



NorthFold

# Welcome to the **Fold**

Delivering a healthier, greener and more  
prosperous future for Wigan and Bolton

Investment **Opportunity**



“Welcome to NorthFold, an unprecedented collaboration between two leading local authorities, private sector partners and a range of investors.”

# Foreword

"This strategic growth corridor brings the very best of Wigan and Bolton together to create new sustainable communities, thriving employment zones, and unique investment opportunities.

"Over the next decade and beyond, NorthFold will be at the forefront of sustainable housing, health innovation, food manufacturing, logistics, sports and leisure.

"An integral part of Greater Manchester's Places for Everyone framework strategy, the NorthFold vision has political backing at local, regional and national level giving investors the confidence that comes from consistent and joined-up leadership.

"With trusted partners like Peel Land already on board, NorthFold's pipeline of delivery features six catalyst projects, each due to commence in the short term and offering exciting opportunities for potential investors and developers.

"Health Innovation Bolton and the NorthFold Food Innovation Centre will be at the forefront of these two growth sectors - creating products that will appeal to consumers both nationally and internationally.

"Haigh Hall and Hulton Park's Ryder Cup bid will

enhance the areas already outstanding reputation as a sporting, leisure and cultural destination.

"The growth area is bookended by the Wigan and Bolton town centres, each is being transformed through strategic regeneration and forward-thinking policies.

"From established cultural institutions like the Bolton Albert Halls and The Museum of Wigan Life, to major redevelopments at The Galleries and Crompton Place, both of these proud northern towns have plenty to offer potential residents and investors alike.

"Connectivity lies at the heart of NorthFold, where road and rail infrastructure will bring the city region even closer to Manchester Airport and Liverpool City Region Freeport.

"With unrivalled connectivity, long-term commitment from an established public and private sector partnership, and a clear plan for delivery - NorthFold is a great place to do business.

"Join us as we build a healthier, greener and more prosperous future for everyone.

**"Welcome to the fold."**



Councillor David Molyneux MBE,  
Leader of Wigan Council



Councillor Nick Peel,  
Leader of Bolton Council



Andy Burnham,  
Mayor of Greater Manchester

**Bolton**  
Council



**Wigan**  
Council

**GMCA** GREATER  
MANCHESTER  
COMBINED  
AUTHORITY



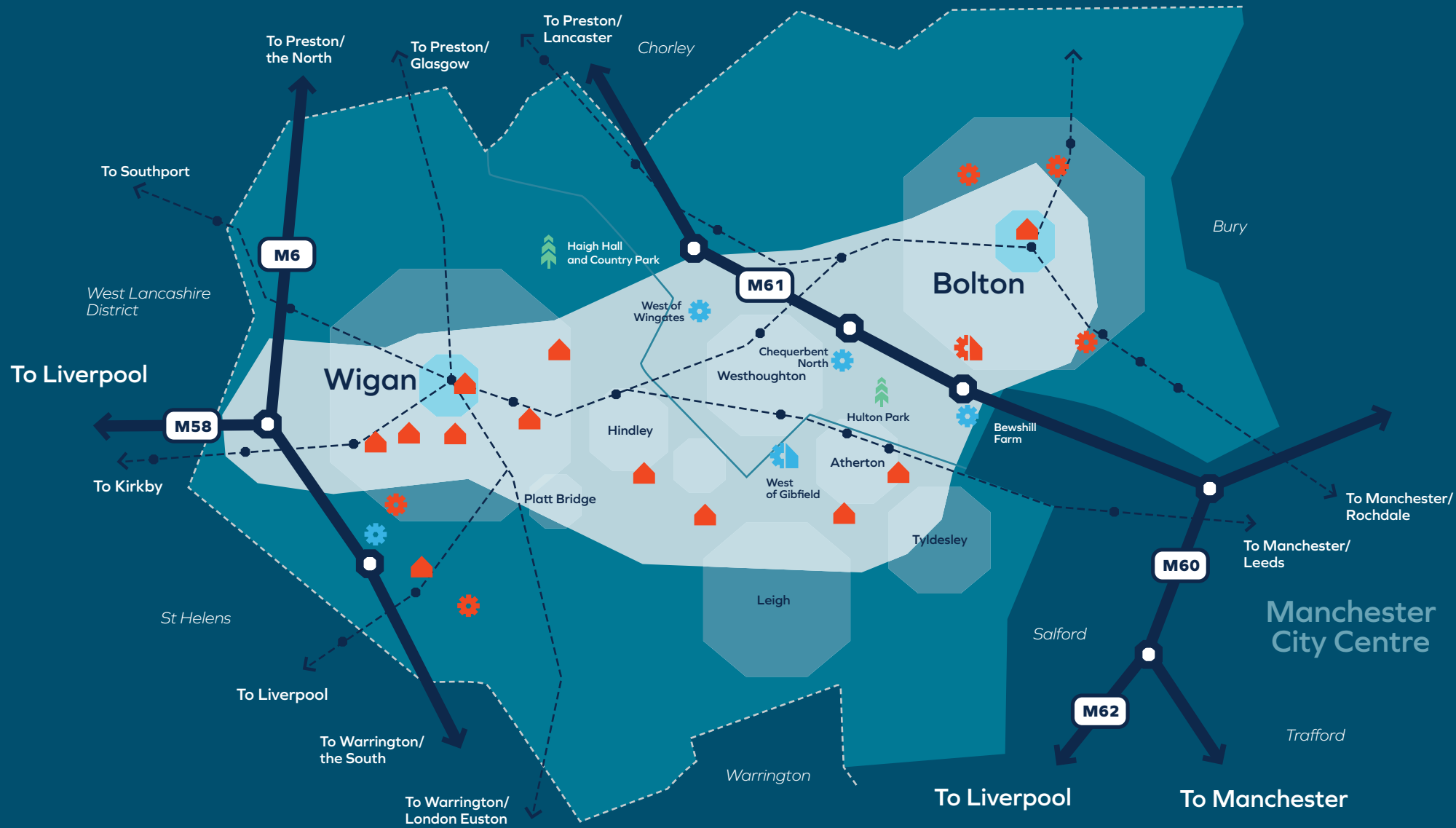
# Our vision

“By 2035, NorthFold will be an established investment location within Greater Manchester, focused on driving economic growth and innovation in future food technology and health and wellbeing.

“NorthFold will be recognised as a location with a reputation for culture and sport, supported by thriving town and district centres and significant high-quality housing.”



- UK Links
- NorthFold
- Key airports
- Key ports



# The NorthFold opportunity

## Commitment to collaboration

Both Bolton and Wigan Councils are committed to seeing NorthFold thrive, exploring every avenue of opportunity, driving investment and enhancing competitiveness across the north of Greater Manchester. These shared values will create a supportive ecosystem for inward investment.

## National connectivity

Located on the M6, M61 and West Coast Mainline with North South transport routes close to the M60 and M62, creating strong logistics functions and increasing employment opportunities.

## Culture and events

Well-established and successful annual cultural and events programme. Home to an abundance of exciting museums, galleries and music venues. Bolton was named as Greater Manchester's Town of Culture 2024 and celebrates its 20th annual food and drink festival in 2025.

## Links to economic centres

Ideal for commuters or businesses, NorthFold boasts an 18-minute train to Manchester from Bolton and 33 minutes from Wigan. With links to the West Coast Mainline, it is well connected to Liverpool, Preston and London.

## Well-established towns

Strong network of town centres within the NorthFold boundary: including Bolton, Wigan, Leigh, Atherton, Westhoughton, Horwich, Tyldesley, Farnworth and Hindley, each with distinctive communities.

## Natural environment

The West Pennine Moors, the Flashes of Wigan and Leigh National Nature Reserve, Haigh Woodland Park and Moses Gate Local Nature Reserve are located just outside NorthFold, making the area an attractive place to live and visit.





### Affordability

NorthFold is affordable compared to neighbouring towns and cities. Value for money creates a draw for people to live in NorthFold.

### University towns

NorthFold is home to the University of Greater Manchester, Bolton College, The Sixth Form Bolton and Bolton School, University Centre Wigan and Leigh College (UK partner institution of UCLAN) and has links to Edge Hill University, in Ormskirk, via the Edge Hill Civic Agreement signed by leaders of several anchor institutions in Wigan.

### Sports

Home to Bolton Wanderers, Wigan Athletic, Wigan Warriors and Leigh Leopards. Hosted the Rugby League World Cup in 2023, UEFA Women's EURO 2022 and 2024 Tour of Britain Women. Bolton, with the support of Wigan, hosts IRONMAN UK alongside the world's largest IRONKIDS, inspiring future generations of athletes.



# A bright future for NorthFold

Located in North-West Greater Manchester, NorthFold is one of six established Greater Manchester Growth Locations. These growth locations will steer the evolution of the city region in the decades and years to come.

NorthFold's potential to accommodate new homes, cultural, retail and leisure attractions, industrial premises, and developments supporting food and health innovation is well highlighted in the Places for Everyone plan for the city-region.

These commitments are marked by action and shared ambitions from the public and private sectors to create new high-skilled jobs, enhance population growth, and boost spending, business rates and value.

## Exciting new homes for everyone

Successful delivery of the current development pipeline will see 9,000 new homes built, boosting the current population by 21,000.

Living in NorthFold will give people the best of both worlds – with access to countryside and green spaces as well as convenient links by road, rail and bus to Manchester, Liverpool and further afield.

These homes will contribute to the positive house price growth story in Wigan and Bolton, where, between 2019 and 2024, house prices saw an average uplift of 39.5%.

Successful delivery of the vision for NorthFold and the economic benefits by 2035

**9,000**  
new homes

**29,000 sqm**  
office space

**342,000 sqm**  
industrial space

**600**  
hotel beds

**20**  
food  
spa

**8,000**  
sqm  
edu

**4,000 sqm**  
gym and indoor  
sports use

**21,000**  
new population

**£356.3m**  
Gross Value Added (GVA)

**75,000**  
new homes target  
set by the Greater  
Manchester  
Places For  
Everyone plan.

**£25.1m**  
additional annual  
visitor spend

**20,000 sqm**  
food and beverage  
space

**9,000 sqm**  
retail space

**£7.3m**  
annual business rates

**8,000  
sqm**  
education space

**£239.9m**  
additional  
annual  
household  
spend

**158,000**  
new visitors per year

**16,500**  
new jobs



# NorthFold catalyst projects

There are six 'catalyst projects' which represent key opportunities for investment. Together they will drive productivity and growth, create enhanced sport and culture and further bolster Wigan and Bolton town centres to attract residents, businesses and visitors.

**1. Wigan Town Centre** will become a destination for combining shopping with leisure. As well as delivering new homes, the developments at Wigan Galleries, Cotton Works and ultimately Wigan Station Gateway will entice town centre visitors during the day and allow them to extend their stay into the evening.

This regeneration will increase footfall, attract additional businesses and retailers, and be a catalyst for future developments across the town.

**2. Bolton Town Centre** is rising to the challenge posed by changing shopping habits with a comprehensive £1bn regeneration masterplan.

While a quality retail offer is consolidated around the outstanding Market Place, new residential opportunities are being created at Moor Lane, Deansgate Gardens, Church Wharf and Trinity Quarter.

The flagship redevelopment of Crompton Place is set to attract further private sector investment.

In conjunction with the GM Mayor, a new Mayoral Development Corporation, will support the creation of new jobs, skills and training opportunities for local people.

**3. Haigh Hall** and the surrounding woodland park is undergoing an exciting multi-million-pound restoration programme.

This masterplan will transform Haigh Hall into a nationally significant arts, culture and heritage destination providing a world class visitor experience.

Once complete, the hall will include an art gallery, education area for children, event space for weddings and parties, rooftop terrace, restaurant, bar and much more.

The works to the hall are funded by £20m from Levelling Up Funding and Wigan Council funding of around £21m.



2

**£1bn**  
Regeneration  
Masterplan



3

**£20m**

Levelling Up  
Funding

**£21m**

Wigan Council  
Funding



**4. Hulton Park** will be transformed into a world-class, custom-built golf venue and destination resort, capable of the hosting championship golf events. It has been shortlisted by UK Sport and Ryder Cup Europe as a potential candidate for the Ryder Cup in 2035 and has the potential to host 60,000 plus spectators daily. The golf venue forms the centrepiece of a new destination which includes a luxury hotel and lodges, health and country club, new homes, retail space, food and beverage opportunities, new transport and community infrastructure and accessible green spaces.

4

**60K+**

Spectators

Hotel, Houses, Food & beverage, gym and indoor sports

**5. Health Innovation Bolton (HIB)** will be NorthFold's primary health innovation zone specialising in wellness and preventative medicine. With a focus on healthy living, ageing and addressing local health disparities, NorthFold has an opportunity to contribute to improving community health. Located close to Royal Bolton Hospital and the new Institute of Medical Sciences, HIB will create skills, training and commercial opportunities for the healthcare sector. The public private partnership alongside University of Greater Manchester will focus research and development activity while also boosting the health and wellbeing sector within NorthFold, contributing to long-term growth, and expanding the wider Greater Manchester Health Innovation ecosystem, including The Corridor.

**6. NorthFold Food Innovation Centre**

has the potential to become a national cluster for food innovation and advanced manufacturing. Building on existing food industry specialisms in the area, such as Heinz and Warburtons, the Food Innovation Centre could support research and development activity, supply chain development, commercial opportunities and start-ups.

Bolton was named as Greater Manchester's Town of Culture 2024. In 2025, the annual food and drink festival in 2025 will return for its 20th iteration, fresh from receiving the "Leading Live Event" category at the 2024 'This Is Manchester Awards'.



# Making NorthFold a success

With investment, we will see growth across a range of existing and emerging sectors.

The NorthFold area has a large portfolio of manufacturing businesses, with a specialism in food manufacturing. There is also the potential to build on Northfold's existing health and training institutions to drive growth in health and innovation.

NorthFold is already home to Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Wigan and Leigh College's Centre of Excellence in Health and Social Care, and the Royal Bolton Hospital (Bolton NHS Foundation Trust).

A new Institute of Medical Sciences, a collaborative project between the University of Greater Manchester, Bolton College, Bolton NHS Foundation Trust and Bolton Council, opened world-class facilities in the hospital grounds in 2024 and will offer a five-year undergraduate medical degree (MBChB) from 2025.

The proposals for a Wigan Health and Social Care Academy and Health Innovation Bolton add to the health portfolio.

The existing educational sites have scope to grow, meeting the need for skills and training and increasing the performance, productivity and qualifications of the NorthFold workforce.

NorthFold will be a place for start-ups and SMEs to find their feet and grow, creating more employment opportunities in exciting new fields and creating more skilled workers across a range of sectors. This will in turn support future development, boost local productivity and drive innovation.

With established supply chain and logistic developments, including Logistics North and Wingates, NorthFold can grow in the logistics sector with several development sites identified.

NorthFold's access to the M58, M61 and M6, improved east-west transport links and its proximity to Manchester Airport and the Port of Liverpool will aid its expansion.



# Key sites and opportunities

NorthFold is home to several economic investment opportunity sites that have been allocated within Places for Everyone.

These sites, largely brownfield, have the potential to deliver large-scale housing and employment development opportunities.

## Opportunity sites:

- 1 Bewshill Farm** – around 21,000 sqm of industrial and warehousing floorspace, complementing the development at Logistics North
- 2 Chequerbent North** - around 25,000 sqm of industrial and logistics uses
- 3 West of Wingates** - large scale distribution and advanced manufacturing at M61 Junction 6
- 4 Symmetry Park** – industrial and manufacturing use with ancillary office space at M6 Junction 25
- 5 West of Gibfield** - substantial housing and employment development, including new green infrastructure and a country park serving Atherton, Daisy Hill and Westhoughton
- 6 North Leigh** - housing site with outline consent for 1,800 homes
- 7 South Hindley** - mixed-use development including delivery of up to 2,000 homes
- 8 Westwood Park** – housing-led mixed-use site in proximity to Wigan Flashes
- 9 Hulton Park** - the restoration of the park and the provision of a Ryder Cup standard golf course and associated leisure and tourism facilities
- 10 Health Innovation Bolton** - the development of a health innovation cluster, including a health village on land at Royal Bolton Hospital



# Connecting you to NorthFold through transport and infrastructure

New and improved transport links across NorthFold are crucial, and involve developments with roads, the rail and bus network and active travel options.

## Road

The East-West Link Road (M58) will provide a reliable new route across Wigan and Bolton, enabling access to NorthFold's housing and employment sites and easing congestion. Together with A577 complementary works, expected within 18 months of the link road, the improved road network will encourage more active travel and bus journeys.

## Rail

The Wigan Bolton Electrification will improve the quality, capacity and reliability of rail services between Wigan and Bolton, as well as providing vital access to NorthFold. The £100m scheme is underway and is due to be completed in 2025. A new integrated travel hub at Wigan Station Gateway, together with upgrades to stations at Atherton and Westhoughton, will enhance public transport.

## Bus

Links to both town centres and Manchester will also benefit from improvements to the local bus network as part of the Greater Manchester Bee Network, known as Quality Bus Transit (QBT) corridors.

## Active travel

Improvements to the current walking and cycling networks will link existing and new communities to local services and reduce car use on shorter journeys.

The new transport links and active travel options will also enable people to make use of NorthFold's existing country parks and open spaces.

## Innovation

The introduction of self-driving vehicle technology is also being explored with an Autonomous Connected Electric Shares (ACES) shuttle service between Bolton Interchange and the Royal Bolton Hospital.

## Travelling by road?



Wigan to Bolton  
**30 min**

NorthFold to  
Liverpool **32 min**

NorthFold to  
Manchester **20 min**

NorthFold to  
Birmingham **1hr 35min**

NorthFold  
to Preston **13 min**

NorthFold  
to London **2 hrs**

## Travelling by rail?

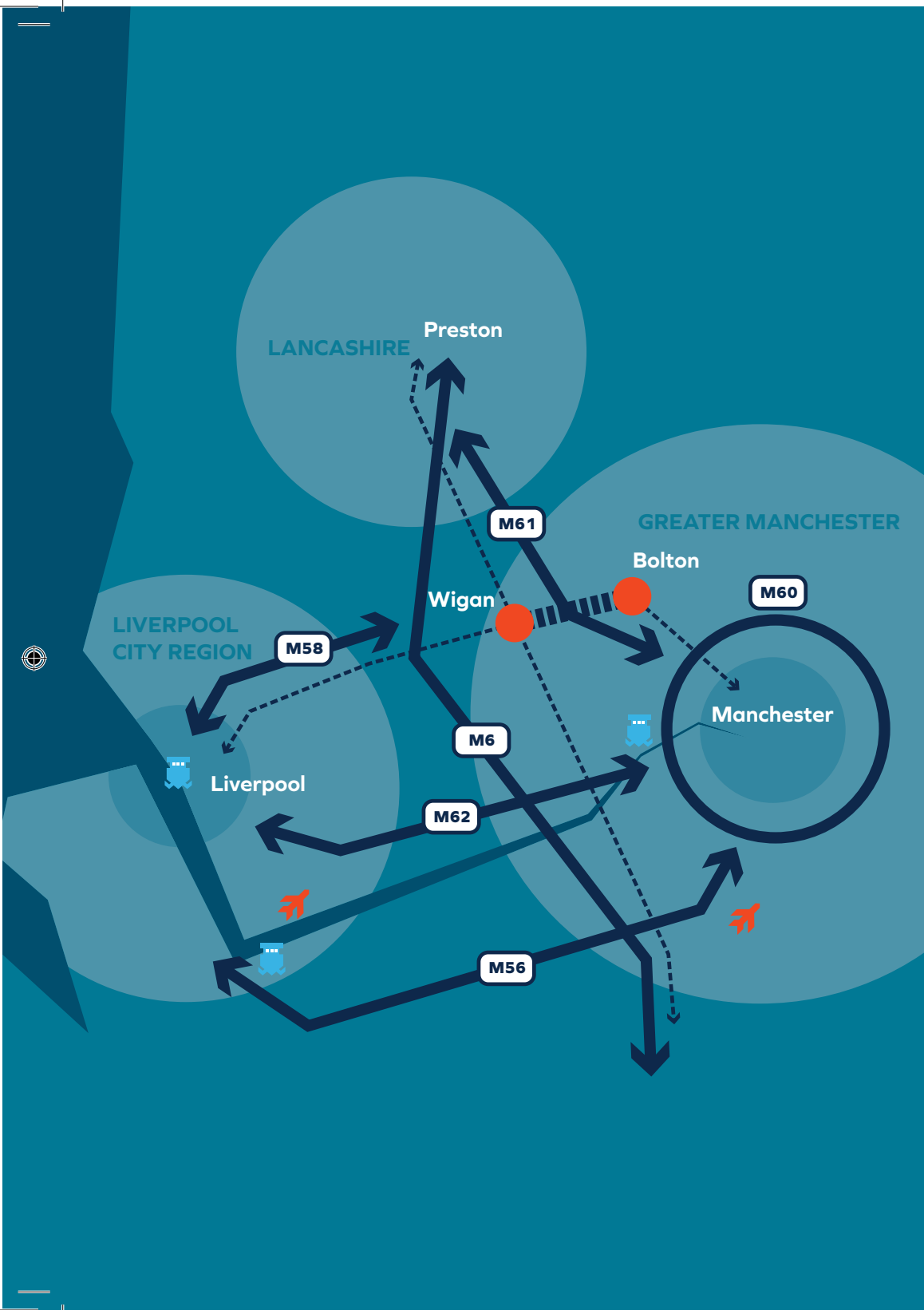
Wigan to Bolton..... **18 min**

NorthFold to Manchester Airport..... **25 min**

NorthFold to Manchester Centre ..... **30 min**

NorthFold to Port of Liverpool..... **50 min**

NorthFold to Port of Hull ..... **Less than 2hrs**



# Investing in NorthFold

Private sector partners are already bought into the NorthFold vision.

Partners, including Peel Land, Step Places and CityHeart, already own several strategic sites within NorthFold and is committed to bringing projects forward via public-private partnerships designed to stimulate economic growth and deliver social value.

We have established a vision for sustainable and inclusive growth, identifying six catalyst projects which represent key opportunities for investment in NorthFold, alongside several economic and residential investment opportunity sites.

Our vision also includes significant infrastructure improvements to further enhance connectivity and plans for housing growth.

This prospectus sets out the vision and the opportunity for NorthFold. As one of six Greater Manchester

Growth Locations and as part of the GMCA trailblazer funding deal, NorthFold will receive support from the Combined Authority to enable strategic growth.

With investment, we can better connect and realise our vision and the potential of NorthFold. The economic potential is great, but we are at a very early stage. We now need government backing and investment.

NorthFold has the potential to be a genuine global asset and a national/northern investment priority.

With this investment, NorthFold can bring £356.3m Gross Value Added (GVA) to its economy. With committed and sustained support, this can be achieved through health innovation and sustainable food production, which will help accelerate economic growth and will create a great place to do business and a desirable place to live.



NorthFold

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