
Report to: West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Date: 10 December 2020

Subject: **Spatial Priority Areas (SPAs) Refresh**

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Is this a key decision?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	☐ Yes ☒ No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	

1. Purpose of this report

1.1 To seek endorsement of the revised Spatial Priority Areas (SPA).

2. Information

- 2.1 SPAs were established in the first version of the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) in 2014 under Priority 4: Infrastructure for Growth. They were defined as the largest and / or most strategic growth opportunities within our city region. Additional SPAs were introduced as part of the SEP refresh in 2016.
- 2.2 Following a review of the existing SPA and call for new SPAs (West Yorkshire authorities only), it was considered that the current SPA categories, focused on growth opportunities (Main Centres, Housing Growth Areas, Employment Growth Areas), were no longer aligned well with our strategic policy position and did not allow for the inclusion of the priorities being put forward by local authorities as new SPAs.
- 2.3 In response, in partnership with all local authorities, new categories and associated criteria have been developed (see Appendix 3) that reflect wider policy priorities including regeneration and urban renewal, Towns Fund

locations, and economic and environmental resilience. A revised set of SPAs meeting these criteria, were identified by local authorities (see paragraph 2.7).

- 2.4 Chief Planning Officers, Strategic Place Officer Group, Directors of Development and West Yorkshire Chief Executives have supported the SPA refresh process and inputted to the changes proposed. The refreshed SPAs were supported by the Place Panel at their meeting on the 14 October 2020.
- 2.5 The map provided in Appendix 1 shows the locations of the proposed SPAs, which are better aligned to the Combined Authority's strategic pipelines. We have undertaken an assessment of this alignment and an example is provided in Appendix 2 which demonstrates positive alignment with Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) schemes and the West Yorkshire Transport Fund Plus. We have also tried where possible to ensure that SPAs are broad areas rather than individual sites (supported by clusters of sites in the strategic pipelines).
- 2.6 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.
- 2.7 The draft list of proposed SPAs (and relevant category) are as follows:

Core City (SPA)	Leeds City Centre
Main Urban Centre (SPA)	- Bradford City Centre - Wakefield City Centre - Huddersfield Town Centre - Halifax Town Centre
Investment Location (SPA)	Mixed use - Canal Road Corridor - Chidswell ~ - East Leeds Extension - Aire Valley - City Fields - Brighouse Garden Village (Including Clifton)* (NEW) - Kirkstall Forge (NEW) Employment - Langthwaite Grange Extension - North West Leeds Employment Hub (NEW) - Newmarket - White Rose Office Park (NEW) - Cooper Bridge* Housing - Castleford Growth Zone - Dewsbury Riverside Urban Extension ~

	• Crosland Moor (NEW) • Bradley Garden Village* (NEW) Regeneration • Shipley (NEW) • Keighley (NEW) • Dewsbury ~ (NEW) • Batley ~ (NEW) • Todmorden (NEW) • Brighouse (NEW) • Five Towns (Castleford, Normanton, Featherstone, Pontefract, Knottingley) (NEW) • Elland (NEW)
Future Growth Location (SPA)	• Knottingley and Ferrybridge Growth Area (proposed additional allocations) (NEW) • South Kirkby Urban Extension (proposed additional allocation) (NEW) • Newmarket (proposed additional allocation) (NEW) • Broad Cut Farm (proposed additional allocation) (NEW) • Apperley Bridge / Esholt (NEW) • Holme Wood (NEW)
Environmental opportunity (SPA)	• Calder Valley (NEW)

* Sites fall within the Garden Village Corridor SPA Cluster

~ Sites fall within the North Kirklees Growth Zone SPA Cluster

2.8 The review of SPAs has been limited to West Yorkshire councils to reflect that the purpose of SPAs is linked to investment and that, in the context of devolution, the future focus of our funding is West Yorkshire. The SPAs have been built bottom-up from district priorities, working within the new criteria. It is intended that the SPAs remain under review and partner councils are able to put forward additional SPAs at any point as new priorities emerge. Further SPAs in the category of Environmental Opportunity are still under development beyond the Calder Valley.

2.9 The SPAs, as supported by Place Panel on the 14 October 2020, will form part of the Strategic Economic Framework (SEF) and will be used in the emerging Draft Connectivity Plan. It is also proposed that the SPAs be included in the Place Narrative, an emerging, online, interactive document that will describe our places and how they interact and set out our place-based plans / ambitions and associated committed infrastructure investments. The development of the Place Narrative is being led by the Place Panel.

3. Clean Growth 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. The refreshed SPA criteria also includes a new category of 'Environmental Opportunity SPA'. These SPAs support the City Region target to achieve net zero carbon by 2038, with significant progress by 2030. They are potential areas 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 SPA methodology (see Appendix 2). The Core City and Main Urban Centre and Future Growth Location SPAs aim to support inclusive growth and renewal through the delivery of key infrastructure, commercial and residential development opportunities. The Investment Location SPAs aim to promote urban renewal and to protect vulnerable places from economic and environmental threats.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report. The SPA refresh has been undertaken internally by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Policy, Strategy and Communications Directorate.

6. Legal Implications

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

7. Staffing Implications

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

8. External Consultees

- 8.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 That the Combined Authority endorses the revised Spatial Priority Areas (paragraph 2.7), including the supporting Definitions and Criteria (Appendix 3), and agrees to publish these as part of the Strategic Economic Framework.

10. Background Documents

- 10.1 None.

11. Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Spatial Priority Area Maps
- 11.2 Appendix 2 - Strategic Sites Transport Alignment
- 11.3 Appendix 3 – Spatial Priority Area Definitions and Criteria