the latter up to the point it runs into the River Mersey.
- The boundary line then runs along the River Mersey to its confluence with the MSC, near to the Cheshire lines railway viaduct.

#### 4. How the boundary proposal was prepared.

The process of developing the proposed neighbourhood boundary for has involved the following:

##### *Talking and listening to residents:*

Group members have spoken to people within Flixton on an ongoing basis to see what they think of the place in which they live, and to discuss where the boundary of the area should be set.

These conversations have taken place throughout the process, including in meetings, at public events, including attending the Flixton Festival and recent consultations undertaken by the Council regarding the use of the former William Wroe Golf Course. Additionally, conversations with residents have taken place on an impromptu basis when out walking around the area.

The overall conclusions are that there is a clear view about the area of Flixton, and where its boundaries lie. Also, those consulted felt that current Council Ward boundaries which put parts of Flixton in Davyhulme West and Urmston Wards to be inappropriate for the purposes of a Neighbourhood Plan boundary.

##### *Consulting local people through public meetings:*

To date five public meetings have been held to discuss the Group's plans. These took place on 7<sup>th</sup> June, 19<sup>th</sup> September and 28<sup>th</sup> November 2018, 11<sup>th</sup> April and 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 respectively.

Meetings were publicised in advance and were attended by local residents. Although each meeting involved discussion of a different aspect of the Group's proposals, central themes in all sessions have been the proposed boundary, and the degree of support for establishing a neighbourhood forum.

This has been devised with the direct involvement of attendees through group work and other exercises to consider ideas, alternatives and options, and to explore what people felt worked best for their locality.

##### *Using social media to seek the residents' views.*

The Group has used its Website and Facebook pages to regularly update members of the local community about its proposals, including the boundary.

Membership of the Group's Facebook currently stands at 142 people. Additionally, the Group has used web-based questionnaire technology to confirm levels of support for its boundary proposals amongst community members who have expressed an interest in becoming a member of Neighbourhood Forum for Flixton.

The Group also regularly shares information, and promotes its work through other local Facebook groups, including 'Save Flixton Green Belt' and 'Urmston M41'ers'. These two groups have a combined total membership of approximately 30,000, ensuring that the Group reaches a wide range of local people.

#### *Walking the proposed neighbourhood boundary*

The Group, along with residents have walked all accessible sections of the boundary to ensure that this makes sense today. These walks have added vibrancy to the identity of Flixton as a place and have confirmed belief in the boundary proposals as being workable in practice.

#### *Seeking Advice and Guidance.*

In developing its proposals for the Flixton neighbourhood boundary the Group has sought specialist advice from relevant planning groups. In this regard the Group has consulted Planning Aid England, whose regional representatives (Julian Jackson and Cedric Knipe) have been of great assistance through attendance at meetings, including public events, reading documents and providing useful feedback on process and content.

#### *Consulting with Local Planning Officers*

At an early stage the Group contacted local planning officers at Trafford Council to explain its ideas and intentions and seek advice on key issues. The Group emphasised that it sought a positive and constructive working relationship with Trafford Council and its planning officers.

As part of this, the Group sent a copy of the draft of the Combined Submission to the Council's designated local planning officer for informal consideration and feedback.

The outcome of this process was that three comments were made on the Group's draft Combined Submission. These were:

Comment (1): (regarding the proposed boundary) - that the Group could consider continuing the proposed boundary line along Davyhulme Road to the junction with Bowers Avenue so that the golf course is also included within the overall boundary.

Comment (2): (regarding objective 1 within the Vision and Objectives Statement - relating to meeting future housing needs) - highlighting how following government guidance, local authorities deal with allocating housing need requirements for designated neighbourhood forums. In the light of this, it was requested that the Group clarify which sites could be allocated and how the housing need for the area would be met.

Comment 3: (regarding funding available for neighbourhood planning purposes) highlighted grant funding and technical support for which they Group might be eligible and where to apply for this assistance.

The Group's response the comments above is as follows:

Response to Comment 1: The Group has further considered the proposed boundary and in the light of this has revised the boundary line as suggested by the Council.

Response to Comment 2: The Group response to this comment is provided within Part 1 of this Comprehensive Submission.<sup>41</sup>

Response to Comment 3: The Group is grateful for this suggestion which it will pursue once the designation process is concluded.

*Considering relevant information and sources.*

The Group has considered a range of relevant sources. The sources concerned and conclusions arising from these are set out below:

a) The relevance of existing Council Ward Boundaries

Information published by Trafford Council shows that for large parts of Flixton comprising a major part of the Woodsend area along with the entire area of Towns Gate, form part of within Davyhulme West Ward.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> See Part 1, Section 4, p. 10.

The current boundary between Flixton and Davyhulme West Wards runs along Moorside Road, part of Woodsend Road and Irlam Road. This modern boundary removes a large part of Flixton from Flixton Ward. This separation is important for a neighbourhood plan as it effectively introduces a seemingly arbitrary split between different parts of Flixton; affecting community facilities such as schools, libraries and retail services, as well as residential areas.

Additionally, Abbotsfield Park and Chassen Road railway station, traditionally regarded as part of Flixton are within Urmston Ward, along with Princess Road and surrounding streets. Both Abbotsfield Park and Chassen Road railway station are important community assets.

In working on the proposed boundary for Flixton the Group noted that the Local Government Association (LGA) says that: “Neighbourhood boundaries don’t always conveniently follow local authority ward boundaries.”<sup>43</sup>

It was therefore concluded that applying modern Electoral Ward Boundaries would not provide an appropriate boundary for Flixton neighbourhood, as adopting this model would create a serious problem for the development of an integrated plan for the community of Flixton.

#### b) Guidance relating to Neighbourhood Planning

The Group has consulted a range of documents and sources relating to Neighbourhood Planning in order to consider points relevant to the determination of the boundary.<sup>44</sup>

The Group referred to National Planning Practice Guidance regarding neighbourhood planning. This identifies nine factors which: “could be

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<sup>42</sup> Trafford Borough Council, Wards in Trafford, Davyhulme West; <http://www.trafford.gov.uk/about-your-council/elections/docs/davyhulme-west.pdf>; Trafford Borough Council, Wards in Trafford, Flixton; <http://www.trafford.gov.uk/about-your-council/elections/docs/flixton.pdf>.

<sup>43</sup> Local Government Association, ‘Neighbourhood planning - a simple guide for councillors’ (2013), p. 10.

<sup>44</sup> The Group has consulted the following sources: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, ‘National Planning Policy Framework’ (February 2019); Locality, ‘Establishing a neighbourhood forum: A toolkit for neighbourhood planners’ (undated); Planning Aid, ‘How to set up a neighbourhood forum: putting the pieces together’ (undated), pp. 3 – 8; Local Government Association, ‘Neighbourhood planning A simple guide for councillors’ (2013), pp. 8 – 11; CPRE, ‘How to shape where you live: a guide to neighbourhood planning’ (2013), pp. 19 – 27; Community Planning, ‘Neighbourhood Plan Process, Neighbourhood Planning Worksheet 2, Neighbourhood Area’ (undated), <http://www.communityplanning.net/neighbourhoodplanning/pdfs/Roadmap-worksheets.pdf>.



considerations when deciding the boundaries of a neighbourhood area”.<sup>45</sup> In doing this the Group also had regard to guidance published by the Local Government Association/Planning Advisory Service regarding Neighbourhood Area and Neighbourhood Forum Designations.<sup>46</sup>

The nine factors together with the Group’s views of their applicability to the proposed neighbourhood boundary for Flixton are described below:

(i) Village or settlement boundaries, which could reflect areas of planned expansion.

*Group comment:*

This factor is relevant in relation to the neighbourhood boundary area proposed by the Group. In particular, the Group considers that this applies in relation to several sites within the boundary area, which might be suitable for future development.

The Group also feels that its proposal for the entire site of Trafford General Hospital to be included within the boundary meets this criterion.

This is because possible future decommissioning or revision of some, or the entire hospital site could potentially provide opportunities for planned development.

The Group considers this is a site of significant importance locally, the potential long-term future use of which impinges on Flixton, with major implications for the area. As such the boundary which has been developed includes the entire hospital site (see also section d) below).

(ii) The catchment area for walking to local services such as shops, primary schools, doctors’ surgery, parks or other facilities.

*Group comment:*

This factor is relevant across the entire proposed neighbourhood boundary area. This is because residents within the boundary

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<sup>45</sup> Gov.uk, Guidance: Neighbourhood Planning (March 2014, updated September 2018), Paragraph 033 Reference ID: 41-033-20140306

<sup>46</sup> Local Government Association, Planning Advisory Service, ‘Briefing Note on Neighbourhood Area and Neighbourhood Forum Designations’ (March 2015); <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/area-and-forum-designatio-814.pdf>

require access to locally based services, as well as those available in larger centres such Urmston, or Manchester. These include shops, doctor's surgeries, schools and the local library and public leisure facilities.

- (iii) The area where formal or informal networks of community-based groups operate.

*Group comment:*

This factor is relevant for the proposed neighbourhood boundary area. This is because there are many community-based groups and organisations within Flixton.

Two relevant examples are: (1) The Friends of Flixton Gardens, a group established to look after the walled garden at Flixton House, in partnership with Trafford Council. (2) Save Flixton Green Belt, which is working to secure the site of the former William Wroe golf course as a public open space.<sup>47</sup>

- (iv) The physical appearance or characteristics of the neighbourhood, for example buildings may be of a consistent scale or style.

*Group comment:*

This factor is relevant for the proposed neighbourhood boundary area. This is because in addition to its many high quality characteristic green spaces, Flixton is a mostly residential area comprising low density dwellings, with many tree lined streets and grass verges. Additionally, there are a total of 9 listed buildings within Flixton. These lie within the historic village area, which is a designated Conservation Area.

- (v) Whether the area forms all or part of a coherent estate either for businesses or for residents.

*Group comment:*

This factor is relevant for the proposed neighbourhood boundary area. Flixton is a mainly residential area.

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<sup>47</sup> Friends of Flixton Gardens; <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1268792599855452/>; Save Flixton Green Belt, 'About Us'; <http://www.saveflixtongreenbelt.org/about-us.html>

However, Flixton is served by a number of businesses, some of which are local to the area and others are part of national chains (for example: supermarkets).

- (vi) Whether the area is predominantly a business area.

*Group comment:*

This factor is not relevant for Flixton.

- (vii) Whether infrastructure or physical features define a natural boundary. For example a major road or railway line or waterway.

*Group comment:*

This factor is relevant for the proposed neighbourhood boundary area. This is because the two sections of the boundary are defined by the River Mersey, and by the Manchester Ship Canal respectively.

- (viii) The natural setting or features in an area.

*Group comment:*

This factor is relevant for the proposed neighbourhood boundary area. Comments made in relation to point (vii), above, are also applicable here.

- (ix) The size of the population (living and working) in the area.

*Group comment:*

The population size of the area is estimated to be between 10,000 –15,000 (it is not possible for the Group to provide a more detailed population figure at this stage).

The Group considers this to be a reasonable size for a viable and sustainable neighbourhood area.

#### c) The area's historic boundary

Digital Map resources available through the National Library of Scotland were consulted, roughly covering the period 1896 – 1909 – 1961. Additionally, a nineteenth-century local history publication consulted by the Group reproduces a map of Flixton and Urmston from 1846. These maps all show the historic Parish boundary for Flixton.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> <http://maps.nls.uk/view/101169650>; <http://maps.nls.uk/view/126522734>; <http://maps.nls.uk/view/91791893>; Langton, *A history of the parish of Flixton*, p. 3.

The line of the historic Flixton Parish boundary has been traced using these maps and appears to be consistent throughout, albeit that as the area has developed the features and roads through which the boundary line runs have changed.

Additionally, the Group consulted records relating to the former Urmston Urban District Council (UUDC). This body was the predecessor to Trafford Council, with responsibility for all local Council services in the area from the mid – 1930's to 1974.

These records confirm that UUDC operated on the basis of three electoral wards for Flixton (Flixton East, Flixton Central and Flixton West respectively).<sup>49</sup> Whilst it is not intended to describe the area included within these wards, it is clear that taken together, this aligned closely with the historic Flixton Parish boundary described above.

Finally, the Group examined the more modern-day alignment of Trafford Council electoral wards. Whilst these have been subject to revision, no doubt to reflect government requirements, up to 2004 it was confirmed that a large part of the Trafford General Hospital site was included in Flixton ward.<sup>50</sup>

In conclusion; analysis of the Flixton's historic boundary demonstrates that this aligns very closely with the boundary proposed by the Group. Additionally, the area covered by the three electoral wards applied to Flixton by UUDC has similarity with the area proposed. Finally, more recent electoral ward alignments have included part of the site of Trafford General Hospital within Flixton.

Whilst the historic boundary of the area provides only one aspect of points requiring consideration in determining a neighbourhood boundary area, this is nevertheless important, as it define what local people feel about the identity of their area; giving them a sense of place.

d) The future sustainability of the neighbourhood area, and devising a plan to reflect this

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<sup>49</sup> Trafford Local Studies, Urmston Urban District Council Newsletters, winter 1968, summer 1969, winter 1970; Trafford Local Studies, Urmston Urban District Council Newsletter, winter 1970, p. 15.

<sup>50</sup> Trafford Local Studies, Map 8, 'Flixton', Trafford Metropolitan Borough up to 2004.

To be sustainable, a neighbourhood boundary needs to reflect longer term future needs, as well as its historic past.

The Group therefore reflected on the size and characteristics of the local area, to determine the final shape of the proposed neighbourhood boundary. In doing this it considered comments made by residents during public meetings.

From this it was clear that consideration needed to be given to the inclusion of the entire Trafford General Hospital (TGH) site within the neighbourhood plan area boundary.

Additionally, after considering informal suggestions made by local residents and by Trafford Council planning officers, the Group considers there is a reasonable case for including the entire Davyhulme Golf Course site within the plan boundary.

*Trafford General Hospital site:*

The Group is fully aware that as a large NHS facility the operation and future development of TGH is outside the scope of a neighbourhood plan.

Additionally, the Group recognises that any major changes to the site would be matters for the NHS Trust, the GMCA and for Trafford Council's Local Plan.

However, TGH is a significant site of major local importance, not only as a medical facility, and what it represents as the first NHS hospital in England; but also, as a site which may have potential for development.

Evidence confirms that TGH is a site which is subject to change. Recent changes include downgrading its status as an NHS facility. Additionally, there have been revisions to the NHS Trust body which operates the hospital. These changes demonstrate that TGH as a site cannot be regarded as stable in the longer term.

Three cited examples demonstrate the changing nature of TGH, underlining the relevance of the site for the Flixton neighbourhood plan.

- i) Changes to the status of TGH include: the closure of the maternity unit (2010), the closure of the Accident and Emergency Department,

and its replacement with an Urgent Care Centre (2013) and the further downgrading of the Urgent Care Centre (2016).<sup>51</sup>

ii) Regarding the operation of the hospital; in 2012 the body responsible, Trafford NHS Healthcare Trust was taken over by the Central Manchester Healthcare Trust. In 2017 this NHS body was itself replaced by Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust.<sup>52</sup> Whilst the operation of TGH is not a matter for the neighbourhood plan itself, this nevertheless highlights how the hospital has been revised on several occasions. Changes of this kind can also result in revisions to the use of the site.

iii) There have also been many changes made to the hospital site, including the sale of a former rehabilitation unit for housing development in 2000, and in 2018 a block of former nurses' homes on the site were demolished.<sup>53</sup>

As the NHS continues to evolve in the future it is perfectly feasible that further change will occur, which could result in the closure or decommissioning of all, or parts of the hospital site.

Access to the TGH site sits on Moorside Road, a busy road within Flixton, and any change of use of the site would therefore impinge on Flixton. Additionally, the development of the TGH site could have implications for community facilities, housing, and highways and public transport.

In the light of this the Group considers it appropriate for the entire existing TGH site to be included within the Flixton neighbourhood plan boundary.

#### *Davyhulme Golf Course site:*

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<sup>51</sup> 'Last baby born at NHS birthplace Trafford General', *BBC News Channel*, 29 January 2010, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/manchester/8487422.stm>; 'Trafford General A&E closure confirmed by NHS Trafford', *BBC News*, 24 January 2013, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-21167061>; 'RECAP: Trafford General Hospital to lose emergency care unit', *Manchester Evening News*, <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/live-trafford-general-urgent-care-10756777> [accessed: 30<sup>th</sup> March 2019]

<sup>52</sup> 'Trafford General Hospital announces takeover partner', *BBC News*, 27 July 2012, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-14308274>; 'New city-wide hospital Trust Launches', *Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust*, Trust News posted: 1 October 2017, <https://mft.nhs.uk/2017/10/01/new-city-wide-hospital-trust-launches/> [accessed: 30<sup>th</sup> March 2019].

<sup>53</sup> <https://publicaccess.trafford.gov.uk/onlineapplications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=OUH4FMQL02W00&activeTab=summary;reference:92181/DEM/17>; <https://publicaccess.trafford.gov.uk/onlineapplications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=OUH4FMQL02W00&activeTab=summary;reference:H/ARM/49491>

The Group also considered the case for including Davyhulme Golf Course (DGC) within the boundary. The inclusion of this site within the plan boundary was suggested by some residents who attended public meetings arranged by the Group. This proposal was however originally discounted because although the DGC site abutts Flixton's historic boundary it was never within this.

However, informal feedback from Trafford Council Planning Officers suggested the Group might consider running the plan boundary along Davyhulme Road, thereby including DGC within the plan boundary.<sup>54</sup> In the light of this comment the Group decided to review its decision to set aside residents' suggestions to include DGC.

After reviewing its earlier decision, the Group is now of the view that there is a reasonable case for the inclusion of DGC within the plan boundary.

In support of this conclusion the Group considers DGC is a site of strategic importance given its proximity to Flixton. Any change of use to all or part of this site would have important implications for Flixton; affecting infrastructure such as roads, schools and community facilities. Furthermore, the Group considers that given its importance locally, residents would wish to have such a significant local site within the boundary. This was a point made by some attendees at public meetings.

Finally, whilst the Group has no information about the state of DGC, it is aware that golf as a sport/leisure activity is currently said to be in decline nationally within the UK.<sup>55</sup> Although the implications of this decline for a single golf club such as DGC are difficult to assess or predict: this highlights a factor which might impinge on the stability of this site, which given its overall strategic importance for Flixton is appropriate to consider in the context of the neighbourhood planning process. Accordingly, the Group concludes that there is a reasonable case for the inclusion of the DGC within the plan boundary.

## 5. Overall conclusions.

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<sup>54</sup> Email correspondence Helen Pickering to Barbara Harper, 04 July 2019 15:44, Subject: RE: Neighbourhood Planning.

<sup>55</sup> 'Does the recent flurry of failing golf facilities constitute a crisis, or is it part of the game's natural cycle of growth and decline?' *Golf Monthly* (January 2019); [www.golf-monthly.co.uk/features/the-game/why-did-so-many-golf-clubs-close-in-2018-173121#OpHTfH5cZMEtYJwx.99](http://www.golf-monthly.co.uk/features/the-game/why-did-so-many-golf-clubs-close-in-2018-173121#OpHTfH5cZMEtYJwx.99); 'Golf Participation in the UK in 2019 – Who's to blame...', *The SocialGolfer.com* (May 2019);

This narrative has provided a detailed description of the proposed boundary and how this has been devised by the Group, after engaging with residents and considering a variety of sources.

Sources consulted by the Group include advice from bodies with expertise in neighbourhood planning, as well as official guidance and statutory documents.

The process of devising a neighbourhood boundary proposal has involved not only researching Flixton's past, but also looking to the future to identify potential future issues impacting on the area.

This has resulted in a neighbourhood boundary which is not only meaningful to local people, but which will also ensure the future sustainability of the area.

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