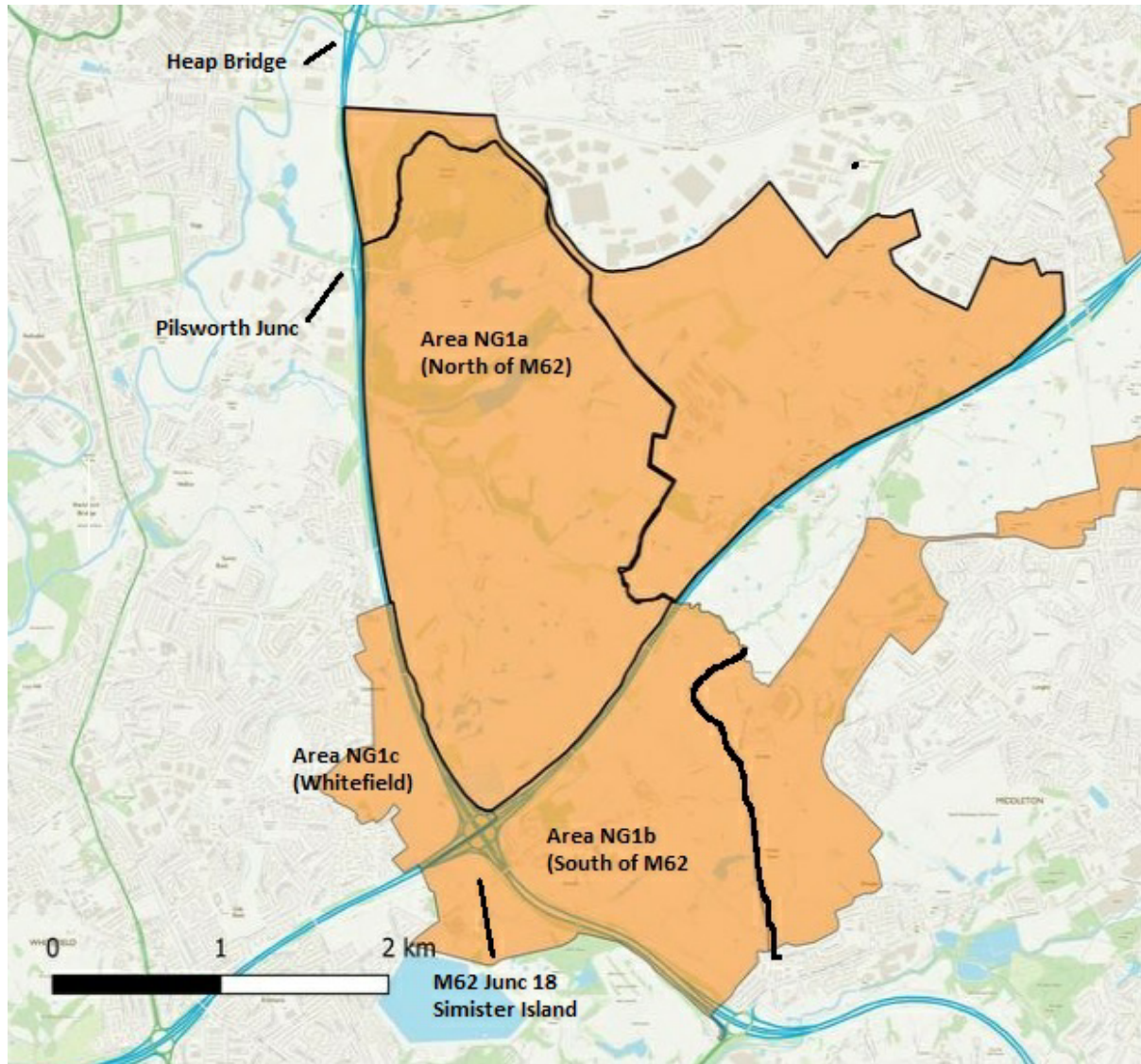


Northern Gateway

I should say at the start, this is my view on the area, rightly or wrongly. The views expressed are my own but I have tried to be factual. It was written after a request for more information about the area. I'm happy to make amendments to any inaccuracy, correct mistakes or add to it.



There are actually 5 areas in the Northern Gateway but only the first three fall within the Bury MBC area. The current MBC boundary is to the left of the black line splitting the area. This huge area is bigger than the other Bury areas put together.

Area NG1a **North of M62**

This area is to the right as you head north up the M66 from Junction 18 of the M62. It currently comprises mainly of rural farm land. There is also a golf course and a couple of fishing lodges. In the north-eastern corner, it joins onto the existing Heywood Industrial Estate. There is also an operational landfill site to the north of the area. This has limited life and is due to be restored by the end of 2028.

This is a huge area comprising of approximately 1,500,000 sq M or about 7 times the existing area covered by Heywood industrial estate. The Spatial Framework calls for this huge block to be an employment area. It will be bigger than Trafford Park which is currently the largest in Europe.

There are currently four main access routes. Heap Bridge, Heywood, From Middleton up past Birch Services and Pilsworth/Hollins. Pilsworth is by far the most commonly used especially by the HGV vehicles using the existing Heywood industrial estate. Access for vehicles from the Bury side for other than HGV is mainly Heap Bridge and Croft Lane from Hollins. Both these roads suffer badly from congestion at the start/end of the working day.

Area NG1b **South of M62**

This area is to the south of the M62. With the exception of Simister Village and Parrenthorn High School, it comprises mainly of rural farm land. The area is split by the northern end of the M60 motorway. It is bounded on the south side by Heaton Park Reservoir and Heaton Park itself and on the eastern side by Heywood Old Rd. The village is located east of "Simister Island" Junction 18, which links the M66, M60 and M62. Thousands of vehicles a day use this motorway intersection and traffic noise is regarded as a nuisance but not part of the village by the residents as there is no direct access.

Simister village could be described as a small, discrete rural village which, some would say, has retained its charm. Although the village's proximity to Manchester means the residential population is mainly made up of commuters, the village has a rural feel with much agricultural activity. The village is clustered around the one access road, Simister Lane. There is also access from the eastern end down two tracks, one an extension of Simister Lane, the other Blueball Lane. These two tracks are often used as a rat run between the Junction 19 of the M60 and Prestwich. The village population is approximately 650 in 2016. The Simister Village Community Association is in the process of developing a 10-acre wetland site. It has installed stone paths funded by grants from 'Big Lottery- Breathing Places' and "Greening Greater Manchester". This has been carried out by local residents, Bury MBC and the BTCV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers).

Area NG1c **Whitefield**

This area is to the left as you head north up the M66. It is bounded in the south by the M60, the east by the M66 and the west by Hillock and Unsworth. It is rural farmland used mainly for grazing. Being badly drained the area has two ponds and accompanying wildlife. The Hillock estate was built in the late 60's as an 'overspill' for Manchester. Indeed I used to play on this open land as a child. Unsworth dates back much longer to Norman Times although the village has much expanded since then. The area is much used as a recreational area as well as the usual dog-walking areas there is a Cricket Club and a nearby golf course.

The proposed area is currently accessed by two tracks, Pole Lane from Unsworth and Mode Hill Lane from Hillock. Both these are little more than tracks. On the Mode Hill side there is a small estate that is served by the one road. The area, although not a floodrisk, it is poorly drained with water always running from the land surrounding Mersey Drive Infant School.

References

Some of this information has been taken from Wikipedia which I acknowledge.