

**Report to:** West Yorkshire Combined Authority

**Date:** 16 March 2023

**Subject:** Spatial Priority Areas

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**Author:** Michael Long, Programme Development Lead – Strategic Sites

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

## 1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement to the inclusion of two additional Spatial Priority Areas (SPAs) in the current set of priority locations agreed across West Yorkshire. It also seeks endorsement of an amendment to the boundary of one existing SPA.

## 2. Information

### Spatial Priority Areas (SPAs)

- 2.1 Our Spatial Priority Areas (SPAs) are the largest and or most strategic growth opportunities within West Yorkshire requiring coordinated infrastructure investment. The SPAs have been developed and are to be actively managed to ensure that:

- We are doing all we can to bring forward the extant housing permissions across West Yorkshire in the context of high demand for homes.
- We are doing all we can to support jobs growth by better understanding local supply and demand for strategic employment land.
- We are raising the profile of those areas in our city region with critical infrastructure and economic resilience challenges.
- We are prioritising development in locations served by sustainable transport networks.

2.2 The value of having SPAs agreed and endorsed is that it provides consensus on our largest and / or most strategic opportunities in our sub region in order to achieved balanced growth across the area. SPAs are of regional significance and / or are cross-boundary locations. This can help with building cases for funding and with prioritisation when funding opportunities arise, it also helps with building status and investor interest in key locations to support inclusive growth. The categories are designed to distinguish between different types of opportunity and are not a hierarchy of priority for investment decisions.

**Additional SPAs**

2.3 At the meeting of the CA on 20 December 2020, the current portfolio of 36 SPAs were endorsed. A copy of the CA paper is linked in the background documents section of the report, along with the agreed SPA Definitions and Criteria, a full list of the SPAs (as proposed in this paper), and SPA Location Plans

2.4 In partnership with Local Authority district officers the priority locations have been kept under review and it is proposed that two new SPAs are added to reflect current spatial priorities within Huddersfield and Halifax, in addition it is proposed that the boundary be revised for the South Kirkby and South Elmsall Urban Extension (Wakefield) to reflect their emerging Local Plan allocation.

2.5 In addition, we have amended the names of some SPAs to reflect the current naming conventions for these areas as detailed below in Table 1.

**Table 1 – SPA Amended Names**

<b>SPA Name 2020</b>	<b>Proposed SPA Name</b>
West Huddersfield Gateway	Manchester Road/Blackmoorfoot Road Corridor
Brighouse Garden Village (inc Clifton)	Thornhills Garden Community (inc Clifton)
Bradley Garden Village	Woodhouse Garden Community / Bradley Garden Village
South Kirkby Urban Extension	South Kirkby & South Elmsall Urban Extension

**Huddersfield Station to Stadium Enterprise Corridor SPA – Future Growth Location**

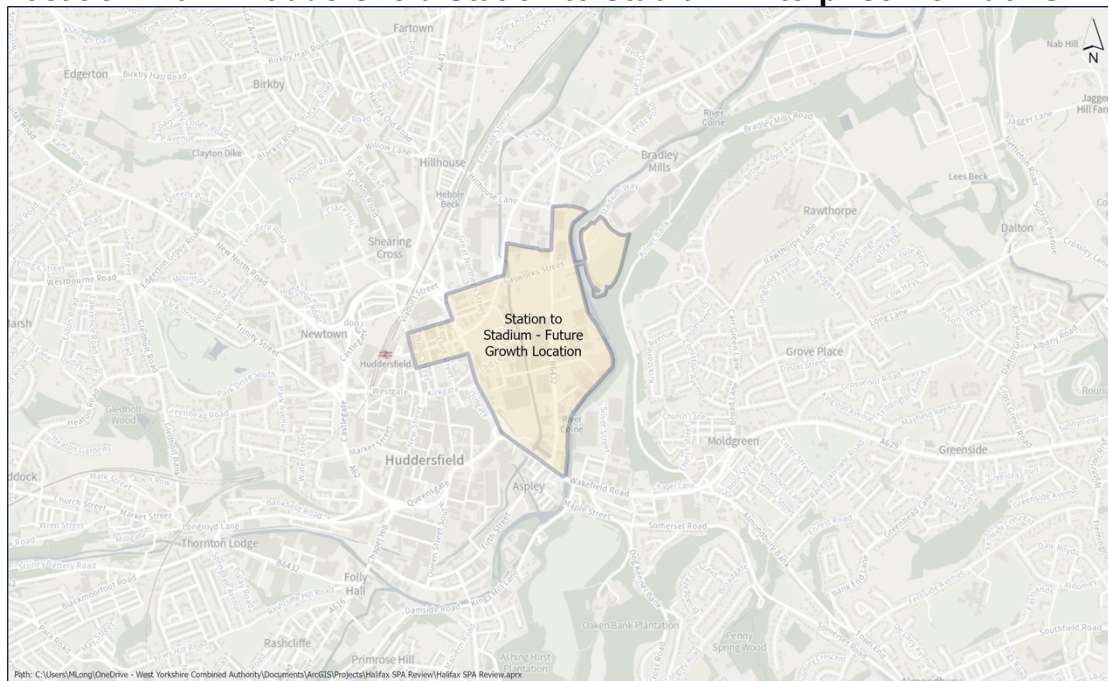
2.6 As a key part of the Huddersfield Blueprint, the Station to Stadium Enterprise Corridor covers a substantial proportion of the town centre. Regeneration of this area offers the opportunity to drive new, diverse and sustainable land uses in the town centre, supporting high value employment to offer a counterweight to the decline in high street retail and predomination of out-of-town business parks.

2.7 The intention is to increase economic resilience through attracting investment to provide regeneration of this key area of Huddersfield town centre and land

beyond the centre to the east. This will be achieved through securing commercial opportunities for existing business expansion and to attract new businesses to the area. The proposals intend to facilitate growth of employment sectors associated with the University of Huddersfield proposed health innovation campus to the east of the Huddersfield ring road.

- 2.8 The aims for this area also include residential opportunities to meet ongoing demand for housing in a highly sustainable location alongside improved connectivity between the town centre and the leisure opportunities provided by the area around the stadium. The proposals will explore the economic benefits provided by improved access to and use of the river and canal as assets to attract further investment to the area. The intention is also for this area to be directly linked to the proposed District Heat Network for Huddersfield town centre as part of the Kirklees council's aspirations to reach net zero by 2038.
- 2.9 The Station to Stadium Enterprise Corridor represents a significant regeneration priority and qualifies as a Future Growth Location SPA. Although land is not allocated in the current Local Plan, this will be explored when the Local Plan is updated. The Enterprise Corridor area directly adjoins St Georges Square (the location of Huddersfield Station) and Enterprise Corridor will provide significant commercial development, much of this within 600 metres of the Station but all within 1km.

**Location Plan - Huddersfield Station to Stadium Enterprise Corridor SPA**



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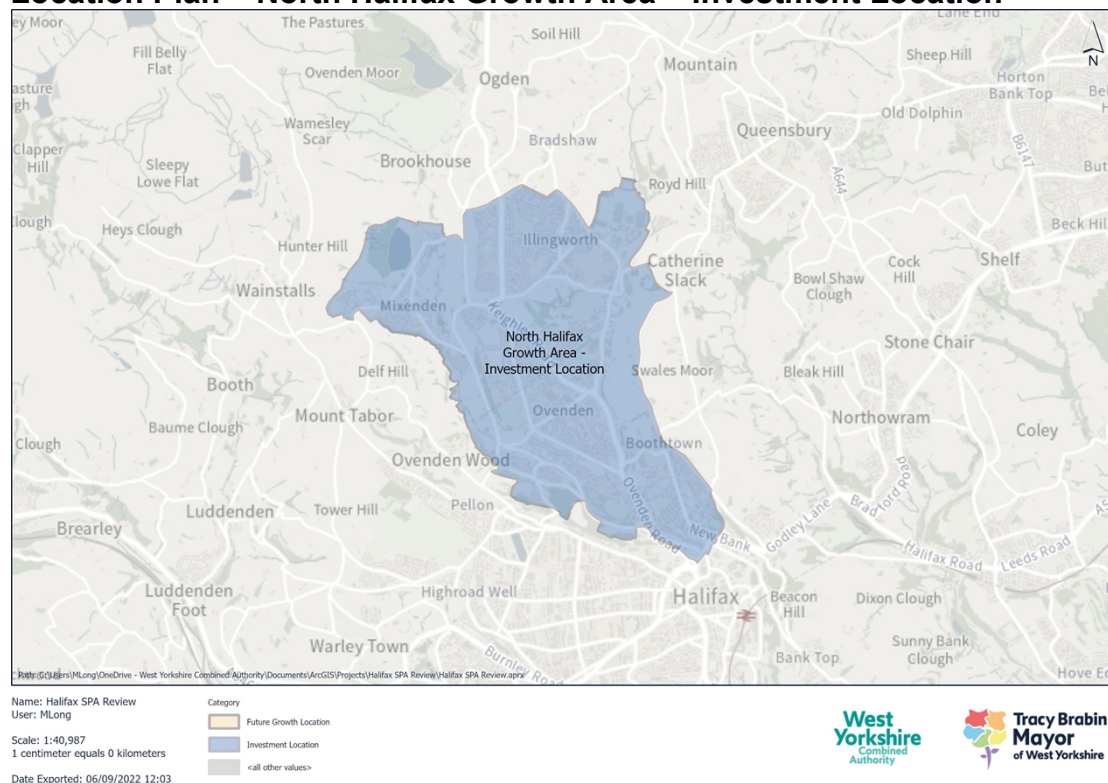
**North Halifax Growth Area – Investment Location**

- 2.10 The North Halifax Growth Area draft SPA is envisaged as including the area to the north of existing Halifax town centre SPA – known as Boothtown which is

adjacent to and to the north of the wards of Illingworth and Mixenden (1,513 Ha) and Ovenden 325 Ha). The aim would be to create a corridor heading out from the town centre towards the neighbourhoods broadly described as 'North Halifax' supporting an additional 1600 new homes. People's health, wealth, and wellbeing in North Halifax has been particularly negatively impacted by the pandemic and that the cost-of-living crisis is already having a big impact on residents and families in North Halifax.

- 2.11 Calderdale Council's Cabinet gave approval for developing a joined up long term strategic plan for North Halifax in January 2022 with the intention of building on the current and planned investment in North Halifax.
- 2.12 Creating the opportunity to secure further economic investment in North Halifax to expedite and build upon the secured funding and local strategic support at a borough level will increase resilience and enable the area and its residents to benefit from the inclusive growth agenda, improve skills and access to employment and to help address the longstanding challenges this area faces.
- 2.13 The North Halifax Growth Area qualifies as an investment location due to the regeneration potential aligned to housing growth of 1600 homes. This meets the criteria set out for an investment location focused on housing growth.

**Location Plan – North Halifax Growth Area – Investment Location**



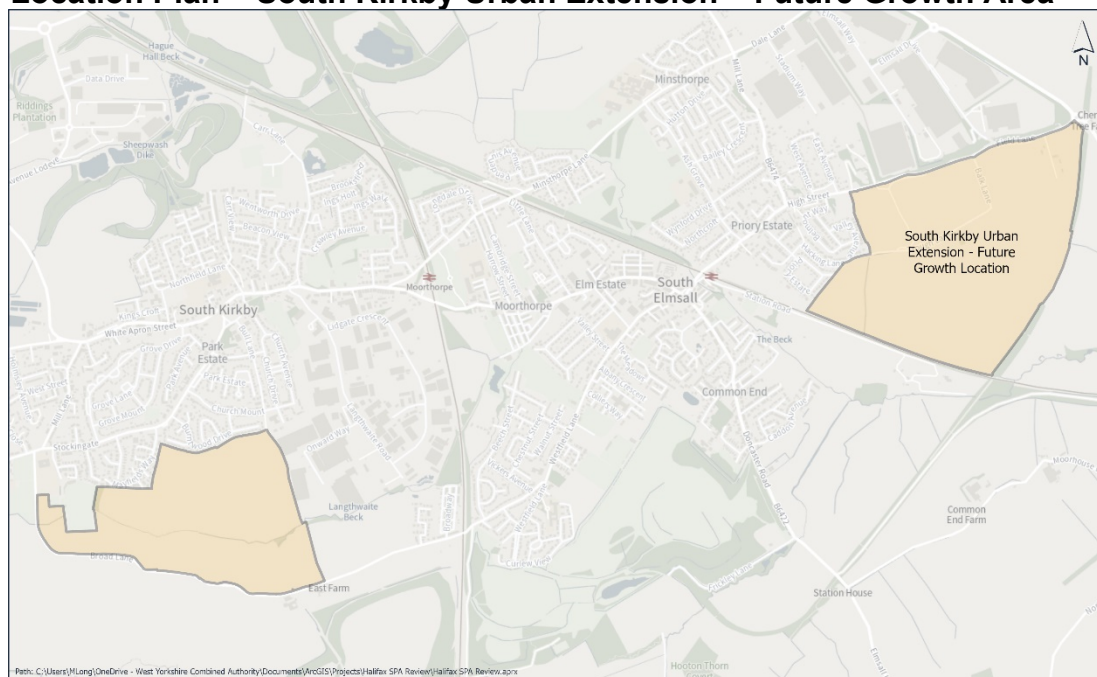
**South Kirkby and South Elmsall Urban Extension – Future Growth Area**

- 2.14 The South Kirkby and South Elmsall Urban Extension has been extended to include a large employment allocation identified at South Elmsall in

Wakefield's emerging local plan. This site is greenfield, and it is proposed by Wakefield Council that this site will be removed from the Green Belt (through the local plan process). The site comprises of a mix of uses which includes housing and some employment. Although B8 is the predominant use on part of the site, other employment uses could occur.

- 2.15 The location is currently categorised as a Future Growth Area. Future growth locations are emerging priorities not currently allocated in Local Plans. Should the site become an adopted site in the Local Plan, it is envisaged that this SPA location will be categorised as an Investment Location SPA.

**Location Plan – South Kirkby Urban Extension – Future Growth Area**



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Category
Future Growth Location
Investment Location
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West Yorkshire Combined Authority  
 Tracy Brabin Mayor of West Yorkshire

**Next Steps**

- 2.16 As set out in Item 9b of this agenda, ongoing work to prioritise and develop a portfolio of workstreams and programmes under Investment Priority 3 (IP3) Creating Great Places and Accelerated Infrastructure is underway. Through the Investment Priority 3 (IP3) workstreams, we are developing two business cases that will support the delivery of SPAs.
- 2.17 The first is the development of an Employment Accelerator Fund that will be used to develop an evidenced employment sites pipeline. This pipeline and associated revenue funding programme will provide a better understanding of the development or delivery challenges for strategic employment sites across West Yorkshire.
- 2.18 Through developing a robust employment pipeline, it will be possible for WYCA to maximise support for the delivery of commercial developments and

ensure these enhance the sustainability and viability of cities and towns, by delivering employment opportunities which are well located to existing settlements and provide a range of employment opportunities.

2.19 The second business case is for a flexible revenue fund to be used to explore delivery models for SPAs. This programme would identify and develop appropriate and tailored development models utilising a suite of tools such as grants, put options, direct investment, CPO, investment zones (or similar) and potential use of Mayoral Development Corporations (MDCs) to suit the requirements of the sites within the SPAs to be developed.

2.20 Developing targeted delivery models for individual SPAs will support the acceleration of delivery across the SPA's aligned to the cross-cutting themes of the Investment Strategy and IP3 specifically through:

- Acceleration of inclusive jobs growth;
- Unlocking of stalled employment sites in strategic locations / corridors;
- Targeting priority sectors (this may be a cluster of complementary sectors rather than a single target sector);
- Alignment with other infrastructure / capital investments;
- Supporting business resilience (and recovery post Covid 19);
- Acceleration of the delivery of affordable and sustainable homes.

### **3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications**

3.1 The SPAs have been developed and are to be actively managed to ensure that we are prioritising development in locations served by sustainable transport networks or can incorporate schemes to ensure that active travel and public transport can be delivered in these locations.

3.2 The SPA categories include 'Environmental Opportunity SPA'. These are locations which offer significant opportunities to address environmental issues, increase resilience and tackle the climate emergency (for example flood risk management, carbon sequestration, net biodiversity and environmental gain, green and blue infrastructure, renewable and low carbon energy generation)

### **4. Inclusive Growth Implications**

4.1 Inclusive growth principles are embedded in the aims and criteria of the SPAs. The Core City and Main Urban Centre, and Future Growth Location categories of SPAs aim to support inclusive growth and renewal through the delivery of key infrastructure, commercial and residential development opportunities. The Investment Location category along with the Environmental Opportunity category of SPAs aim to promote urban renewal and to protect vulnerable places from economic and environmental threats.

### **5. Equality and Diversity Implications**

5.1 A fundamental part of the Combined Authority strategic sites work is to support inclusive growth and sustainable development. The delivery of the regions

SPAs supports inclusive growth by enabling development and investment in some of the most deprived areas in our region, by encouraging regeneration, growth and renewal of our urban centres and through the delivery of key infrastructure to enable commercial and residential opportunities for all.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications of this report however part of the rationale of agreeing strategic regional spatial priorities is to direct resource and funding to these locations as opportunities arise. The West Yorkshire Investment Strategy makes reference to Spatial Priority Areas as an example.

## **7. Legal Implications**

- 7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

## **8. Staffing Implications**

- 8.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

## **9. External Consultees**

- 9.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

## **10. Recommendations**

- 10.1 That the Combined Authority note the content of the report.
- 10.2 That the Combined Authority approve the SPA name changes listed in Table 1.
- 10.3 That the Combined Authority approve the additional two SPAs of North Halifax Growth Area (Calderdale) and Huddersfield Station to Stadium Enterprise Corridor (Kirklees) and the amended South Kirkby and South Elmsall Urban Extension SPA in Wakefield. Subject to this approval, the content on the Combined Authority website relating to SPAs will be refreshed.

## **11. Background Documents**

Spatial Priority Areas (SPAs) Refresh – Combined Authority 10 December 2020

<https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s18099/Item%208%20-%20Spatial%20Priority%20Areas%20Refresh.pdf>

Spatial Priority Area – Definitions and Criteria

<https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/9984/item-12-appendix-2-spatial-priority-area-definitions-and-criteria.pdf>

Spatial Priority Area Locations

<https://westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/9985/item-12-appendix-3-spatial-priority-area-locations.pdf>

Spatial Priority Area Location Maps

<https://westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/9986/item-12-appendix-4-spatial-priority-area-location-maps.pdf>

## **12. Appendices**

None.