

Mill Gate.

BURY MILL GATE REGENERATION FRAMEWORK



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Introduction.

1

Introduction

1.1



The Mill Gate Shopping Centre ("the Mill Gate") sits at the very heart of Bury and its successful regeneration will be a major step forward for the Bury Town Centre Masterplan (2022). This Mill Gate Regeneration Framework ("the Framework") seeks to deliver "homegrown" regeneration that builds upon the area's existing strengths and unique assets, capturing the spirit of Bury in plans to revitalise the area.

This will be achieved through physical improvements to buildings and public realm; reconfiguration of the retail offer to make Mill Gate one of Greater Manchester's most attractive shopping and leisure destinations; harnessing and celebrating the local identity and character of the town; and growing the town centre's residential community. In this way, the Mill Gate can create sustainable inclusive growth opportunities for Bury's residents over the short, medium and long term.

The Framework sets out a vision and set of place based regeneration principles that seek to establish the Mill Gate as a vibrant mixed-use hub that meets the needs of the local community and stimulates future investment in the town centre. It also includes an illustrative masterplan, which imagines how the Mill Gate could look in the future if the vision is achieved.

- 1// Mill Gate Entrance (Market Street)
- 2// Library Gardens
- 3// Bury Market
- 4// The Rock Shopping Centre

The Framework vision and guiding principles are founded on an in-depth understanding of the Mill Gate, its interface with Bury Town Centre and local communities, and its location within the Borough and Greater Manchester.

This includes recognising and complementing the town centre's existing role and character, including its established retail function, a strong local entrepreneurial spirit epitomised by the nationally recognised Bury Market, rich historic cultural offer of museums and galleries, and strong regional transport connections, which are being enhanced by the new Bury Interchange.

In doing so, the Framework seeks to deliver genuine social and economic benefits for local people, which address the specific challenges and identified needs of the local community. This includes recognising the need to deliver improved local health outcomes; within the context of the Mill Gate's town centre location this requires new, innovative solutions and enhancements to integrate in with the existing infrastructure, such as active travel networks (e.g. Greater Manchester's Bee Network).

The Framework is being brought forward by Bury Metropolitan Borough Council ("the Council") and Bruntwood, who jointly acquired the Mill Gate shopping centre in 2022 ("the JV").



Mill Gate Today

Today, the range of uses and quality of environment in and around the Mill Gate are not maximising the town centre's potential. The Framework Area includes a variety of buildings that have been delivered on a piecemeal basis over the years. This has resulted in a lack of any cohesive architectural quality or style, under-utilised public realm, and poor connections, which collectively undermine the town centre's attractiveness as a place within which the local community and visitors want to spend time.

The current amount of retail floor space within the Framework Area is unsustainable due to the significant shift towards online shopping and new, less traditional, forms of retail and leisure. The area lacks a wider mix of uses and insufficient access to high quality, mixed tenure, multi-generational housing. This limited housing provision prevents the town centre from being a community of choice for those wanting to live in one of Greater Manchester's most vibrant town centres.

- 1// Parade at The Rock Shopping Centre
- 2// Parade at The Rock Shopping Centre
- 3// Bury Market
- 4// Bury, Mill Gate

The solutions to the full range of challenges and opportunities are multi-faceted and cannot be solved by this Framework alone. However, by identifying key regeneration drivers, the Framework can establish a series of 'golden threads' that run through the vision and objectives, place based principles, and the illustrative masterplan.

Overall, the Framework seeks to establish the long-term vision, objectives and development principles, which will ultimately provide the community with a clear understanding of the future potential for the Mill Gate and inform future decisions by the JV, the Council and those investing in the town centre.



1.2

Purpose of the Regeneration Framework



The Framework area is a prime example of a late 20th century retail development, and this Framework represents a unique opportunity to revitalise the significant, underutilised asset in Bury Town Centre. The purpose of the Framework is summarised as:

A Catalyst for the Town Centre

- The Framework is a central component of delivering Bury's Town Centre Masterplan and supports the Council's aims and objectives around inclusive economic growth in Bury's 2030 Let's Do It! Strategy.
- The Framework has been developed from an in-depth understanding of the Framework area, its interface with Bury Town Centre and local communities, and its location within the Borough and Greater Manchester. It has been directly informed by the Local Development Plan, Places for Everyone and other material considerations such as the Bury Town Centre Masterplan and Bury's Let's Do It! Strategy.

A Long-Term Vision

- The Framework provides a clear long term vision for the Framework area which aligns to key stakeholder expectations, objectives and priorities.
- A range of guiding principles are established within the Framework which underpin the overarching vision and objectives for a future-proofed Mill Gate, that supports the long term vitality Bury Town Centre.

A Guide for Future Development

- The Framework provides the strategic basis to guide the coordinated delivery of future development phases to maximise the environmental, economic and social potential of the town centre.

1.3

Structure of the Regeneration Framework



Report Navigation

This Regeneration Framework follows the below structure:



Section 01: Introduction

- Sets out the surrounding context and purpose of the RF, including introducing the Vision and Objectives.



Section 03: Site Analysis

- A summary assessment of key local considerations that have informed the Framework and will also inform future development proposals.



Section 05: Illustrative Masterplan

- An indicative representation of how the area could be developed over the regeneration period, including presenting key urban design strategies.



Section 07: Phasing & Delivery

- Sets out the indicative phasing and delivery strategy for bringing forward future proposals within the Regeneration Framework Area, including identifying key delivery considerations.



Section 02: Drivers for Regeneration

- An overview of the underlying factors that support the regeneration and investment opportunity.



Section 04: Development Principles

- Outlines the detailed place-based development principles that will guide future development proposals.



Section 06: Landscaping & Public Realm Strategy

- An overview of the landscaping and public realm guiding principles.



Section 08: Glossary

- An overview and explanation of terms used within the document.

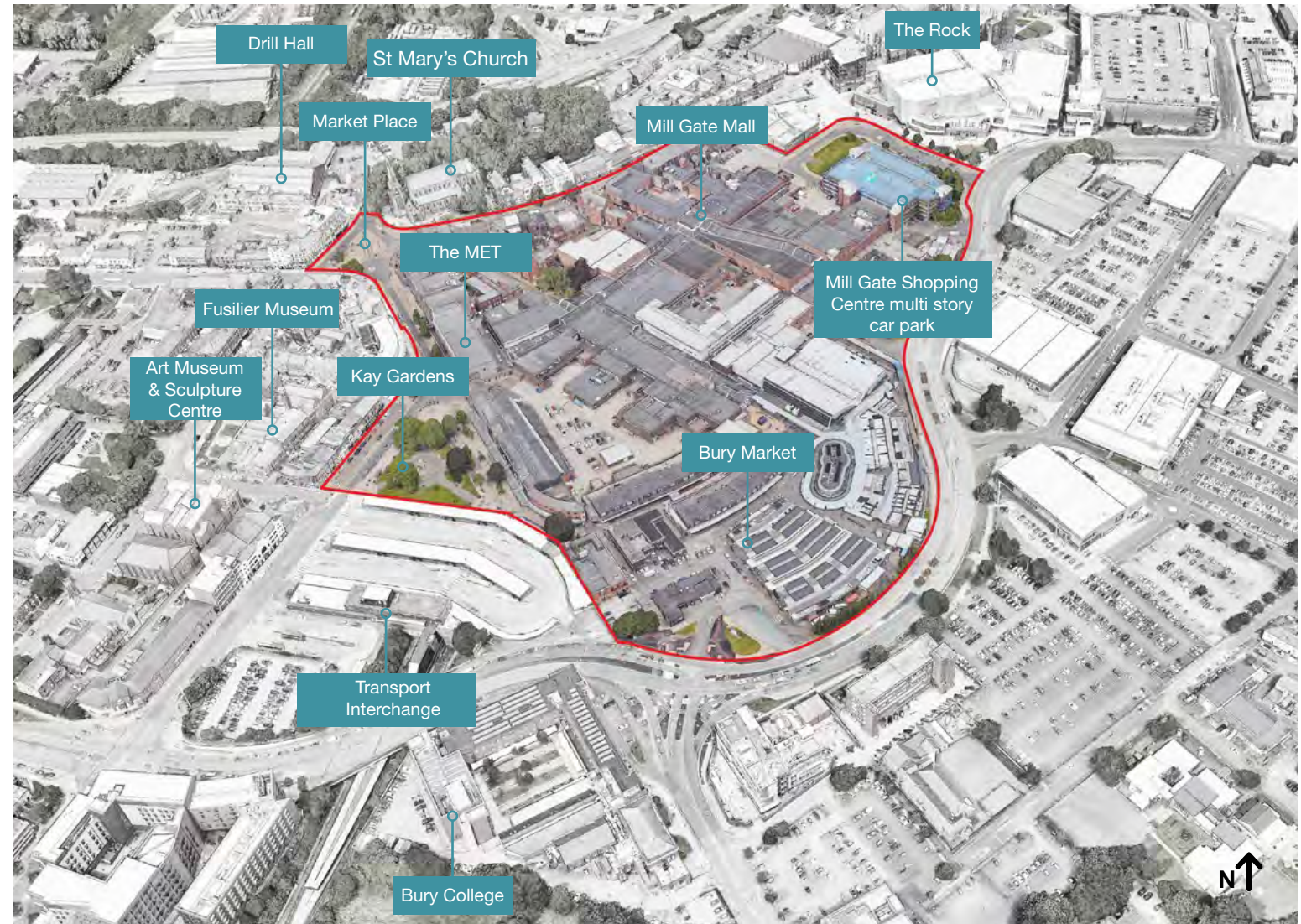
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Framework Area



The Framework area covers 10.9 hectares in the heart of Bury Town Centre.

The Framework Area is informed by the ownership of the Joint Venture. A number of additional areas of land have been included within the Framework area to extend to include areas of the public realm, within the ownership of Bury Council.





Key

- Mill Gate Regeneration Framework
- Bury Town Centre Masterplan
- Conservation Area



1.5

Challenges



A number of challenges facing Bury Town Centre and the Mill Gate Shopping Centre have been identified and informed by a detailed understanding of the Framework Area and its surrounding context. These challenges have provided the starting point for developing the Framework and its overarching vision, objectives and guiding development principles.

These key challenges are summarised below:

- **Retail** – the existing mix of retail within the Mill Gate is unsustainable, with an oversupply in the value led offer. Data indicates that Bury's town centre offer is only attractive to 25% of Bury's residents. The limited market opening days also means that for large parts of the week (daytime and evening) footfall is therefore reduced.
- **Residential** – Existing lack of housing mix and diversity within the town centre mean that Bury Town Centre is not a desirable location for people to live.
- **Public Realm** – the existing areas of public realm have been delivered on a piecemeal basis, with no underlying strategy. This has resulted in low quality spaces that local residents, workers and visitors only uses these spaces to pass through.

- **Poor Connectivity** – connectivity within the Framework area and beyond to other parts of Bury Town Centre and the surrounding communities is poor. This is exacerbated by a poor quality environment, including an over dominance of servicing yards and car parking, that hinders way finding and legibility.
- **Covered Mall** – the existing Covered Mall within the Mill Gate closes at 7pm which creates a blocker to the town centre, both physically and in terms of the evening economy.

Retail Mix



Limited residential offer



Lack of evening activity



Low quality public spaces



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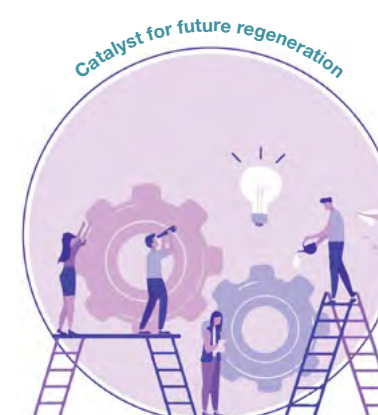
Opportunities

In response to the challenges facing Bury Town Centre and the Mill Gate Shopping Centre, there is clear, established opportunity to deliver an enhanced and future proofed town centre through the regeneration of the Mill Gate.

A number of key opportunities have been identified:

- **Creation of a Mixed-use hub** – Curate a retail, residential and leisure mix that meets the demands of a broader cross section of Bury's residents and creates a unique and attractive destination for visitors from across the region. This should include introducing varied leisure and F&B operators to support the evening and night time economy, and delivering a variety of new high quality homes to increase the town centre residential population.
- **Improve Local Opportunities and Outcomes** – deliver inclusive growth to support broader social and economic ambitions and opportunities for the community. This includes maximising socio-economic outcomes locally and improving the quality of life of Bury's residents and workers.

- **Catalyst for Future Regeneration** – the Framework represents the first major opportunity to bring forward catalytic investment in the Town Centre. It will align with improvement plans at the Interchange and will form the basis for enhancing connections with the wider town centre in all directions.
- **Celebrate the Market** – recognise the important role of the market as a key part of Bury's heritage and identity. Enhancing the surrounding environment to support the market's long term success through delivery of a complementary retail offer.
- **Improving the Built Environment** – deliver future development phases that are aligned with a cohesive masterplan and support the creation of one of the most attractive town centres in Greater Manchester. Provide attractive, safe and accessible routes and public spaces.



1.7

The Vision + Objectives



To enhance Bury Town Centre's role as a mixed use hub for the Borough and Greater Manchester that: supports local business and enterprise; fosters strong local identity and civic pride; meets the needs of the local community; delivers attractive and well connected spaces; and attracts investment to deliver sustainable and inclusive growth.

The Vision and it's supporting objectives provide the golden thread running through the Framework. The key objectives underpinning the Vision are as follows:

1. Deliver **inclusive growth** that seeks to maximise opportunities and social outcomes for Bury's residents.
2. Embed **environmental sustainability** into the design delivery and long term operation of Mill Gate.
3. Increase and **enhance the housing offer** to support a vibrant residential community in the heart of the town centre, whilst knitting in with the existing local communities.
4. Refresh and **diversify the town centre offer**, introducing more varied uses to meet current and future demands.
5. **Celebrate and enhance Bury's iconic and unique market**, to secure its long term success and destination maintain its role in the town centre.
6. Deliver **high quality public realm and connections** to improve access, function and vibrancy of outdoor spaces.



CATALYTIC REGENERATION + INCLUSIVE GROWTH

- Strengthen Bury's prime role within the region and borough as a mixed use town centre hub, to become one of Greater Manchester's most attractive destinations for residents, workers and visitors.
- Engage with the local community to shape the future of the Mill Gate and seek to address local needs.
- Deliver meaningful, measurable social impact, including through the delivery of improved health and wellbeing and opportunities for existing and future residents.
- Integrate the masterplan with the existing town centre and identify future strategic interventions to support on-going investment in Bury.
- Serve the needs of the local community and the surrounding towns through a clear focus on social impact, which is centred around the following themes: Strengthening the local economy by supporting local businesses, local employment, and local spend; furthering the inclusion and community cohesion agenda in Bury; addressing health disparities in and around the town centre; and strengthening community safety.
- Support future growth by strengthening the town centre's reputation as sustainable and attractive place for future investment.
- Successfully deliver the Framework's regeneration programme to support future strategic considerations and opportunities outside of the Framework Area, including supporting potential longer term infrastructure, funding and land assembly requirements.

A VIBRANT RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY

- Deliver new high quality, residential accommodation that responds to local housing need and supports the diversification and vitality of the town centre.
- Catalyse a self-sustaining housing market that can deliver high quality homes of choice, facilities and amenities for all stages of life and income.
- Develop affordable housing options that cater to the needs of lower-income families and individuals, ensuring that those who need it most have access to safe and secure housing within the town centre and surrounding areas.
- Seek to create a diverse, mixed and sustainable residential community that makes a positive contribution to the town centre.
- Identify opportunities to integrate existing and new residential communities within the town centre and beyond.

HIGH QUALITY PUBLIC REALM + CONNECTIONS

- Create a network of distinctive, high quality and well-connected spaces and routes that have a clear and unique role and function.
- Provide accessible and permeable routes for all and positively contribute towards the cycling and walking infrastructure network,
- Deliver a placemaking strategy that positively responds to Bury's heritage and identity, and strengthen the town centre's connection with the natural environment.
- Improve safety and security across the Framework Area, ensuring it is attractive and inclusive for all members of the community.

The Objectives.

The objectives build on the Vision and leverage the existing success of Mill Gate and Bury Town Centre to enable the delivery of a future proofed inclusive and sustainable town centre.

REFRESHED AND DIVERSE TOWN CENTRE

- Support the crucial role of the retail, leisure and cultural sectors and complement the existing town centre offer (including Bury Market, The Rock and the cultural quarter).
- Diversify Mill Gate's offering by introducing new uses that bolster and revitalise the town centre.
- Deliver a retail, leisure and visitor strategy that curates a vibrant mix of occupiers, which serve local needs and attract visitors.

EMBEDDING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Establish and commit to sustainability principles that run through the design, delivery and long term operation of all future proposals.
- Seek to deliver a Biodiversity net gain across the masterplan.
- Prioritise the natural environment to maximise community wellbeing benefits.

ENHANCING THE MARKET

- Improve the access, function and vitality of the market to secure its long term success and maintain its role in the town centre.
- Be sensitive to existing operations and ensure temporary arrangements maintain the quality and viability of the market throughout the delivery of the masterplan.

1.8

Planning Policy + Guidance



It will be essential for any future planning applications to accord with planning policy and consider guidance, to ensure that future proposals are in line with these. A detailed overview of the planning policy and guidance is provided at Appendix 01. This section provides an overview of the currently adopted policy and guidance at a national, regional and local level, which future applications will need to consider:

The Development Plan currently comprises:

- Bury Unitary Development Plan (Saved Policies) - 1997
- Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan – 2013
- Greater Manchester Joint Waste Plan – 2012

The Council is also currently progressing a new Local Plan which, once adopted, will replace the saved policies of the Bury UDP.

At the time of writing, PfE is due to be formally adopted in early 2024. It is therefore presumed that PfE will form part of the Development Plan, when the first planning application is brought forward within the Mill Gate Framework Area.

In addition, Bury has been working alongside eight other Greater Manchester districts to prepare the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE). This was submitted

to the Government for examination in February 2022. The Inspectors have now concluded their examination of the plan and have issued their findings and recommendations in their Inspectors' Report which was received on 14 February 2024. In that report the Inspectors conclude that all legal requirements have been met and that, with the recommended main modifications, PfE is sound.

The nine districts will be seeking Council approval during February and March 2024 to adopt PfE with effect from 21 March 2024. Once PfE is adopted it will become a key part of the statutory development plans of each constituent district, including Bury, and would be given full weight in the determination of any planning applications to be submitted within the Mill Gate Framework area.

The following documents comprise material planning considerations in the determination of planning applications within the Framework Area:

National planning policy and guidance, including:

- National Planning Policy Framework (2023)
- National Planning Practice Guidance
- National Model Design Code (2021)

Regional and sub-regional policy and guidance, including:

- Greater Manchester Strategy 2021-2031
- Places for Everyone (PfE) Main Modifications Draft (2023)
- Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040,
- Greater Manchester Work and Skills Strategy 2022-2027
- Greater Manchester's Walking and Cycling Investment Plan (Bee Network) 2020.

Local Planning Policy and Guidance, including:

- Bury Supplementary Planning Guidance
- Bury Town Centre Masterplan (2022)
- Bury Transport Strategy (2023)
- Bury Housing Strategy 2021 – 2026
- Bury 2030 Vision – Let's Do It! Strategy
- Emerging Bury Local Plan
- Bury Economic Development Strategy 2024 - 2034



Planning Policy and Guidance Front Covers

Engagement

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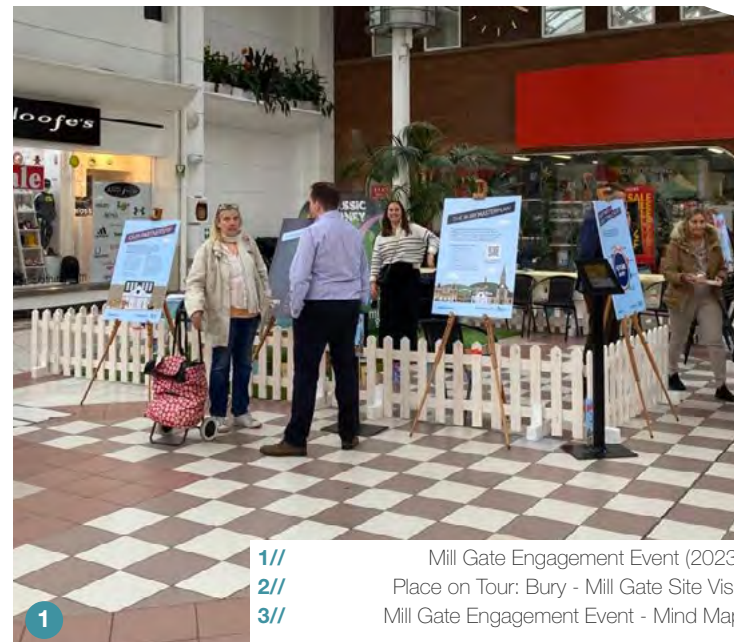


- Two early public engagement events took place in Autumn 2022 and July 2023. These public engagement events provided an early opportunity to hear the views of the local community.
- Additional engagement has taken place during the preparation of the RF with a range of key stakeholder groups, including:
 - Local Members
 - Bury Council Officers, including planning and highways
 - Local businesses and associations
 - Local community groups and organisations

A formal public consultation took place on the RF from between 16 November 2023 and 11 January 2024. This included two in-person consultation events in the Mill Gate shopping centre.

- The consultation process has provided a valuable opportunity for the JV to listen and engage with the local community, and to ensure that local voices have been considered and represented in shaping the future of the Mill Gate. The consultation undertaken been used to inform the final version of the RF.

- Future proposals will be expected to consider and respond to the Regeneration Framework as part of the planning application process. Within this context, future proposals will be subject to further public and local community engagement to enable stakeholders to understand and comment on the extent to which proposals address the strategic vision, objectives and development principles set out by the RF.



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2//
3//

Mill Gate Engagement Event (2023)
Place on Tour: Bury - Mill Gate Site Visit
Mill Gate Engagement Event - Mind Map



3

1.10

Status of the Regeneration Framework



This Framework has been subject to a period of public consultation. Following the consultation period, the responses received have been considered and, as required, the Framework has been updated.

This updated Framework will be considered by Bury Council's Cabinet for endorsement.

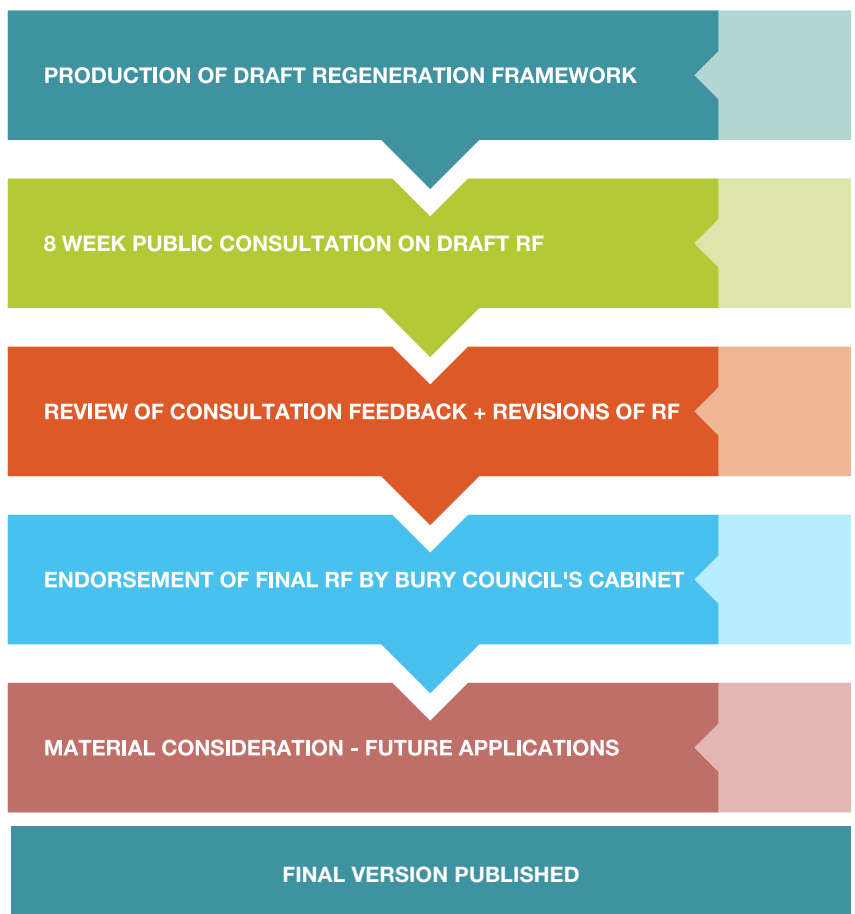
Once endorsed by Bury Council, the Mill Gate RF will act as a material consideration for the Local Planning Authority in the determination of future planning applications that fall within the Framework area.

Notwithstanding this, future proposals will continue to be determined through the statutory planning process. This will include a full and robust assessment in accordance with national, regional and local planning policy, as well as any other material considerations.

Flexibility //

The Framework provides the foundation for future development regeneration proposals, whilst ensuring that the necessary flexibility is provided to enable the detailed design of each plot to be refined. The flexibility of the Framework is important to allow future development to respond to changing market conditions, technological advancements, design

innovation, technical analysis and environmental considerations, throughout the long-term delivery phase.



The Team

1.11



Project Team

Mill Gate.

The Framework has been brought forward by Bury Bruntwood (Mill Gate) LLP (a Joint Venture between Bruntwood and Bury Council).

The Framework has been informed by discussions with Senior Officers at Bury Council. This collaboration with the Local Authority has sought to ensure that the Framework aligns with Bury Council's strategic objectives and that it provides a suitable level of detailed guidance to inform future proposals.

The Framework has been prepared by an appointed multi-disciplinary team, including:

- BDP
- Deloitte
- Layer
- Curtins
- Crookes Walker Consulting
- Hatch

