STATEMENT OF CASE

MOORGATE FOOTBRIDGE CAM PAIGN GROUP

DOCUMENT LIST

For Part 1 of Statement

	Title of Document	**Specific part of document.**
1	Document submitted by Network Rail to Oldham Council in support of tis planning application ref FUL/349203/22. Submitted on both 30th May 2022 and 1st June 2022 and known as both "Covering Latter" and "Design and Access Statement.	All
2	Letter emailed to Saddleworth Parish Council on 19th May 2025 from Communications Manager Transpemminr Route Upgrade	Paragraphs 1 and 4
3	Network Rail report to the Highway Regulation Committee of Oldham Council on 18th July 2024. Dated 4th August 2023. Signed by Vicki Bentley	All
4	Network Rail report to the Highway Regulation Committee of Oldham Council on 18th July 2024. Report titled "Additional Information to support an application to extinguish or divert footpath 209 SADD over Moorgate Level Crossing"	All
5	Leaflet describing Moorgate Quarry Recreation Area	Photographs attached
6	Oldham Local Plan 2011 and current draft Oldham Local Plan Review as referenced in Network Rail's application	Policy and Proposal Map relating to "Our Centres" in each document
7	Uppermill Trail circular walk leaflet	Photograph attached
8	Extract from the book "Wind Among the Heather" by Ammon Wrigley. Published, Huddersfield 2016. Alfred Jubb and Sons, Albany Printing Works.	Photograph of page 64 attached.
9	"Safety Risk Assessment". GG104 September 2025 by Mayer Brown	All
10	"Highways Statement" July 2025 by Mayer Brown	All

For Part 2 Consultation

Documents 1, 2, 9 and 10 above are relevant.

We have assumed that we do not need to provide copies of documents which have been prepared by Network Rail, or others on behalf of Network Rail. We have assumed that we do not need to provide links to the local development plan documents referred to at 6 above. Network Rail has already referenced these in its application. Where appropriate, we have pointed to particular parts of these documents.

Copies of documents 5, 7 and 8 are attached. Please advise us if further information is needed.

Background

The Trans-Pennine Route Upgrade (TRU) Programme is a rail enhancement programme established to increase capacity and improve reliability/journey times between Manchester Victoria and York, via Huddersfield and Leeds.

The West of Leeds element of the TRU programme is split into various geographical zones, with Project W2B (of which this planning application will be part) running from Stalybridge to Geldholt Tunnel, Huddersfield. The proposed works are required to be undertaken at an earlier stage than the majority of the W2B works, in order to support the construction programme at other parts of the TRU programme. The proposed works and their interrelationship with the wider W2B project has been discussed with the Council previously as part of ongoing stakeholder engagement for Project W2B.

Network Rail (NR) usually invokes the Prior Approval process under Part 18 to Schedule 2 of the Town & County Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) (the GPDO) for new or replacement bridges, and the rest of the works would usually be permitted development under Part 8 of the GPDO. In this case, whilst the majority of the application site (the Site) lies on land which is owned by NR, a small section of the footpath to be upgraded stretches onto third party land (see Existing and Proposed GA plans) which triggers the requirement for Full planning permission.

The Application Site and Surrounding Area

The Site consists of the Moorgate Halt Level Crossing, and sections of the existing PROW (ref. 6612/6240) footpath on either side of the crossing which are to be upgraded (see the Existing GA plan). The Site is located on the western side of Uppermill, within a railway embankment. The Moorgate Halt Level Crossing currently provides the railway crossing point for a Green Lane PROW at this location. The level crossing is unmanned and is accessed via a kissing gate. The PROW is a popular route for recreational purposes. The existing footpath experiences localised flooding and the retaining walls on sections of the footpath are in poor condition.

The embankments on either side of the railway corridor feature relatively dense areas of trees and vegetation. The majority of the Site lies within the existing railway corridor away from the vegetation, albeit sections of the footpath to be upgraded extend into the vegetated areas.

The Uppermill Conservation Area boundary lies along the eastern side of the railway corridor at the Site, and thus the proposed works to upgrade the footpath on the eastern side extend into the conservation area. The Site is also located within the Green Belt.

Development Management
Planning Services
Oldham Council
Civic Centre
West Street
Oldham
OL1 1UT

Square One,
4 Travis Street
Manchester
M1 2NY
michael.gradwell@networkrail.co.uk

Date: 23/02/2026

Dear Sir/Madam,

Application for Full Planning Permission (with Section 257 Order for Public Right of Way Diversion), for a new footbridge and upgrades to an existing footpath at Moorgate Halt Level Crossing, Uppermill, Oldham.

Please find enclosed details to support a Full planning application under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) for the construction of a new footbridge to replace Moorgate Halt Level Crossing at Uppermill, and upgrades to the existing footpath (the proposed works). The proposed works are being undertaken as part of the Trans-Pennine Route Upgrade (TRU) Programme.

The following plans and supporting material have been submitted with this application:

Location Plan (scale 1:1250)
Drawing no. 151667-TSA-26-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-040002 Rev. P02: Existing General Arrangement
Drawing no. 151667-TSA-26-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-040003 Rev. P03: Proposed General Arrangement
Drawing no. 151667-TSA-26-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-040004 Rev. P03: Proposed General Arrangement 2
Ecological Impact Assessment (including Figure 1 – Habitat Features Plan, and Figure 2 – Statutory Sites and Priority Habitat)
Arboricultural Impact Assessment (including Tree Removal Plan and Constraints Plan)

Given that a Public Right of Way (PROW) (ref. 6612/6240) passes over Moorgate Halt Level Crossing, which is to be diverted over the proposed footbridge, a Section 257 Order for PROW diversion has been submitted alongside this planning application.

The Ladcastle and Den Quarries Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies to the north west of the Site. Given that this is a geological SSSI, and the Site lies outside of the SSSI impact risk zone, the proposed works will not have any impacts upon this SSSI.

Given the location of the Site within the railway cutting, which is bordered by relatively steep embankments on either side, it will not be visible from outside of the railway cutting, including from within Uppermill.

Planning History

A review of Oldham Council's online planning records has been undertaken, which has found the following planning history within the immediate vicinity of the proposed works:

- Ref. PA/340631/17 – In March 2018 an application for Full planning permission for one detached dwelling to the north east of the Site, on the edge of the railway corridor was refused planning permission. An Appeal was subsequently dismissed. The proposed development was refused due to its negative impact on the Uppermill Conservation Area.
- Ref. FUL/345685/20 – A Full planning application for one detached dwelling on the same site was submitted in October 2020, and is still under consideration according to the Council's online files.

It is not considered that either of the above applications have any direct implications for the proposed works.

The Proposed Works

As shown on the Proposed GA plans, a single span stepped access steel footbridge is proposed to replace Moorgate Halt Level Crossing, which is to be removed. The footbridge will be supported by steel columns, and sections of the stairways on either side of the bridge will be supported by precast concrete units with stone cladding on either side.

The external faces of the footbridge will be weathering steel with black painted components (see Proposed GA plans). The appearance of weathering steel will not degrade over time, and this material will require minimal maintenance. The inside face of the footbridge will however be painted green to support the amenity of footpath users given that the inside faces will be more sheltered from erosion.

The proposed bridge parapets will be 1.85 metres in height and made from solid steel. This is in order to reduce risk of direct contact with exposed live parts of the OLE to be installed as part of the electrification of the railway line, which is a key feature of the wider TRU Programme. This parapet height is in accordance with British Standard BS EN 50122 Railway

applications – fixed installations, Part 1: Protective provision relating to electrical safety and earthing.

On the eastern side of the proposed footbridge, minor regrading of the railway embankment is proposed to allow the addition of a precast reinforced concrete platform to support the footbridge and its staircase on this side. Pre-cast reinforced concrete steps with anti-slip surfacing are proposed from the concrete platform to the level of the existing footpath. Resurfacing of a section of the footpath is proposed at this location, to include a 1.25 metre long section of tarmac, and a 10 metre long section of corduroy tactile paving. Along this section of the footpath, the existing stone walls on either side which are in poor condition will be reinstated.

On the western side of the footbridge, footpath resurfacing is proposed in the form of a 1.25 metre long level tarmac landing at the base of the footbridge steps, and a 20 metre long gravel-filled trench within the middle section of the footpath. In order to address the localised surface water flooding issues which have been reported, new drainage channels (approx. 300mm in width and depth) are to be incorporated along this section of the footpath, and tied into the existing trackside drainage which will be upgraded in the railway cess.

Security fencing, comprising 2.1 metre high mesh fencing panels, is also proposed along the proposed footbridge steps and at sections of the footpath on either side, to deter railway trespassing and reduce safety risks associated with the electrification of the railway line at this location.

Environmental Social Management Plan

As part of its standard procedures, NR will produce an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), to manage the environmental and social impacts from the proposed works. The ESMP will be produced in 2022 and the proposed works will be carried out in accordance with the measures set out in it.

As set out under 'Assessment Against Key Planning Considerations' in this letter, four trees need to be removed as part of the proposed works. The removal of these trees will however be taken into account in the TRU route-wide approach to Biodiversity Net Gain, which will inform the compensatory planting to be undertaken as part of the TRU Programme. The implementation of these measures will be required as part of the measures to be included in the ESMP.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.
Chapter 9 (Promoting Sustainable Transport) states that transport issues should be considered in development proposals so that 'opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised', and 'opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued' (paragraph 104).

Chapter 13 (Protecting Green Belt Land) sets out at paragraph 138 that "Green Belt serves 5 purposes:

a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land".

Paragraph 147 stipulates that "inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances". Paragraph 148 adds that "'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations".

Paragraphs 149 and 150 set out types of development which are not inappropriate, which includes "local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location" (paragraph 150). Paragraph 150 also requires that such developments preserve the openness of the green belt "and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it".

Chapter 16 (Conservating and Enhancing the Historic Environment) stipulates at paragraph 200 that "any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification".

Chapter 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment) requires that when determining planning applications local authorities should refuse permission if "significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for" (paragraph 180).

Local Plan

Policy 5 (Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices) stipulates that all development must not "compromise pedestrian or highway safety".

Policy 20 (Design) requires development proposals to meet a series of design principles, including inter alia: Safety and Inclusion, and Designing for Future Maintenance.

Policy 21 (Protecting Natural Environmental Assets) requires that development proposals "protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity", and "protect and maximise opportunities for Green Infrastructure at or near to the site".

Policy 22 (Protecting Open Land) states that "development in the Green Belt will be permitted provided it does not conflict with national policies on Green Belt".

The supporting text to Policy 23 (Open Spaces and Sports) acknowledges that "access to quality open space is essential to health and well-being, encouraging increased physical activity and exercise and contributing to improved mental health".

Policy 24 (Historic Environment) stipulates that "development within or affecting the setting of a conservation area, including views in or out, must serve to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area". It is added that development "proposals must not adversely affect important architectural or historic features or distinctive local features or structures unless it can be demonstrated that the development brings substantial benefits to the community".

Assessment Against Key Planning Considerations

Principle of Development

The NPPF includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and Chapter 9 (Promoting Sustainable Transport) of the NPPF supports developments which help to promote walking and cycling. The proposed works will upgrade an existing PROW footpath, addressing localised flooding issues in the process, and provide a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists at this location following the electrification of the railway line. The proposed works are also in connection with the established use (i.e. rail) given that they will be located in the existing railway corridor. For these reasons it is considered that the proposed works will address the aims of NPPF Chapter 9, as well as Local Plan Policy 5 (Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices).

The proposed works lie within the Green Belt, however paragraph 150 of the NPPF states that "local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location" is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The NPPF does not provide a

definition for 'local transport' in this context. Although the proposed works form part of the wider TRU Programme, they address local requirements, or more specifically the safety of pedestrians utilising the PROW at this location. The proposed works are required in this location as they relate to the existing Moorgate Halt Level Crossing, and the PROW which passes over it.

It is therefore considered that the proposed works are not inappropriate development in the Green Belt in principle.

Visual Impact

The eastern half of the site lies within the Uppermill Conservation Area, but also within the existing railway corridor. Therefore any impacts from the proposed works upon the character of the conservation area should be considered within the context of the existing visual character of the railway corridor. The Site lies within a railway cutting and the eastern bank is heavily vegetated, which means that the Site is only visible from the PROW in question and not any other part of the conservation area.

Stone cladding is to be incorporated on the retaining walls for the proposed footbridge, with a view to respecting the building materials used elsewhere within the conservation area (see Proposed GA plan). Weathering steel is to be used for the external faces of the footbridge stairs and span, with a view to minimising their visual impact. Maintenance has been identified as an issue by the relevant Network Rail Route Asset Manager at this location, and the use of weathering steel therefore addresses the risk of the visual appearance of the footbridge degrading over time and maintenance requirements will be reduced.

Due to the minor nature of the footpath resurfacing works it is not considered that they will have a material impact upon the character of the conservation area. The stone walls alongside the footpath on either side of the railway line will be retained, and restored in places which may have a positive impact.

Four trees will need to be removed to facilitate the proposed works, as set out in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) which has been submitted with this planning application. Only one of the trees to be removed lies within the conservation area, and all of the trees to be removed are classified as low quality. For these reasons, it is not considered that the required tree removal for the proposed works will have a material impact upon the character and setting of the conservation area, or the wider area within which the Site sits.

It is therefore considered that the proposed works constitute a proportionate solution to safety issues which will be caused to users of the PROW at the Site by the electrification, and upgrade of the railway line. This is in terms of the minor visual impact from the proposed works to the conservation area, the Green Belt and the wider area in general. The proposed works will therefore be in accordance with NPPF Chapters 16 (Conservating and Enhancing

the Historic Environment) and 13 (Protecting Green Belt Land), as well as Local Plan policies 20 (Design), 22 (Protecting Open Land) and 24 (Historic Environment).

Safety and Inclusion

Level crossings represent one of the principal public safety risks on the railway. It is NR policy to seek removal of level crossings wherever possible for safety reasons. As the upgrade will introduce faster, longer and a greater number of trains along the route, including the introduction of 25,000 volts of Overhead Line Equipment (OLE), this would increase the risk at the crossing to an unacceptable level with no means of making the current crossing sufficiently safe. The proposed footbridge will enable this important recreational route to be retained at the same location, with only a 2 metre increase in length, whilst addressing these fundamental safety issues.

Due to the steep embankments at this location, and the uneven surface of the greenway PROW which passes through the Site, it would not be appropriate to provide level access via the footbridge, and therefore a stepped-access footbridge is proposed. This approach has been assessed as part of a Diversity Impact Assessment for this section of the TRU Programme. Handrails will be incorporated to assist pedestrians using the footbridge, and the inside faces of the bridge will be painted green for the amenity of its users.

The proposed bridge parapets are required to be solid, and at least 1.8 metres in height to meet NR safety standards associated with OLE. Where a railway line is electrified, protective provisions against direct contact with exposed live parts of the OLE are required in order to comply with British Standard BS EN 50122 Railway applications – fixed installations, Part 1: Protective provision relating to electrical safety and earthing. This standard has its basis in ensuring that safety on the railway delivers adequate protection for users and the public in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

No lighting is included as part of the proposed works as there is currently no lighting along this section of the footpath. Not including lighting will also minimise visual impacts upon the conservation area, and impacts upon wildlife (especially bats). This approach has been discussed with the Council as part of ongoing stakeholder engagement for Project W2B.

For the reasons set out above, the proposed works will support the goals of Local Plan Policy 5 (Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices), and Policy 23 (Open Spaces and Sports).

Trees and Ecology

As stated, to enable the proposed works to be undertaken, four trees will need to be removed. One of these trees is included within Tree Preservation Order (TPO) ref.

TPO/416/01 (see the AIA). As set out in the AIA, the tree to be removed within this TPO is classed as a Category 'C' tree, meaning that it is of low quality and value.

The other trees to be removed (T21-23) are all outside of the Uppermill Conservation Area, are not protected by TPOs, and are classed as being of low value. It is therefore considered that the required tree removal for the proposed works will not cause harm to the character of the conservation area, or to the purposes of TPO ref. TPO/416/01.

There are several other trees nearby to the proposed works which lie within the Uppermill Conservation Area and/or TPO ref. TPO/416/01. As set out in the AIA, these trees will be unaffected by the proposed works, however tree protection measures will be implemented during construction to ensure that the construction works do not impact upon these trees.

As set out in the Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) report which has been submitted with this application, the habitats within the Site are artificial hard surfaces with sparse vegetation, and those adjacent to the site are unlikely to be affected by the proposed works. The Site is not within or immediately adjacent to statutory or non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation and no such local sites are likely to be affected by the proposed works.

The Site has low potential to support common and widespread species typical of urban fringe environment including common birds and commuting bats (see the EcIA). Measures to ensure that impacts to commuting/foraging bats and birds are avoided during construction will be included in the Environmental Social Management Plan, which will result in no significant residual effects with regards to protected species. Furthermore, no lighting is included as part of the proposed works, which will help to minimise impacts upon bats.

The proposed works will therefore not have any substantial impacts upon trees and ecology, and thus no on-site compensatory planting is required. Nevertheless the TRU Programme is committed to a route-wide approach to Biodiversity Net Gain, so all vegetation removal will be taken into account in a route-wide approach to biodiversity offsetting and mitigation, and this will be included in the ESMP. It is therefore considered that the proposed works are in accordance with NPPF Chapter 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment), and Local Plan Policy 21 (Protecting Natural Environmental Assets).

Conclusion

This letter sets out that Moorgate Halt Level Crossing must be closed and replaced by a new footbridge to meet modern safety standards. These safety considerations are now even more pertinent given the electrification and upgrade of the railway line at this location, as part of the wider TRU Programme.

The proposed works are required to ensure that the PROW at the Site can continue to be provided over the railway, ensuring continued access for users passing between Uppermill and Ladcastle Road.

The proposed works will sit within the existing railway cutting, thus minimising their visual impact. Stone cladding will be included on the retaining walls to reflect the character of the Uppermill Conservation Area, and weathering steel will be used for external faces on the bridge span to minimise its visual intrusion and ensure that its appearance will not degrade over time.

The AIA and EcIA which have been produced to support this application have found that the impacts to trees and ecology from the proposed works will be minor. The only required environmental mitigation measures for the proposed works are thus control measures during construction, due to the wider areas of vegetation nearby to the site, which will be detailed in the ESMP.

It is therefore considered that the proposed works meet identified transport, recreation and safety requirements, whilst minimising the potential impacts, in accordance with national and local planning policy. There are no other material considerations which should preclude consent from being granted for the proposal.

The requisite fee of £MG TO ADD has been paid separately by credit card.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward in due course to receiving an acknowledgement that the application has been validated.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward in due course to receiving an acknowledgement that the application has been validated.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Gradwell
Town Planning Manager

Saddleworth Parish Council

O1457 876665

From: Charlotte Hattrell <Charlotte.Hattrell@networkrail.co.uk>
Sent: 19 May 2025 11:36
To: Karen Allott <karen@saddleworthparishcouncil.org.uk>
Subject: RE: Concerns over Moorgate Crossing

OFFICIAL

Good morning Karen,

Thank you for writing to our chief executive, Sir Andrew Haines, about the proposed works at Moorgate Halt level crossing. We recognise the strength of the Parish Council's concerns and that there are differing opinions within the community about the future of Moorgate Halt level crossing.

Our view is that the level crossing should be closed, due to changes in the railway environment and the resultant heightened level crossing user safety risk. The first change is taking place in September 2025, when new train control signals will be switched on that could result in a train standing across the level crossing. Subsequent changes to the railway environment will occur in later years when there will be a gradual increase in train services travelling at faster speeds, a result of electrification of the route.

In July 2024, Transpennine Route Upgrade scheme representatives attended an Oldham Council Highway Regulations Committee Meeting to support an application to extinguish or divert the footpath over Moorgate Halt level crossing. At this session it was explained why a footbridge was no longer considered to be a viable option. In summary, there are significant challenges in building a footbridge, primarily relating to poor access to the site, which drives up cost. Scheme proposals are assessed on a case-by-case basis balancing the benefit and providing value for public money and, in the scheme's opinion, the installation of a footbridge does not support a value for money proposition.

The scheme is proposing to enhance the nearby public footpath (FP244) as an alternative means to cross the railway in this locality, and several enhancements are planned in this area including the improvement of underfoot conditions. It should be noted that this is an existing public right of way with an existing highway interface onto Oldham Road. The current route across Moorgate Halt level crossing leads onto Ladcastle Road, and so the proposed alternative footpath (no.244) is consistent with this. We are not proposing to take pedestrians across Greenfield Railway Bridge via the 1.3 mile route. Instead, the proposed alternative footpath (no.244) is approximately 440m in length.

We're preparing to submit a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) application to the Secretary of State for Transport in September 2025. This is to seek the necessary consents to construct and operate the Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth) section of the upgrade. When this application is submitted, we'll also be formally contacting community groups, residents and organisations to notify them that the application has been submitted, alongside clear guidance on how to make an objection, submit a representation or express support. Should the Secretary of State decide a public inquiry is required, all objectors will have the chance to present their evidence at that stage.

I hope that this information is helpful. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us using our 24-hour national helpline on 03457 11 41 41 or contact us online at networkrail.co.uk/contact.

Many thanks,

Charlotte

Charlotte Hattrell

Communications Manager (Transpennine Route Upgrade)

07354 530567

www.theTRUpgrade.co.uk

TRANSPENNINE ROUTE UPGRADE ON TRACK TO BETTER

From: Karen Allott <karen@saddleworthparishcouncil.org.uk>
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 5:05 pm

REQUEST FOR A RAIL CROSSING EXTINGUISHMENT ORDER TO BE MADE UNDER SECTION 118A OF THE HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 (INSERTED BY THE TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992).

The following questions are to be answered and the information and maps requested to be supplied by the applicant to the council which is to be requested to make the order.

FOR AUTHORITY'S USE ONLY
File Ref: / /
Date acknowledged:

SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

Please include a plain-English summary of the reason(s) for the proposed Rail Crossing Extinguishment Order. This should clearly and succinctly show the rationale for extinguishing the route, and for raising it to the Secretary of State. This should be around 1-2 paragraphs in length and may use bullet-points.

Network Rail are applying for an extinguishment of the public footpath over Moorgate Halt level crossing on the following basis.

- The Transpennine Route Upgrade Project will electrify and re-signal the railway at this location, which will permit the delivery of an improved timetable and a more frequent train service that will travel at a greater line speed than present.
- Moorgate Halt crossing is currently an unprotected 'passive crossing meaning that there is no active warning of a train approaching. Users are required to decide themselves whether to cross by looking in both directions.
- The crossing receives a very high volume of usage. The most recent 9 day census recorded 434 movements over the crossing in 11 days, and a high proportion of this use was by vulnerable users.
- There is already a sighting deficiency when approaching and crossing from Ladcastle Road, but the high number of vulnerable users has meant that a temporary speed restriction is in place over the crossing, to mitigate this risk.
- The TRU Project will increase the current line speed and improve the frequency of services on the network, and the full benefit of the TRU Project cannot be achieved with a temporary speed restriction in place.
- In addition, as part of the re-signalling of the line, there will be an additional signal installed close to the crossing that will result in trains stopping and fouling the crossing when the signal is at red.
- All available mitigation measures have been considered and discounted where they are not technically feasible. The only viable option at the crossing is closure.

1. RAIL CROSSING TO BE EXTINGUISHED

(a) Name and location of rail crossing (including reference and parish or district in which it is located).

Moorgate Halt level crossing on MVL3 at 13m 26c and located between Moorgate Street and Ladcastle Road, Uppermill OL3 6DE. Grid Reference SD994056

(b) Name(s) and number(s) of any footpaths and/or bridleways leading to the crossing to be extinguished. (Indicate whether footpath or bridleway.)

Footpath 209SADD at the railway boundary fence at approximately SD994056 – fingertip.chatting.pouting (w3w), in a northerly direction for approximately 18m, then crossing the railway for approximately 11m, and then continuing in a northerly direction for another 11m to the railway boundary at approximately SD994056 – expiring.taker.river (w3W)

(c) Length in metres of any path or way to be extinguished.

Approximately 42.5m in total.

(d) Description of length of any path or way to be extinguished by reference to terminal points shown on a map to be supplied and attached by the applicant which must be to a scale of not less than 1:2500 or, if no such map is available, on the largest scale readily available.

From point A over unregistered land to point B on land within the ownership of Network Rail. Please see Map 1 (2024).

(e) List the name(s) and address(es) of the owners, lessees and occupiers of the land on either side of any path or way to be extinguished.

The land that the line of footpath 209SADD follows is unregistered but is recorded as having been a full public highway historically. This is now considered to be a Restricted Byway. The land between the railway boundary is also unregistered but is owned by Network Rail.

(f) Have you obtained the written consent of every person having an interest in the land over which any path or way to be extinguished passes: in so far as such consent is needed?

See previous.

(g) Are you prepared to enter into an agreement with the council in accordance with section 118A(5)?

Yes.

(h) Give reasons for the proposed extinguishment or the rail crossing (use separate sheets if necessary). Include information about:

(i) the use currently made of the existing path, including numbers and types of users. and whether there are significant seasonal variations, giving the source for this information (any circumstances preventing or inhibiting such use must also be mentioned);

Moorgate Halt level crossing is located between Greenfield and Marsden stations on the edge of Uppermill village on the Huddersfield to Manchester railway.



Ariel view of Moorgate Halt LC



Ordnance Survey Map view of Moorgate Halt LC

The approach to the crossing on the east from Uppermill village centre is from Moorgate Street, up a steep narrow track to the railway boundary, then through a pedestrian gate to reach the decking.



View of approach (looking towards Moorgate St, and pedestrian gate at railway boundary

The approach to the crossing from west, from Ladcastle Road, is down a steep track, partly surfaced, through a wooded area, then a narrowed section down to the railway boundary and pedestrian gate.



View of approach down to crossing with pedestrian gate and signage at crossing

On entering through the gates either side, there is fencing that directs users to the decking to cross and signs to inform users to stop look and listen before crossing. There are also whistle boards located in each direction to prompt train drivers to sound their horns to alert users of an approaching train.



View of crossing from west approach showing fencing and signage on either side of the crossing

A census was conducted at the crossing between 25th March and 4th April 2022, which recorded 434 pedestrian movements across the crossing. The breakdown of usage is as follows:

- 418 adults
- 8 unaccompanied children
- 8 accompanied children
- 82 dogs on a lead
- 2 dogs not on a lead
- 2 cyclists

There was a high number of users classed as vulnerable and 6 of the crossings were between the hours of midnight and 06.00hrs.

In addition, there is a long history of misuse at this crossing. There are 36 reported incidents in total dating back to 1994, including 3 fatalities. All of these incidents are detailed in the accompanying Impact Risk Assessment.

(ii) the risk to the public of continuing to use the present crossing and the circumstances that have given rise to the need to make the proposed order;

Whistle Boards and Night-Time Use

Whistle Boards place the onus on the train driver to sound a warning which can sometimes lead to either no warning or inconsistent warning times. Furthermore, during the night-time quiet period (NTQP) which is between 00.00hrs and 06.00hrs, drivers are no longer able to sound their horns, so no warning is given to any users who may be crossing between those times. During the last census, 6 pedestrians during an eleven day period were seen to cross during the night-time quiet period.

Normal passenger services run between 06.00 and 22.00hrs, but freight trains run through the full 24 hour period over this crossing. This can fluctuate depending on operational requirements and will increase to 15 once the line upgrade is complete.

Along with the increased line speed, much quieter and more frequent trains will travel over the crossing as a result of the electrification of the line. In addition to the already secluded location of the crossing that has no ambient lighting, this results in a significant increase in risk to users of the crossing.

Sighting

Sighting time is the amount of time in seconds from which the full front of a train is visible to a user to its arrival at the crossing. For sighting to be compliant, the time that it takes to cross from one side of a crossing to a place of safety on the other side should be less than the sighting time of the fastest train.

At Moorgate Halt, for users crossing from west of the railway, the sighting when looking for trains approaching from the direction of Greenfield is significantly less than the minimum 330m required at just 286 metres. This gives users 1.51 seconds less to cross safely. There is currently a speed restriction from 65mph to 55mph in place to mitigate this.

The upgrade to the line will only be achieved by electrification allowing an increase in line speed. Based on an increased line speed up to 80mph, the minimum required sighting will be 406m. This will further increase the deficiency where it will be short by 120 metres giving users 3.35 seconds less than the required time to cross.

Second Train Coming

At Moorgate Halt level crossing, there is the possibility of a second train passing on the other line within 20 seconds of the first train. This poses a significant risk to users where the second train may be hidden from view for several seconds both whilst the first train passes and for several seconds afterwards. Also, the noise from the first train can mask the sound of the second train.

Signal Positioning

The re-signalling and electrification of the line at this location to facilitate the upgrades to the network will involve the installation of a new signal in close

proximity to the crossing. When trains stop at a red signal, they will stop over and block the crossing. This introduces a significant risk to users, who will not be prevented from entering the crossing because it is unprotected.

This may encourage people to either pass beneath the standing train, or to walk down the track to the end of the standing train, in order to cross the line. Not only does this pose a significant risk, as explained above, the chances of a second train passing are high at this location, and they may not see the approaching train.

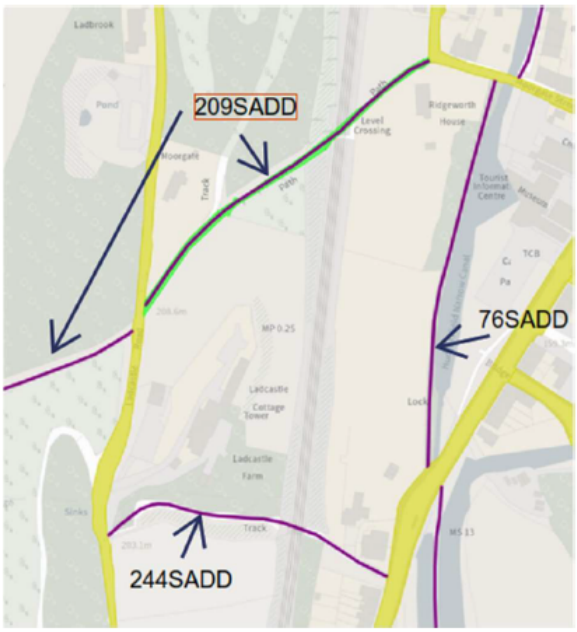
Other risk factors

At this location at certain times of the year there are issues with visibility due to fog and equally at other times of the year sun glare, that both impact the ability of users to see approaching trains.

With all of these factors taken into account and inputted into ALCRM, the risk ranking of the crossing increases significantly from its current risk score of a C4 to that of a B3. This equates to an **80%** increase in risk to users of the crossing.

(iii) the effect of the loss of the crossing on users, in particular whether there are alternative rights of way, the safety or these relative to the existing rail crossing, and the effect on any connecting rights of way and on the network as a whole;

Below is an overview of the current rights of way network near to Moorgate Halt LC. Footpath 209SADD can be seen stretching from Moorgate Street on the east of the railway to the other side of Ladcastle Road on the west. The application will seek to extinguish the section highlighted green between Moorgate Street and Ladcastle Road.



Footpath 76SADD provides a route between Moorgate Street and Oldham Road to the south of approximately 43m. This a pleasant route that takes users along the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, where once on Oldham Road, they can link into footpath 244SADD after a short distance of approximately 26m.

Footpath 244SADD stretches between Oldham Road and Ladcastle Road for a distance of approximately 173 metres, beneath railway underbridge 29 and through the former Wickens Quarry. Bridge 29 was constructed by the railway company to give private access to the quarry, and the public right of way has been claimed since then.

On the east side of the railway the land upon which the route passes is unregistered, but on the west beyond the bridge is privately owned. The route is steep beyond the bridge and the surface uneven in places. Towards the higher end, there is a set of stone steps that takes users up to the adopted highway that is Ladcastle Road.



View looking up to Ladcastle Road and down the steps from Ladcastle Rd

The route is passable, but could be difficult for some users, and Network Rail have agreed that some work could be undertaken to improve the route somewhat – although the extent of this is not yet agreed with either the landowner or the Highway Authority.

Network Rail appreciate that Moorgate Halt is a heavily used crossing that provides a vital link into the centre of the village for residents along Ladcastle Road, as well as leisure users such as walkers, runners, and cyclists. We also recognise that alternative path through the former quarry is currently not ideal to be used in lieu of that at Moorgate Halt.

However, it is hoped that with some improvement works to footpath 244SAD, this would make the route more accessible for potential users. The small section of road that would need to be used between the canal towpath and the beginning of

244SAD on Oldham Road is already public highway with a footway for pedestrians, and as mentioned previously, Ladcastle Road is also an adopted public highway.

Network Rail believe that this route in lieu of that at Moorgate Halt, with some improvement works would provide a much safer method of crossing from one side of the railway to the other.

(iv) the opportunity for taking alternative action to remedy the problem such as a diversion, bridge or tunnel, or the carrying out of safety improvements to the existing crossing;

The enhancement to the railway at this location including new signalling and electrification involves new signal positions and stanchions to support the overhead line equipment (OLE). This will affect the options that are available at this crossing. The various options are considered below

Pedestrian Underpass

This would remove the risk at the crossing entirely, but due to the steep approaches and ground conditions at the location, it presents considerable Civil Engineering difficulties. Any such structure would have to be constructed considerably deeper than is usual, creating long gradients either side for the approaches. This would require a considerable amount of land take, it would potentially be susceptible to flooding and because it is an underpass, this often attracts anti-social behaviour issues.

VAMOS

This is an overlay miniature stop light (MSL) system that does not require integration into the signalling system, but instead uses a treadle on the rack so that when a train passes and strikes the system, the warning lights will show red warning users at the crossing not to cross. Once the train has passed, the lights will show green again, informing users that it is safe to cross.

However, it is not possible to install this system at this location due to the new signal positions which are within the 'strike' point, meaning that a train could be held at the signal whilst the light system is showing red. This would switch the system into 'dark mode' with no lights being shown at all. Users at the crossing would not know if it was safe or not to cross, and this further increases the risk.

MSL's (integrated)

This system is similar to VAMOS but is integrated into the signalling system, and at this location, due to the new signalling, it is not technically possible to install this system at this location.

Permanent Speed Reduction and keep the crossing 'as is'

There is currently a temporary speed restriction in place at the crossing to mitigate the deficient sighting from one side. The goal of the Transpennine Route Upgrade Project is to enhance the railway at this location and deliver a faster, quieter, more

efficient and frequent train service for the public. Permanently reducing the speed limit over the crossing, is incompatible with the aims of the Project.

After the enhancements are complete the risk to users at the crossing will increase by 80%. There will be an increase in the line speed, deficient sighting for users due to the position of stanchions on the railway to support the OLE, and the position of new signals that will result in trains having to stop on the crossing and block the public footpath.

Pedestrian Overbridge

The option of a pedestrian overbridge was the first choice of the Transpennine Route Upgrade Project, however, upon exploring this further, it has become evident that delivering this is not feasible at this location.

The railway corridor at this location is very narrow, and because of this, platforms would need to be constructed to protect the piers of a bridge where they would fall within a collision protection zone. In addition, the erection of a footbridge would block the signal sighting for oncoming train drivers. There are 3 signals in the vicinity of the bridge, two of which cannot be moved as they protect train movements over the new junction. The third cannot be moved because this would impact the signals further along the line

Any bridge would have to be high enough to clear the OLE, and this would mean the construction of a large bridge that would impact the amenity, especially for the lineside neighbours immediately adjacent to the railway. Additionally, access would be required to their land in order to construct the footbridge.

It is not possible to move any proposed footbridge slightly either. The geography of the location near the crossing is complex and any re-location would still affect the signal sighting.

Furthermore, other Civil Engineering issues have arisen such as recent ground investigations at the proposed location of a pedestrian overbridge, have found that the piling of the bridge would be required. This has significantly increased the costs for delivering a footbridge.

Extinguishment of footpath over the railway

After careful consideration of the possible measures available, the only remaining viable option to close the crossing is the Extinguishment of the public right of way. There are alternative nearby public footpaths that can be utilised by people wishing to cross from one side of the railway to the other, that with some improvements would provide a much safer alternative. This has been discussed in previous sections of this document.

(v) the estimated cost of any practicable measures identified under (iv) above;

Section 10 of the accompanying Impact Risk Assessment explores fully the use of the Gross Disproportionality Test to be able to produce a cost benefit analysis of the feasible options, not all of which are suitable for this location in any case. However, the costs are as follows;

Pedestrian Underpass	£2,500,000
VAMOS	£500,000
MSL's	£1,200,000
Speed Reduction	£u/k
Pedestrian Footbridge	£3,000,000
Extinguishment of path	£25,000

(vi) the barriers and/or signs that would need to be erected at the crossing or the point from which any path or way is to be extinguished, assuming the order is confirmed.

Extinguishment of the public right of way would be from its junction with Moorgate Street on the east of the railway to its junction with Ladcastle Road on the west side of the railway. Please see Map 1. The gates at either side of the crossing will be removed and replaced with appropriate fencing and all crossing furniture and signage removed.

2. NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF PUBLIC UTILITY UNDERTAKERS IN AREA (whether or not their apparatus is likely to be affected):

(a) Public gas supplier - Cadent Gas Ltd 0800 688 588 or plantprotection@cadentgas.com

(b) Public electricity supplier - Electricity North West, 304 Bridgewater Place, Birchwood Park, Warrington WA3 6XG – 0800 195 4141

(c) Water undertaker - United Utilities, Haweswater House, Lingley Mere Business Park, Gt Sankey, Warrington WA5 3LP – 0345 026 8989

(d) Sewerage undertaker – as above

(e) Public telecommunications operator - British Telecom – 0330 1234 150

3. MAPS AND PLANS

List or insert all maps and plans accompanying this request giving details of their scale and content. In addition to the map mentioned in paragraph 1(d), this must include a map of a scale not less than 1:25,000 or, if no such map is available, on the largest scale readily available, showing the crossing and any paths or ways to be extinguished (represented by a bold continuous line), and any connecting paths or ways, within the context of the general rights of way network. The map should show a breakdown of existing and new routes into clearly labelled sections (e.g. A-B, B-C). Information about local landmarks or features, junctions with other highways or any other information that would assist with orienting the description in the Order would be welcomed.

Map 1 (2024) – MVL3 13m 26c Moorgate Halt LC – s.118A Rail Crossing Extinguishment Order

4. OTHER INFORMATION

Please refer to the accompanying document the Impact Risk Assessment for further detailed information.

DECLARATION

I/We

(a) understand that no authority for the extinguishment or obstruction of any path or way in this itchiest is conferred unless or until a Rail Crossing Extinguishment order has been confirmed and come into force;

(b) request that a Rail Crossing Extinguishment order be made to stop up the crossing and any path or way described in Section 1 above; and

(c) declare that, to the best of my/our knowledge and belief, the factual information included in this form is correct.

Signed:



Name in Capitals: VICKI BENTLEY

On behalf of (name of railway or tramway operator): Network Rail

Address: Network Rail, First Floor, Square One, 4 Travis Street, Manchester M1 2NY

Position held: Liability Negotiations Adviser

Date: 4th August 2023

Please note the council will need all relevant information to enable them to proceed.

MVL3 13m 26c Moorgate Halt LC:

Additional Information to support an application to extinguish or divert footpath 209SADD over Moorgate Level Crossing

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1. Introduction

1.1. On the 4th of August 2023 an application under s.118A Highways Act 1980 was submitted to Oldham Council for the proposed extinguishment of footpath 209SADD between its junction with Moorgate Street and Ladcastle Road. The application proposed no replacement footbridge and footpath 244SADD was identified as an alternative route to safely cross beneath the operational railway. It was recognised that some improvement work may be required.

1.2. After confirming receipt of the application, the Public Rights of Way Officer asked for a meeting to discuss the application, and this was held on 14th August 2023 (via Teams with PROW and Liability Negotiations Adviser). The Officer stated there was not enough information within the application and supporting documents, to enable him to decide whether to make an Order.

1.3. The Officer had shared the application and supporting documents with representatives of local user groups including, The Ramblers, The Wednesday Walkers and the Peak and Northern Footpath Society. These groups expressed some concerns over the reasoning given by Network Rail on why they did not propose to replace the crossing with a footbridge. The provision of a footbridge had been previously proposed by NR in earlier consultations.

1.4. A further meeting was arranged on site for Friday the 25th of August and those in attendance included:

- Liam Kennedy – Rights of Way Officer Oldham Council
- Kevin Lawton – Representative of the Wednesday Walkers
- John Walton – Representative of the Ramblers
- Vicki Bentley – Liability Negotiations Adviser Network Rail
- Stephen Sherlock – Senior Project Engineer Network Rail
- Calum Gardner – Scheme Project Manager Network Rail

1.5. The result of this meeting was that Network Rail were asked to provide some further information to support their claims that a footbridge cannot be installed. This requirement revolves around the following areas of concern:

- Why Network Rail have changed their minds about building a footbridge.
- The matter of a bridge blocking new signalling arrangements – as expressed in the s.118A application.
- The added requirement of platform to protect any structure and the escalation in costs associated with this design – as expressed in the s.118A application.
- Lack of exploration as to a possible diversionary route beneath underbridge 30 to the north of the crossing.
- The details of geographical complexities that are referred to in the s.118A application.

1.6. The purpose of this report is to address the concerns raised and to provide the additional information that has been requested. The content has been collated from various individuals that have been and still are involved directly in the ongoing project and will explore the history of the investigations and decisions made in relation to the crossing.

2. National Level Crossing Risk Reduction Programme (NLCRRP)

2.1 This programme pre-existed prior to the Transpennine Route Upgrade Project (the current project that will affect the crossing) and was an agreed programme with the Office of Rail and Road that sought to achieve a 25% risk reduction at level crossings. This was to be achieved by way of closures and replacements with either an Extinguishment/Diversion of the PROW or the installation of footbridges where appropriate.

2.1 In 2015 Moorgate Halt Level Crossing was identified as a high risk crossing that fell within the remit of the of the NLCRRP and feasibility study was undertaken to explore the options for closure at Moorgate Level Crossing. It incorporated a Diversity Impact Assessment and also explored the alternative routes through Bridge No.30 to the North and Bridge No.29 to the South.

2.1 The conclusions of the feasibility study were that the construction of a replacement footbridge at this location would be extremely complex. It concluded that the alternative routes should be explored

further, but it is not known if the conclusion was followed through, but clearly the level crossing remained.

3. The Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU)

3.1. The TRU Project covers the railway between Manchester and York and aims to improve the service by upgrading the line, signalling, and stations. By 2017, the Project had been established and another feasibility study was conducted into the construction of a footbridge to replace Moorgate Level Crossing.

3.2. The conclusions of this feasibility study were that the TRU Project should pursue the installation of a stepped footbridge to replace Moorgate Level Crossing. The development of this option then took place, which explored the solution in greater detail.

4. Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA)

4.1. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 for any public sector organisation to consider the impact of any proposed work that would affect people, to ensure they don't discriminate against those people with the protected characteristics as defined in the Act. NR discharges this duty by the provision of a Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA).

4.2. In 2021, a DIA was undertaken by the TRU Project, and this was sent out to various groups for consultation including Oldham Ramblers, Oldham Council public rights of way team and their planning officers. Many groups did not respond, but Oldham Ramblers and Oldham Council both agreed that in the interests of public safety a replacement bridge would be the most appropriate solution. The Ramblers went further with their preference for a ramped structure.

5. The Narrative Risk Assessment (NRA)

5.1. In 2022, an NRA assessed various mitigation measures and whether they could be deployed at the crossing, to make the crossing safe. This document is produced by the Level Crossing Manager (LCM) who is the Safety Risk expert within Network Rail for managing the

risk at level crossings. The NRA was used by the TRU Project team as part of their optioneering process at Moorgate LC.

5.2. NRAs are produced by the LCM to assess the risk at the level crossing, but they do not consider related factors such as adjacent land ownership, geographical or environmental complexities, ancillary costs for the construction of a bridge or the engineering difficulties that may hinder construction etc.

5.3. The LCM explored various mitigation measures which included the installation of Miniature Stop Lights, which would allow the crossing to remain whilst providing a visual indicator to users that it was safe to cross. These could reduce the risk by circa 76%, and they must either be integrated into the signalling system or overlayed onto the signalling system where permitted.

5.4. Integrated MSL's cost circa £1.2Million, but despite the obvious safety benefits, this option did not perform well in the cost-benefit analysis (CBA) conducted by the LCM. The cost incurred, significantly outweighed the realised benefit.

5.5. Overlay MSL's cost circa £250,000 and performed much better in the CBA and the LCM recommended that this option be considered as part of the larger TRU Project. However, as the TRU Project developed and the proposal for bi-directional lines emerged, it became apparent this recommendation could not be delivered. Overlay MSL's cannot be used on bi-directional lines where there is a train turnback, or where a train may be signalled to stop over a level crossing.

5.6. The LCM also referred to the possibility of alternative diversionary routes, which again scored well in the CBA, but these would need to be explored further by the TRU Project team where they fall outside of the NRA remit.

5.7. Although the LCM also considered the installation of a footbridge to replace the crossing, this too did not score well on the CBA. Again, the LCM recommended the option be explored further by the TRU Project, where any alternative diversionary routes would not be feasible.

5.8. The TRU Project, in line with the DIA, decided that the most suitable option that could be delivered, would be a stepped footbridge. Planning permission for the proposed structure was granted in August 2022 (FUL/349203/22). Drawing 151667-TSA-26-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-040003 Revision P03 was submitted as part of the planning application and shows the arrangement of the proposed footbridge.

5.9. However, prior to the DIA being signed off and published, as they moved through the Design stage, the TRU Project identified some major difficulties in delivering the construction of a bridge. These difficulties could not be overcome and resulted in the option being discounted. These are now explored in the following sections.

6. Signalling

6.1. Near Moorgate Halt, there are new crossovers being installed on the track which will allow trains to pass from one line to the other, so that both lines become bi-directional. This requires new signalling to be installed to protect the train crossovers.

6.2. Signal SL4701 on the downside and signal SL4703 on the upside will be situated approximately 20 metres from the crossing, meaning that when trains stop at either, they will straddle the crossing. This was one of the main drivers for the installation of a footbridge and formed part of the safety case that has been put forward for the closure of the crossing, where it is unacceptable to have a train straddling a level crossing.

6.3. The signals cannot be moved for the following engineering reasons:

- They are required in these specific locations to protect the track crossovers.
- The crossovers cannot be moved because of the curvature of the track.
- The line bends to the left on approach to signal SL4701, and if it was moved further towards Stalybridge, it will not be seen by the driver.
- Railway Signals need to be regularly spaced and moving them would make them non-compliant with Signalling Standards.

- Moving the signals would have an operational impact for trains changing direction and would delay junction times, impacting the proposed timetable and making it unworkable.

6.4. It was originally thought the construction of a footbridge would block the train drivers' view of the signals. This was one of the reasons that a footbridge had been discounted in the s.118A application. However, it has now been confirmed that this is no longer the case. The construction of a new footbridge would not have a detrimental effect on the new signalling at this location, but there are several other issues which are still relevant.

7. A unique design for the bridge

7.1. There are some environmental constraints that make the design of this footbridge unique. The site footprint for the footbridge is limited and pushes the footbridge to sit within the required 4.5 metre collision protection zone. This means a more robust design is required to ensure that the bridge columns are sat outside of this zone, so the footbridge is protected in the case of a derailment.

7.2. To mitigate this a raised platform would need to be constructed, designed to resist robust kerb loading. The alternative to this is a mass concrete bridge structure which would be more expensive, more intrusive, and even more difficult to construct in the limited space available.

7.3. This issue was raised on the 25th of August meeting and was a point that the user groups asked for more detail on. It was suggested by them that this platform had not been discussed before and that it was not detailed on the design drawing that have seen. However, this platform can be seen on the Drawing 151667-TSA-26-MVL3-DRG-T-LP-040003 Revision P03 that was included in the application for planning permission. This leads us onto the issues that have since arisen since the first proposals were put forward.

8. Building Requirements

8.1. In brief, the construction of a footbridge on the site of Moorgate LC consists of the following:

- The construction of a reinforced in-situ concrete ring beam along with a precast L-Wall robust kerb platform and precast concrete stairs (South Side) 32 no units between 2-9 tonnes each.
- The construction of a mass-fill in-situ foundation dug systematically to avoid possible collapse of the existing drystone retaining wall (North Side).
- The installation of 21no 13m deep 300mm diameter in-situ reinforced concrete bored piles (case).
- In-situ pile caps and a 12m steel footbridge structure and approach staircases.
- 3no GRP/ Steel Staircases, Hand railing (circa 30m).
- Stonework cladding of concrete L-Walls.
- Installation of GRP Palisade fencing.
- Infilling of the ring beam structure.
- Assumed cranage is AC55 Rail mounted Crane.
- Surfacing and drainage outlets.

9. Ground Conditions

9.1. Ground investigations were conducted in the vicinity of where the proposed footbridge was to be constructed. The result of these complex investigations has shown that there would be a need for piled foundations for any bridge. As discussed under access, this is a difficult location to access with a piling rig, driving night-time working, and extending the construction programme.

9.2. In addition, to the Ladcastle Road side of the bridge, there are concerns over the stability of the existing stone walls which line the foot path. This drives the needs for temporary support to the walls and more complex construction sequencing to install the foundations.

10. Accessibility

10.1. Moorgate footpath level crossing is in a remote location north of Uppermill Village. It is accessed via public footpaths from Den Lane and Ladcastle Road. Both of these roads are narrow with limited access for construction vehicles. The footpath is narrow and in poor condition, and the area of works is cut into an embankment, with limited access to where the structure would be.

10.2. The key aspect to this works is logistical planning in order to transport materials from the nearest access points onto Road-Rail-Vs and Trailers (1.8km West) with plant and equipment along the railway. Access is limited to rail due to the constraints on the road network, the topography, and the distance from the road networks. This drives all construction to be completed at night, during railway closures known as possessions, which incur additional costs.

10.3. The materials required for the construction of a footbridge include wet concrete, piles, precast concrete sections, and steel bridge sections. For wet concrete, there is no feasible location to deliver concrete other than by rail or by using a concrete pump under road closure sited on Ladcastle Road. This will require long pipelines to reach the foot crossing, plus the requirement to install pipes running

under the railway. This creates risk due to the requirement of line blockages which makes the method undesirable.

10.4. To deliver concrete by rail, means we need to open concrete batching plants over night at additional costs, and use specialist plant to transport the concrete. This also requires additional time due to the limited working windows within possessions.

10.5. With regard to the required piles, the piling rig will also need to be delivered to site by rail. This is difficult due to the size of the required rig, and again it would only be able to work under possessions, driving the need for noisy piling works to be completed over night.

10.6. For precast concrete, – again deliveries must be made by rail and again this drives the need to work at night so that it is in line with line possessions and blockages. It is the same for the delivery of steel bridge sections, which will need to be carried on specialist trailers by track.

10.7. The methods described here for the delivery of materials to the site with limited accessibility has contributed towards the escalation in costs because it is more complex and prolongs the programme significantly.

10.8. In addition, the footprint of the footbridge takes up all of the available space and drives the need to remove the existing boundary between the adjacent house and the railway. Access to the garden will be required for construction, with the boundary wall reinstated on completion. Also, during construction, the footpath will need to be closed to the public for a minimum of 8 months.

10.9. Overall, access must be via track for all of the construction, resulting in a longer than normal programme, and a large amount of night working. Due to limited rail access points in the vicinity, access will need to be created off Oldham Road, near Greenfield Station and this will involve a prolonged road closure.

11. Construction Costs

11.1. A footbridge to replace a foot crossing normally has a budget cost of circa £1.8Million. The additional constraints and design issues discussed above result in this footbridge being estimated to cost circa £3.5Million.

11.2. A breakdown of costs that was drafted during the detailed design stage for the proposed footbridge, estimated the costs for labour, plant, subcontractors, and materials at approximate total of circa £2.3M and estimated to rise to more. This can be broken down as follows.

11.3. The labour costs consist of the use of specialised persons such as machine banksman, lift supervisors, skilled operatives, and several other supporting functions, over approximately 80 shifts, at an estimated cost of £771K.

11.4. The works will involve a selection of specialist equipment as described previously as well as site cabins and associated facilities at a total estimated cost of £467K.

11.5. The site and works would also require the use of various subcontractors to supply items such as scaffolding, security and the removal of waste materials, which was calculated to cost approximately £930K. However, it was estimated that this was likely to rise significantly due to the added requirement of a specialist piling technique that allows for the process in restricted access sites and the location of the proposed bridge at Moorgate.

11.6. The materials required for the bridge include pre-cast concrete, steel, rebar and type 1 MOT, at a total estimated cost of £216K.

11.7. These estimated costs do not include the costs of the required temporary occupation of adjacent land or its possible permanent acquisition. Therefore, the total will be significantly higher and when these are costed in, the total costs will be circa £3.5M.

12. Managing Public Money

12.1. As well as promoting safety, as the operator and owner of the national rail infrastructure, Network Rail as an 'arms'-length' Government body, has a statutory duty and a critical role to play in improving railway efficiency, whilst giving due consideration of spending public money in operating the railway. Under its operating licence Network Rail is required to act in accordance with the duties and responsibilities in running, maintaining, and developing railway infrastructure. This would include the provision of bridges to replace level crossings where enhancements affect the safety at a crossing. This licence is granted under Section 8 of the Railways Act 1993.

12.2. It incorporates a series of codes, protocols and guidelines under which Network Rail must operate, which in part relates to operational efficiency and public expenditure. Operational efficiency incorporates the justification of spending public money against the ongoing maintenance and enhancement of the railway. It is therefore reasonable for Network Rail to scrutinise the cost-efficiency of any proposals and have due regard for the need for railway operational efficiency.

12.3. At this location, the initial proposals for the construction of a pedestrian bridge, seemed perfectly plausible as a suitable solution and one that was concluded to be the most suitable option in the Diversity Impact Assessment. However, as the optioneering process has progressed and a more in-depth design has been sought, it has become apparent, that the construction of a bridge at this location would be extremely complex, and unfortunately this has increased the costs significantly.

12.4. Disproportionate expenditure is contrary to Network Rail's financial and efficiency objectives under its Licence, and we are therefore strongly of the view that it is no longer feasible to construct a pedestrian bridge in place of Moorgate Level Crossing, and that other alternatives must be explored.

13. Sustainability and the Environment

13.1. The site sits on the edge of a Special Area of Conservation on what is considered to be greenbelt land, and adjacent to Uppermill town which is also considered to be a Conservation Area. It is also just south of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) of Ladcastle and Den Quarries, although the proposed works did not directly affect this area.

13.2. In 2022 an independent Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) was commissioned which explored the impact of the proposed construction of a pedestrian footbridge on the immediate area around Moorgate Halt LC and the trees within it. It used the General Arrangement Drawing to assess the impact on the surrounding trees, the results of which were that four trees would need to be removed completely whilst a significant number of others would require extra protection during the proposed works.

13.3. The inclusion of Construction Exclusion Zones around some of the tress to be retained has an impact on the proposed works, where access by plant and machines is extremely limited. The assessment outlined how the smallest plant possible would need to be used in close proximity to any trees to avoid any damage to them or their canopies, with careful pre-planning required for any site operations.

13.4. Other precautions listed included the restrictions on the storing of materials beneath any trees, such as oil, cement or solvents that could be injurious to a tree, and that these should be stored at least 5m from the edge of the canopy of any tree. In addition, any permitted work carried out on any trees would have to be done at the appropriate times of year (outside of bird nesting season) and in line with any planning permission that would be required to fell trees.

13.5. All of these measures all have implications for the project and proposed works in terms of both time and the additional cost in fulfilling the recommendations as set out in the AIA.

14. Alternative Route through Bridge No.29 to the South of Moorgate Halt LC

14.1. This option has been heavily explored previously but at the meeting on 25th of August 2023, this option was discounted as being unsuitable.

15. Alternative Route through Bridge No.30 to the North of Moorgate Halt LC

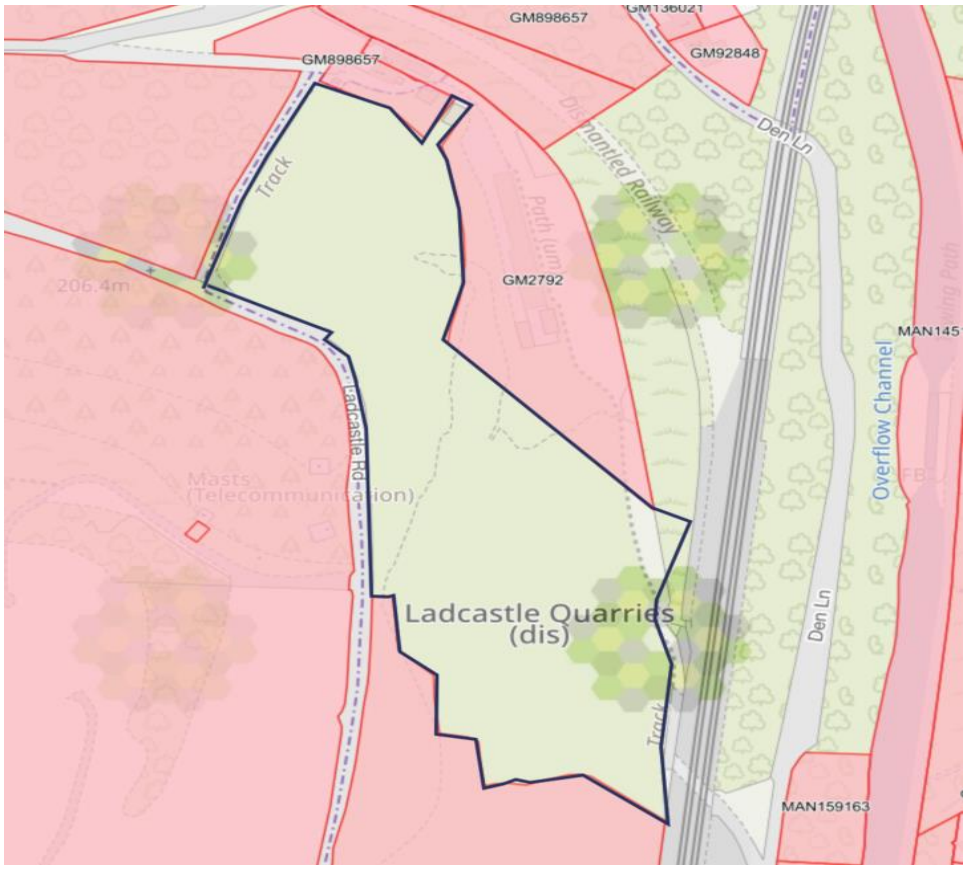
15.1. At the on-site meeting held on 25th August, the PROW Officer stated that he wished Network Rail to re-visit the possible diversionary route through Bridge 30 to the north of Moorgate LC. This seems like a plausible alternative should the level crossing be closed, but it is not without its own difficulties.

15.2. Bridge 30 is an underbridge approximately 360m from the crossing (directly north up the track) and is owned and maintained by Network Rail. It currently does not accommodate a public right of way, although it is clearly used by members of the public as part of a wider network of both recorded and unrecorded footpaths in the vicinity. Upon closer investigation of this route, it has become apparent that it is not possible to create a public right of way entirely on land within Network Rail ownership, and therefore any path would have to traverse at least 3 different land ownerships, and we would require landowner consent to dedicate a way over their land to accommodate a public right of way.

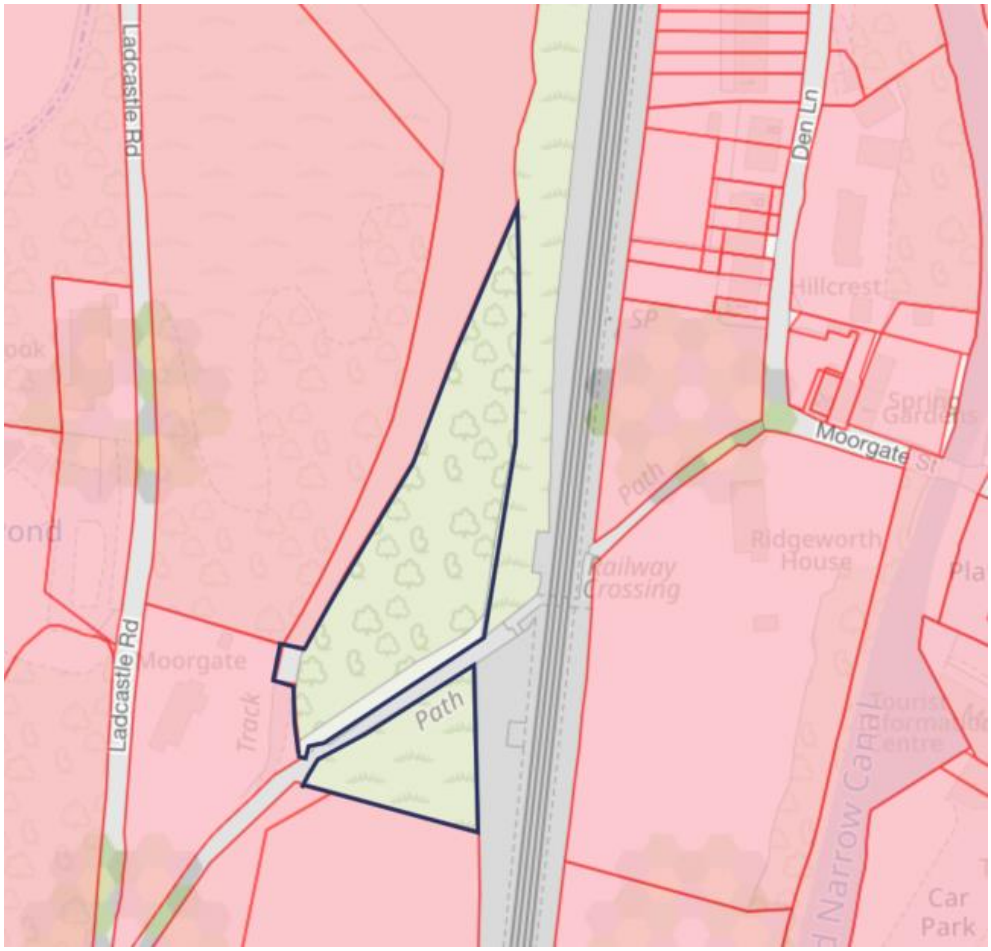
15.3. One of the parcels of land that would be affected is registered with the Land Registry, as MAN181042. Network Rail have spoken to the owner, who is potentially open to the idea of the diversionary route traversing his land, although further negotiations would be required in terms of upgrading the route and potential compensation payable etc.

15.4. Network Rail have also identified three unregistered parcels of land that would be affected. The first is immediately south of GM2792 and adjacent to bridge 30. The owners of GM2792 are Petsville Cattery and Kennels have confirmed ownership of this parcel and are open to the idea of the current unrecorded path becoming a

public right of way should Moorgate Level Crossing close permanently. This can be seen edged blue on the plan below.



15.5. Two parcels of unregistered land, one of which may be affected by any diversion, are further south immediately either side of the path from Moorgate LC up to Ladcastle Road. The owner of Ladcastle Cottage (MAN49385) has confirmed that he owns both of these parcels of land and has no objection to this proposal. These parcels can be seen in the plan below edge blue.



15.6. The owner of GM942754 (Moorgate Cottage) has replied to the letter that was sent by stating that she would not agree to this proposal. She owns the land to the left of the 2 parcels highlighted above, immediately adjacent to the current right of way. Some further clarification has been sent to this landowner on how the proposal would directly affect her land and Network Rail are awaiting a response.

15.7. It may be the case, that if they are insistent on the already used path over their land not becoming a recorded public right of way, then Network Rail will need to liaise with the adjacent landowner on the possibility of a new path being constructed over his land to avoid that included in Moorgate Cottage.

15.8. A site meeting is required with the affected landowners the project team and the Rights of Way Officer, so this can be discussed in further detail and issues that they may have can be addressed. This is now confirmed as being the 25th of October 2023. It is worth

noting that in speaking with 2 of the landowners, none of them have an expressed any objection to the closure of the crossing on a permanent basis.

15.9. In addition, the project would have to obtain permission from the Asset Owner – the North-West & Central Structures Team, as to whether they would be willing to permit a public right of way beneath the bridge. On occasion, asset owners are reluctant to do this because ordinarily a private bridge such as this one, can be infilled when life expired, but where there is a public right of way, this is not possible, or very difficult. However, the Senior Asset Engineer has now confirmed that he is happy for the bridge to accommodate a public right of way.

15.10. Some comments were also made at the site meeting on 25th of August that Den Lane is not suitable due to there being no footway, and it may be the case that a Road Safety Audit should be carried out in order to identify any issues. This could then inform the project as to what works may be required.

15.11. Some of the previous feasibility reports also identified that there may be some works that are required to Den Lane to upgrade and improve the route for pedestrians where currently there is no footway. This may require some permanent works in the highway, and Oldham Council may require an agreement under s.278 of the Highways act 1980 for us to carry out those works.

15.12. Such an agreement enables the Highway Authority to adopt any permanent works in the highway so that they can thereafter maintain them at public expense. Network rail do enter into these agreements where appropriate, and this would not pose a major hurdle in this scenario, but it is an added layer of complexity and cost.

16. Conclusions.

16.1. The terms ‘geographical complexities’ had been used in the application, and the Rights of Way Officer asked that this concept be more fully explained. This report has highlighted the restricted access to and from the site and is the narrow nature of the railway

corridor at this location. Ground investigations have confirmed that specialist equipment and methods are required for the construction of any bridge, and because of the proximity to the running rails, a unique bridge design is required.

16.2. This issue of bespoke platforms was specifically raised by one of the user groups, who asked why this element was absolutely necessary and what it involved and suggested that it had not been discussed prior to these recent conversations. The cast concrete platform is required because of the proximity of the bridge to the running rails and is designed to protect the bridge from potential train derailment. The platform design is included on the GA drawing that has been readily available and has been considered by the user groups, it is not a new feature of the bridge design but is an essential part of its design.

16.3. With regards to signalling, one of the user groups referred to other locations nearby where bridges had been built next to signals with no issue, and asked why it can't be done at Moorgate. As mentioned previously, it has now been confirmed that the signalling is irrelevant to any footbridge construction at this location.

16.4. All concerned parties asked why it is that Network Rail had initially promoted the construction of a pedestrian footbridge but have since changed their minds and have sought extinguishment of the footpath without the provision of a bridge. This report has attempted to explain how these projects are pursued internally and how the development of a project from inception to full detailed design develops and the obstacles that it may come across on that journey.

16.5. For this project, it is a combination of factors that have resulted in a huge escalation of costs for the construction of a bridge at Moorgate. The geographical complexities coupled with the unique design of the bridge have only fairly recently come to light during the detailed design and costing stage of the project. The estimated costs do not include other costs such as those associated with access and temporary land occupation and environmental protection issues, so in fact would be upwards of what has been recently quoted.

16.6. The Rights of Way Officer and one of the user groups asked that Network Rail carry out some further investigations into a possible alternative route. A considerable amount of time has now been spent on identifying landowners and speaking with them to determine what issues they may have with a public right of way being recorded over their land. In all, the result has been positive, but they do have some queries over items specifically linked to their land such as fencing and concerns around trespass etc.

16.7. A meeting has now been arranged for the 25th of October 2023 with those affected and the Rights of Way Officer and the project team to discuss these issues and to try and resolve them in way that suites all parties should Network Rail be successful in obtaining a diversion Order for the footpath. In addition, the asset owners of bridge 30 have confirmed that they would accept a public right of way beneath bridge 30.

16.8. Another point on which the user groups asked for further information was the cost implications of a footbridge. At this location the physical works are extremely difficult to execute, and this has contributed massively to those costs. This unique set of circumstances has led to an escalation in the costs associated with the installation of a footbridge that was promoted previously, and this is likely to be more when all of the other costs are factored in – as mentioned above.

16.9. Network Rail are fully aware that the reasoning for not constructing a bridge doing cannot be based on cost alone, although it does play a significant factor in decision making process when managing public money. Project teams consistently question whether what they are proposing is an adequate use of public money and could that money be better used elsewhere. Network Rail are bound by this under their operating conditions, and it does play a huge part in the decision-making process, as it has for Moorgate Halt.

16.10. The aims of this report were to highlight the difficulties and complexities involved in providing a pedestrian footbridge as a replacement for the footpath over the railway at Moorgate level crossing. Some significant concerns were raised in relation to the s.118A application that had been submitted by Network Rail, in that

it did not provide this information in enough detail, and also specific questions were raised by the user groups with regards to the construction requirements and signalling arrangements.

16.11. It is hoped that this document now provides all of the additional information as requested in sufficient detail, but Network Rail will endeavour to answer any further queries that may arise from this.



Moorgate Quarry Walking Trails

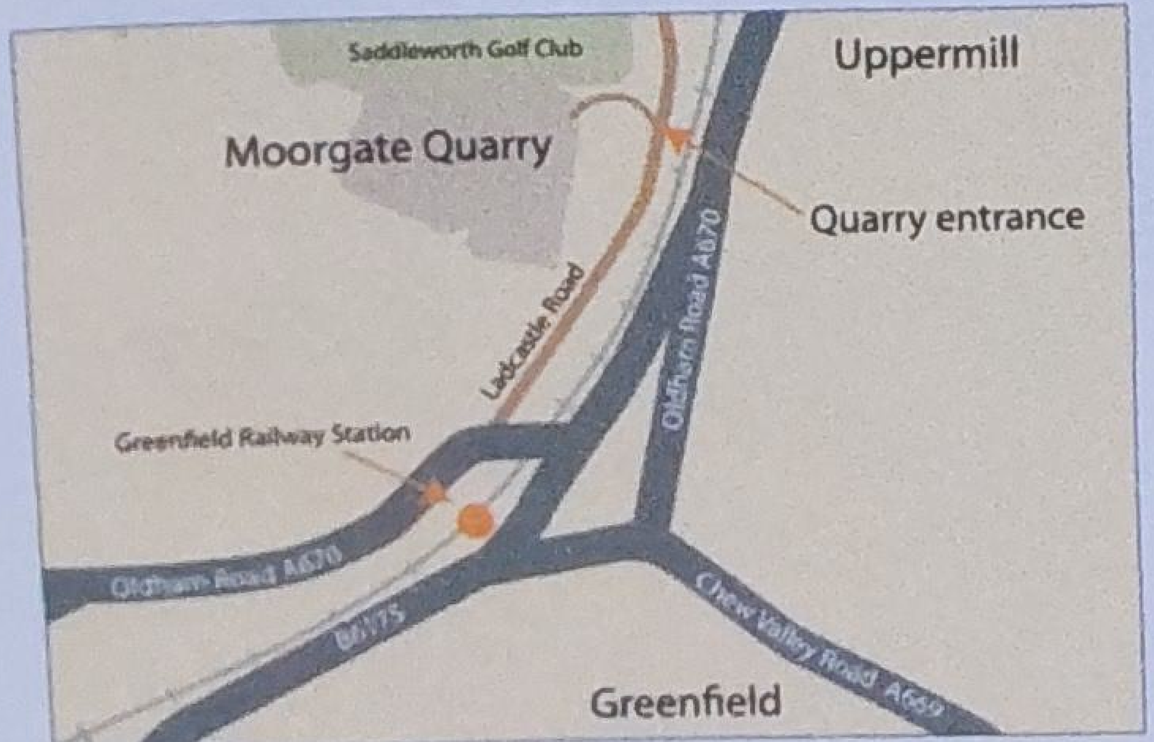
Oldham Council

Moorgate Quarry location

Moorgate Quarry entrance can be found on Ladcastle Road, off Oldham Road (A670), Uppermill.
OS Grid Ref **SD 9934 0544**

By train - Greenfield Station off Oldham Road (A670), near Ladcastle Road, Greenfield.
Train enquiries: T: 08457 484950 • www.nationalrail.co.uk

By bus - Regular bus service to Uppermill and Greenfield from Oldham town centre that drops you off on Oldham Road (A670) / Greenfield Station stop close to Ladcastle Road.
Bus enquiries: T: 0161 244 1000 • www.tfgm.com



Oldham Council Environmental Services
T: 0161 770 4056

Moorgate Quarry today

Full of geology, unique nature and spectacular views, Moorgate Quarry is waiting to be discovered. The site is located in the hillside of Wharmton Hill above Uppermill, Saddleworth. It is now home to a diverse matrix of wildlife habitats - ponds, areas of heathland, acid grassland and woodland.

History and heritage

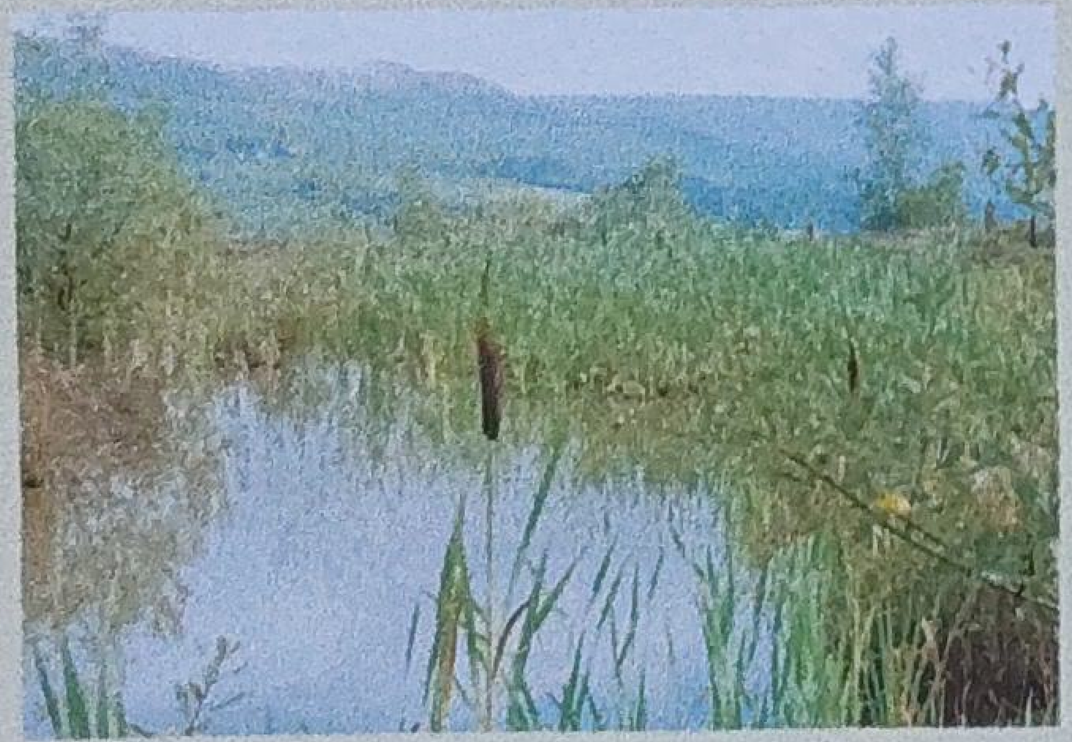


Moorgate Quarry 1988 (Peter Fox)

Moorgate Quarry's working life began in 1920's when quarrying the Gritstone, used for road building and other purposes. Moorgate Quarry closed during the 1990's. Oldham Council took ownership of the quarry in 1999 and undertook a restoration project to help create the important wildlife site that it has become today.

Wildlife at the quarry

When quarries come to the end of their working life they provide space for important wildlife habitats to develop as nature takes over. As part of the restoration project ponds and ditches were created and areas of heathland, acid grassland and woodland began to flourish.



Take a wander through the quarry and experience this special nature site that is now designated as a *Site of Biological Importance (SBI). There is an important population of dragonflies and damselflies that exist in and around the ponds with 15 different species having been recorded at the site in recent years.



Lichen - Common Powderhorn

*Site of Biological Importance (SBI) is the name given to the most important non-statutory sites for nature conservation and provides a means of protecting sites that are of local interest and importance.

In spring the quarry comes alive to the sound of bird song and the buzz of insects. Many birds find suitable nesting sites in the trees that grow along the edge of the quarry. Butterflies, bees and hoverflies can be seen flitting from flower to flower foraging for nectar and pollen, to provide them with the vital energy to enable them to survive and thrive in the quarry. By mid-summer the heather flowers cast a wonderful purple hue across the quarry.



Creeping Thistle

Throughout the year a number of mammals can be found living in or visiting the quarry; from the very small, such as field voles and wood mice, to the occasional fox and roe deer.



Small Skipper Butterfly

Dragonfly or damselfly?

Damselflies are tiny, dainty fliers, often multi-coloured and the size of a matchstick. They perch with their wings usually folded back along their body.



Damselfly (Common Blue)



Dragonfly (Black Darter)

Dragonflies are larger and some are vibrant in colour and have striking body patterns when seen close up. They will perch with their wings held open at right angles to their body.

To learn more about dragonflies why not visit the British Dragonfly Society website at **www.british-dragonflies.org.uk**

If you're lucky enough to catch sight of and photograph these beautiful animals or insects then upload it to any of our social media sites with the hashtag **#LoveOldham:**

facebook facebook.com/loveoldham

twitter twitter.com/OldhamCouncil

Places to visit



Dove Stone Reservoir

Uppermill has lots to offer so why not take the opportunity to wander along the High Street and see for yourself? There are lots of local shops, tempting cafes and tea shops to pop in for refreshments after your visit to Moorgate Quarry.

Upland Discovery Centre
A permanent exhibition celebrating the South Pennine landscape and wildlife, open daily from 9am - 7pm. The centre is on the first floor – above The Limekiln Café, Brownhill Countryside Centre, Wool Rd, Dobcross, OL3 5PB.
T: 0161 770 5888



Saddleworth Museum and Art Gallery - The Art Gallery hosts exhibitions throughout the year and the museum tells the fascinating story of the people who have created Saddleworth's landscape and character. For further information visit www.visitoldham.com. There is also a visitor information facility within that offers local advice on local events. Uppermill High St, Saddleworth, Uppermill, Oldham OL3 6HS. **T: 01457 874093**

For further information of what's on, things to do and places to visit **www.visitoldham.com**





There are lots of places to discover in the area either on foot or cycle. Ordnance Survey Explorer Map OL1 is a great way to discover many of numerous footpaths, bridleways and lanes to be found in the area.
www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/leisure
For maps to help you plan your cycling route please visit: **www.cycling.tfgm.com**

Moorgate Quarry

The three walking trails

As well as rewarding you with stunning views over Uppermill and beyond, this site offers 3 short walking trails that you can follow and enjoy. The walking trails vary in difficulty and length and are signposted for you to follow.



Summit trail A walk to the top of the quarry along the access track with the rewards of a bench, information board and breath-taking views of the surrounding countryside. Distance - 1350 metres



Woodland trail A circular walk along the woodland edge of the quarry leading to the top of the site, descending down the stone steps to the bench and view point, and then down the access track to the quarry entrance. Distance - 1540 metres



Pond trail A short, circular trail around the lower ponds located in the heart of the quarry. Distance - 1020 metres

Please be aware, whilst these walks might be fun and enjoyable, there are sheer rock faces, steep slopes and loose stones underfoot.



Gatekeeper butterfly



Broad bodied chaser

Heron

Hoverfly

Cream Spot Ladybird



Wildlife Photographs by Ken Garlick

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Oldham Local Development Framework

Development Plan Document - Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies

Adopted 9 November 2011

Oldham Council

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1 About this document

If you would like to receive this information in another format, such as large print, Braille, audio or alternative languages, please call us on telephone number 0161 770 4061.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a new planning system called a Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF will direct the future development pattern of the borough and will eventually replace the 2006 Unitary Development Plan (UDP) which is the borough's current land use plan. The LDF forms part of the borough's Development Plan. Development Plans guide and control the use of land. The LDF will be a folder of different planning documents called Development Plan Documents (DPD) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD). DPDs are subject to independent examination and form part of the Development Plan. SPDs are not subject to independent examination and are not part of the Development Plan, but they are material planning considerations in the determination of planning applications. Appendix 10 sets out the status of the UDP policies once this DPD is adopted.

What is the joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document?

The purpose of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) is to set out the long-term vision and objectives for the borough. It will also contain a planning and development strategy, policies and a monitoring and implementation framework. The Development Management Policies DPD will set out policies that will manage development in the borough. Here in Oldham, the Core Strategy DPD and the Development Management Policies DPD will be prepared as a single document called the `Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document`. From this point on, it will be referred to simply as `the joint DPD`.

2 Introduction and Spatial Portrait

Summary of the main issues and key challenges we face

2.1 Our challenge is to improve the quality of people's lives and our communities here in the borough. To do that we need to make sure Oldham plays to its strengths and pulls its increasing weight in Greater Manchester. We also need to take advantage of our links to Leeds. We will also work with the Peak District to reflect its particular characteristics and the benefits that come from being so close to the national park.

2.2 We want to make the borough an address of choice. To do so we need to meet the housing needs and demands of all sections of the community by improving the choice, quality and affordability of new homes. This will be achieved through securing housing-led regeneration, the reuse of brownfield sites and appropriate housing mix. The Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder (HMR) will be a key player here.

2.3 Alongside improving our housing offer, we also want to change our local economy with a shift towards low carbon industries and technologies. Improving prosperity will help address worklessness, tackle deprivation and promote economic well-being. We will build upon being a university town to increase education and skills by working with partners on the new and remodelled schools programmes. Also our outstanding higher and further education colleges - the Oldham College and the Oldham Sixth Form College - and our own university, the University Campus Oldham which is a successful part of the University of Huddersfield, will be key players in helping deliver on our aspirations.

2.4 The limited supply of available developable land acts as a constraint on our future plans for providing new jobs. This reflects our tight Green Belt and the topography of the borough. Our approach towards employment land is to keep the best and recycle the rest, including old industrial sites and mills. Our `centres` act as a focal point for local communities, and we need to improve their offer. In Oldham Town Centre this includes plans for some key sites, such as the Old Town Hall, and addressing the challenges posed by the night-time economy. Making it easier for people to get to jobs, here in the borough or in Manchester City Centre and our neighbouring districts key sites, is also a challenge. Traffic congestion and its impacts on bus journey times and reliability, the integration of development with the transport system, motorway based commuting to employment sites, and the need to encourage travel by sustainable modes are challenges we face. Metrolink will be a key element in improving accessibility.

2.5 Our local natural, built and historic environments play a crucial part in so many aspects of life in the borough, for example liveability, health, people's perceptions of safety, community cohesion, it's image. We need to protect people's amenity and improve local environmental quality. Achieving sustainable developments through using our resources wisely, securing the right locations and ensuring the high-quality design and construction of new buildings are ways we will face the challenges posed by climate change. Protecting our quality open spaces and encouraging healthy lifestyles, more play and physical exercise are integral to improving health and well-being.

Our key assumptions

2.6 In addressing these issues and challenges we have had regard to national policies. Some planning matters, such as securing high quality design and construction, are taken as read. In addition, some of our key assumptions are:

a. no changes to our current Green Belt boundaries;
b. the number of new homes we will plan for is at least 289 per annum (net of clearance) on average over the plan period, the amount that will be on brownfield land is at least 80% per annum and the requirements for affordable homes is based on national guidance (sites threshold of 15 dwellings or more);
c. our provision of new employment land (approximately 82 hectares) will contribute to Greater Manchester's overall supply;
d. we will promote alternatives to people using the private car, such as public transport, walking and cycling;
e. that work at the Greater Manchester level has informed our approach to energy;
f. that detailed waste and minerals matters will be dealt with by the Greater Manchester joint plans which are being prepared by the Geological Unit; and
g. that a number of on-going programmes, such as the LIFT health and well-being programme, the Metrolink proposals, HMR, and a range of environmental regeneration initiatives, will proceed alongside preparation of the LDF.

Spatial Portrait

Setting the Scene

2.7 Oldham is situated in the north east of Greater Manchester. It covers an area of 55 square miles. Our metropolitan neighbours include Rochdale, Manchester and Tameside in Greater Manchester, and Kirklees and Calderdale in Yorkshire. Parts of Saddleworth are in the Peak Park. The borough is made up of the town of Oldham itself and the areas of Shaw, Royton, Lees, Hollinwood, Failsworth, Chadderton, Uppermill, Greenfield, Delph, Dobcross, Denshaw, Diggle, Austerlands, Grasscroft, Grotton, Lydgate, Scouthead and Springhead. The borough contains a residential population of approximately 220,000, with approximately 90,000 households.

Figure 1 The borough and its surrounding areas



2.8 The borough is one of contrasts with significant levels of deprivation but also areas of prosperity. The many distinct areas that make up the borough, and their communities, are a source of strength locally and to the sub-region that are to be celebrated and which contribute to the local distinctiveness and character of the borough. Spatially, the borough is also, in many ways, an area of physical constraints. Pennine moorland dominates the eastern side of the borough, part of which falls within the Peak Park. It consists of a large area of countryside with a settlement pattern of densely settled river valleys, dispersed farmsteads and open moorland. To the west, most of the borough has an urban character reflecting its industrial legacy and proximity to Manchester. Much of the west and centre of the borough was originally developed at high densities, and there are less green spaces here, which are often a precious asset to the local area.

2.9 Land within the borough is not an unlimited resource. Developable land within the borough, which is already constrained by our Green Belt boundaries and the borough's topography, has many competing uses. The recycling of previously developed land as a means of promoting regeneration, environmental protection and sustainable development will be critical. For example, due to the nature of the borough there are industrial sites located within predominantly residential areas that may no longer be suitable for today's business needs and therefore it may be that these would be better developed for other appropriate uses.

2.10 The LDF will address the borough's future development needs, including housing, employment, education, leisure and open spaces. It has to take account of a wide range of issues that can sometimes be in conflict, however it will do so in ways that contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development and inclusive communities and adapts and mitigates the effects of climate change.

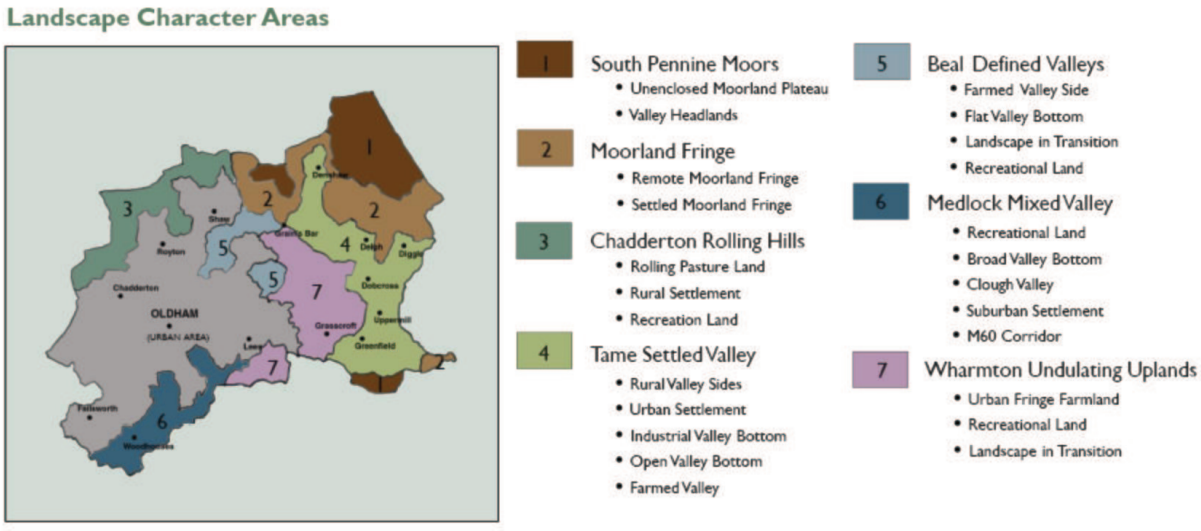
Where we have come from...

2.11 Oldham rose to prominence during the 19th Century as an international centre of manufacturing. It was amongst the first industrialised towns. Following the decline of the textile industry Oldham diversified into other sectors, however these are now experiencing decline. This has left us with a legacy of dense urban areas comprising terraced properties developed during the industrialisation of the town. These residential areas sit alongside large mill buildings, many of which are landmark buildings contributing to the borough's local distinctiveness and character. Many mills, however, are in need of repair, becoming derelict, underused and costly to refurbish and failing to meet the needs and standards of modern businesses.

2.12 The landscape of Oldham and the South Pennines is a product of a complex interaction between human influences and environmental responses. Its special character can be attributed to the mixture of landscapes generated through the industrial revolution combined with the 'prehistoric landscapes' still to be found on the upland areas. With very little separation between them, these landscapes present a unique and visually contrasting representation of Oldham's landscape evolution.

2.13 The map below shows the seven landscape areas that have been devised to represent the variations in character. Each of the wider landscape character areas has been further sub-divided into separate landscape character areas. These discrete geographical types possess common characteristics with the areas but have a distinct and recognisable local identity.

Figure 2 Oldham Landscape Character Areas



2.14 Farming practice has had a major influence on the borough's rural fringe landscape character. It was the testing conditions of the upland landscape that lead to the development of the dual economy of farming and textiles. This dual economy, along with the natural limitations of the land, has meant that farming has not grown to the same degree as in surrounding lowland areas. The close links between the industrial/urban and rural economy is one of the distinctive

features of the area. In many respects, the valued landscapes and habitats that exist on the fringes are a direct by-product of past management practices. For example, mill ponds and the 'tight knit' development of the settled valleys near their source of power.

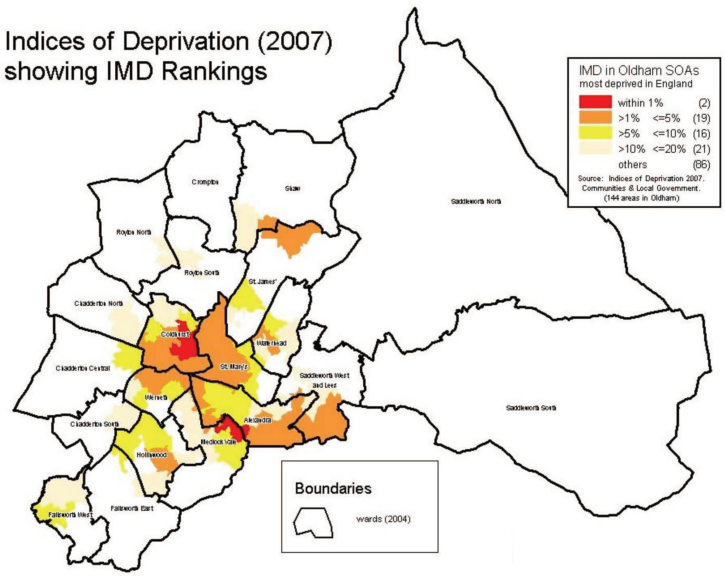
2.15 With the influence of the Pennine Moors so strong, it is the cultural living landscape, represented by its people that reinforce the special link between people and place. As less people work in rural jobs, the understanding of how the land and the landscape has evolved to serve the community is lost. What might appear as minor landscape features, such as sunken lanes or building foundations, could be important historical features such as turnpikes or water mills. It is important that the protection, enhancement and interpretation of the landscape are considered alongside measures that re-invigorate the economy. Only in this way will the borough balance its wonderful landscape with economic development and secure successful regeneration.

Where we are now... and the challenges we face

2.16 Oldham remains dependent on manufacturing with approximately one-sixth of the borough's employees employed in this sector compared with one-in-nine nationally. The borough's economy is under-performing; Gross Value Added (GVA) per head for Greater Manchester North is 36% lower than the national level. Business formation is low.

2.17 Pockets of deprivation are particularly concentrated around the inner Oldham area. The borough is the 42nd most deprived local authority area in the country, although this has improved from the 33rd most deprived in the mid 1990s. The borough's unemployment rate is above the Greater Manchester and national averages. Average gross weekly wages of a full time worker in the borough are below United Kingdom levels.

Figure 3

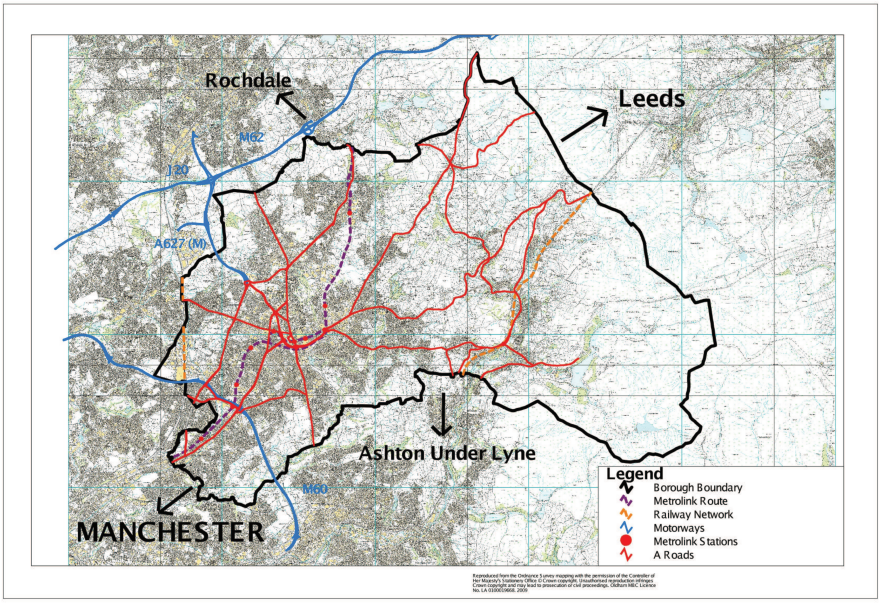


2.18 Approximately over one-third of the borough's population, aged 16-74 years old, are without qualifications. The percentage of Oldham school pupils achieving 5 or more A to C* grades at GCSE (including Maths and English) in 2009 was 46.7%, below the England-wide proportion (49.8%).

2.19 The borough achieved university status in 2005 through its links with the University of Huddersfield. Due to the success and aspirations of University Campus Oldham, the University has recently expanded with the opening of its new university teaching centre in October 2008. It provides business training and support services and a range of undergraduate courses. Other further education establishments include the Oldham College and the Oldham Sixth Form College which offer a range of academic and vocational education courses designed to meet the needs of all students. Although things are improving there is still much to be done to improve education and to retain skilled people within the borough.

2.20 Oldham has good transport connectivity with its road and motorway network links, including the A62, A627(M), A663, A671, A669, A635 and easy access to the M60 and M62. Metrolink will be up and running over the next few years. These transport links offer locational advantages for the borough with opportunities for accessing two major centres of importance, Manchester and Leeds, and also Manchester airport. The rail network in Oldham provides connections to West Yorkshire and Manchester and beyond. Oldham also has two Quality Bus Corridors at Manchester-Oldham-Saddleworth (A62/A669) and Rochdale-Oldham-Ashton (A671/A627). There is a new central bus station in Oldham Town Centre. These public transport links are very important to ensure accessibility and sustainable development and also to Oldham's economic and social prosperity, even more so as car ownership in the borough is below the national average. Sections of the Strategic Road Network experience peak traffic flows which can reduce journey time reliability. The challenge of addressing the additional trip generating developments will be essential to facilitating the joint DPD. Table A (see page 25) defines the key issues which have been identified in partnership with the Highways Agency to ensure that the long-term plan can be realised without compromising the operation of the Strategic Road Network.

Figure 4 Main Transport Network

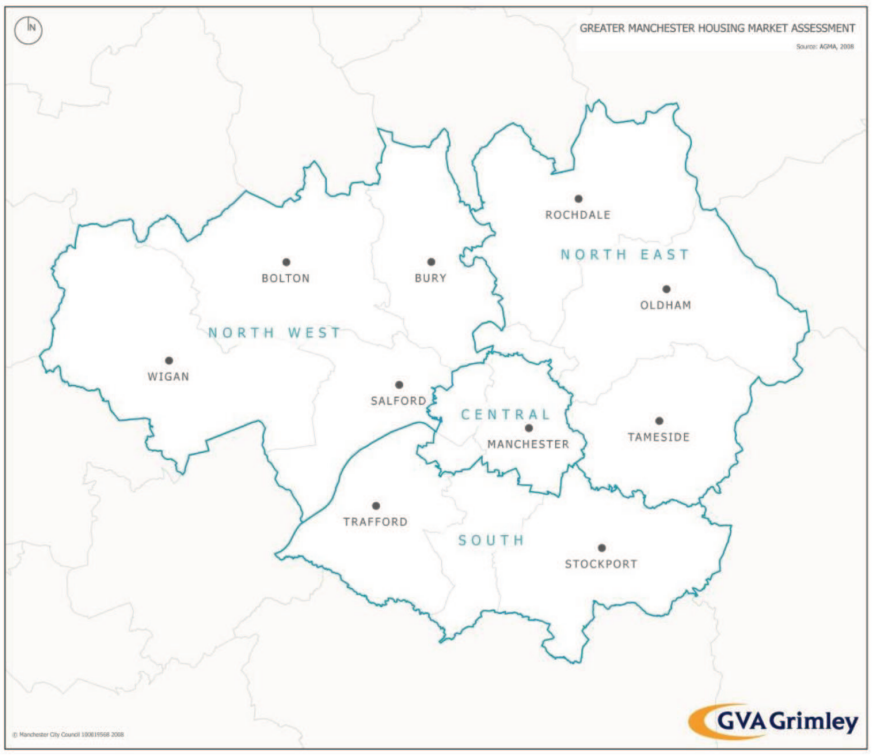


2.21 There are many challenges affecting the borough's housing market today. The borough has an unbalanced housing market with low proportions of detached properties and very high proportion of terraced properties. The supply of current homes does not match the needs and demands of people in the borough and Greater Manchester. In particular, there is a need for larger family accommodation within the borough.

2.22 The vacancy rate was 5.65% as of May 2009 when there were 5,341 empty properties across Oldham. Long-term empty houses create a number of problems within the borough, including reducing the number of homes available to those in need and increasing the pressure for new housing.

2.23 The availability of affordable housing within the borough has significantly reduced due to a combination of house price inflation, reduction in council-owned stock and an increasing buy to let market. Oldham's relatively low wages also mean that many people are unable to buy a house. Levels of overcrowding within the borough (7% of housing stock in 2001 (Census)) further compounds the affordability situation. Over recent years, progress has been made in the provision of affordable housing, including through new residential development. Since April 2009 207 affordable homes have been delivered, which is over three times the level from 2008/09 and the largest number in recent years.

Figure 5 AGMA Housing Market Areas

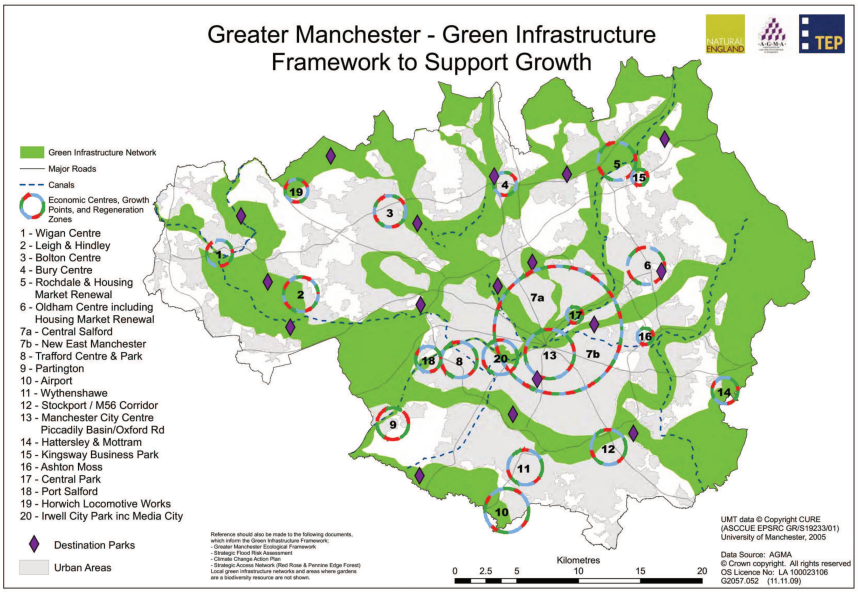


2.24 Oldham Town Centre and the seven centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill are the main focus for retailing in the borough, including independent shops. These centres function as the hub for local communities, providing a focus for a range of social, civic and community services and activities close to people's homes. Elsewhere, small clusters of shops and neighbourhood shops also provide a role in meeting local needs. Out-of-centre retail parks, such as Elk Mill and Alexandra Retail Park, also form a significant part of the retail offer in the borough. Oldham Town Centre and the other seven centres will remain the focus for new major retail and leisure developments. The opening of Gallery Oldham and the Oldham Library and Lifelong Learning Centre are significant achievements in recent years. The challenges are how to improve the offer so that the vitality and viability of our centres are enhanced. This is particularly the case in Oldham Town Centre, where a real challenge is posed by the need to improve the night-time economy with its current reputation for binge-drinking and anti-social behaviour that can put off sections of the community from visiting and can detract from the image of Oldham.

2.25 Over half of the borough is open land that provides an attractive setting to built up areas and is an important natural resource supporting agricultural, tourism and recreational activities. The majority of the open land is designated Green Belt or locally protected open countryside. Woodland cover at 3% is below the national average, although this must be seen in the context of the wide extent of open moorland here. River valleys and waterways, including the Rochdale Canal corridor and the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, which have recently been restored, provide habitats and corridors for wildlife, as well as opportunities for recreation, tourism and regeneration.

2.26 Heritage and conservation is very important within the borough. There are 36 conservation areas totalling 251 hectares, 533 listed buildings, three registered parks and gardens and three registered scheduled ancient monuments, all of which contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of the borough. There is also a range of nature conservation areas, from international through to those of local importance. These include five Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 36 Sites of Biological Importance (SBI), one Local Nature Reserve, one Special Protection Area for Birds (SPA) and two Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). The South Pennine Moors, which is designated SPA and SAC, as well as SSSI and SBI, has the highest degree of international importance for birds and habitats.

Figure 6



2.27 Open space, sport and recreation provision helps to underpin people's quality of life. It has a key role to play in the protection of the environment: supporting biodiversity, animal habitats and nature conservation; and combating the effects of pollution. This supports the Biodiversity Duty, introduced by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (October 2006), which states that public authorities have a duty to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in exercising their functions. However, open spaces within urban areas can come under pressure for development primarily due to the need for urban renewal and the protection of the Green Belt. New residential developments also place pressure on existing open space, sport and recreation provision as new developments result in more residents in an area. Even individual new dwellings and small developments can cumulatively result in pressure on existing facilities. A recent audit [(1)] of open space, sport and recreation provision within the borough shows that we have 1,596 hectares. Open spaces in the borough vary in quality and accessibility, however there are seven open space spaces within the borough that have Green Flag status – Alexandra Park, Brownhill Centre Nature Garden, Chadderton Hall Park, Coalshaw Green Park, Foxdenton Park, High Crompton Park and Stoneleigh Park.

1 Open Space Study, PMP consultants and Oldham Council, 2006-2010.

2.28 As part of the borough's green infrastructure there is an extensive Rights of Way network, with 805 numbered paths, totalling 430 kilometres. The Pennine Way and the Pennine Bridleway are two long distance routes that run through the borough. Other locally important routes include the Oldham Way, Medlock Valley Way, Stanedge Trail and Crompton Circuit. As well as providing access to parts of the borough these also provide access to neighbouring areas, including Tameside, Manchester and the Peak Park. Due to its open nature the network is mainly in the east of the borough and there is a need to develop links from the urban area through to the open countryside so as to encourage greater access and use of the recreational opportunities, particularly as this will help with promoting healthy lifestyles.

2.29 Flood risk in the borough arises from many potential sources. The main issues in the borough appear to be from surface water, followed by canals. Fluvial flooding is less of a problem in the borough due to the steep nature of the river valleys and limited floodplain in the upper reaches of the Rivers Beal, Irk, Medlock and Tame. As the borough lies at the top of the catchment, surface water tends to flow quite quickly into the river system. The lower lying areas to the west of the borough such as Chadderton and Failsworth are at greatest susceptibility to surface water flooding. In terms of flooding from sewers Oldham is one of the local authorities with the least number of recorded flood incidents in Greater Manchester and there are relatively few reported incidents of groundwater flooding in the borough. The canals do not generally pose a direct flood risk as they are a regulated water body. The residual risk is associated with the lower probability events such as overtopping and/or the breeching of embankments. Oldham is heavily urbanised in places and many watercourses have been culverted or diverted to make space for urban growth. The borough has 11,702 kilometres of culverted watercourses. Some watercourses were in-filled or disconnected as the need for water supply to mills or other industries ceased. The condition or standard of culverted or hidden watercourses are often unknown, but they can become blocked with debris and cause localised flooding following heavy rainfall and need to be carefully managed.

Our role in Greater Manchester and beyond

2.30 Oldham is located in the north east of Greater Manchester. The sub-region represents the largest economy outside London and the south east, forming the powerhouse of the northern economy.

2.31 Greater Manchester has set ambitious but achievable targets for growth. There are marked differences in economic performance and prosperity within the sub-region. As a generalisation the districts in the north, including Oldham, have been experiencing lower GVA growth and private sector investment, than those in the south or Manchester City Centre. The intention of the Greater Manchester authorities is to close this gap, by accelerating the process of regeneration in the northern districts, and thereby strengthen the whole of Greater Manchester.

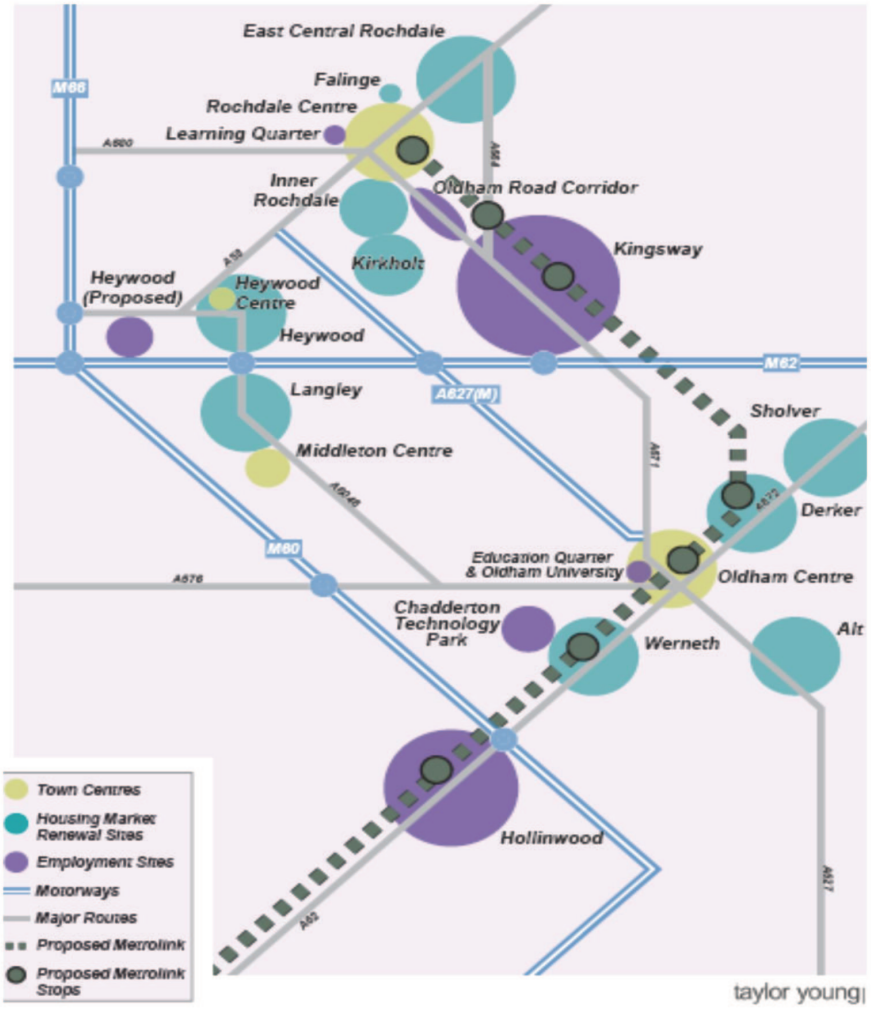
2.32 This ambition is also reflected in the Manchester Independent Economic Review (MIER), which has been prepared to inform the economic strategy for Greater Manchester. In terms of the future, MIER reports that the positioning of Oldham is important, in particular improving connectivity with the rest of the conurbation and improving skill levels. It identifies that more investment is required and that the policy focus is needed to attract that.

2.33 The Manchester Multi-Area Agreement (MAA) and the Greater Manchester Strategy will help to deliver and co-ordinate the ambitious plans for growth and development, and provide a link between work that is going on at the local and higher levels.

2.34 Being part of Greater Manchester's economy can be an enormous advantage to the borough and we must make sure we seize the opportunities this presents. In particular, we need to take advantage of the nearby job and business opportunities in Manchester City Centre and at our neighbouring district's key sites (such as at Kingsway in Rochdale, Ashton Moss in Tameside, and Central Park and at Manchester Piccadilly Basin/Oxford Road Area in Manchester). These offer opportunities for Oldham's workforce to gain employment, however it is recognised that access by public transport to these sites is an issue that needs to be addressed by transport initiatives across Greater Manchester.

2.35 Our relationship with Rochdale is particularly well developed. We are joint partners in HMR. Oldham also forms part of Greater Manchester's north east housing market with Rochdale (and also Tameside and the Moston and Blackley neighbourhoods of Manchester). We have formed an economic and skills alliance (Oldham Rochdale Economic and Skills Alliance, ORESA), which has prepared a prospectus (`investing in jobs, homes and communities`) for housing, employment, investment and skills. Joint work has also been undertaken to understand the potential flood risks from the Beal catchment.

Figure 7 Oldham and Rochdale spatial priorities



2.36 Oldham is also working with the other Greater Manchester authorities on a combined approach towards waste management and minerals resources across the sub-region. There is a need to recognise the importance of sustainable waste management and ensure that all facilities are developed in line with the principles of the waste hierarchy. Also there is a need to recognise the importance of targets for waste and, through the joint waste plan, identify and safeguard sites within appropriate locations for a range of waste management facilities, including disposal, to meet this need within acceptable environmental, economic and social parameters. There is also a need to ensure that all properties have adequate provision of facilities for the storage of both refuse and recycling.

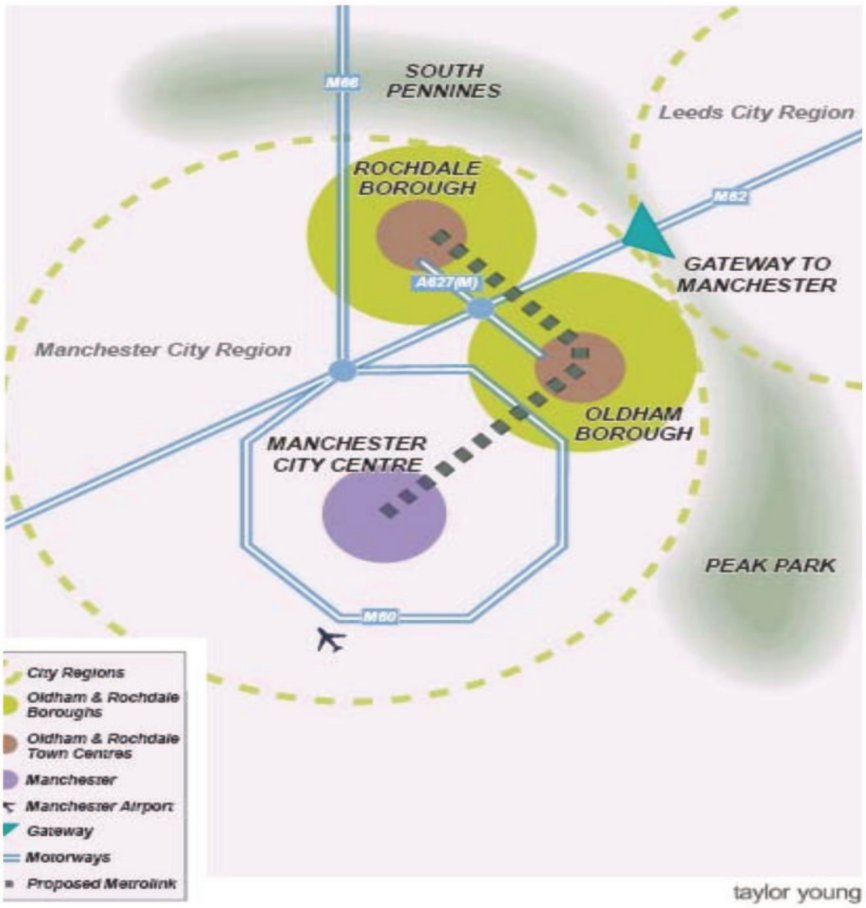
2.37 For minerals there is need to contribute towards maintaining an adequate land bank and steady supply of aggregates, safeguarding areas for future minerals development and avoiding sterilisation of known resources where possible, and identify sites for minerals storage, processing and transfer. Also there is a need to promote the use of recycled and secondary aggregates and the sustainable transport of minerals, and to ensure the effective restoration and aftercare of minerals sites, and ensure that minerals are extracted in line with sustainable development principles.

2.38 Oldham has the lowest carbon dioxide emissions (CO2) in Greater Manchester at 5.2 per capita emissions. Oldham has taken significant steps over recent years towards increasing the amount of energy that is met by renewable sources through the successful implementation of the UDP policy requiring 10% of predicted energy requirements to be provided, on site, from renewable sources in all major developments. However, there is still the need to reduce our carbon dioxide emissions, contribute towards meeting national targets and provide a policy framework that reflects national guidance. Oldham has worked with the Greater Manchester authorities on the Energy Study and will continue to work with Greater Manchester in taking forward a co-ordinated approach to energy planning. Issue 4 of Table A acknowledges the air quality forecasts which have been modelled through the transport modelling assessment. The council and the Highways Agency will work together on the Site Allocations DPD in line with the Protocol (see paragraph 2.85-2.86 for further details.)

2.39 The borough also has linkages with other areas given its location and transport links. It adjoins Yorkshire, having shared boundaries with Calderdale and Kirklees. It also adjoins the East Midlands, with part of Saddleworth lying in the Peak Park and under the planning responsibility of the National Park Authority. In respect of the Peak Park, we have worked to ensure that the policy frameworks of Oldham Council and the National Park are generally consistent with each other insofar as they relate to Saddleworth. This is particularly so for our approach towards landscapes.

2.40 We need to maximise the advantages and benefits arising from our location. Not only in terms of the local economy and jobs, but also the available opportunities for recreation and leisure to improve the health and well-being of the borough's people and communities. Oldham is not a lone player. Our plans for the borough's future success are based on playing an active role in Greater Manchester and making a positive contribution to the wider agenda.

Figure 8 Oldham's links to Greater Manchester and beyond



Where we are going... and how the borough will change by 2026

2.41 Since 2001, the population of Oldham has increased by a modest degree; from 217,300 in 2001 to 218,200 in 2008. In terms of age structure, the population of Oldham is younger than the national average, and also that of other local authorities in Greater Manchester. However, the proportion of the working age population and the proportion of people of retirement age or older are both smaller than the average for England. Forecasts show an increase in Oldham's population between 2008 and 2026, however the degree of increase varies with the 2026 population ranging between 224,400 and 239,000. There will be a significant growth in the number of people of retirement age or above, with increases ranging in percentage terms from 26% to 31%. In terms of ethnic composition, around one-in-six people in Oldham are from black and ethnic minority groups. By 2022, forecasts show that this proportion will increase to almost one-in-four as a result of growth in the size of Oldham's Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage communities. Life expectancy, on average, in the borough for both men and women is below the average in England, and within the borough this varies by as much as five years for men and almost seven years for women across different areas.

2.42 Regeneration is an integral part of the borough's past, present and future. The future direction of the borough is based around regeneration. The key to this is recognising that economic growth, diversification and prosperity and the quality and choice of local housing are intertwined. At the heart of the LDF will be the need to achieve sustainable economic regeneration and renewal of local housing markets, whilst at the same time mitigating and adapting to climate change and promoting sustainable development.

2.43 There are a number of important plans, policies, programmes and strategies at the international, United Kingdom, Greater Manchester and local levels that influence the LDF. The LDF will reflect these ideas and aspirations that will give physical expression to a transformed and regenerated borough over the next 15-20 years. The LDF does not operate in isolation; this joint DPD is not starting afresh, but will build on a number of continuing strategies that have proved to be successful. The higher-level documents include the Greater Manchester Strategy, the ORESA Prospectus, `Oldham Beyond`, the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement.

2.44 Now, we have HMR status (along with Rochdale), the New Deal for Communities (NDC) in Hathershaw and Fitton Hill (which ends in 2010) and the plans for improving the borough's schools, as well as other programmes such as the Private Finance Initiative. These programmes form part of our response to improving the life opportunities of local residents, including education and health, as a means of tackling deprivation and improving quality of life. Other on-going regeneration activities and initiatives also include Metrolink, the plans for Oldham Town Centre, the proposals for premium businesses at Foxdenton, Hollinwood Business District and Chadderton Technology Park, and the new health and well-being centres across the borough.

2.45 `Oldham Beyond`, which was commissioned by the Oldham Partnership and published in 2004, sets the vision for transforming the borough over the next 20 years. Its vision was: "*A confident place, at ease with itself and celebrating in its diverse communities and landscapes – from the tight-knit terraced communities to the wild moors and valley villages to the east. A borough that is proud of its industrial past but which has reinvented its economy by making the most of the creativity and drive of its young people. The world will see the borough as a place transformed and people will be attracted to live and work in the borough by the quality of life that it offers and by its reputation for tolerance and diversity*".[(2)]

2.46 `Oldham Beyond` envisages Oldham Town Centre as a shopping destination of choice, an aspirational place to live, a place that throngs with students from the local area and further afield, a hotbed for talent and enterprise, fizzing with creativity, a place to visit, work and study and live. It will have a broad range of activities that add to the vitality and viability of the town centre and provide for a safe and pleasant experience for all users and visitors.

2.47 `Oldham Beyond` has been a key driver in taking forward the borough's ambitious plans for regeneration and development to 2020 and beyond, both locally and as part of Greater Manchester. It is firmly rooted in demonstrating how physical change can help support achievement of successful outcomes in relation to the economy, jobs and skills, cleaner, greener and safer local neighbourhoods, improved quality and choice of housing, and healthier residents living and working within more cohesive communities.

2 `Oldham Beyond`, Oldham Partnership, 2004.

2.48 Oldham's Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2020 (SCS) has as its vision for 2020 to make "*Oldham a place where everyone is proud to belong*" by "*increasing life opportunities for all*".[3] It was updated in 2008 alongside the Local Area Agreement 2008-2011 (LAA) as a joint document. The LAA is subject to annual review and refresh with Government.

2.49 The SCS lists a series of ways to address the vision, including:

- "*Responding to economic restructuring by improving the employability of our residents, creating new and better quality employment opportunities, and improving access to the Greater Manchester jobs market.*"
- "*Developing a cohesive and integrated society by addressing inequalities between individuals, neighbourhoods and communities (especially the most vulnerable and deprived) and encouraging interaction between people in the borough's diverse communities*."
- "*Providing a strategic framework to support the physical regeneration of the borough through the implementation of Oldham Beyond.*"
- "*Improving the condition and mix of our housing stock as a strategic priority*."
- "*Developing Oldham's profile and improving its image within the Greater Manchester sub-region, North West and nationally*."
- "*Engaging and empowering our communities*…"
- "*Taking a pre-emptive, crosscutting and preventative approach to dealing with our priority issues such as crime, worklessness and health*."

2.50 The LAA links funding streams of central Government, the council and key partners to a set of agreed outcomes based on national and local priorities. The SCS and the LAA are based around three themes of economic prosperity, safe and strong communities, and health and well-being. Four crosscutting issues relating to a cohesive society, community engagement, culture, and sustainable use of resources supplement the themes.

2.51 HMR was established in 2003. This is a long-term programme that seeks to invest substantial resources into transforming local housing markets. Its overall aim is "*to deliver transformation in the housing markets in our area that will create sustainable communities and lead to greater community cohesion*".[4] The borough's housing offer will improve as we reap the benefits from previous investments, including HMR. The emphasis will be on delivering high quality housing in sustainable locations that provide a range of homes, which are attractive to local and new residents alike at all levels on the property market. The challenge will be meeting these requirements whilst delivering the right type of housing to meet the needs and demands of the local community. Our housing land assessment indicates that there is sufficient land to meet the borough's housing requirement.

3 Oldham Sustainable Community Strategy, Oldham Partnership, 2008.
4 Transformation and Cohesion: The Housing Market Renewal Prospectus for the Oldham and Rochdale Pathfinder, 2003.

Figure 9 Oldham Rochdale HMR Pathfinder areas



2.52 Manufacturing remains an important element of the local economy but, as identified through MIER and local evidence, there is the need to diversify our economic base. The council and its key partners recognise that this involves creating and fostering an environment that supports new and existing businesses. It also involves improving the skills and education levels of the borough's children and young people.

2.53 The provision of employment land will be an important part of our plans. Proposals for the economy are focused on Oldham Town Centre, including the new Regional Science Centre Oldham, Foxdenton, Hollinwood Business District and Chadderton Technology Park. These latter three areas have good transport links, including access to the motorway, and are key locations for development of technology based businesses. These broad locations are part of the ORESA `M60 employment zone` and form an `arc of opportunity` that is a natural extension from Manchester City Centre. They provide significant opportunities for economic diversification to improve the borough's economy and image and help our future success.

2.54 Education and skills levels will be improved through the transforming the education agenda for secondary and primary schools. As well as the future plans for University Campus Oldham and the Oldham Sixth Form College, the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme presents a new approach to capital investment in secondary school buildings and facilities. The proposals will involve some secondary schools being rebuilt, replaced or renovated;

changing the way children are taught and the way facilities are used. A Regional Science Centre Oldham (the Centre) is planned to be located at the recently developed Kings Point building in Oldham Town Centre. The Centre will comprise science laboratories, exhibition areas and lecture theatres. It would expect to take up to 1,600 visitors from schools a year, plus delivering to around 1,000 Further Education students and providing several hundred Higher Education proposed places. The Centre will host science enrichment activities for primary and secondary school students and also lectures from key scientists for students and businesses alike. Part of the centre may be used by the University of Huddersfield as part of the University Campus Oldham. However, a large part of the Centre will be for the use of the Oldham Sixth Form College. The Sixth Form College aim to increase their student numbers from 2,300 to 2,500 by 2011, predominately through the expansion of their science department. It will open in 2011. The importance of education at primary and pre-school is also recognised as a key driver of the borough's future success and improvements are to be delivered through the Primary Capital Programme. These initiatives will of course have important spatial implications for the future use of land in the borough, not only with regards to the development of sites but also how their location influences the surrounding areas.

2.55 Transport has a major role to play in delivering the borough's vision for the future. We need to deliver growth without increasing congestion and pollution. We must ensure that all residents can easily access the opportunities across the borough and Greater Manchester in a sustainable way. Major public transport improvements are planned with proposals to extend Metrolink from Manchester City Centre to Failsworth and Hollinwood up to Oldham and on to Shaw, which will be up and running over the next few years. There are of course challenges and opportunities presented by Metrolink; the location of new development at points of greatest accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling will be important, as well as the integration with the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy and the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan. Specific measures will be investigated to address any potential increased impacts on the Strategic Road Network through area wide and more specific assessments in the Site Allocations DPD as defined in Table A.

One Oldham...many locations

2.56 The borough can be looked at in many different ways: as a single entity; by wards; by physical or geographical boundaries. For the purposes of this spatial portrait, the borough is looked at in terms of its urban and rural places (although recognising there will be some degree of overlap between and within areas). We have looked at the district partnership areas, with East and West Oldham combined.

East and West Oldham

2.57 This inner area includes some of the most deprived parts of the borough. The need to improve health inequalities is a key challenge as average life expectancy at 74.7 years is the lowest in the borough. One in five (21.4%) of all people in Oldham have a limiting long-term illness, which is higher than the borough average (20.3%). Over one in ten people (12.7%) describe their health as `not good` compared to the borough average of 11.2%.

2.58 Oldham Town Centre is at the commercial, retail and educational heart of the borough. It acts as a focal point for local communities with the Spindles Town Square shopping centre, Tommyfield Market and the Civic Centre (home to the council's main offices) all here. The

potential for the town centre is substantial, especially with the benefit of Metrolink which will improve connections within and beyond the borough. The Oldham retail and leisure study provides independent evidence that the town centre should be the main focus for major retail and leisure developments for the foreseeable future, and that the town's shopping offer can and should be improved. The challenge for the LDF will be to promote and maintain the quality of Oldham's shopping offer by providing opportunities for new developments. As well as the future of the shopping offer, the night-time economy poses a real challenge to be addressed to create a new, relaxed and safe environment for appropriate leisure uses. Hill Stores centre on Huddersfield Road is also located within this area.

2.59 Almost half (46.9%) of all 16 to 74 year olds have no qualifications, significantly higher than the borough and national averages. Unemployment in the area is above the borough average. Improving education and skills will be a key driver of the borough's future economic success. The higher and further education plans and proposals for the University Campus Oldham, the Oldham Sixth Form College, the Oldham College and the Regional Science Centre Oldham will be key elements of this.

2.60 Alexandra Park, a locally and strategically important park, is located within the area, as is Stoneleigh Park. Both are Green Flag parks. The network of open spaces within the area, contributing to the green infrastructure of the borough, is also important. These include parts of Daisy Nook and Oldham Edge. The Green Belt will be maintained. This includes a narrow strip along the southern boundary of the area between Oldham and Tameside, land including Alexandra Park and Snipe Clough that separates Hathershaw and Glodwick, and the Beal Valley which runs along the north eastern edge of this area. There are at least 27 hectares of SBI, as well as Glodwick Lows Local Nature Reserve.

2.61 The Medlock Mixed Valley (Landscape Character Area 6) lies in the southern part of this area and the Beal Defined Valley (Area 5) applies to the Beal Valley. Landscape types include: Recreational Land (6a), Clough Valley (6c), Farmed Valley Sides (5a), Flat Valley Bottom (5b) and Landscape in Transition (5c).

2.62 In Oldham Town Centre the primary flood risk is from surface water and the secondary source of flood risk is from Snipe Clough. Snipe Clough, formally known as Sheepwashes Brook, is a culverted watercourse which flows southwards through Oldham Town Centre. It feeds into two large storage tanks at Warren Lane. Excess surface water overflows from here into Glodwick Brook, a tributary of the River Medlock.

2.63 Our housing land assessment shows that the greatest proportion of the borough's future residential development, 60%, is within the heart of Oldham, focusing around the regeneration initiatives within the borough. Within Oldham Town Centre the emphasis is now moving toward schemes such as town houses.

2.64 HMR and the NDC programmes are working together to regenerate Hathershaw and Fitton Hill, to the south of Oldham Town Centre. This provides an opportunity to improve the choice and quality of homes. There are a number of cleared sites within the area, in particular within and around the Hill Farm estate, that provide an opportunity to improve the choice and quality of homes. In addition, a new neighbourhood centre is proposed including a health centre, library, youth club and local shops. The `Borough Mill triangle` also provides a key development opportunity, combining a mix of residential and modern office and retail uses. The NDC

programme ends in 2010. Work is underway as part of HMR to regenerate Werneth and Derker, and proposals are also being established to improve the areas of Alt and Sholver in Oldham. These masterplans will seek to redevelop the residential areas to provide high quality homes to meet the needs and aspirations of the local community. There are plans for the regeneration of Crossley, Clarkwell and Primrose Bank estates as part of the Government's Private Finance Initiative. These areas suffer from poorly designed housing and have an over-supply of flats and maisonettes, so a better choice of different types of housing is needed in line with modern principles of good design.

Saddleworth and Lees

2.65 This area includes Austerlands, Delph, Denshaw, Diggle, Dobcross, Grasscroft, Greenfield, Grotton, Lees, Lydgate, Scouthead, Springhead and Uppermill, with the remainder of the area comprising smaller hamlets and dispersed farms. Uppermill has a strong local identity with independent shops and is an attraction for visitors to the area. Saddleworth provides a gateway to the Peak Park and includes Dovestone Reservoir, which lies close to Greenfield.

2.66 The whole of this area, other than the inset villages and settlements, is Green Belt which will be maintained. There are a number of areas of locally protected open countryside as well as safeguarded land. It has significant nature conservation and landscapes. The South Pennine Moors, to the east of Denshaw, is part of an area which has two European-level nature conservation designations. This is a Special Area of Conservation due to its important habitats, including European dry heaths, blanket bogs and old sessile oak woods. It is also a Special Protection Area as it supports populations of internationally important birds, including Golden plover, Merlin, Peregrine and Short-eared owl. The Green Flag park, Brownhill Nature Garden and Countryside Centre, is located here, as is Strinesdale Country Park.

2.67 South Pennine Moors (Landscape Character Area1) lies in the northern and southern parts of the area. The remainder of the area is covered by Moorland Fringe (Area 2), Tame Settled Valley (Area 4) and Wharmton Undulating Uplands (Area 7). Landscape types includes: unenclosed Moorland Plateau (1a), Valley Headlands (1b), Remote Moorland Fringe (2a), Settled Moorland Fringe (2b), Rural Valley Sides (4a), Urban Settlement (4b), Industrial Valley Bottom (4c), Open Valley Bottom (4d), Farmed Valley (4e), Urban Fringe Farmland (7a), Recreational Land (7b) and Landscape in Transition (7c).

2.68 In Saddleworth and Lees the primary source of flood risk is from surface water and the River Tame. Secondary risk is from the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. There has been surface water flooding reported at Uppermill and also Greenfield. White Brook is a former Critical Ordinary Watercourse that has been associated with localised flooding. The River Tame rises near Denshaw in the northeast of the borough. The river flows generally through Delph and Saddleworth and then through Mossley, Stalybridge and Hyde in Tameside. Significant tributaries to the Tame are Hull Brook, Diggle Brook, Pickhill Brook, White Brook, Chew Brook and Clough Land. The steep upper reaches of the Tame are constrained by the channel resulting in narrow floodplains. Flood Zone 3 extends in the villages of Delph, Uppermill and Greenfield, as well as downstream of the Chew Brook confluence. Flood Zone 2 is more extensive. In January 2008, houses in Uppermill and Greenfield were exposed to surface water and fluvial flooding. The Huddersfield Narrow Canal runs through the area. It includes Britain's longest underground waterway tunnel linking Marsden to Diggle. The canal is mainly fed by Diggle Reservoir. Canal flooding is an unlikely occurrence, however in terms of hydraulic

linkages, if overtopping or a breach of the canal did occur it is possible that additional water would flow into Diggle Brook and/or the River Tame. In Saddleworth there are several large reservoirs namely Chew, Dovestone, Yeoman Hey, Greenfield, Diggle, Brun clough, Castleshaw Upper and Lower, Dowry, New Years Bridge, Crookgate, Readycon Dean and Black Moss.

2.69 Life expectancy within this area is 79.9 years – the highest in the borough. Around one in six (16.8%) people have a limiting long-term illness, which is much lower than the borough average. 70.9% of people describe their general health as being `good` and 8.5% describe their health as `not good`, which is significantly better than the borough averages of 65.7% and 11.2% respectively.

2.70 Less than one-quarter (23.2%) of 16-74 year olds have no qualifications, which is lower than the borough and national averages. Unemployment is the lowest in the borough. There are ten established business and employment areas, made up of three distinct areas around Greenfield, Diggle and Delph, which provide opportunities for local employment.

2.71 Our housing land assessment indicates that approximately 10% of the borough's potential residential development over the life of the plan is within Saddleworth and Lees. This reflects the limited amount of developable land within the area due to its topography and constrained nature. There are significant issues in relation to the availability and delivery of affordable housing within the area. Many local residents who may wish to live within the area, perhaps for family or employment reasons, are unable to afford to do so due to high house prices within the area. Furthermore, the limited amount of developable land and high management costs associated with many schemes makes it difficult to deliver affordable housing within the area.

Royton, Shaw and Crompton

2.72 The area includes the centres of Shaw and Royton. The Green Belt will be maintained. It lies along the northern boundary of the borough and also separates the built up areas of Royton, Summit and Shaw. The area includes Crompton Moor. High Crompton Park, which has Green Flag status, is located here, as is Tandle Hill, a large country park. Cowlishaw protected open land is here. The area includes the Higginshaw, Royton and Shaw employment areas. Metrolink will come through the area with a relocated stop at Shaw.

2.73 Unemployment is below the borough average. Around three in ten (31.8%) of all 16-74 year olds have no qualifications, making it below the borough average but above the average for England.

2.74 In Shaw the primary flood risk is from the River Beal and secondary flood risk is from surface water. The floodplain is relatively well constrained. The River Beal rises in Higginshaw and runs in a northerly direction through open fields criss-crossing the Oldham - Rochdale railway as it meanders in the direction of Newtown and Shaw. Once past Shaw and whilst maintaining its northerly course, the river runs through a relatively open and wooded area towards the Piethorne Brook confluence at Milnrow in Rochdale. In the upper reach, the floodplain is 50m to 100m wide within greenfield land. Through Shaw the floodplain becomes more constrained by the channel, but can flood out of bank at a depot at Linney Lane. The last major flood to affect Shaw was in 1964, which was associated with intense and localised rainfall. Since this

time there has been relatively frequent but localised flooding. Pencil Brook is a former Critical Ordinary Watercourse that has been associated with localised flooding. Surface water must therefore be carefully managed.

2.75 Life expectancy in the area is 77.6 years. Nearly one-in-five (19.5%) of all people have a limiting long term illness or disability, which is slightly lower than the borough average. Two-thirds (67.3%) of people say they have `good health` and 10.1% say that their health is `not good`, which is better than the borough average. New health facilities are planned for Shaw and Royton.

Chadderton

2.76 The Green Belt in Chadderton will be maintained. The Rochdale Canal runs through the western part of Chadderton. This is a European designated site for nature conservation, known as a Special Area of Conservation, as it supports a significant population of *Luronium natans* (floating water-plantain). There are three Green Flag parks; Chadderton Hall Park, Coalshaw Green Park and Foxdenton Park. South Chadderton will benefit from the conversion of the railway line to Metrolink and a new stop under Metrolink Phase 3a proposals.

2.77 This area currently has a large part of the borough's employment land around Broadway and Greengate. Unemployment is below average. The new Foxdenton employment area is located within Chadderton. Over a third (34.9%) of all 16-74 year olds have no qualifications, below the borough average (37.7%) but above the national average (28.9%).

2.78 In Chadderton the primary flood risk is from surface water and secondary flood risk is from the Rochdale Canal and Wince Brook. The refined Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding maps show that the lower lying areas to the west of the borough, such as Chadderton are at greatest susceptibility to surface water flooding and therefore need to be carefully managed. The River Irk rises near Shaw and passes through Haggate and Chadderton Fold. Wince Brook, which is a tributary to the River Irk, flows south of Chadderton through Foxdenton Farm and has been culverted under recent development and the Rochdale Canal before becoming an open watercourse again west of Brookside Business Park. Flood risk is constrained by the natural channel and is limited along the watercourse. The Rochdale Canal, which was restored in 2002, extends from Chadderton to Failsworth. The pound lengths are generally short though canal flooding is an unlikely occurrence and is considered to be a residual risk.

2.79 Life expectancy in Chadderton is 77.4 years. One in five (20.3%) of all people have limiting long term illness or disability, which is the same as the borough average. 66.3% of people in Chadderton describe their health as being `good` and 10.8% describe their health as being `not good` compared to the borough averages of 65.7% and 11.2% respectively. The Chadderton Health and Well-being Centre opened in 2009.

Failsworth and Hollinwood

2.80 The area has very good transport routes and links. The M60 passes through this area with the motorway junction (22) at Hollinwood and it also benefits from a Quality Bus Corridor along the A62. Failsworth and Hollinwood will benefit from the conversion of the existing railway line to Metrolink.

2.81 Unemployment in Failsworth and Hollinwood compares to the borough's average. Four in ten (40.8%) of all 16-74 year olds have no qualifications, which is higher than the borough average (37.7%). The area includes part of the Hollinwood Business District and the revamped Failsworth centre.

2.82 The Rochdale Canal runs through the western part of Failsworth. The area around Woodhouses is Green Belt. The Medlock Mixed Valley (Area 6) Landscape Character area lies to the south of Failsworth. It includes the landscape types: Recreational Land (6a), Broad Valley Bottom (6b), Clough Valley (6c), Suburban Settlement (6d) and M60 Corridor (6e). Rochdale Canal (SAC, SSSI and SBI) runs through area. Manchester and Ashton Under Lyne canal (Hollinwood branch) runs along southern boundary of borough. It include parts of Daisy Nook and Moston Brook which will be brought back to community life with the council working alongside our partners including Manchester City Council.

2.83 In Hollinwood the primary flood risk is from surface water and secondary flood risk is from the Rochdale Canal. The SFRA analysis shows that there is a high risk of surface water flooding to properties in the Stock Brook area of Hollinwood and in the Failsworth area. There is also a residual risk from the Rochdale Canal.

2.84 Life expectancy in Failsworth and Hollinwood is 76.9 years. More than one in five (21.3%) people have a limiting long-term illness, which is slightly higher than the borough average. Less than two thirds of people (64.6%) describe their health as `good` and 11.7% say that their general health is `not good` compared to the borough averages of 65.7% and 11.2% respectively.

The main issues and key challenges facing the borough

a. Improving the quality of people's lives.
b. Making sure that Oldham plays to its strengths and pulls its weight in Greater Manchester and develops its links with Leeds.
c. Working with the Peak District to reflect its particular characteristics and the benefits that come from proximity to the national park.
d. Adapting and mitigating to climate change and promoting sustainable development.
e. Securing energy conservation and efficiency and use of renewable energy, and low carbon developments.
f. Protecting people and property from flooding, and improving the quality of rivers and water.
g. Ensuring high quality design and sustainable construction of developments.
h. Promoting community cohesion.
i. Reducing crime and the fear of crime, and promoting community safety.
j. Protecting people's amenity and local environmental quality.
k. Make Oldham an address of choice. Meeting the needs of the local housing market, with the right homes in the right locations, including choice, quality and affordability of new housing.
l. Promoting economic prosperity, addressing worklessness, tackling economic deprivation and promoting economic well-being. Encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation. Providing enough employment land for new jobs and businesses.

m. Improving education and skills levels. Facilitating the Oldham College, the Oldham Sixth Form College and University Campus Oldham developments.
n. Promoting the vitality and viability of Oldham Town Centre, the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill, and local shopping parades.
o. Maximising the potential of creative industries and the benefits that tourism and culture bring to the borough.
p. Addressing the night-time economy, particularly in Oldham Town Centre.
q. Promoting accessibility and sustainable transport choices such as public transport, cycling and walking. Securing Metrolink and maximising its benefits.
r. Encouraging healthy lifestyles, more play and physical exercise. Improving general health and well-being. Facilitating new health and social care facilities.
s. Protecting our valued open spaces, and providing new quality open spaces, sports and recreation facilities.
t. Maintaining Green Belt, protecting open land from inappropriate development and ensuring a portfolio of safeguarded land for future development.
u. How best to maximise the benefits of the local natural, historic and built environments, green infrastructure, biodiversity, geodiversity and landscapes.
v. Ensuring Oldham sustainably manages its waste.
w. Safeguarding valuable mineral resources and ensuring their prudent use and sustainable management.

2.85 In acknowledgement of the potential impacts of the joint DPD proposals on the Strategic Road Network, a Protocol arrangement has been implemented. The Protocol sets out the joint working arrangements and shared approach between the primary organisations involved in defining and addressing the transport impacts of development across Greater Manchester. Key transport-related issues have been defined for Oldham through an appraisal of the available evidence base. It is envisaged that the key issues will be championed through the Protocol and are fundamental factors which have been integrated into the joint DPD. The following key issues have been defined:

Table A Key transport and highway issues facing the borough

Key Issue	*Theme*
1.	*Addressing the forecasted drop in walk and cycle movements alongside decreasing Public Transport patronage and capacity constraints on the PT network;*
2.	*Clustering of employment sites and Journey Times along the M60 clockwise (between Junctions 20 and Junction 22);*
3.	*Journey times along the key radial routes and principally those in proximity to the SRN;*
4.	*Air Quality and the adoption of Low Emission Strategies particularly with regard to the 19.4% forecasted increase in CO2 levels; and*

5.	*The delivery of accessible development to sustainable modes of transport and key services.*

2.86 With particular reference to the key issues in Table A, the impact on the transport network of the development sites being promoted through the LDF will be assessed, both individually and cumulatively, during the development of the Site Allocations DPD, in partnership with the Highways Agency. Sustainable transport measures and any infrastructure improvements required to enable the sustainable delivery of development will also be identified and appraised in terms of the level of mitigation afforded and will be supported by evidence to demonstrate the deliverability of each measure.

3 Vision

Oldham will be a borough transformed by economic diversification, growth and prosperity, regeneration, sustainable development and community cohesion that respects our local natural, built and historic environments. It will have safer and stronger sustainable urban and rural communities; from Chadderton, Failsworth, Hollinwood, Woodhouses, Lees, Oldham, Royton and Shaw to Uppermill, Greenfield, Delph, Denshaw, Diggle, Dobcross, Austerlands, Grasscroft, Grotton, Lydgate, Scouthead and Springhead. We will make the most from our geography, cultural and transport links with Greater Manchester, Leeds and the Peak Park.

Oldham will be a confident place with safe neighbourhoods and clean, green spaces for all to enjoy. A university town with good education, learning and training to improve the skills and choices of our citizens. An address of choice - a healthy and active place with suitable housing for all - with services of choice.

Oldham will:

a. adapt to and mitigate against climate change and promote sustainable development. We will promote the prudent use and sustainable management of our natural and man-made resources, including land, soil, minerals, waste, air and water. We will maximise opportunities for our developable land by reusing brownfield land and converting existing buildings in sustainable and accessible locations, including recycling old industrial sites that are no longer suitable for employment and making best use of our industrial heritage and legacy of old mills. We will require high quality design and sustainable construction of new development that will improve the quality of the borough, and reflect and enhance the positive character of the local area. We will ensure that new developments reduce their carbon emissions through low carbon and renewable technologies.

b. focus new homes, shops, jobs, education and leisure in sustainable and accessible locations within the existing built-up areas, although in rural areas we will allow appropriate levels of development to meet their local needs.

c. meet its local housing needs and demands providing good quality housing, choice and diversity, including affordable, low cost and high value market housing. We will have a balanced and sustainable local housing market that forms part of Greater Manchester's north east housing market area which also includes Rochdale, Tameside, Moston and Blackley.

d. promote a low carbon economy that benefits from the new and emerging industries to offer jobs for local people, so reducing worklessness and deprivation levels. We will provide employment land for our businesses locally that is suitable for the 21st century, whilst at the same time recognising the role Manchester City Centre and our neighbouring district's key sites play in the borough's economy. We support our rural economy and recognise its particular characteristics and challenges including the need for employment sites, appropriate land management and farm diversification. We support tourism in its widest sense.

e. promote the vitality and viability of our centres as the focus for commercial, social, civic, community, cultural and appropriate night-time economy uses. Major retail and leisure

developments will be focused on Oldham Town Centre. Appropriate levels of development will be allowed in the borough's other centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill. Local shopping will be encouraged in neighbourhoods.

f. have well educated and highly skilled children and young people. We will provide sites for new schools and develop our status as a university town with our outstanding higher and further education colleges.

g. have an integrated public transport system, including the Metrolink extension, with good connectivity. We will reduce the need to travel and promote accessibility and sustainable transport choices such as walking, cycling and use of public transport rather than people relying on the car. We will have a well established network of cycle routes.

h. maintain our current Green Belt. We will designate locally protected countryside land (`Other Protected Open Land`) and safeguarded land (`Land Reserved for Future Development`). We will support improvements to the Peak Park, particularly around Dovestone in Saddleworth, which acts as a green lung for Greater Manchester, allowing people to enjoy and benefit from this key recreation asset on our doorstep.

i. value, protect, conserve and enhance its local natural, built and historic environments, green infrastructure, biodiversity, geodiversity and landscapes, and their settings. This will include the European-designated nature conservation sites at Rochdale Canal and South Pennine Moors. Also sites of national importance (such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest), regional importance (such as geological and geomorphological sites, RIGS) and local importance (such as Sites of Biological Importance and our Local Nature Reserve), and our key quality open spaces across the borough (such as Alexandra Park).

j. respect the positive features and characteristics that add to our sense of place and identity by ensuring development respects the positive aspects and distinctiveness of our urban and rural landscapes. Features and characteristics include the significant and valuable elements of Oldham's heritage such as conservation areas and listed buildings, and their settings, and the scheduled ancient monuments. Also the views into and out of the Peak Park.

k. provide better opportunities for residents to lead healthy, active and longer lives and have access to key health and well-being services and facilities.

3.1 By 2026 the borough and the places within it will look and feel different to now, as detailed below.

Boroughwide

Oldham will ensure the effective and efficient use of land and buildings in sustainable and accessible locations within the existing built-up areas. We will keep the best of our employment sites and recycle the rest. We will reuse our existing buildings and recycle previously developed land before releasing greenfield sites.

Metrolink extension proposals and new stations, from Manchester via Hollinwood to Oldham and Shaw and on to Rochdale, will help secure an integrated transport system. Developments will be located so as to reduce the need to travel, promoting alternative means of travel to the private car such as walking, cycling and use of public transport.

Developments will be sensitive to Oldham's built, historic and natural environments, including its green infrastructure network, which all contribute to its local character, distinctiveness and sense of place. They must also be built to high quality design standards using sustainable construction techniques and low carbon technologies.

Sufficient land will be allocated to accommodate at least 289 new dwellings each year net of clearance on average across the LDF plan period. Across the borough as a whole at least 80% will be on recycled land or buildings. Residential development will be focused on the built-up areas including regeneration areas (including Oldham Town Centre and the Housing Market Renewal area), also areas within and accessible to the borough's other centres (of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill), and rural settlements (such as the Saddleworth villages). The Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder will have contributed to our improved housing offer.

Approximately 82 hectares of land will be allocated for business, industry and office developments. The focus will be on areas that are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling as alternatives to the car. This includes Oldham Town Centre and the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill. Other accessible employment areas – known as `Business and Employment Areas` and `Saddleworth Employment Areas` - will be designated as part of Oldham's economic land supply. Our principal employment areas will form an `arc of opportunity` from Oldham Town Centre through to Foxdenton and on to Hollinwood Business District with its links to Manchester City Centre. These areas form part of the ORESA `M60 employment zone` and will be part of our contribution to Greater Manchester's portfolio of sites. We recognise the role that our neighbouring district's key sites, such as Kingsway in Rochdale, Ashton Moss in Tameside and Central Park and Manchester Piccadilly Basin/Oxford Road Area in Manchester, play in the borough's economy and jobs offer.

Oldham Town Centre will remain the focus for major retail and leisure developments. The night-time economy will be developed to provide a suitable and appropriate experience in a safe and pleasant environment for all visitors. A family leisure area will be developed, the Coliseum will be improved and the Old Town Hall will be transformed into a revitalised and vibrant area. Appropriate developments will be focused on the centres at Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill. Small-scale services, shops and leisure facilities which serve local needs will be located in sustainable and accessible locations.

The transforming education agenda will be key to our university town aspirations. These will be supported by, amongst other things, the Building Schools for the Future programme, the Primary Capital programme for improving primary schools and the plans for the Regional Science Centre Oldham in Oldham Town Centre.

Green Belt boundaries will be maintained. The `major developed site` in the Green Belt in Saddleworth will be developed for appropriate uses. Existing locally protected open land (`Other Protected Open Land`) will be maintained, with the exception of Foxdenton. Safeguarded land (`Land Reserved for Future Development`, LRFD) at Foxdenton, Warren Lane, Haven Lane and Lancaster Sports Club will be released for development but not Bullcote Lane.

East and West Oldham

Oldham Town Centre will be at the heart of Oldham. At its core there will be a revitalised and vibrant area around the Old Town Hall. An attractive family leisure environment will have been developed. The Coliseum theatre will have been improved. The night-time economy will have changed beyond recognition and the area around Yorkshire Street will form part of a safe and pleasant leisure experience for all visitors anytime of the day or night. Metrolink will be well-established linking the town centre to Manchester City Centre and to areas beyond. A Regional Science Centre Oldham will be up and running.

Outside the immediate town centre boundary, the Hathershaw and Fitton Hill areas to the south will have benefited from investments, including the new health centre, brought about by the New Deal for Communities programme which ended in 2010. The choice and quality of homes will have been improved through the Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder programme and the Private Finance Initiative, and will include areas such as Alt, Sholver, Crossley, Clarkwell, Primrose Bank, Werneth and Derker. Hill Stores along Huddersfield Road will continue as one of our `centres`. Alexandra Retail Park will have been redeveloped. About three-fifths of our new homes will be located in the heart of Oldham area by 2026. Established business and employment areas will be maintained, including at Busk, Primrose Bank, Hathershaw, Greenacres. Metrolink stops will be at Derker, Freehold, Westwood (Middleton Road), Oldham King Street and Oldham Central (Union Street). Green Belt around Beal Valley will be maintained and the landscape character of the Beal Defined Valleys will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Alexandra Park will continue to be protected as a key asset in Oldham's Green Infrastructure network. Oldham Edge as a natural open area with sports pitches will contribute to the feeling of openness and the quality of life for local residents and visitors. By 2026 any deficiencies in the quantity of open spaces will have been rectified, with all open spaces in the area of good or very good quality. There will be a new BSF Academy school in Waterhead.

Royton, Shaw and Crompton

The Green Belt to the north of the area bordering Rochdale will be maintained and the landscape character of the Chadderton Rolling Hills and Moorland Fringe will be protected, conserved and enhanced. The large open countryside area at Cowlishaw will continue to be protected from development. This whole area benefits from its transport links to the rest of Greater Manchester and to Leeds and beyond. These include the motorway and strategic road networks, and Metrolink with a stop at Shaw and Crompton. Shaw and Royton will be prosperous centres, each with new health facilities. High Crompton, Royton and Tandle Hill parks will contribute to the local quality of life. By 2026 any open space deficiencies in the area will have been overcome to a

good or very good quality standard. Approximately 10% of residential development over the lifetime of the plan up to 2026 will be located here. Employment areas will be maintained at Higginshaw, Shaw Road and Shaw. `Land Reserved for Future Development` will be maintained at Bullcote Lane, Royton. There will be a new BSF Academy school in Royton, Shaw and Crompton.

Failsworth and Hollinwood

The area is the closest in proximity to Manchester City Centre. It has good transport links – the A62/M60 transport corridors – with Metrolink stops at Failsworth and Hollinwood. The established employment area at Hollinwood will be re-developed as a new Business District. Established employment areas will continue at Wrigley Street and Hawksley Street. The revamped Failsworth centre will be thriving and a focal point for the community. Over the lifetime of the plan up to 2026 approximately 10% of residential development will be located in Failsworth and Hollinwood. The Rochdale Canal corridor will be a key asset in terms of recreation, image and quality of life. Working with our partners, including Manchester City Council, the Moston Brook corridor will be brought back to life for the local community. The Green Belt to the south of the area around Woodhouses will be maintained and the landscape character of the Medlock Mixed Valley will be protected, conserved and enhanced. `Other Protected Open Land` will be maintained. We will have addressed any open space deficiencies by 2026, and all open spaces in the area will be of good or very good quality. There will be a new BSF Academy school in Hollinwood.

Chadderton

Green Belt will be maintained. The landscape character of the Chadderton Rolling Hills will be protected, conserved and enhanced. `Other Protected Open Land` in the area will be maintained, except for Foxdenton which will become a premium employment location. Established employment areas will continue at Greengate/Broadgate. Chadderton Technology Park is partly located within this area, and part of the Hollinwood Business District is in Chadderton South ward. Chadderton centre will continue to be the main focus for retailing in the area. Approximately 10% of new houses over the lifetime of the plan up to 2026 will be located in Chadderton. There will be a new Metrolink stop at Freehold, South Chadderton and Westwood (Middleton Road). Any deficiencies in open spaces will have been rectified by 2026, and all open spaces in the area will be of good or very good quality. There will be one new school and one remodelled school through the Building Schools for the Future programme in Chadderton.

Saddleworth and Lees

Green Belt and `Other Protected Open Land` will be maintained. Closeness to the Peak Park and the South Pennine Moors makes this the most rural part of the borough with its picturesque landscapes. It includes Uppermill, Lees, Greenfield, Delph, Diggle, Dobcross, Denshaw, as well as Austerlands, Grasscroft, Grotton, Lydgate, Scouthead and Springhead. Additionally, it includes

smaller hamlets and dispersed farmsteads. The South Pennine Moors will be protected from development. The landscape character of South Pennine Moors, Moorland Fringe, Tame Settled Valley and Wharmton Undulating Uplands will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Development levels will be appropriate to that which the area can sustain and must be sensitive to the character of the local landscape, either side of the Peak Park boundary. Existing local business and employment areas will be maintained at Greenfield, Delph and Diggle. The rural economy will be supported through appropriate land management, tourism and farm diversification. The `major developed site in the Green Belt`, at the former Robert Fletcher's mill complex at Greenfield, will be developed for appropriate uses. Uppermill will continue as the main shopping destination in Saddleworth, with local shops in Greenfield, Delph and elsewhere protected. Approximately 10% of residential development over the lifetime of the plan up to 2026 will be located here. Dovestone will be a key gateway to the Peak Park, not only for local residents but for people from further afield in Oldham and beyond in Greater Manchester. The Huddersfield Narrow Canal will continue to develop as a tourist attraction. We will continue to protect the good accessibility to most types of open space in the Saddleworth villages and by 2026 will have addressed the deficiencies in access to provision for children and young people in the villages and the deficiency to outdoor sport facilities in Denshaw. By 2026 deficiencies in the quantity of all open space typologies in the villages will have been rectified and all open spaces in the area will be of good or very good quality.

4 Objectives

4.1 The objectives for the LDF are based around five broad headings: sustainable development and climate change; housing; economy; environment; and communities. They have been derived from the main issues and key challenges that we need to address, with input from people and organisations through the consultations we have undertaken. For the purposes of this joint DPD, we have included at the end of each policy a linkages box which shows the connections between these objectives and the policies. Also in the monitoring chapter we have included details of how these objectives link to the outputs, targets and indicators.

SO1 To mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to promote sustainable development in the borough by:

a. supporting carbon neutral developments by following the principles of the zero carbon hierarchy.
b. ensuring the sustainable and high quality design and construction of all new developments.
c. ensuring the effective and efficient use of land and buildings.
d. guiding development to the most accessible and sustainable locations.
e. reducing the need to travel and encouraging walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
f. securing improvements to the public transport network and implementing the Metrolink extension proposals from Failsworth, to Hollinwood, to Oldham Town Centre and on to Shaw and beyond.
g. minimising the impact of motorised traffic on the global climate and on local air quality.
h. avoiding development within areas of flood risk and where necessary controlling and mitigating the impact and residual risks. Developments will have regard to the findings of the Oldham Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
i. promoting the prudent use, appropriate reclamation where necessary and sustainable management of natural resources (land, soil, air and water) and man-made resources.
j. promoting the sustainable management of minerals through the prudent use, recycling, conservation and safeguarding of mineral resources. Developments will have regard to the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals DPD.
k. promoting sustainable waste management through the waste hierarchy. Developments will have regard to the Greater Manchester Joint Waste DPD.

This objective links to the preferred way forward and all policies.

SO2 To ensure the borough's housing market, as part of Greater Manchester's north east housing market area which also includes Rochdale, Tameside, Moston and Blackley, is balanced and sustainable with a mix of house sizes, types and tenures, providing quality housing, choice and diversity, which will encourage people to remain living within the borough and attract people from outside the borough to locate to the area by:

a. integrating the Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder's and the council's housing objectives, policies, programmes, masterplans and initiatives.
b. providing sufficient housing to meet the needs and demands of the borough's urban and rural communities, including affordable, low cost and high value market housing.
c. achieving the right quantity of affordable housing to meet local needs and demands.

d. making best use of, and continuing to raise the quality of, our new and existing housing stock.
e. focusing new homes on regeneration areas (including Oldham Town Centre and the HMR area), also areas within and accessible to the borough's other centres (of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill), and rural settlements (such as the Saddleworth villages).
f. ensuring over the lifetime of the LDF up to 2026 that approximately 60% of new homes are built in East and West Oldham, with approximately 10% of new homes built in Chadderton, and in Failsworth and Hollinwood, and in Royton, Shaw and Crompton, and in Saddleworth and Lees.
g. ensuring over the lifetime of the LDF up to 2026 that at least 80% of new homes are built on previously developed land across the borough as a whole.

This objective links to the preferred way forward, and in particular the policies on housing, communities and design.

SO3 To promote economic diversification, growth and prosperity and the sustainable economic regeneration of the borough by:

a. addressing the worklessness agenda, tackling deprivation and creating skilled and accessible jobs for local residents.
b. providing employment land which is fit for the 21st century for existing and new businesses.
c. maximising the opportunities from being within close proximity of Manchester City Centre and our neighbouring district's key sites such as at Kingsway, Ashton Moss, Central Park and Manchester Piccadilly Basin/Oxford Road Area by ensuring that local residents can access these locations by public transport.
d. encouraging and facilitating the development of new and emerging industries (such as high technology, knowledge based, innovative, environmental technologies and creative industries) in appropriate locations (such as Foxdenton, Hollinwood Business District and Chadderton Technology Park).
e. facilitating appropriate developments in Oldham Town Centre, the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill, and along transport corridors.
f. focusing employment areas on the Business and Employment Areas (BEA) and the Saddleworth Employment Areas (SEA).
g. supporting the borough’s transforming education agenda to improve education and skills by:

    i. facilitating improvements to the borough’s schools through programmes such as the Primary Capital Programme.
    ii. facilitating higher and further education proposals such as those of the University Campus Oldham, the Oldham College and the Oldham Sixth Form College including the development of the Regional Science Centre Oldham in Oldham Town Centre.

This objective links to the preferred way forward, and in particular the policies on the economy, `centres` and communities.

SO4 To improve and value the borough’s environment by:

a. maintaining the positive features and characteristics that add to the borough's local identity.
b. protecting, conserving and enhancing the character and quality of the borough's landscapes and townscapes, its natural assets and heritage, green infrastructure, biodiversity and geodiversity, and its built heritage and historic environment, including their wider settings.
c. ensuring development respects our rural and historic landscapes.
d. ensuring appropriate land management in the open countryside and Green Belt that has regard to the needs of the rural economy.
e. maintaining Green Belt boundaries, and permitting only appropriate developments.
f. identifying `Other Protected Open Land` and `Land Reserved for Future Development`.

This objective links to the preferred way forward, and in particular the environment policies.

SO5 To create safer and stronger inclusive communities by:

a. promoting community cohesion.
b. promoting the vitality and viability of Oldham Town Centre, including the night-time economy, and the borough's centres as the focal points for social, civic, leisure, cultural, commercial and retail activities.
c. facilitating the Oldham Beyond and local area masterplans.
d. encouraging sustainable rural communities, including those in the Saddleworth villages and surrounding areas.
e. promoting local environmental quality, community safety and crime prevention by ensuring developments are high quality and contribute to the provision of well designed and safe neighbourhoods and local areas.
f. ensuring that public open spaces, including open and green spaces and civic spaces and public realm, are well-designed, safe and accessible.
g. improving the health and well-being of the borough's population through the provision of quality and accessible open spaces, sport and recreation facilities.
h. improving the health of the borough's population by facilitating programmes such as the new health and well-being centres and facilities in accessible locations.
i. promoting the borough's image to its residents and those living outside the borough.

This objective links to the preferred way forward, and in particular the policies on housing, `centres`, local environment and communities.

5 Part 1: Core Strategy - The Way Forward

The Preferred Way Forward for the LDF

5.1 As the LDF progressed through its various stages – `Issues Survey`, `Issues & Options`, `Preferred Options` and `Refining Options` - the council consulted on the most appropriate way forward for the borough. Table 1 shows summary details of the three options initially considered at `Issues & Options` stage, which were themselves the results of the emerging evidence base and local consultations. Table 2 summarises the key points about the preferred way forward which the council opted for. It shows the links to the main issues and vision, how it links to the three original options and the key evidence to support the council's choice.

5.2 The council's view is that the preferred way forward is best suited to delivering the borough's aspirations for growth and prosperity. It is considered to be realistic, achievable and deliverable, and is the most appropriate strategy for the borough. It is justified by the evidence and offers flexibility to meet the borough's needs in these uncertain times.

Table 1 Summary of the options we initially considered

Option A Focused Regeneration	Option B Urban Concentration	Option C Urban Concentration including planned expansion
Maintain Green Belt	Maintain Green Belt.	Maintain Green Belt.
Maintain `OPOL`. (`OPOL` is `Other Protected Open Land`, which is locally protected open countryside.)	Maintain `OPOL`.	Release `OPOL`.
Maintain the `LRFD`. (`LRFD` is `Land Reserved for Future Development`, which is locally safeguarded potential development land.)	Maintain the `LRFD`.	Release `LRFD`.
Focus growth and development on `centres` (including Oldham Town Centre and the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill) and regeneration areas.	Spread growth and development around the main urban areas of the borough (not just in `centres` and regeneration areas), but not in the open countryside areas listed above (i.e. not in Green Belt, `OPOL` or `LRFD`).	Spread growth and development around the main urban areas of the borough (not just in `centres` and regeneration areas) and also in `OPOL` and `LRFD`, but not in the Green Belt.

5.3 The preferred way forward for the LDF addresses a range of policy agendas; jobs, homes, environment, countryside, transport, open spaces, `centres`, shopping and so on. It is focused on the quality of our places and creating healthier lifestyles, economic prosperity and sustainable communities, but in ways that reduces our impacts on global and local environments. The

way forward was guided by the fact the LDF does not start with a blank sheet of paper. There are a range of successful initiatives already in place to guide the regeneration of the borough – `Oldham Beyond` visioning exercise, the Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder (HMR), the Hathershaw and Fitton Hill New Deal for Communities (NDC) programme, the Metrolink proposals, the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement, for example – that the LDF aims to build upon.

5.4 The council had regard to a number of factors in determining the way forward for the LDF. These include:

a. national policies;
b. Oldham's local aspirations for economic prosperity, health and well-being, and safe and strong communities as outlined in `Oldham Beyond`, the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement;
c. Greater Manchester's ambitious plans for growth and development as set out in the Greater Manchester Strategy;
d. local area masterplans and regeneration initiatives such as HMR and NDC;
e. education proposals for the borough such as the Regional Science Centre Oldham;
f. findings from the evidence base;
g. the alternative planning and development strategies that were considered as part of the earlier stages;
h. findings from the Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitats Regulations Assessment; and
i. feedback from talking with people.

5.5 The council's preferred way forward is about regeneration, promoting economic prosperity, and creating safe and strong sustainable communities. This will be achieved by:

a. focusing appropriate housing, retail and employment development on: Oldham Town Centre and the borough's other centres, ensuring that the scale and nature of new development is well related to the role, function and character of the borough's centres; in regeneration areas (such as Housing Market Renewal); at key locations (such as Foxdenton, Hollinwood Business District and Chadderton Technology Park); at key transport points such as future Metrolink stops; but at the same time permitting appropriate levels of development in sustainable and accessible locations within the built up areas of the borough (including the Saddleworth villages) to meet the needs of local communities.
b. maximising opportunities to recycle brownfield land and conversion of buildings, ensuring that new developments are built using sustainable construction techniques and securing high quality design of new development.
c. maintaining Green Belt boundaries.
d. protecting appropriate areas of locally protected open land (OPOL) and safeguarded land (LRFD) from development.
e. recognising the role of Manchester City Centre and our neighbouring district's key sites (such as Kingway, Ashton Moss and Central Park) offer to the borough's economy, whilst at the same time providing employment land for businesses locally.
f. securing an efficient transport system, including the Metrolink proposals through the borough, and promoting alternative means of travel to the private car such as encouraging walking, cycling and use of public transport.

g. protecting, conserving and enhancing the borough's natural, built and historic environments.
h. protecting and enhancing existing green infrastructure, and where appropriate providing new quality and accessible open spaces, to promote health and well-being.
i. addressing the transforming education agenda and the programme for new health and well-being centres and facilities.

5.6 In short, the preferred way forward which is supported by the policies can be said to:

a. address the climate change and sustainable development agenda.
b. promote economic diversification, growth and prosperity and sustainable economic regeneration.
c. support the transforming education agenda.
d. encourage sustainable and high quality design and construction.
e. ensure a balanced and sustainable local housing market.
f. reduce the need to travel and promote public transport accessibility.
g. improve and value local natural, built and historic environments and our green infrastructure network.
h. secure safe and strong communities.
i. tackle the health and well-being agenda.

Table 2 Summary of the council's preferred way forward for the LDF

Key element of the preferred way forward (and how it links to the main issues and the vision)	Evidence to support the preferred way forward	Links to the options that we initially considered
Maintain the Green Belt. (This links to environmental protection and promoting regeneration.)	Consultation responses.	Links to all three options.
Maintain all OPOL, except for Foxdenton. (This links to environmental protection, promoting regeneration and economic prosperity.)	Employment Land Review. Consultation responses.	Links mostly to options A and B, but Foxdenton also links to C.
Release the LRFD at Foxdenton, Warren Lane, Haven Lane, Lancaster Sports Club, but maintain the LRFD at Bullcote Lane.	Employment Land Review. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.	Links mostly to option C, but Bullcote Lane also links to A and B.

Key element of the preferred way forward (and how it links to the main issues and the vision)	Evidence to support the preferred way forward	Links to the options that we initially considered
(This links to environmental protection, promoting regeneration and economic prosperity.)	Consultation responses.	
In overall terms, we will be looking to focus appropriate development in and around the borough's centres, in regeneration areas and at key locations, whilst permitting appropriate levels of development in sustainable and accessible locations within the built up areas of the borough including the Saddleworth villages. Specifically, we will under this broad heading:		
1) Focus appropriate residential development on regeneration areas (including Oldham Town Centre and the HMR areas), also areas within and accessible to the borough's other centres (of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill), and rural settlements (such as the Saddleworth villages). (This links to making Oldham an address of choice.)	Based on our housing land availability assessment findings (December 2009), 60% of new houses over the lifetime of the plan up to 2026 will be in the East and West Oldham District Partnership area. The remainder will be distributed approximately across the other four District Partnership areas as follows: Chadderton (10%), Failsworth & Hollinwood (10%), Royton, Shaw & Crompton (10%) and Saddleworth & Lees (10%). Additional evidence includes: Strategic Housing Market Assessment. Consultation responses.	Links mostly to options A and B, but also C in respect of Foxdenton (which will have a small amount of residential development to facilitate bringing forward the infrastructure requirements of the employment site).
2) Focus appropriate employment development on accessible locations including Oldham Town Centre, the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill, and accessible employment areas. This element recognises	Based on our Employment Land Review findings, approximately half our new employment land will be located at Foxdenton with the remainder spread across sites in the other locations which also includes Hollinwood Business District and Chadderton Technology Park.	Links mostly to options A and B, but also C in respect of Foxdenton

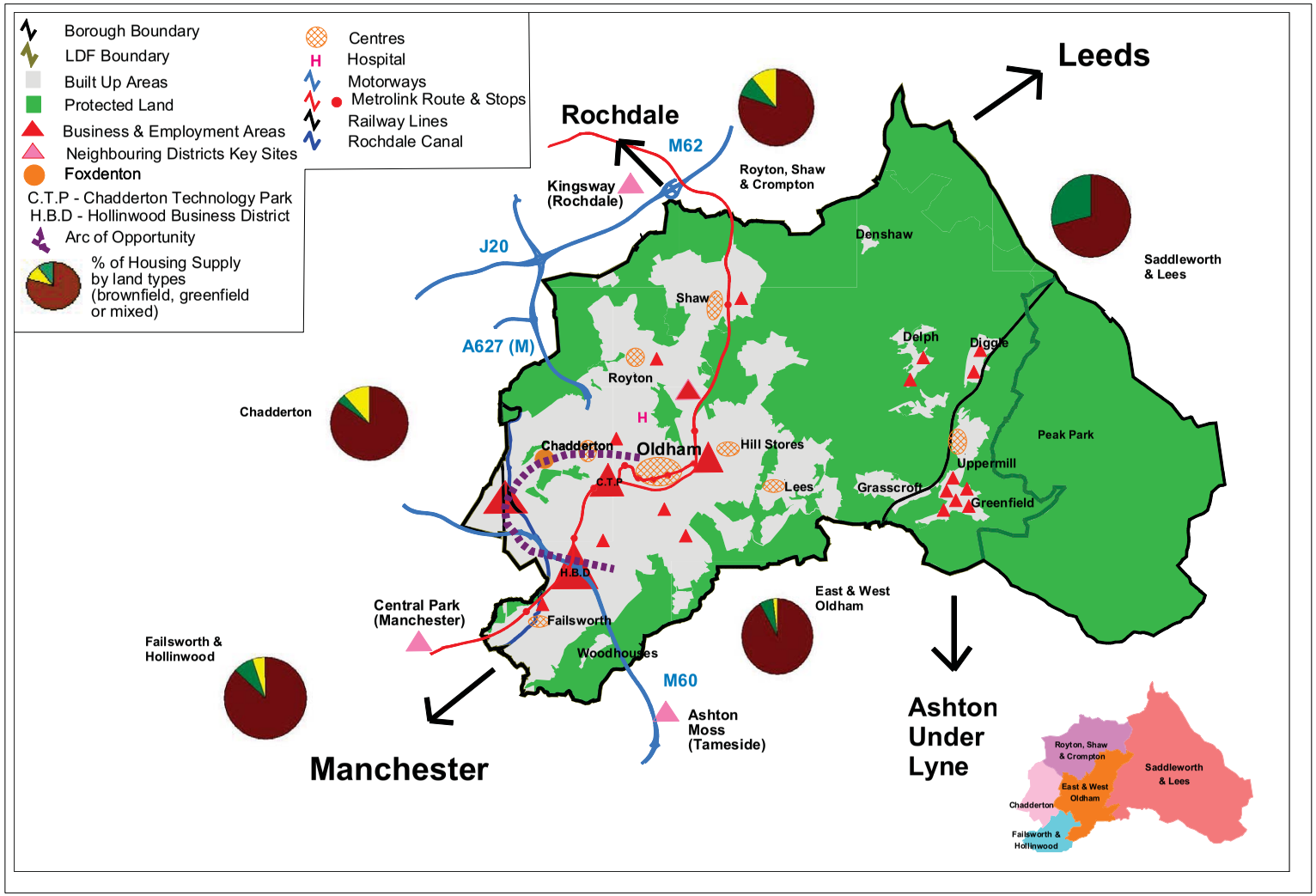
Key element of the preferred way forward (and how it links to the main issues and the vision)	Evidence to support the preferred way forward	Links to the options that we initially considered
the role of Manchester City Centre and our neighbouring district's key sites. (This links to economic prosperity.)	Additional evidence includes: Oldham and Rochdale Economic and Skills Alliance (ORESA) Prospectus. `Oldham Beyond`.	
3) Focus appropriate major retail and leisure development on Oldham Town Centre. Appropriate levels of development will be allowed in the borough's other centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill. Local shopping will be focused on existing shopping parades and local neighbourhoods. Development must be of an appropriate scale and well-related to the role, function and character of the centre, and not undermine vitality and viability of the borough's centres. (This links to economic prosperity and sustainable communities.)	Oldham Retail and Leisure Study. `Oldham Beyond`.	Links to options A (for major developments) and B (for local neighbourhoods).
4) Maximise opportunities to recycle brownfield land and conversion of buildings, ensuring that new developments are built using sustainable construction techniques and securing high-quality design of new development.	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. Employment Land Review. AGMA Energy Study.	Links to options A and B.

Key element of the preferred way forward (and how it links to the main issues and the vision)	Evidence to support the preferred way forward	Links to the options that we initially considered
(This links to climate change and sustainable use of resources.)	Oldham's Design Principles.	
5) Ensure new developments are as accessible as possible by public transport alternatives (such as rail, bus, Metrolink, walking and cycling) and are not solely reliant on the private car. (This links to climate change and accessibility.)	Local Transport Plan. Metrolink proposals. Oldham public transport accessibility profiles.	Links to options A and B, although Foxdenton is also accessible by public transport (option C).
6) Ensure residential developments are accessible to a range of key services. (This links to sustainable communities.)	PPS3. Oldham's access to services map.	Links to options A and B.
7) Protect and enhance existing green infrastructure, and where appropriate providing new quality accessible open spaces, to promote health and well-being. (This links to environmental protection, sustainable use of resources, health and well-being and sustainable communities.)	AGMA Green Infrastructure Study. Oldham's PPG17 Local Needs Audit and Assessment.	Links to all three options.
8) Protect, conserve and enhance the borough's natural, built and historic environments. (This links to environmental protection and sustainable use of resources.)	PPS 5. Oldham's Landscape Character Assessment. Greater Manchester's Historic Landscape Characterisation Study.	Links to all three options.

Key element of the preferred way forward (and how it links to the main issues and the vision)	Evidence to support the preferred way forward	Links to the options that we initially considered
	HMR Heritage Assessments.	
9) Facilitate the land use dimensions of the borough's education plans (such as the Regional Science Centre Oldham and the plans of University Campus Oldham, Oldham Sixth Form College, Oldham College) and its health and well-being plans (such as plans of NHS and PCT) by working with education and health partners. (This links to economic prosperity, Oldham as a university town, and health and well-being.)	Primary Capital programme. Regional Science Centre Oldham. University Campus Oldham. Oldham Sixth Form College. The Oldham College. Primary Care Trust.	Links to options A and B.

5.7 The policies in this joint DPD have been separated into two parts: part 1 forms the Core Strategy which sets out the way forward for the LDF, and part 2 contains the development management policies on how the key elements of the LDF will be implemented. Cross referencing of policies has been kept to a minimum and the policies should be read as a whole.

Key Diagram


Borough Boundary
LDF Boundary
Built Up Areas
Protected Land
Business & Employment Areas
Neighbouring Districts Key Sites
Foxdenton
C.T.P - Chadderton Technology Park
H.B.D - Hollinwood Business District
Arc of Opportunity
% of Housing Supply by land types (brownfield, greenfield or mixed)
Centres
Hospital
Motorways
Metrolink Route & Stops
Railway Lines
Rochdale Canal
Leeds
Rochdale
M62
Kingsway (Rochdale)
Royton, Shaw & Crompton
Denshaw
Saddleworth & Lees
J20
Shaw
A627 (M)
Delph
Diggle
Royton
Chadderton
Chadderton
Oldham
Hill Stores
Peak Park
Uppermill
C.T.P
Lees
Grasscroft
Greenfield
H.B.D
East & West Oldham
Central Park (Manchester)
Failsworth
Failsworth & Hollinwood
Woodhouses
M60
Ashton Moss (Tameside)
Manchester
Ashton Under Lyne
Royton, Shaw & Crompton
Saddleworth & Lees
East & West Oldham
Chadderton
Failsworth & Hollinwood

Policy 1 Climate Change and Sustainable Development

Development should adapt to and mitigate against climate change and address the low carbon agenda, contribute towards sustainable development, help create a sense of place, improve the quality of life for residents and visitors, and enhance the borough's image. Housing-led development should contribute towards a balanced and sustainable housing market, as part of Greater Manchester's north east housing market area, making Oldham an address of choice. Economic-led development should build on our role as part of Greater Manchester and our links to Leeds, promote economic growth and prosperity, and address worklessness and deprivation. The council will promote and support improvements in education and skills which contribute to Oldham as a university town. Improvements that benefit the health and well-being of people in Oldham will be supported. Development must be in sustainable and accessible locations within the built up area, and must not prejudice the development of other land or the regeneration plans of an area identified by the council as being in need of investment.

When allocating sites and determining planning applications, the council will:

a. ensure the effective and efficient use of land and buildings by promoting the reuse and conversion of existing buildings (including Oldham's industrial mills) and development on previously developed land (including through land reclamation, remediation of contaminated land and recycling derelict, vacant and underused land) prior to the use of greenfield sites.

b. meet Oldham's housing needs and demands by focusing residential land in sustainable and accessible locations in regeneration areas (including Oldham Town Centre and the Housing Market Renewal area), also in areas within and accessible to the borough's other centres (of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill), and in rural settlements (such as the Saddleworth villages).

c. promote the vitality and viability of the borough's centres by focusing appropriate major retail and leisure developments on Oldham Town Centre, and appropriate levels of development in the borough's other centres (of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill) and local shopping parades.

d. promote economic prosperity and meet the needs of existing and new businesses by providing employment land in areas that are accessible by public transport. Appropriate business, industry and office developments will be focused on suitable and available employment land in Oldham Town Centre, the borough's other centres (of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill), at Foxdenton, the Hollinwood Business District, the Chadderton Technology Park and the other established employment areas (`Business and Employment Areas` and `Saddleworth Employment Areas`).

e. reduce the need to travel by ensuring developments are located in areas that are accessible by a range of sustainable transport choices, consistent with the Transport Protocol and specifically key issues 1 and 5 (Table A).

f. promote `green` energy.

g. promote development away from areas at risk of flooding, reduce surface water run-off and the likelihood of downstream flooding, and protect and improve water resources.

h. promote sustainable and high quality design and construction of development that respects Oldham's local character, distinctiveness and sense of place, and enhances the borough's image.

i. promote the prudent use and sustainable management of Oldham's natural and man-made resources, including land, soil, minerals, waste, air and water.

j. maintain the borough's Green Belt, and protect locally designated `Other Protected Open Land` and `Land Reserved for Future Development`.

k. ensure development respects Oldham's natural, built and historic environments, Green Infrastructure, biodiversity (including the environmental value of brownfield sites), geodiversity and landscapes, and their settings.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy addresses all the main issues, and is supported by the other policies which provide greater details on how these matters will be addressed in planning terms. It links to the Vision and the preferred way forward by addressing climate change, sustainable development, an improved housing market, economic prosperity, education and skills, transport, local environments.
Objectives	SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	All.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities. Cohesive Society. Sustainable Use of Resources.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place. An address of choice. Services of choice. A university town.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	All indicators.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector. Voluntary Sector.
Transport Protocol Key Issue	1, 4, 5.

Supporting Text

5.8 A fundamental principle of sustainable development is the need to conserve natural resources and improve their quality, particularly those that are finite and non-renewable. The importance of climate change has risen considerably up the public and political agenda over the last few years. The policy links to the preferred way forward and the objectives generally by setting out the key ways Oldham will address these matters. The policy in many ways sets the overall context for the joint DPD. It is supported by the other policies that deal with the detailed matters covered by these broad headings, particularly for dealing with development management proposals.

5.9 Development proposals should:

a. be consistent with national and local policy and guidance; and
b. support the Oldham Sustainable Community Strategy and other strategies, plans, policies and programmes approved by the council or the Oldham Partnership; and
c. be consistent with the Oldham LDF objectives, the preferred way forward and other policies; and
d. have regard to `Oldham Beyond` and its successor documents such as local area-based masterplans; and
e. have regard to the Greater Manchester Strategy, including the spatial planning framework; and
f. have regard to an approved Parish Plan by Saddleworth Parish Council or Shaw & Crompton Parish Council, where appropriate; and
g. have regard to the statutory purposes of the Peak District National Park, where appropriate.

5.10 The `Assessment of Potential Carbon Savings Achievable in the North West Region by 2020` was commissioned by the former 4NW (October, 2008). It recommends various ways in which carbon savings can be achieved such as Code for Sustainable Homes, Zero Carbon Homes and minimising the need to travel.

5.11 Greater Manchester was awarded Low Carbon Economic Area (LCEA) for the Built Environment in December 2009. The purpose of the LCEA is to accelerate growth in a particular part of the low carbon economy expanding on particular strengths, thus helping to strengthen and grow the UK's share of this market.

5.12 Greater Manchester's LCEA vision is that by 2015 Greater Manchester has established itself as a world leader in transforming to a low carbon economy. The physical retrofit and supply of energy to both the residential and non-residential building stock plays a key role in achieving this vision.

5.13 The Stern Review: The Economics of Climate Change[5] concluded that the benefits of acting strong and early significantly outweigh the economic costs of not responding. Manchester Enterprises published a `Mini Stern` report[6] to identify what can be done to deal with the

5 HM Treasury, 2006.
6 July 2008.

impacts of climate change legislation. It recommends that Greater Manchester should look further into the potential to develop a more robust and cost efficient energy infrastructure that is based on low and zero carbon technologies.

5.14 The Multi Area Agreement[7] addresses climate change as a key issue and states it will assess the business support needs of responding to the challenges around energy and carbon emission reduction and business growth opportunities set out in the Mini-Stern report.

5.15 Access and movement need to be achieved with as little harm as possible to the environment and to human health. It is known that there are instances of poor air quality in the borough identified through monitoring, and an Air Quality Management Area has been designated where areas are likely to exceed Government targets for air pollution. Traffic congestion needs to be managed and there is a need to reduce the impact of motorised traffic on the global climate and levels of noise, as well as on air quality. A Greater Manchester Congestion Target Delivery Plan[8] is part of a strategy to deliver national targets on urban congestion.

5.16 Defra and the Low Emissions Partnership have prepared good practice guidance on Low Emission Strategies[9]. This provides a package of methods to mitigate the transport impacts of development. There is a Greater Manchester Air Quality Action Plan[10] in place. It identifies that Oldham will work in partnership with the other Greater Manchester authorities.

5.17 Securing sustainable communities involves ensuring that new housing is developed in locations that offer access to a range of community facilities, jobs, key services and infrastructure. There are many employment-generating land uses, such as offices and creative industries, which can be located alongside residential areas without having a negative impact on residential amenity. Located in appropriate areas, mixed-uses can stimulate sustainable economic investment and regeneration, and can create local jobs that can reduce the need to travel and hence lower emissions.

5.18 Improving, protecting and conserving the quality of soils is important. Certain soils, such as peat, can act as a carbon sink. Remediating contaminated land will continue to be addressed. Policy 9 deals with managing potential hazards.

5.19 Improving our housing market, through choice, quality and diversity, is key to the future of the borough. Policies 3, 10, 11 and 12 of this joint DPD provide further details about how we will ensure Oldham is an address of choice.

5.20 Focusing major retail and leisure developments on Oldham Town Centre, and appropriate levels of development on the borough's other centres (of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill), will help to promote their vitality and viability. Supporting local shops and services will help sustain our communities. Policies 15 and 16 provide further details on how we will support our centres and neighbourhoods.

7 AGMA and Manchester Enterprises, June 2008.
8 AGMA, September 2007.
9 January 2010.
10 AGMA, 2006.

5.21 Changing our local economy and improving education and skills so that we increase economic prosperity are key means to addressing worklessness and tackling deprivation. Our work on so many different fronts and with a wide range of partners is aimed at bringing about these changes and improvements. Policies 4, 13 and 14 provide further details about how the planning framework will contribute towards this.

5.22 Ensuring development is located in areas that can help reduce the need to travel and are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling are key ways to address our impacts on the local and global environments. Particularly with regard to the site allocations which emerge through Policies 11 and 13 and the relationship with Policies 15 and 16. Policies 5 and 17 provide further details on how we will promote accessibility and sustainable transport choices.

5.23 Policy 18 provides details of how we will we reduce energy consumption and increase energy conservation by securing use of appropriate low carbon and renewable energy technologies.

5.24 Quality water is a precious resource. Water resources and features make a valuable contribution to biodiversity, form part of the landscape and offer recreational value. Many watercourses have been culverted. Flooding, and how best to protect and defend developments from its effects, is of great importance. Oldham Council commissioned a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)[11], working with Greater Manchester partners and the Environment Agency, which forms a key part of the LDF evidence base. Policy 19 provides details of how we will manage water and flooding matters in the borough.

5.25 Our design principals reflect the positive characteristics of the borough's local areas and communities. Further details of how we will secure high quality design of new developments is provided in Policy 20.

5.26 Oldham is working with its Greater Manchester partners to ensure the prudent use and sustainable management of our waste and minerals resources. Policies 7 and 8 provide further details on these matters.

5.27 Policy 22 provides details of how we will manage Green Belt and open countryside matters in the borough.

5.28 Our local natural, built and historic environments add to the borough's sense of place, and Policies 6, 21, 23 and 24 provide further details of how we will manage these matters.

5.29 All development sites will only be taken forward in the Site Allocations DPD following satisfaction of assessments in respect of flooding, highways, habitats, infrastructure, the potential sterilisation of minerals by the development and the potential or not for prior extraction of those mineral resources. This is not an exhaustive list.

11 Oldham Strategic Floodrisk Assessment, JBA Consulting and Oldham Council, 2010.

Policy 2 Communities

Promoting and addressing the needs of local neighbourhoods is key to creating sustainable communities across Oldham. The council will support appropriate development that contributes towards creating sustainable communities and promotes community cohesion across the borough, supports the transformation of education and skills, and contributes to improved health and well-being of people in Oldham.

Communities

Development should contribute towards sustainable communities, and should not undermine community cohesion.

The council will support proposals for new and improved community facilities that meet an identified need, where appropriate, by working with partners and through the use of developer contributions.

Health and well-being

The council will support improvements in the health and well-being of Oldham's residents by working with the NHS, PCT and other health partners and through the use of developer contributions to facilitate the development of new and improved health-related facilities. This will include the current LIFT health and well-being centres programme.

Education and skills

The council will support improvements to the education and skills of the borough's population by working with a range of education partners, including the University Campus Oldham, the Oldham College and the Oldham Sixth Form College, and through the use of developer contributions, to facilitate the development of new and improved education facilities. These will include proposals relating to the Building Schools for the Future programme, the primary capital programme and the Regional Science Centre Oldham.

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy addresses the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward by relating to the land-use elements of communities, health and well-being, and education and skills.
Objectives	SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC5, EC9, SOC1, SOC2, SOC10, SOC11.

Linkages	
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities. Sustainable Use of Resources. Cohesive Society.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place. An address of choice. Services of choice. A university town.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; and Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	23, 40, 41, 42, 43.
Infrastructure	Primary Capital programme is approximately £8 million. Children's Centres programme.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Public Sector agencies. Education sector. NHS. PCT. Private Sector. Voluntary Sector.

Supporting Text

5.30 The policy links to the preferred way forward and objectives by creating safer and stronger communities, contributing towards improved health and well-being, and increasing education attainment.

Communities

5.31 Development should contribute towards community cohesion. Regard should be given to the following objectives when determining planning applications:[12]

a. people share a sense of belonging and a common identity;
b. people are strong in their own identities and respect others;
c. a more equal borough;
d. people relate to each other;
e. people play their part; and
f. resilience to threats and conflict.

5.32 Community facilities are currently defined as:

a. education facilities.
b. facilities associated with social service provision.
c. facilities associated with HM Prison Service.
d. health and well being centres, health / medical centres, hospitals and nursing homes.
e. child care facilities including private nurseries.

12 Evaluating the Impact on Projects of Community Cohesion, Oldham Council, 2007.

f. indoor built facilities used for sport and recreation.
g. cultural facilities, libraries, arts centres, museums and theatres.
h. community centres, halls and social clubs used for promotion of sport and cultural activities.
i. religious buildings.
j. special needs housing involving communal living and/or supported accommodation.

5.33 The council will encourage the continued use of existing community facilities (provided that facilities are in accordance with other objectives and policies, and consideration is given to any reviews of facilities use / provision undertaken), and encourage the development of flexible premises that can accommodate a range of uses and / or service providers.

5.34 The change of use from education or community facilities, either in whole or in part, will be permitted where it can be demonstrated by the applicant to the council's satisfaction that the facility is redundant and surplus to requirements, or where appropriate alternative provision is proposed. Redevelopment of a facility for a non-community or education use will be permitted where the proposals would achieve broader planning and regeneration objectives.

Health and well-being

5.35 The council has worked closely with NHS Oldham to ensure that the future vision for health provision in the borough is reflected in the joint DPD. The Strategic Services Development Plan 2007-2012[13] sets out the future plans for health and social care under the LIFT programme. The aims of the LIFT vision include:

a. Integrate health and social care
b. Realign service delivery to better meet the needs of patients
c. Develop premises for community use
d. Develop facilities and services that promote positive health and well being through increased exercise, improved diet etc
e. Develop and expand primary care premises so they are fit for the future.

Table 3 Facilities currently proposed through the LIFT programme

Project	District Partnership
Chadderton Town Integrated Care Centre - current facility will be replaced by a new facility.	Chadderton
Chadderton South Integrated Care Centre - centre will directly serve the local area offering GP practises and other health related services.	Chadderton
Royton Health and Well Being Centre - Integrate health and leisure services over two phases. The centre will include GP practices, a pharmacy, community nursing teams, dental surgeries and more specialist services.	Royton, Shaw and Crompton

13 Oldham Council, Oldham PCT, Community 1st Oldham Ltd, North West Ambulance Services NHS Trust, 2007.

Project	District Partnership
Shaw/Crompton Primary Care Centre - Services may include GP, pharmacy and dental services as well as some diagnostics services.	Royton, Shaw and Crompton
Fitton Hill Neighbourhood Centre - A neighbourhood campus with a range of facilities including a health centre, library, youth club, housing office and local shops.	West Oldham
Werneth Primary Care Centre - A multiple GP unit with associated health and social care facilities, library service and a health cafe.	West Oldham

Education and skills

5.36 The Primary Capital programme aims to work towards closing the gap between education attainment levels across the borough and aligning the supply of school places with demand.

5.37 Building Schools for the Future (BSF) is a new approach to capital investment in school buildings and facilities. Proposals involve secondary schools being replaced, rebuilt or renovated. A review of the BSF programme by the Government, announced 6th July 2010, resulted in changes to some of the borough's planned school development. Seven schools will be replaced by three new academies and a new Roman Catholic School. North Chadderton School and Sixth Form will be remodelled on the same site.

Table 4 Proposed BSF schools

Proposed BSF Schools	District Partnerships
North Chadderton School and Sixth Form (remodelled)	Chadderton
New Roman Catholic School	Chadderton
Oasis Academy Oldham	Failsworth and Hollinwood
Oldham Academy North	Royton, Shaw and Crompton
Waterhead Academy	East Oldham

Policy 3 An Address of Choice

We will promote the borough as an address of choice. Oldham is part of Greater Manchester's north east housing market area, along with Rochdale, Tameside and parts of Manchester. Working with partners and developers we will ensure the housing market is balanced and sustainable to meet the needs and demands of our urban and rural communities, by providing quality, choice and diversity through new residential development, promoting the effective and efficient use of land and managing the release of housing land.

When allocating sites and determining planning applications, the council will promote housing within a boroughwide and Greater Manchester context, having regard to national and local guidance, policies and evidence. This includes the:

- Greater Manchester Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation and Service Delivery Needs in Greater Manchester.
- Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder prospectus, strategies, plans, programmes and masterplans.
- Oldham Strategic Housing Market Assessment (formerly the Housing Needs and Demands Study).
- Oldham Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).
- Oldham Affordable Housing Economic Viability Assessment (AHEVA).
- Oldham Affordable Housing Strategy.

Distribution of Housing

The council will allocate sufficient land, in whole or as part of a mixed use scheme in the Site Allocations DPD, to accommodate at least 289 dwellings per year, net of clearance, on average over the LDF plan period up to 2026, informed by the findings of the SHLAA. At least 80% of the housing provision will be on previously developed land. The focus for new housing will be in sustainable and accessible locations. This includes regeneration areas (including Oldham Town Centre and the Housing Market Renewal areas), and areas within and accessible to the borough's other centres (of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill), and rural settlements (such as the Saddleworth villages). Based on the current SHLAA (which will be monitored and reviewed over the lifetime of the LDF) this means providing the following distribution of housing up to 2026 within each District Partnership area:

Table 5 Current distribution of housing within District Partnerships (based on the 2009 SHLAA)

Approximate percentage of borough's housing within District Partnership areas	
East and West Oldham	60%
Failsworth and Hollinwood	10%
Saddleworth and Lees	10%
Royton, Shaw and Crompton	10%
Chadderton	10%

Managing the release of housing land

Planning applications for residential development, in whole or as part of a mixed-use scheme, will be permitted where:

a. the site is allocated for residential development or mixed-use and has come forward in line with the council's approach to phasing, reflecting the residential distribution described above; or
b. the site is allocated for residential development or mixed-use and has come forward prematurely from the phasing set out in the Site Allocations DPD and does not undermine other national and local guidance and policies: and

i. a deliverable five-year supply of housing land cannot be demonstrated; or
ii. it contributes to the delivery of the borough's regeneration priorities; or
iii. it contributes to the delivery of affordable housing that meets the local affordable housing needs.

Proposals on a non-allocated site for residential development will be considered favourably where it meets the three criteria listed under b above or it is for a small development, comprising a change of use or conversion or not identified in the council's SHLAA.

The use of previously developed land and vacant or underused buildings is the council's first preference for residential development and the availability of such land, both in the locality and boroughwide, as assessed by the council's monitoring arrangements, will be the first consideration when regarding applications on `greenfield` sites.

Access to key services

Major residential development should have access to at least three key services, and minor residential development should have access to at least two key services. Major residential developments are defined as ten or more dwellings or a site of 0.4 hectares and above, and minor development is defined as that which falls below these thresholds. As a guide, `access` is currently defined as being within approximately 480 metres or approximately ten minutes walk time of a key service. Key services currently include areas of employment, major retail centres (such as Oldham Town Centre, the borough's other centres and large-scale foodstores), local shopping parades, health-related facilities and services (such as doctors surgeries and hospitals), secondary schools, primary schools, post offices and community uses (such as libraries, theatres).

UDP policies H1.1 and H1.2[(14)] will be saved and will be assessed in the Site Allocations DPD.

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy links to the main issues, and the vision and the preferred way forward, by relating to the needs of our local housing market and making Oldham an address of choice.
Objectives	SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4, SO5.

14 Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council Unitary Development Plan, Oldham Council, 2006.

Linkages	
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC1, EC2, EC6, ENV1, ENV2, ENV3, SOC1, SOC2, SOC3, SOC8, SOC9.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities. Cohesive Society. Sustainable Use of Resources.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place. An address of choice. Services of choice.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.
Infrastructure	HMR Pathfinder programme. Primary Capital programme is approximately £8 million. Metrolink: £600 million invested on four Metrolink lines to Oldham and Rochdale, Droylsden, Chorlton and Media City. £84 million committed to extend the system through Oldham Town Centre.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector.

Supporting Text

5.38 The policy links to the preferred way forward and the objectives generally by contributing to meeting the housing needs and demands of the community and to helping make Oldham an address of choice.

5.39 Housing is one of the major issues facing the borough and is a key component to quality of life. Good quality housing, choice and diversity in attractive, safe and cohesive neighbourhoods are required to satisfy peoples' needs and aspirations and the needs and demands of a modern, balanced housing market. This will encourage people to remain living within the borough and also to attract new economically active residents and households.

5.40 Improving the condition and mix of the borough's housing stock is identified as a strategic priority within Oldham's SCS and LAA contributing to the borough's `qualitative transformation`. The SCS and LAA states that "*the first call upon the limited land available for housing should be the high quality replacement homes which are needed as part of our drive to radically improve the quality and variety of housing*".[15]

15 Oldham Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement, Oldham Partnership, 2008.

5.41 Oldham will provide enough land for at least 289 new dwellings on average each year (after allowing for clearance). From 2003/04 to 2009/10, this meant that an extra 2,023 dwellings should have been completed in the borough. 3,074 new dwellings were built during this period, although 1,502 existing dwellings were also cleared which means there was a net gain of 1,572 dwellings during the period. This is 451 dwellings fewer than the 2,023 dwellings that were expected to be built.

5.42 From 2010/11 to 2025/26 the borough will provide sufficient land for 4,624 new dwellings. It is assumed that clearance from 2010/11 to 2025/26 is 1,846 dwellings. Therefore, for the period 2010/11 to 2025/26, taking account of the annual need and the previous performance and future clearance, then the borough's housing land requirement is for 6,921 new dwellings. In addition to this, and in line with Planning Policy Statement 3 `Housing` (PPS3), it is also assumed that there will be a need to have a five year housing land supply at the end of the plan period (that is from 2025/26 to 2030/31). This means providing land for a further 1,445 new dwellings. Therefore, for the period 2010/11 to 2030/31, the LDF has to plan for sufficient land for 8,366 new dwellings.

5.43 The SHLAA[16] identifies a potential housing land supply of 10,937 dwellings as at 1 April 2010. The SHLAA, therefore, contains more dwellings compared to the level of housing provision required.

5.44 The council has sufficient land supply to meet its housing requirements over the life of the LDF. Sites, and the phasing arrangements, will be identified in the Site Allocations DPD.

5.45 At least 80% of housing provision is to be on previously developed land. The borough has consistently exceeded having at least 80% of its housing provision on brownfield land and buildings since 2003/04. The five-year supply as at April 2010 indicates that this will continue. Table 6 shows the breakdown of housing land types based on the current (December 2009) SHLAA findings. This will be monitored and reviewed over the lifetime of the LDF.

Table 6 Current distribution of housing land types within District Partnership areas (based on the 2009 SHLAA findings)

District Partnership area	Proportion of each area's total by land type		
	Brownfield (approximate %)	Greenfield (approximate %)	Mixed (approximate %)
East and West Oldham	92%	6%	2%
Failsworth and Hollinwood	87%	8%	5%
Saddleworth and Lees	71%	29%	-
Royton, Shaw and Crompton	80%	9%	11%
Chadderton	85%	4%	11%

16 Appendix 10, Annual Monitoring Report, Oldham Council, December 2009.

5.46 The LDF sets out the approach to managing housing land release, ensuring that the focus is on supporting the aims and objectives of HMR during the lifetime of the project, through adopting a phasing and `plan, monitor, manage` approach. The potential housing land supply does, however, allow the borough some degree of flexibility to take account of changing circumstances.

5.47 Residential development needs to be in suitable locations, which offer a range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure in order to create sustainable communities. Housing will be focused on regeneration areas (including Oldham Town Centre and the HMR areas), areas within and accessible to the borough's other centres (of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill) and rural settlements (such as those in Saddleworth). However, this is not stating that all development should take place within regeneration areas before any can take place elsewhere. It is about ensuring over the life of the LDF that the delivery of housing development reflects our aspirations and principles and addresses the needs and demands of all communities, recognising that the focus for housing development generally will be in these areas, whilst acknowledging the contribution that non-allocated sites may make to the housing market.

5.48 The 2006 UDP policies may be viewed on the council's website at www.oldham.gov.uk.

Policy 4 Promoting Sustainable Regeneration and Prosperity

We will promote and enhance the needs of the local economy within a boroughwide and Greater Manchester context. Oldham will encourage and support sustainable, low carbon economic regeneration, diversification, growth and prosperity. The council will allocate sufficient employment land to meet the needs of existing and new businesses, and contribute towards Greater Manchester's economic land supply.

When allocating sites and determining planning applications, the council will have regard to the following:

- national guidance and policies.
- Greater Manchester Strategy.
- Manchester Independent Economic Review (MIER).
- Oldham and Rochdale Economic and Skills Alliance (ORESA) Prospectus.
- Oldham Employment Land Review.
- `Oldham Beyond` and its successor documents.

The council will promote and support the development of a range of low carbon industries that contribute towards sustainable regeneration and prosperity across the borough by working with developers and partners, where appropriate.

The council will allocate approximately 82 hectares of employment land in the Site Allocations DPD, for the period 2008 to 2026. Approximately half of this land will be provided at Foxdenton. The remainder will be focused on areas that are sustainable and accessible locations. The selection of development sites will have regard to a sequential approach, as set out in national

guidance, based on Oldham Town Centre, the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill, Hollinwood Business District, Chadderton Technology Park and the other established employment areas (which are now titled either `Business and Employment Areas` or `Saddleworth Employment Areas`).

Forecasting indicates that the borough may require additional office and retail floorspace during the plan period. The selection of development sites will have regard to a sequential approach as set out above. The majority of the floorspace will be located within, or on the edge of, our existing centres. New floorspace must be of an appropriate scale and nature and well-related to the character, role and function of the centre.

The council will, where appropriate, work with developers and partners to ensure Manchester City Centre and our neighbouring district's key sites (such as at Kingsway, Ashton Moss, Central Park and Manchester Piccadilly Basin/Oxford Road Area) are as accessible as possible by public transport for the residents of the borough.

The council will, where appropriate, work with partners and developers to explore opportunities to address deprivation and worklessness in the borough through the use of developer contributions and local employment initiatives.

The council will, where appropriate, support diversification of the rural economy for business purposes, particularly where it would enhance agriculture, sports and recreation, tourism or education.

UDP policies B1, B1.1, B1.2 and B1.3[17] will be saved and will be assessed in the Site Allocations DPD.

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy links to the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward by relating to changing our local economy and increasing economic prosperity.
Objectives	SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC1, EC2, EC3, EC4, EC5, EC6, EC7, EC9, EC10, ENV3, SOC2, SOC11.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-Being. Safe and Strong Communities. Sustainable Use of Resources.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	An address of choice. A university town.

17 Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council Unitary Development Plan, Oldham Council, 2006.

Linkages	
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 46.
Infrastructure	Primary Capital programme is approximately £8 million. Metrolink £600 million invested on four Metrolink lines to Oldham and Rochdale, Droylsden, Chorlton and Media City. £84 million committed to extend the system through Oldham Town Centre.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector. LTP.
Transport Protocol Key Issue	2, 5.

Supporting Text

5.49 The policy links to the preferred way forward and objectives generally by improving our local economy and economic prosperity.

5.50 A key objective of the borough's regeneration activities is to turn round the local economy by promoting and securing the development of knowledge based and innovative technologies and industries, so as to provide skilled and accessible jobs for local people.

5.51 The Greater Manchester Employment Land Position Statement[18] was commissioned to update the employment land `need` for the ten local authorities. One of its conclusions was that Greater Manchester has an employment land `need` of between 1,609 hectares and 1,863 hectares. The conclusion for Oldham was that the borough should contribute between 69 hectares and 133 hectares to the overall total for Greater Manchester.

5.52 Oldham's Employment Land Review (ELR)[19] sought to determine a more specific employment land `need` figure for the borough. Using a range of forecasting methods, based on the Greater Manchester Forecasting Model (GMFM)[20] scenarios, the ELR shows the same general trends with growth in demand for B1 (offices) land, a slight growth in B8 (storage or distribution) land and a large decline in demand for B2 (general industry) land. The ELR identified the need for approximately 82 hectares of B1, B2 and B8 employment land over the period to 2026. Specific sites will be allocated in the Site Allocations DPD.

18 AGMA, August 2009.
19 Oldham Council, 2010.
20 AGMA, October 2009.

5.53 Improving public transport accessibility to Manchester City Centre and our neighbouring district's key sites, for example at Kingsway, Ashton Moss, Central Park and Manchester Piccadilly Basin/Oxford Road Area, is an issue that needs to be addressed as the borough's residents have below average car ownership rates. Metrolink will directly link the borough to Manchester City Centre and our neighbouring district's key sites when the line is complete, so offering easier access to potential job opportunities for local residents.

5.54 Addressing deprivation and worklessness is an underpinning priority and central challenge in Oldham's Sustainable Community Strategy. It states that worklessness could be the single most important determinant of the future prosperity and cohesion of the borough. We will work with partners and developers to maximise the job prospects for local people arising from new developments.

5.55 Farming plays an important role in shaping and maintaining the borough's countryside. However, according to the GMFM outputs, the number of jobs in agriculture across the borough is forecast to decline considerably up to 2026. Therefore, by supporting diversification of the rural economy for business purposes, the council will help maximise the potential of the borough's rural areas. UDP policy OE1.11 `Farm Diversification` is saved. [21]

5.56 The 2006 UDP policies may be viewed on the council's website at www.oldham.gov.uk.

Policy 5 Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices

We will guide development to the most accessible locations, and promote and encourage use of public transport, Metrolink, walking and cycling. All development, particularly that which is likely to generate a large number of journeys, must be accessible by a choice of transport modes and must not impede the strategic and local road networks or compromise pedestrian or highway safety.

When allocating sites and determining planning applications, the council will promote accessibility and sustainable transport choices having regard to national guidance and policies, including proposals set out in the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy and the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan, as well as supporting proposals in other local strategies and plans.

The council will:

a. ensure that development is accessible by public transport. All major developments should achieve `High Accessibility` or `Very High Accessibility` unless it can be demonstrated that this is neither practicable nor desirable or it provides exceptional benefits to the surrounding environment and community. Minor development should achieve `Low Accessibility` as a minimum.

21 Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council Unitary Development Plan, Oldham Council, 2006

Public transport accessibility is currently defined below. It will be monitored and reviewed over the lifetime of the LDF.

i. Very High Accessibility: within approximately 400 metres of a frequent bus route (route with a service or combination of services running minimum of every ten minutes daytime Monday to Saturday and running evenings and Sundays) and approximately 800 metres of a rail station or future Metrolink stop.
ii. High Accessibility: within approximately 400 metres of a frequent bus route or approximately 800 metres of a rail station or future Metrolink stop.
iii. Medium Accessibility: within approximately 400 metres of a bus route with a service, or a combination of services, running at a frequency of two per hour daytime Monday to Saturday.
iv. Low Accessibility: within approximately 400 metres of a bus route with a service, or a combination of services, running less frequently than the medium accessibility.

Major developments are defined as ten or more dwellings or sites of 0.4 hectare or above for residential development, or floorspace of 1,000 square metres or more or sites of one hectare or above for other uses. Minor development is defined as that which falls below these thresholds.

b. promote Metrolink and its links with other means of travel, such as bus, walking and cycling, and encourage developments that are accessible to it.
c. ensure the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users by ensuring appropriate highway safety measures and schemes are implemented as part of development proposals. Where feasible all pedestrian and cycle movements will be prioritised consistent with the road user hierarchy.
d. promote walking and cycling by ensuring developments are located so as to link to an attractive and safe network of routes where possible.
e. require developments to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan where appropriate.
f. reduce the need and distance travelled consistent with national policy.
g. integrate development within a multimodal network, promoting connections and interchange facilities.
h. capitalise on the opportunities associated with park and ride sites.
i. deliver service enhancement of the public transport infrastructure which will be reviewed to assess the available capacity.
j. promote and encourage infrastructure for modern modes of transport where appropriate.

The council will apply parking standards to developments as a means to manage demand and encourage greater use of public transport, walking and cycling. In line with national guidance and policy the council will apply the maximum car parking standards set out in Annex D of Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 `Transport` (PPG 13) until locally-specific standards can be prepared after the joint DPD has been adopted. (See Appendix 11). Where an application is for a land use not covered in the national guidance, the council will determine the level of parking provision on an individual basis taking account of local circumstances. The council will have regard to, amongst other things, the nature and scale of the development, the character and

setting of its location, the current and future levels of public transport accessibility and opportunities for walking and cycling in the area, the safety of road users and pedestrians, the need to reduce congestion and carbon emissions, and improve air quality.

The council will also take account of the Protocol arrangements with the Highways Agency and continuously monitor the cumulative transport impacts alongside the assessment of individual site characteristics.

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy addresses the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward by promoting accessibility and movement.
Objectives	SO1, SO4, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC3, EC8, ENV3, ENV4, ENV5, ENV7, ENV8, SOC4, SOC6, SOC10.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	An address of choice.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	23, 24, 25, 26.
Infrastructure	Metrolink £600 million invested on four Metrolink lines to Oldham and Rochdale, Droylsden, Chorlton and Media City. £84 million committed to extend the system through Oldham Town Centre.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Transport for Greater Manchester. Network Rail. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector. Highways Agency.
Transport Protocol Key Issue	1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Supporting text

5.57 The policy links to the preferred way forward and objectives generally by reducing the need to travel and promoting accessibility and movement.

5.58 It is important to ensure that new development locations are accessible by a choice of travel modes, including public transport, walking and cycling. This will help reduce the need for people to travel and hence contribute towards reducing congestion and meeting climate change reduction targets. It also links with the need to improve people's health by creating more opportunities for people to walk or cycle rather than use the car. The council has mapped and classified public transport for all parts of the borough as either `very high`, `high`, `medium` or `low` accessibility. It will be regularly monitored and updated, as necessary, over the life of the LDF. Developer contributions may be sought, where appropriate and necessary, to improve the accessibility of development sites by sustainable transport choices. The Highways Agency has also undertaken a comprehensive accessibility mapping exercise which provides a supporting analysis of the relative accessibility of the borough to a composite of service types.

5.59 AGMA and the Highways Agency have commissioned a study, Assessing the Transport Impacts of the Local Development Frameworks.[22] Districts have supplied the consultants with potential levels of development proposed within LDFs, and the transport implications of these developments have been modelled to assess the impacts on the road network. The analysis of the modelling has enabled key transport related issues to be defined and a Protocol arrangement to be agreed with stakeholders. The Protocol and key issues are discussed in Table A and represent where further work will need to be undertaken to facilitate the joint DPD and Site Allocations DPD.

5.60 Developments will be required, where appropriate, to have a travel plan, with the primary aim of shifting traffic away from car use and reducing congestion. Active travel is an important way of increasing physical activity and integrating exercise into children's lifestyles. All schools are required by Government to develop a school travel plan. In addition, the council has a Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy (SMoTS).[23] Transport Assessments may also need to be submitted alongside planning applications for new developments. This will include developments that are likely to generate a significant increase in the number of trips or have an impact on the operation of trunk roads or any other developments. Applicants will be encouraged to look at the national guidance[24] in relation to guidance on producing travel plans and transport assessments. The current thresholds for which a transport assessment and/or a travel plan will be required are:

a. A1 Food retail - 800 square metres
b. A1 Non-food retail - 1,500 square metres
c. A2 Financial and professional services - 2,500 square metres
d. A3 Restaurants and cafes - 2,500 square metres
e. A4 Drinking establishments - 600 square metres
f. A5 Hot Food Takeaway - 500 square metres
g. B1 Business - 2,500 square metres
h. B2 General Industrial - 4,000 square metres
i. B8 Storage or Distribution - 5,000 square metres
j. C1 Hotels - over 100 bedrooms.
k. C2 Residential Institutions - over 50 beds,

22 MVA, AGMA and the Highways Agency, 2009/10.
23 Oldham Council, 2010.
24 Guidance on Transport Assessment, DfT and DCLG, March 2007.

l. C2 Residential Education - over 150 students
m. C2 Institutional Hostels - over 400 residents.
n. C3 Dwelling Houses - over 80 units
o. D1 Non-residential Institutions - 1,000 square metres
p. D2 Assembly and Leisure - 1,500 square metres
q. smaller developments, which would generate significant amounts of traffic and/or is located within or near to Air Quality Management Areas and/or in locations where there are initiatives or targets to reduce road traffic.
r. schools (including extensions).
s. where a Transport Assessment / Travel Plan would help address a local traffic problem identified by the council and/or the Highways Agency.
t. any proposals in a location where transport infrastructure in inadequate.

5.61 After the joint DPD has been adopted the council will undertake an early review of car parking standards to create locally-specific standards. In setting local standards the council will have regard to the criteria included within PPS4 Policy EC8.

Policy 6 Green Infrastructure

The borough has a great, rich and vast built and natural environment. Features include a range of nature conservation areas, the recently restored Rochdale and Huddersfield Narrow Canals, an extensive rights of way network and our wide range of open spaces such as the award-winning Alexandra Park. We will value our local natural, built and historic environments, green infrastructure, biodiversity, geodiversity and landscapes, and their wider settings. The council will identify, protect, conserve and enhance this multi-functional Green Infrastructure network in the borough and maximise the benefits associated with Green Infrastructure, such as health and climate change adaptation.

When allocating sites and determining planning applications, the council will have regard to international, national, Greater Manchester and local guidance and policies, including:

- the conservation of biodiversity duty.
- the findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment.
- national guidance and policies, including Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 `Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation` (PPG17).
- North West Green Infrastructure Guide.
- North West Regional Forestry Framework.
- North West River Basin Management Plan.
- Pennine Edge Forest initiative.
- Greater Manchester Green Infrastructure Framework.
- Greater Manchester Ecological Framework.
- Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Greater Manchester Local Geodiversity Action Plan.
- Greater Manchester and Oldham Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Study.
- Peak District National Park Landscape Character Assessment, where appropriate.
- Oldham Landscape Character Assessment.

- Oldham Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Oldham Local Needs Assessment and Audit.

Development proposals, where appropriate, must:

a. promote and enhance the borough's Green Infrastructure network. This currently consists of nature conservation sites, strategic recreation routes, green corridors and links, canals and open spaces which are defined below; and
b. make a positive contribution to Green Infrastructure assets and its functions in priority areas identified in the Greater Manchester Green Infrastructure Framework and elsewhere where there are deficiencies in quantity, quality, accessibility and functionality; and
c. support opportunities to contribute towards the habitat creation and repair of Biodiversity Opportunity Areas identified in the Greater Manchester Ecological Framework. In the borough the two priority biodiversity areas identified for habitat creation and repair are South Pennine Moors (this is a Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area for Birds) and Moston Brook Corridor (this is a green corridor); and
d. protect and enhance habitats and species identified in the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan and Oldham Biodiversity Action Plan; and
e. conserve, protect and enhance the geological and geomorphological heritage identified in the Greater Manchester Local Geodiversity Action Plan; and
f. have regard to historic landscape as identified in the Greater Manchester and Oldham Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Study; and
g. enhance and reinforce distinctive elements of the borough's landscapes and have regard to the Oldham Landscape Character Assessment; and
h. ensure that the purpose, appearance and valued characteristics of the Peak Park, and views into and out of it, are not adversely affected; and
i. support the implementation of plans and projects which significantly contribute to the borough's Green Infrastructure. These include the Moston Brook project, Leesbrook Nature Park, Pennine Edge Forest Trail, Peak Park Northern Gateway project, Sustrans Connect2 projects, Beal Valley and canal and river valley enhancement schemes.

These will be delivered through a range of funding streams, including developer contributions, where appropriate. The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy links to the main issues, the Vision and the preferred way forward by addressing the need to protect, conserve and enhance the borough's local natural, built and historic environments, green infrastructure, biodiversity, geodiversity and landscapes.
Objectives	SO1, SO4, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC2, EC4, EC5, ENV7, ENV8, ENV14, SOC10.

Linkages	
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-being. Sustainable Use of Resources.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place. An address of choice.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	20, 21, 27, 28, 37, 38, 39.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Private Sector. Public Sector agencies.

Supporting Text

5.62 Policy 6 links to and helps to deliver Policies 21, 22 and 23. This policy links to the preferred way forward and the objectives generally by valuing and improving the borough's environment.

5.63 The key Green Infrastructure assets shown on the proposals map includes nature conservation sites, strategic recreational routes, canal corridors and all strategic open spaces and Green Flag parks in the borough. Strategic open spaces include parks and gardens (sites over 15 hectares) and strategic natural and semi-natural open spaces (sites over 20 hectares). Special Protection Areas for Birds (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are grouped together under one category on the proposals map, `Designated Nature Conservation` or DNC. Sites of Biological Importance and the Glodwick Lows Local Nature Reserve are also shown separately on the proposals map.

5.64 The borough's Green Infrastructure network and its functions consists of:

Nature conservation sites

5.65 These are currently:

a. Special Protection Areas for Birds (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC);
b. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs);
c. Sites of Biological Importance (SBI's); and
d. Local Nature Reserves and other non-designated sites containing substantive nature conservation value of local significance.

Strategic recreational routes

5.66 These are currently the Oldham Way (boroughwide); Pennine Bridleway, Pennine Way, Greenfield-Uppermill and Delph Donkey (in Saddleworth and Lees); Hunt Lane (in Chadderton) excluding Foxdenton; Oldham-Lees (in East and West Oldham, and Saddleworth and Lees); Royton Junction (in Royton, Shaw and Crompton); Oldham Bardsley (in East and West

Oldham); Crompton Circuit (in East and West Oldham, and Royton, Shaw and Crompton); the Beal Valley Way (in East and West Oldham, and Royton, Shaw and Crompton); and Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Rochdale Canal.

Green corridors and links

5.67 These are currently Wrigley Head, Stock Lane, Railway-Morton Street/ Hardman Lane, Somerset Road, cemetery by Hibbert Crescent (in Failsworth and Hollinwood); cemetery/cricket ground by Duchess Street, High Crompton Park, North Downs/Rochdale Road, Mill Lane/Thorp Road, Long Clough (in Royton, Shaw and Crompton); Egerton Street to Shaw Road and Clayton Playing Fields (in East and West Oldham and Royton, Shaw and Crompton); Broadbent Road/Whetstone Hill Lane, Alexandra Park, Ashton Road/Simkin Way and Sholver Lane (in East and West Oldham); Stonebreaks Road/Cooper Street, Chew Valley Road to Halls Way, Manchester Road to Ryefields Drive, River Tame from Delph New Road to Mow Halls Lane, Hill End Road to Gatehead Croft, Spurn Lane, Wall Hill Road and Wall Hill Road/Hudsteads Lane, Lydgate Tunnel/Oaklands Park, Oaklands Road (in Saddleworth and Lees); Brookside Business Park, Chadderton cemetery and Foxdenton (in Chadderton); Lees New Road to Greenacres Road (in East and West Oldham, and Saddleworth and Lees); and Cotswold Drive, Royton.

Canal corridors

5.68 This includes the Rochdale Canal (in Chadderton and Failsworth and Hollinwood) and the Huddersfield Narrow Canal (in Saddleworth and Lees).

River corridors

5.69 The main rivers across the borough include the Beal (in East and West Oldham, and Royton, Shaw and Crompton), Irk (in Chadderton, and Royton, Shaw and Crompton), Medlock (in Failsworth and Hollinwood, and East and West Oldham) and Tame (in Saddleworth and Lees).

Open spaces

5.70 This includes parks and gardens; natural and semi natural green space; green corridors; outdoor sports; amenity greenspace; recreational provision for children and young people; allotments and community gardens; cemeteries and churchyards; and civic spaces. This policy applies to all open spaces, whether or not shown on the proposals map.

5.71 There are two European designated sites that fall partly within the borough. These are the Rochdale Canal (which is a Special Area of Conservation, or SAC) and South Pennine Moors (which is a SAC and a Special Protection Area). The council has a duty to assess all development that could significantly affect these European sites, through a process called `Habitats Regulations Assessment`. Consultation with Natural England is required, from an early stage, on any proposals that could potentially affect the special interest of these sites. Applicants should have regard to the findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA),[25] where appropriate.

25 Oldham LDF: Joint DPD - Proposed Submission - Habitats Regulations Assessment, Greater Manchester Ecology Unit, 2010.

5.72 The Greater Manchester Green Infrastructure Framework defines Green Infrastructure as "*part of Greater Manchester's life support system. It is a planned and managed network of natural environmental components and green spaces that intersperse and connect our city centres, our towns and our rural fringe. In simple terms, it is our natural outdoor environment*".[26]

5.73 It is important to plan for Green Infrastructure as an asset (e.g. open space) but also in terms of its functions (e.g. health benefits). Green Infrastructure can offer a range of functions that offer environmental, social and economic benefits and is described as being multi-functional where different functions take place on the same land. These include:

a. facilitating a low-carbon society in a changing climate
b. an ecological framework
c. an active travel network
d. a sense of place and positive image and setting for growth
e. river, canal corridor and flood risk management
f. supporting urban regeneration
g. community, health and enjoyment
h. employment and skills development

5.74 The Greater Manchester Green Infrastructure Framework sets out how Green Infrastructure can be enhanced across Greater Manchester. It identifies priority areas for conservation, enhancement and creation. The key diagrams highlight that Green Infrastructure investment is needed in town centres and major transport corridors, including Oldham Metrolink (Victoria to Hollinwood), to raise quality of public realm; as part of the regeneration of priority areas such as Oldham, including the Housing Market Renewal area and in economic centres (such as our neighbouring districts key sites including Kingsway, Ashton Moss and Central Park); in areas with below average health; and areas that should be conserved and managed or restored to address climate change. The key green infrastructure map illustrates the priorities to support growth. See Figure 6 in the spatial portrait.

5.75 The council will have regard to current local standards of provision and the surpluses and deficiencies of open space provision identified in the Open Space Study.[27] Further details of these standards are set out in Policy 23. The council will also have regard to Oldham's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment[28] which can help identify opportunities for delivering flood risk management measures through Green Infrastructure. Policy 21 provides more information on the Green Infrastructure Framework.

5.76 The Greater Manchester Ecological Framework[29] provides a spatial understanding of where habitat creation and repair is needed through `Biodiversity Opportunity Areas`. It is a component of Green Infrastructure and is used to repair and enhance habitats identified in Biodiversity Action Plans. The following two priority sites within the borough have been identified for large-scale habitat creation and repair.

26 Towards a Green Infrastructure Framework for Greater Manchester, AGMA, 2008.
27 PMP consultants and Oldham Council, 2006-2010.
28 JBA Consulting and Oldham Council, 2010.
29 An Ecological Framework for Greater Manchester, AGMA, 2008.

- **South Pennine Moors** – extensive opportunities for upland habitat restoration within and adjacent to the Special Area for Conservation.
- **Moston Brook Corridor** – a strategically important area of green space between Oldham and Manchester districts. A range of habitat types occurs across four distinct sites connected by the Moston Brook watercourse, including lowland broadleaved woodland, wet grassland and unimproved neutral grassland.

5.77 Development will be expected to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity where the opportunity arises, either on-site or adjacent to the site, and so contributing to linkages between valuable or potentially valuable habitat areas where appropriate.

5.78 The Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan [30] and Oldham Biodiversity Action Plan [31] include actions which aim to conserve the habitats and species which are locally important.

5.79 The council will have regard to the impact of development proposals on sites recognised for their geological importance. The Greater Manchester Local Geodiversity Action Plan[32] aims to conserve, protect and enhance the unique geological and geomorphological heritage of Greater Manchester for the future.

5.80 The Greater Manchester Historic and Oldham Urban Landscape Characterisation Study[33] provides an understanding of the historical and cultural origins and development of the current landscape and identifies material remains at landscape scale which demonstrate the human activities that have formed the current landscape.

5.81 The council has prepared a Landscape Character Assessment[34] covering rural areas across the borough. It identifies the following landscape character areas:

a. South Pennine Moors
b. Moorland Fringe
c. Chadderton Rolling Hills
d. Tame Settled Valley
e. Beal Defined Valleys
f. Medlock Mixed Valley
g. Wharmton Undulating Uplands

5.82 Each landscape character area is split into landscape types with a principal landscape objective. Policy 21 provides more details on how applicants should have regard to landscape. The south eastern corner of the borough lies within the Peak Park, and planning for that part of the borough is the responsibility of the Peak District National Park Authority. Development proposals must have regard to the Peak District Landscape Character Assessment, where appropriate[35].

30 AGMA, 2009.
31 Oldham Council, 2007.
32 Greater Manchester Geological Unit, 2009.
33 Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit, 2010.
34 Oldham Council, 2009.
35 Peak District National Park Authority, 2008.

5.83 The council is currently progressing a number of environmental regeneration projects that will enhance the borough's Green Infrastructure. The council will support the implementation of the projects listed within the policy and any other appropriate environmental projects that arise over the plan period. Many of these projects will be delivered through a variety of funding mechanisms, which will include developer contributions where appropriate.

Policy 7 Sustainable Use of Resources - Waste Management

Oldham recognises the importance of sustainable waste management. The borough has to make an appropriate contribution towards enabling Greater Manchester to meet its waste management needs, including those requirements identified in the Greater Manchester Municipal Waste Management Strategy. Oldham Council is working with the other local authorities to prepare the Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan Document (JWDPD).[36]

The council will:

a. require all waste management facilities within Oldham to demonstrate consistency with the principles of the waste hierarchy; and
b. work with other boroughs, through the JWDPD, to identify and safeguard sites for waste management in appropriate locations; and
c. encourage the sustainable transport of waste, including by use of modes such as rail; and
d. promote the use of site waste management plans in major construction projects within Oldham; and
e. have regard to the environmental, social and economic impacts of new waste management facilities proposed within Oldham, including the scope for securing long-term benefits in improving the environment; and
f. ensure that proposals for waste management facilities within Oldham do not prejudice the regeneration plans of an area identified by the council as being in need of investment.

The 2006 UDP policies on waste management[37] will be saved until they are replaced by the JWDPD.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy links to the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward by addressing the prudent use and sustainable management of resources.
Objectives	SO1, SO4, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	ENV10, ENV11.

36 AGMA and Greater Manchester Geological Unit. 2006-present.
37 Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council Unitary Development Plan, Oldham Council, 2006.

Linkages	
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities. Sustainable Use of Resources.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place. Services of choice.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	34, 35.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Joint Waste DPD. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector.

Supporting Text

5.84 The policy links to the preferred way forward and the objectives generally by setting out how we will ensure the prudent use and sustainable management of our waste.

5.85 The Greater Manchester local authorities are signed up to a joint waste plan, the JWDPD, which is being prepared on our behalf by the Geological Unit. This will set out in detail how Greater Manchester will manage its waste. Policy 7 sets the strategic overview of waste management matters, with the detailed requirements set out in the JWDPD. Adoption of the JWDPD is planned for 2012. Details about the JWDPD can be viewed via: www.gmwastedpd.co.uk.

5.86 There is a need to recognise the importance of sustainable waste management and ensure that all facilities are developed in line with the principles of the waste hierarchy. Also there is a need, through the JWDPD, to identify and safeguard sites within appropriate locations for a range of waste management facilities, including disposal, to meet this need within acceptable environmental, economic and social parameters.

5.87 The Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority, which represents nine of the Greater Manchester local authorities including Oldham Council, has prepared the Municipal Waste Management Strategy (MWMS)[38] that sets out guidance and targets for reducing and managing municipal solid waste in the borough. The MWMS has targets to stem the increases in the amount of municipal sold waste and to reduce non-household waste alongside commitments to increasing recycling and composting. There is a need to ensure that all properties have adequate provision of facilities for the storage of both refuse and recycling.

Policy 8 Sustainable Use of Resources - Minerals

The Greater Manchester local authorities are committed to preparing a joint minerals plan (the Joint Minerals DPD,[39] or `JMDPD` for short) to address minerals. Minerals can only be worked where they occur. It is recognised that mineral working can impose environmental costs. It is important to protect mineral resources from inappropriate development. Proposals to work mineral resources must be justified in terms of need, the contribution it makes to meeting requirements for aggregates and the potential environmental impacts.

The council will promote the sustainable management of minerals through the prudent use, recycling, conservation and safeguarding of mineral resources. When determining planning applications the council will have regard to national minerals policies and guidance. The council will ensure an adequate and steady supply of minerals, having regard to known resources in the borough, that will contribute towards apportionment targets and maintenance of the landbank. Where appropriate, the movement of minerals will be achieved through the use of sustainable transport. The council will safeguard existing, planned and potential rail heads, wharfage and associated storage, handling and processing facilities. Proposals must include plans for the high quality restoration and aftercare of the minerals site.

The council will work with other boroughs, through the JMDPD, to identify sites and/or areas of search for minerals extraction and minerals safeguarding areas, and identify and safeguard sites for minerals storage, processing and transfer in appropriate locations.

The 2006 UDP policies on minerals[40] will be saved until they are replaced by the JMDPD.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy links to the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward by addressing the prudent use and sustainable management of resources.
Objectives	SO1, SO4, SO5
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	ENV11
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Sustainable Use of Resources.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place.

39 AGMA and Greater Manchester Geological Unit, 2009-present.
40 Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council Unitary Development Plan, Oldham Council, 2006.

Linkages	
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	32, 33.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Joint Minerals DPD. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector.

Supporting Text

5.88 The policy links to the preferred way forward and the objectives generally by setting out how we will ensure the prudent use and sustainable management of our minerals.

5.89 For minerals there is need to contribute towards maintaining an adequate landbank and steady supply of aggregates in order to meet targets, safeguarding areas for future minerals development and avoiding sterilisation of known resources where possible and identify sites for minerals storage, processing and transfer. Also there is a need to promote the use of recycled and secondary aggregates and the sustainable transport of minerals, and to ensure the effective restoration and aftercare of minerals sites, and ensure that minerals are extracted in line with sustainable development principles.

5.90 The 2006 UDP identified Mineral Resource Zones (MRZ) as a supplementary map to the proposals map. The MRZ should be regarded as no more than a geological overlay indicating the approximate limits of workable mineral reserves.

5.91 The Greater Manchester local authorities are working on producing a joint minerals plan, called the JMDPD. It is being prepared on our behalf by the Geological Unit, along similar lines to the joint waste plan, as a means of addressing minerals at the Greater Manchester level. The JMDPD will provide a sound planning policy framework that provides a clear guide to minerals operators and the public about the locations where mineral extraction may take place, the safeguarding of sensitive environmental features and of mineral resources with potential for future extraction, and all aspects of environmental and resource protection including the sustainable transportation of minerals. Adoption is scheduled for 2012. Further details can be viewed via www.gmmineralsplan.co.uk

6 Part 2: Development Management Policies

Policy 9 Local Environment

Quality of life is affected by the state of the local environment. Tackling pollution, addressing amenity and ensuring the safety of developments will have impacts on health and well-being and the environment. Promoting safe neighbourhoods and clean, green spaces for all to enjoy will benefit everyone who lives, works and visits Oldham. When allocating sites and determining planning applications, the council will protect and improve local environmental quality and amenity and promote community safety across the borough.

Local Environmental Quality and Amenity

a. The council will protect and improve local environmental quality and amenity by ensuring development:

i. is not located in areas where it would be adversely affected by neighbouring land uses; and
ii. does not have an unacceptable impact on the environment or human health caused by air quality, odour, noise, vibration or light pollution; and
iii. does not cause significant harm to the amenity of the occupants and future occupants of the development or to existing and future neighbouring occupants or users through impacts on privacy, safety and security, noise, pollution, the visual appearance of an area, access to daylight or other nuisances; and
iv. does not have a significant, adverse impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding area, including local landscape and townscape; and
v. does not result in unacceptable level of pollutants or exposure of people in the locality or wider area. Developments identified in the Air Quality Action Plan will require an air quality assessment; and
vi. is not located in areas where an identified source of potential hazard exists and development is likely to introduce a source of potential hazard or increase the existing level of potential hazard; and
vii. minimises traffic levels and does not harm the safety of road users. Proposals to work from home must also ensure provision is made for access, servicing and parking.

Community Safety

b. The council will promote community safety by ensuring that development:

i. minimises opportunities for crime; and
ii. reduces the fear of crime; and
iii. provides for the safety and security of all sections of the community.

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy links to the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward by relating to protecting people's amenity, environmental quality and community safety.
Objectives	SO1, SO4, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC2, ENV2, ENV5, ENV6, ENV8, ENV10, ENV12, ENV13, SOC1, SOC2, SOC5, SOC7, SOC10.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities. Sustainable Use of Resources.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place. An address of choice. Services of choice. A university town.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	29, 30.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector.
Transport Protocol Key Issue	4.

Supporting Text

6.1 This policy links to the preferred way forward and the objectives by promoting local environmental quality, community safety and crime prevention, and improving the health of the borough's population.

6.2 Levels of amenity affect people's sense of well-being. In the context of this policy, amenity is regarded as the desirable features of a place that ought to be protected in the public interest. This might include the visual appearance of an area, or in terms of residential and workplace amenity, a suitable level of privacy, access to daylight, low levels of noise and so on. High levels of amenity can also have economic benefits by making an area an attractive place to live and work. Where appropriate, proposals to work from home should demonstrate that the business use would not have a detrimental effect on surrounding residential properties.

6.3 The state of the local environment has a direct impact on our quality of life, health and well-being. It is important, therefore, to make sure that development does not adversely affect the local environment. Pollution is an obvious threat to the quality of the local environment. In terms of pollution, the planning system performs two key functions; it can determine the location of development that may give rise to pollution and also ensure that other types of development are not affected by major existing sources of pollution. Where appropriate, applications must demonstrate that measures to minimise pollution and improve the environment are taken at every stage of development. It is important to note that the planning system

operates alongside pollution control systems. Consequently, planning should focus on whether a proposal represents an acceptable use of the land, the impacts of the use, and assume that relevant pollution control regime will be properly applied and enforced.

6.4 An air quality assessment will be expected where a potential `significant` impact on local air quality is anticipated, or where air quality remains generally unchanged but there is an increased risk of exposure. The following types of development would normally require an air quality assessment:

a. proposals that will result in increased congestion, a change in either traffic volumes (for example, 5% annual average daily traffic or peak) or a change in vehicle speed (±10 kilometres per hour), or both, on a road with greater than 10,000 vehicles per day.
b. proposals that will significantly increase the flow on roads lying within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).
c. proposals that would significantly alter the traffic composition in an area (e.g. bus stations, HGV parks, increased delivery traffic.)
d. proposals that include new car parking spaces (more than 80 spaces) or coach/lorry parks.
e. developments located in, or which may affect, sensitive areas (e.g. ecological sites), areas of poor air quality (including AQMAs) or which may generate pollution at levels that could harm health where either direct emissions to air occur, or where any of the preceding criteria are met.
f. residential, school, public buildings or similar developments lying within an area of poorer air quality such as an AQMA.

6.5 The following thresholds (developments of size equal or greater than criteria listed below) will also be used to determine where an air quality assessment is required:

Table 7 Air quality thresholds

Development	Site Area	Gross Floorspace
Food retail	0.2 hectares	1,000 square metres
Non-food retail	0.8 hectares	1,000 square metres
B1(Business)	2.0 hectares	2,500 square metres
B2 (General Industry) and B8 (Storage or Distribution)	1.0 hectares	6,000 square metres
Other	60 or more vehicle movements in any hour	

6.6 The significance of the development in terms of its air quality impact will depend upon:

a. the extent of the predicted increase in pollution from the development;
b. whether the development is already in an Air Quality Management Area;
c. whether the development may cause exceedances of air quality objectives or standards where these did not already occur;

d. whether the development affects the implementation of measures under the Air Quality Action Plan or Local Transport Plan;
e. exposure of people in the locality or wider area; and
f. whether the development could potentially affect a European designated nature conservation site

6.7 It is not possible to place exact thresholds on what increases in pollution will make a proposed development unacceptable. Each proposal will be considered on the merits of its individual circumstances.

6.8 Where appropriate, the redevelopment of contaminated sites will support the council's efforts to make the most effective and efficient use of land and will help promote sustainable development. When dealing with contaminated land we will deliver a remediation programme for grossly polluted sites that require immediate attention and promote the redevelopment of potentially contaminated sites in a manner that does not pose an unacceptable risk to the water environment, the local ecosystem or to the well-being of residents, the workforce and the general public.

6.9 In relation to landfill gas, the council will, where appropriate, control residential and other development on, or in close proximity to, existing or former landfill sites. Certain sites and pipelines are designated as notifiable installations because of the processes taking place, or because of the quantity or type of substance present. Whilst the use and storage of certain substances above specified quantities is subject to strict control by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE), this policy directs that for the sake of health, safety and amenity that sensitive land uses, such as new housing, should not be located next to a known source of hazard. Equally, development that constitutes a potential hazard will not be permitted near to existing residents. The HSE advises on consultation distances for different types of installation, and the council will consult with the HSE when determining applications for proposed developments within these consultation distances in accordance with Circular 04/2000 `Planning Controls for Hazardous Substances`.[41]

6.10 Safety and security also affect quality of life, and play a key role in establishing sustainable communities. Crime, and fear of crime, can undermine quality of life and community cohesion. In Oldham, surveys have revealed that crime is one of the primary concerns of the borough's residents. There is wide variation in the levels of crime between areas within the borough. In relative terms, crime levels in Oldham generally compare well to Greater Manchester.

6.11 Fear of crime, like crime itself, can have a direct impact on a person's well-being and also lead to exclusion. Fear of crime is a broad term that encompasses a wide range of reactions to the prospect of becoming a victim of crime. Such reactions can influence behaviour, including determining if someone will walk down a passageway, use a park, or even decide to move out of an area.

6.12 Planning can contribute to reducing crime by influencing the location of activities. It can also influence the design and use of buildings, and of spaces around buildings. Planning policies cannot prevent a crime from being committed, but they can reduce the opportunity for a crime being committed and help reduce the fear of crime.

41 DETR, June 2000.

6.13 Highway design is another important factor that contributes to community safety. It is necessary, therefore, to ensure that access and egress from developments can be safely achieved. In addition, the design of development needs to consider streets as places for people and not just cars. The layout of streets, and the inclusion of shared services such as Home Zones, for example, can help reduce road speeds and improve safety in residential areas.

6.14 An Air Quality and Development SPD and a Contaminated Land SPD[42] were prepared to assist with implementing the relevant UDP policies. Although not formally part of the LDF, they are still considered to offer relevant advice and will therefore remain a material consideration until the council provides further advice and guidance on this LDF policy.

6.15 UDP policy D1.12 `Telecommunications`[43] will be saved. The 2006 UDP policies may be viewed on the council's website at www.oldham.gov.uk.

Policy 10 Affordable Housing

We want to provide homes to meet the needs and demands of all sections of the community. Provision of affordable homes is an issue across the borough, including in Saddleworth. We will work with partners and developers to ensure this need is met. Our approach to affordable housing will be based on the findings of our Affordable Housing Economic Viability Assessment (AHEVA).

All residential development of 15 dwellings and above, in line with national guidance, will be required to provide an appropriate level of affordable housing provision. The current target is for 7.5% of the total development sales value to go towards the delivery of affordable housing, unless it can be clearly demonstrated to the council's satisfaction that this is not viable. This target is based on the findings of the AHEVA, but will be monitored and reviewed over the lifetime of the LDF to ensure that it is still appropriate.

When agreeing the level and nature of affordable housing to be provided the council will have regard to the following:

a. the size and type of affordable housing to be provided, such as social-rented accommodation or intermediate housing, and how this meets the local affordable housing needs; and
b. the availability of Social Housing Grant, or equivalent, to support the delivery of the affordable housing; and
c. the impact of the provision of affordable housing on the economic viability of the development; and
d. whether the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the delivery of other planning and regeneration objectives.

42 Oldham Council, June 2007.
43 Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council Unitary Development Plan, Oldham Council, 2006.

Affordable housing must be provided on-site, in partnership with a Registered Provider, preferably that belongs to the Oldham Housing Investment Partnership (OHIP), unless there are exceptional circumstances that would justify the acceptance, by the council, of off-site provision within the locality or a financial contribution in lieu of provision. Exceptional circumstances include:

e. where the specific characteristics of the residential development proposed mean that the provision of affordable housing on-site is neither practicable or desirable; or
f. where the council consider that off-site provision within the locality or a financial contribution would meet local affordable housing needs and other planning and regeneration objectives more effectively.

Where a financial contribution is paid and the provision cannot be provided on-site, the priority will be given to off-site provision in the local area followed by off-site provision within the borough.

The council will use planning conditions or obligations to secure delivery of the affordable housing provision, and to ensure that it is occupied in perpetuity by people falling within particular categories of need for affordable housing.

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy links to the the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward by relating to making Oldham an address of choice and by addressing an improved local housing market and the need for greater affordability of housing.
Objectives	SO1, SO2, SO3, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC1, EC2, EC6, ENV1, SOC1, SOC2, SOC3, SOC8, SOC9.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Safe and Strong Communities. Cohesive Society.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place. An address of choice. Services of choice.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	15.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector.

Supporting Text

6.16 Affordable housing is currently defined in national policy as including social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing "*provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market*".[44]

6.17 The availability of affordable housing within the borough has dramatically reduced as a result of a reduction in council-owned stock, an increasing buy-to-let market, house price inflation, demographic changes and the poor quality of much of the private housing sector. Added to this are issues of overcrowding, which place increased pressure on the need for more family homes to rent. Much of the social rented housing provision has also effectively been restricted to replacing properties lost through clearance.

6.18 The council seeks affordable housing on all suitable sites with a capacity of 15 dwellings or more in accordance with the minimum indicative requirement set out in Planning Policy Statement 3 `Housing` (PPS3). Historically, the type of affordable housing sought was discounted dwellings for sale (secured through a re-sale covenant). However, due to rising house prices in recent years, such dwellings have become increasingly unaffordable, despite the current market conditions. Local evidence also shows an overriding need for larger family social rented accommodation. As a result, the council now negotiates with developers to provide social rented housing on-site in partnership with Registered Providers.

6.19 The council's Affordable Housing Strategy 2009 - 2012[45] and supporting action plan identifies the following priorities:

- **Quantity**: achieving the right quantity of affordable housing to rent.
- **Quality**: continuing to raise the quality of our new and existing stock.
- **People**: connecting Oldham's residents to an improved housing offer through greater choice and access.

6.20 Our approach towards affordable housing including site threshold, proportions and the boroughwide approach have been tested through our economic viability assessment (the AHEVA). It looks at the potential implications that affordable housing would have on the viability of housing developments throughout the borough. The main aim of the assessment is to identify an appropriate level of developer contribution towards affordable housing that will not have a detrimental impact on the viability of housing development throughout the borough. The assessment tests a series of variables, including affordable housing thresholds, to examine the impact of seeking affordable housing on development viability, through the use of a clear and robust methodology that will allow regular monitoring and updating.

6.21 The assessment tests various thresholds in relation to the percentage of Gross Development Value (GDV) available for affordable housing. The thresholds tested were 5%, 7.5%, 10% and 15%. The split between social rented and intermediate affordable housing will be an important component of the housing mix on a site, however, it is not necessary to feed this into the model as the final figure produced by the model will be the sum of money that is available for affordable housing whether this is delivered through social-rented or intermediate housing.

44 Planning Policy Statement 3 `Housing` (PPS3), DCLG, 2011.
45 Oldham Council, 2009.

6.22 The AHEVA is a strategic assessment. It does not seek to test the viability of specific sites and development proposals may require a site-specific economic viability assessment to reflect their individual circumstances.

6.23 The AHEVA took into account the current property climate and the latest information available has been used in constructing the model used to inform the assessment. The assessment model culminates in a projected profit figure which is then used to determine the proportion of the GDV that can go towards affordable housing provision, whilst ensuring that the proposed development remains viable for the developer to proceed. This represents the baseline position. It is recognised that in the current climate obtaining affordable housing provision may be difficult, however the assessment will need to take a long term view to 2026 on how the viability of sites can help to meet the shortage in affordable housing over the longer term.

6.24 In order to understand how the ability to deliver affordable housing may change we have considered `poor`, `average` and `good` market conditions through altering specific factors built into the model. The baseline position represents `average`, whilst the `poor` is represented by a fall in GDV and build out rate, and `good` is represented by an increase in GDV and build-out rate.

6.25 The findings of the assessment demonstrate that the viability of developments and their ability to provide affordable housing varies significantly across the borough depending upon the location of the development and the land / sales values achieved within that area. There are issues around the viability of development in Alexandra ward where the total cost of development consistently exceeds the total development sales value, which will prevent developments coming forward unless there is gap funding available. Developments are considered most viable within the three Saddleworth wards.

6.26 The findings of the AHEVA will help to support delivery of the council's Affordable Housing Strategy, and may be used when assessing planning applications or when undertaking pre-application discussions to inform decision-making around affordable housing provision.

6.27 The 2006 UDP set out an approach towards the delivery of affordable homes based on the general presumption that for all allocated housing sites that 25% of the site capacity should take the form of dwellings which meet identified housing needs. The provision was secured through conditions or planning obligations to ensure the development was affordable in perpetuity. However, following the rise in house prices (before the credit crunch) this approach was no longer considered practicable as properties, even when discounted, remained unaffordable when re-sold and were therefore no longer affordable in perpetuity. In 2007, the council's Affordable Housing Strategy set out a formula for translating the UDP requirements into a percentage of the total development sales value, when dealing with a planning application, which is then used to deliver social rented housing. The formula produces a sum equivalent to 7.5% of the total development sales value. The LDF will continue with this approach that works for the borough.

6.28 The council will work with partners and developers to secure affordable homes to meet the needs of the borough's diverse communities. The council's 2008 Housing Needs and Demands Study has been updated as the Oldham Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and was published in 2010. In determining the number of affordable homes that will be secured over the life of the LDF, the council and developers must have regard to the latest available

information, including the Affordable Housing Strategy and the Oldham SHMA. This will ensure that the borough secures the right numbers and types of affordable homes. The number of affordable homes that will be secured will be dependent upon a number of factors. These will include, amongst other things, housing market conditions, the economic climate, the viability of development schemes within different areas of the borough, land values, remediation costs of development sites and the availability of public funding. In the Housing Market Renewal (HMR) area, the approach is that any developments funded through the HMR programme will be required to provide 30% affordable housing provision pepper potted, i.e. not concentrated in one area but mixed, singularly or in small clusters, throughout the development. During 2010/11 – 2011/12, the HMR programme is anticipated to deliver 90 affordable homes for rent or low cost purchase. Therefore, the number of affordable homes secured will, clearly, be dependent on the circumstances that prevail at the time of the development, and in negotiating on delivery the council will have regard to the 7.5% target to negotiate to pay for affordable housing provision on a site by site basis.

6.29 The council will identify the anticipated number of affordable homes to be provided on the housing allocations in the Site Allocations DPD.

6.30 Based on past trends it is anticipated that the preferred way forward for the provision of affordable housing is deliverable. It is, however, considered this approach will enable the provision of affordable housing to reflect circumstances within specific localities, for example around differing land values and/or the housing need and demand.

Policy 11 Housing

All residential developments must deliver a mix of appropriate housing types, sizes and tenures that meet the needs and demands of the borough's urban and rural communities. The mix of houses that we will secure will be based on local evidence.

All residential development must be appropriate to the area, accessible to public transport and key services, and have regard to the council's plans for the area.

The council will promote the delivery of a mixed housing stock, based on the findings of local evidence which will be monitored and reviewed over the lifetime of the LDF, to ensure that it is still appropriate. Based on our current local evidence this includes:

a. family housing (three bedrooms and above), particularly within regeneration areas, to widen the choice of housing available and address issues of overcrowding;
b. a mix of housing within Oldham Town Centre and the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill as appropriate, to encourage people to live within these areas; and
c. high-value housing to retain and attract residents throughout the borough.

The council will have regard to the following to determine the appropriate mix on a specific site:

d. the need to create sustainable and inclusive communities and meet identified housing needs within the site and surrounding area and, in the case of smaller developments the surrounding area; and

e. the findings of the Greater Manchester and Oldham Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA) [46] and other local evidence identifying housing needs and demands within the borough; and

f. the location and characteristics of the site, including:

   i. public transport accessibility and access to key services, consistent with key issue 5 in Table A; and
   ii. shape, topography, landscape, historic environment and biodiversity features; and
   iii. surrounding uses and characteristics; and

g. delivery of wider planning and regeneration objectives.

Houses in multiple occupancy shall not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal does not adversely affect: the local character of the area; the residential and workplace amenity of current, future and neighbouring occupants; and traffic levels and the safety of road users.

The Government changed the classification of gardens from `brownfield` to `greenfield` in June 2010. As stated in Policy 3, the use of previously developed land and vacant or underused buildings is the council's first preference for residential development and the availability of such land, both in the locality and boroughwide, as assessed by the council's monitoring arrangements, will be the first consideration when regarding applications on `greenfield` sites. In addition, housing development within an existing residential curtilage shall not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the development: is acceptable in terms of design, scale, massing and density; is sensitive and compatible with local character; does not adversely affect the amenity of adjoining dwellings; is acceptable in access and parking arrangements. All residential development must provide adequate garden or other outside amenity space.

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy links to the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward by relating to making Oldham an address of choice and addressing an improved local housing market and the need for greater diversity of housing.
Objectives	SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC1, EC2, EC6, ENV1, ENV2, SOC1, SOC2, SOC3, SOC8, SOC9.

46 AGMA and Oldham Council, 2008 and 2010.

Linkages	
SCS / LAA	Safe and Strong Communities. Cohesive Society. Sustainable Use of Resources.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place. An address of choice.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	14, 19.
Infrastructure	HMR Pathfinder programme.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector.
Transport Protocol Key Issue	1, 5.

Supporting Text

6.31 An important part of meeting the borough's housing requirement will depend upon the efficient use of land. Each development proposal will be assessed on its merits taking account of local circumstances, including the contribution that non-allocated sites may make to the housing market. Regard will be given to the development's location in relation to accessibility to public transport and to key services, and the ability to deliver larger family or disabled persons or elderly persons accommodation. In bringing forward the proposed housing developments (along with other development proposals) there are likely to be direct implications on aspects such as the transport network. Therefore the specific impact of housing sites on the transport network, both individually and cumulatively, will be assessed during the development of the Site Allocations DPD.

6.32 Local evidence will include, amongst others, the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment[47] and the Affordable Housing Economic Viability Assessment.[48]

Policy 12 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

As part of creating a balanced and sustainable housing market we will address the needs of the Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople communities by working with partners, partner organisations and communities to identify sustainable sites.

The council will make new provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the Site Allocations DPD if there is a clear and demonstrable need based on up-to-date evidence.

47 Oldham Council, 2009.
48 Oldham Council, 2010.

When allocating sites and determining planning applications, the council will ensure the following criteria are satisfied:

a. it is consistent with national and local guidance and policies; and
b. it is well-designed and protects the residential amenity and safety of current and future occupiers and those living nearby; and
c. there is safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access to the road network and provision of on-site parking, turning and servicing; and
d. it is located within or near existing settlements with access to existing local shops, community, education and health facilities and public transport options; and
e. the site is able to provide adequate pitch sizes, on-site facilities and to make provision for a mix of uses, where appropriate; and
f. it has access to, or can be linked to, facilities and services that are required to meet the needs of the occupiers (including facilities for sewage and waste disposal, water, power supplies and drainage).

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy links to the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward by addressing the housing needs of various communities.
Objectives	SO1, SO2, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC1, EC2, ENV1, ENV2, SOC1, SOC2, SOC3, SOC8.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities. Cohesive Society. Sustainable Use of Resources.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place. An address of choice. Services of choice.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	16.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector.

Supporting Text

6.33 There are no sites allocated for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in this joint DPD.

6.34 Currently, national guidance[49] requires local planning authorities to allocate specific sites for Gypsy and Travellers accommodation to meet identified needs.

6.35 Research has been undertaken by AGMA. The Greater Manchester Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment[50] identifies a shortfall of 26 pitches up to 2015 for Oldham. There is no pitch requirement identified for travelling show people.

6.36 The council will identify pitches in the Site Allocations DPD only if there is a clear and demonstrable need based on up-to-date evidence.

6.37 The criteria for determining planning applications and for identifying the location of sites in the Sites Allocations DPD are set out above. Regard must be had to other policies in the joint DPD, for instance Policies 1, 6, 21, 22 and 23.

Policy 13 Employment Areas

Our approach towards employment land has been to keep the best and recycle the rest. In the UDP there were 32 Primary Employment Zones (PEZ's) across the borough. These have been reviewed as part of the LDF. Established employment areas in the LDF are to be known as either `Business and Employment Areas` (BEA) or `Saddleworth Employment Areas` (SEA). Ten established employment areas are in Saddleworth and Lees, which remain unchanged from the UDP. Of the other areas in the UDP, 12 will be retained (subject to amendments) and 10 will be de-designated for other uses such as housing, community or education. Foxdenton will become a new employment area.

Oldham has identified an `arc of opportunity` of key development locations for business that underpins our future economic prosperity. This area, which is shown on the Key Diagram, stretches from Oldham Town Centre through to the Technology Park, Foxdenton and Broadway in Chadderton and on to Hollinwood Business District. It forms a natural extension to Manchester City Centre, and links with the ORESA M60 employment zone.

A collective modelling exercise, defined in unison with the Protocol key issues outlined in Table A, will be facilitated to appraise the impacts of the Foxdenton site and the wider `arc of opportunity`. The council will provide further detail in partnership with key stakeholders, through the Site Allocations DPD. It is envisaged that the modelling work will review the impact on the Strategic Road Network and wider public transport requirements to enable sustainable growth.

Foxdenton is approximately 45 hectares. It falls within Chadderton Central ward. In the UDP it was designated as Land Reserved for Future Development 3 and 4 and Other Protected Open Land 3.

Hollinwood Business District is approximately 70 hectares. It falls within the wards of Failsworth East, Hollinwood and Chadderton South. In the UDP it was designated as PEZ 4 and PEZ 5.

49 Circular 01/2006 `Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites`, DCLG, 2006.
50 AGMA, 2008.

Chadderton Technology Park is approximately 50 hectares. It falls within the wards of Coldhurst, Chadderton Central and Werneth. In the UDP it was designated as PEZ 10.

The other BEA's and the SEA's are listed below. The council will assess the BEA's and SEA's in the Site Allocations DPD. The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Failsworth and Hollinwood District Partnership			
BEA 1 Wrigley Street	Failsworth East	3.69 hectares	Previously PEZ 3 (amended)
BEA 2 Hawksley Street	Hollinwood	5.26 hectares	Previously PEZ 6 (amended)

Chadderton District Partnership			
BEA 3 Greengate/Broadgate	Chadderton Central and Chadderton South	185.89 hectares	Previously PEZ 8

West Oldham and East Oldham District Partnerships			
BEA 4 Busk	Coldhurst	5.33 hectares	Previously PEZ 11 (amended)
BEA 5 Primrose Bank	Alexandra	10.37 hectares	Previously PEZ 13
BEA 6 Hathershaw	Alexandra and Medlock Vale	12.38 hectares	Previously PEZ 15
BEA 10 Greenacres	St Mary's and St James'	61.41 hectares	Previously PEZ 16 (amended)

Royton, Shaw and Crompton District Partnership			
BEA 7 Higginshaw*	Royton South and St Mary's	76.72 hectares	Previously PEZ 16 (amended)
BEA 8 Shaw Road	Royton South	16.11 hectares	Previously PEZ 21
BEA 9 Shaw	Shaw	21.33 hectares	Previously PEZ 22 (amended)

* 7 hectares of this BEA is located within West and East Oldham District Partnerships but as 90% of it falls within Royton, Shaw and Crompton District Partnership it has been grouped under that area.

Saddleworth and Lees District Partnership

SEA 1 Oak View Mills, Manchester Road, Greenfield	Saddleworth South	0.44 hectares	Previously PEZ 23
SEA 2 Hey Bottom Mill, Greenfield	Saddleworth South	1.49 hectares	Previously PEZ 24
SEA 3 Chew Valley Road, Greenfield	Saddleworth South	1.79 hectares	Previously PEZ 25
SEA 4 Boarshurst Lane, Greenfield	Saddleworth South	1.13 hectares	Previously PEZ 26
SEA 5 Waterside Mill, Greenfield	Saddleworth South	1.87 hectares	Previously PEZ 27
SEA 6 Delph New Road, Delph	Saddleworth North	3.61 hectares	Previously PEZ 29
SEA 7 Valley Mills, Huddersfield Road, Delph	Saddleworth North	2.87 hectares	Previously PEZ 30
SEA 8 Shaw Pallets, Huddersfield Road, Diggle	Saddleworth North	6.79 hectares	Previously PEZ 31
SEA 9 Warth and Ellis Mills, Huddersfield Road, Diggle	Saddleworth North	1.69 hectares	Previously PEZ 32
SEA 10 Greenbridge Lane, Greenfield	Saddleworth South	1.59 hectares	Previously PEZ 33

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy addresses the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward by changing our local economy and by improving economic prosperity.
Objectives	SO1, SO3, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC1, EC3, EC4, EC5, EC6, EC9, ENV1, ENV3, SOC2, SOC11.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	An address of choice. A university town.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre.

Linkages	
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 46.
Infrastructure	Metrolink £600 million invested on four Metrolink lines to Oldham and Rochdale, Droylsden, Chorlton and Media City. £84 million committed to extend the system through Oldham Town Centre.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector.
Transport Protocol Key Issue	2, 3, 5.

Supporting Text

6.38 The policy links to the preferred way forward and objectives generally by improving our local economy and economic prosperity.

6.39 The council has designated BEAs and SEAs across the borough for a broad and diverse range of appropriate employment-generating uses. These locations will help meet the needs of our changing local economy and will provide opportunities for investment from new businesses and existing firms.

6.40 Foxdenton has been identified as a new employment area. The Employment Land Review[51] has identified the site as being key to meeting the employment land requirements of the borough.

6.41 In bringing forward the employment areas (along with other development proposals) there are likely to be direct implications on aspects such as the transport network. Therefore, the specific impact of employment sites on the transport network, both individually and cumulatively, will be assessed during the development of the Sites Allocations DPD.

6.42 Ten PEZs from the 2006 UDP will be de-designated as employment areas. Removing this status will not affect businesses that are currently located there and which still make a valuable contribution to the borough's economy. Future development proposals will be considered on their merits. The PEZs that will be de-designated represent approximately 10% of current employment areas in the borough and are:

a. PEZ 1 – West Failsworth (16.57 hectares);
b. PEZ 2 – Ashton Road, Failsworth (5.29 hecatres);
c. PEZ 7 – Hollins (5.73 hectares);
d. PEZ 9 – Fields New Road, Chadderton (9.18 hectares);
e. PEZ 12 – Fernhurst Mill, Chadderton (3.01 hectares);
f. PEZ 14 – Copster Hill, Oldham (4.66 hectares);
g. PEZ 17 – Wellyhole Street, Lees (3.92 hectares);
h. PEZ 18 – New Street, Lees (2.31 hectares);
i. PEZ 19 – Greenacres Road, Waterhead (5.66 hecatres); and
j. PEZ 20 – New Coin Street, Royton (9.08 hectares).

51 Oldham Council, March 2010.

6.43 Policy 14 provides details of the types of uses that will be encouraged in the BEAs and SEAs, as well as the circumstances in which changes from employment-generating uses will be permitted.

6.44 Any boundary changes from the 2006 UDP are shown in Appendix 4.

Policy 14 Supporting Oldham's Economy

It is important Oldham has a range of sites to support the local economy. Employment areas are spread across the borough. They provide land for existing firms to expand and for new firms to locate here, so providing for job opportunities. Development proposals which would result in the loss of a site currently or most recently used for employment purposes to other uses should include measures to outweigh the loss of the site and support Oldham's economy and the regeneration plans of the borough.

The uses permitted within the Business and Employment Areas (BEA) and the Saddleworth Employment Areas (SEA) are listed below. Development proposals within these areas should be consistent with national and local guidance and policies. The selection of development sites will have regard to a sequential approach as set out in Policy 4.

Forecasting indicates that the borough may require an additional 30,000 square metres of office floorspace during the plan period, as shown in the Employment Land Review. The council will identify sites in the Site Allocations DPD. The majority of this may be located within, or on the edge of, our existing centres. Within the BEAs and SEAs, suitable offices should be of an appropriate scale and nature, and should not cause unacceptable harm to the character, role and function of the borough's centres.

Foxdenton

The aim is to create a premium business location with opportunities for high-quality office, business and industrial developments in a pleasant environment that provides skilled jobs and contributes to Oldham's and Greater Manchester's economies. Development proposals for B1 (business) and B2 (general industry) will be permitted and should form the focus for uses within the area. B8 (storage or distribution) will be permitted. Residential development on up to 25% of the site will be permitted. The council will provide further advice and guidance on this in the form of a masterplan.

Hollinwood Business District

The vision for Hollinwood Business District is "*a new business-led district for Oldham - that meets Oldham's needs for good quality business space in an efficient and attractive environment to support a growing and productive local economy*". Development proposals for B1 (business) and B2 (general industry) will be permitted and should form the focus for the business district. In addition, the following uses will be permitted where appropriate: B8 (storage or distribution),

A3 (restaurants and cafes), A4 (drinking establishments), A5 (hot food takeaways), C1 (hotels), leisure facilities up to 1,000 square metres gross floorspace and retail facilities up to 500 square metres gross floorspace.

Chadderton Technology Park

The aim is to attract investment to create high quality modern floor space and new jobs away from the existing manufacturing base. The masterplan sets out a framework to attract new investment and high-tech employment into the area and thereby creating high quality businesses for the future. Development proposals for B1 (business), B2 (general industry), B8 (storage or distribution) and waste management facilities will be permitted and must form the predominant uses within the technology park. The following uses will be permitted where appropriate but must remain ancillary to the overall development of the technology park: A3 (restaurants and cafes), A4 (drinking establishments), A5 (hot food takeaways), C1 (hotels), leisure facilities up to 1,000 square metres gross floorspace, retail facilities up to 500 square metres gross floorspace,and transport and transport-related uses.

Other Business and Employment Areas and Saddleworth Employment Areas

The uses that will be permitted within the other BEAs and the SEAs are listed below*:*

i. B1 – Business.
ii. B2 – General Industry.
iii. B8 – Storage or Distribution.
iv. A3 – Restaurants and Cafes.
v. A4 – Drinking Establishments.
vi. A5 – Hot Food Takeaway (excluding SEAs 1 to 10).
vii. C1 – Hotels.
viii. Leisure facilities up to 1,000 square metres gross floorspace.
ix. Retail facilities up to 500 square metres gross floorspace.
x. Building and construction related uses.
xi. Transport and transport-related uses.
xii. Waste management facilities.
xiii. Garden centres.

Exceptions

Uses other than those listed above will be permitted on sites currently or most recently used for employment purposes, provided the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it is no longer appropriate or viable to continue the existing use. This can be demonstrated by the developer:

a. through a marketing exercise that there is no market for the uses listed above. The marketing exercise should be agreed with the council before commencing and be of a professional standard; or

b. through a viability exercise that the continued use/development of the site for the uses listed above is unviable; or
c. that the development of the site for alternative uses would benefit the regeneration areas identified by the council as being in need of investment or would benefit the community of an area.

This applies to sites located within the BEAs and SEAs and elsewhere.

Supporting Oldham's Economy

Development proposals which result in the loss of an employment site to other uses should include measures to outweigh the loss of the site and support Oldham's economy. Measures will include:

d. supporting employment opportunities, including:

    i. providing or funding the construction of incubator units, managed workspace, and workshops of small and medium sized businesses; or
    ii. providing discounted rental agreements within mixed-use developments; or
    iii. employment initiatives; or
    iv. contributions to new bus services and/or additional capacity on existing public transport routes, where appropriate, to support residents in travelling to employment locations; or
    v. funding/sponsoring/training initiatives to raise skill levels within the workforce and the unemployed.

e. creating mixed-use development, that includes employment uses and/or live/work units;
f. assisting in the relocation and expansion of existing businesses displaced from the site;
g. assisting the consolidation of businesses operating from multiple sites on to a single location;
h. providing grants to assist businesses to improve their sites/premises; and
i. a commuted sum towards supporting the above measures to be agreed with the council.

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy links to the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward by changing our local economy and by improving economic prosperity.
Objectives	SO1, SO3, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC1, EC2, EC3, EC4, EC5, EC6, EC7, EC9, ENV1, ENV3, SOC2.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities.

Linkages	
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	An address of choice. A university town.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 46.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Private Sector. Transport for Greater Manchester. Highways Agency.
Transport Protocol Key Issue	1, 5.

Supporting Text

6.45 The policy links to the preferred way forward and objectives generally by improving our local economy and economic prosperity.

6.46 The employment land module of the Greater Manchester Forecasting Model (GMFM)[52] indicates that the borough may require an additional 30,000 square metres of office floorspace by 2026.

6.47 BEA 7 Higginshaw, BEA 9 Shaw, SEA 6 Delph New Road, SEA 7 Valley Mills, SEA 8 Shaw Pallets and SEA 9 Warth and Ellis Mill are all partly located in areas at risk of flooding. Proposals in these areas will need to be accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment.

6.48 The uses permitted within Foxdenton, Hollinwood and Chadderton Technology Park reflect the council's aspirations for these locations. Hot food takeaways have been excluded from the Saddleworth Employment Areas as a result of local consultations and due to the limited nature and amount of employment land in the area.

Foxdenton

6.49 Foxdenton is a key location for premium office, business and industry development. It is located within Chadderton in close proximity to the well established Broadway Business Park. There are aspirations for the future of this site to 2026, although it is recognised that a phased approach to its development will be needed so as to ensure the necessary infrastructure, such as gas, water, electricity and highways, is put in place to facilitate bringing it forward and maximising its potential benefit to Oldham.

6.50 Development at Foxdenton will be for high quality opportunities for B1 (business), B2 (general industry) and B8 (storage or distribution) uses, and a small amount of residential development will be permitted in order to facilitate the infrastructure requirements of the area.

52 GMFM Reference Scenario 2009, AGMA and Oxford Economics, 2009.

6.51 Up to 25% of the site area may be developed for residential development subject to meeting sustainability and regeneration requirements. Proposals for residential development must be in conformity with national and local guidance and policies on mix and the number of affordable units provided on site. The homes must be built to a high quality design using sustainable construction techniques. They must be located to ensure that residential development is protected against noise and other adverse impacts generated on the rest of the site.

6.52 Development at Foxdenton must be of a high quality design with landmark buildings of an appropriate scale that are sensitive to their surroundings. Developers should use construction methods and materials that make a positive contribution to design quality, character and appearance, but also contribute to the sustainable use of resources. The design of the development should also provide a public realm of streets and spaces that is well designed in its detail to be visually attractive.

6.53 The council has undertaken a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)[(53)] as part of the LDF. The conclusion was that the site is acceptable for development though there are some issues that would need further consideration. The SFRA states that a site-specific FRA, to be agreed with the council and the Environment Agency, would benefit from a survey and a more detailed assessment of potential blockages to the Wince Brook culvert. However, the SFRA confirms that the culvert capacity along Wince Brook is adequate provided appropriate inspection and maintenance continues. Foxdenton is also within a Critical Drainage Area. Appropriate mitigation measures must be put in place to protect the development and the area from flooding. The watercourses and streams that flow through the site (Wince Brook and its tributaries) must be protected and integrated into the development, particularly the eastern part of the site (which was formerly `Other Protected Open Land` in the 2006 UDP). The SFRA indicates that the site is likely to pass the Exception Test.

6.54 The council, working in conjunction with the Highways Agency and the other Greater Manchester local authorities, has undertaken an assessment of the implications of the LDF on the strategic road network. Development proposals must be subject to a Transport Assessment. This must be agreed with the council and the Highways Agency. Appropriate measures must be put in place to address any impacts the development may have on the strategic and local road networks. A right of access has been reserved into the site off Broadway, but early engagement with the Highways Agency will be essential in obtaining the access.

6.55 Development proposals must be subject to a Travel Plan. This must be agreed with the council and the Highways Agency. It will be essential in ensuring the development promotes use of public transport, walking and cycling. Measures will be required, as part of the development of the site, to improve the public transport accessibility of Foxdenton. The council will work with the Highways Agency and Transport for Greater Manchester, prior to and at, Site Allocations DPD stage to look at accessibility and public transport issues.

6.56 The joint DPD has been subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment.[(54)] Development proposals must be subject to a habitats assessment. This must be agreed with the council, Natural England and the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU). The habitats assessment

53 JBA Consulting and Oldham Council, 2010.
54 Oldham LDF: Joint DPD - Proposed Submission - Habitats Regulations Assessment, Greater Manchester Ecology Unit, 2010.

is required due to the proximity of the site to the Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Appropriate mitigation measures must be put in place to address any potential harmful effects on the SAC which may be identified. A screening opinion has been undertaken on Foxdenton by the GMEU which concluded that the potential impacts on the Rochdale Canal from development of the site could come from water and air pollution.

6.57 The Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit has undertaken a historic landscape characterisation study of the urban areas of the Oldham.[55] Development proposals must be subject to a heritage assessment. This must be agreed with the council, English Heritage and the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit. The heritage assessment is due to the fact that within the site is a Grade II listed building, Foxdenton Farmhouse, and outside of the site is the Grade II* listed building, Foxdenton Hall. The site and the settings of these heritage assets will need to be protected as part of any development proposals.

6.58 Investigations must be undertaken by developers to ascertain the extent of any land contamination on the site. Foxdenton is in part of the borough identified by the Coal Authority as being underlain by surface coal resources and therefore development proposals must be consistent with national and local minerals guidance and policies.

Other

6.59 Instances can arise when uses other than those listed within the policy may be appropriate within the BEAs and the SEAs. Development proposals for other uses will only be permitted either where it can be demonstrated (through a marketing or viability exercise) that there is no realistic prospect of a continuing employment use, or that the alternative proposal would bring community or regeneration benefits to an area identified by the council as being in need of investment.

6.60 In relation to a marketing exercise, when agreeing timescales the council will have regard to market conditions, and the size and nature of the premises/site. A record of all expressions of interests/offers received should be submitted and where possible the applicant should try and obtain from interested parties reasons as to why they were not willing or able to proceed. A lesser financial return on investment relative to other development options will not be sufficient to justify the site not continuing to be available for employment use. In instances where the council considers the marketing exercise has been inadequate, the applicant will be advised that the planning application will be recommended for refusal.

6.61 If the applicant seeks to demonstrate that the site is no longer viable for employment uses by assessing the cost of works needed to bring the site back into use for employment purposes then a development appraisal or residual valuation prepared by a qualified surveyor will be required. This should assess a range of options from partial or full demolition and redevelopment. The options appraised should be agreed in advance with the council.

6.62 To successfully prove that the redevelopment or refurbishment of the site for the range of employment uses listed in the policy is unviable, the applicant will need to provide evidence that the potential return for the employment use is so low that the site is likely to remain sterilised. The residual valuation will allow for evidenced costs including costs for demolition/disposal of materials, construction costs, remedial works, professional fees,

55 Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit, 2010.

funding/finance costs, void letting periods, marketing cost and reasonable profit. Where a valuation includes elements of abnormal costs these will need to be evidenced by way of a costed site investigation/building survey.

6.63 In considering whether the investment needed is economically viable the prevailing freehold and leasehold market rates for the type of employment land/premises concerned, both as currently provided and for the different options agreed for refurbishment/rebuild, need to be taken into account. The prevailing market rates will need to be agreed with the council and should be based on evidence from recent transactions of a comparable nature and location in the borough or, if not available, within a similar location.

6.64 Applicants may wish to demonstrate that the development of the site for alternative uses would benefit the regeneration areas identified by the council as being in need of investment or would benefit the community of an area. In order to do this it will need to be agreed by the council in advance that the site is within an area in need of investment and that the proposal will benefit the community. Regeneration and community schemes and benefits will include, among others, Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal, Private Finance Initiative, local masterplans and action plans.

Policy 15 Centres

Oldham Town Centre and the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill make significant contributions to the borough. They act as focal points for its commercial, shopping, social, civic, community and cultural activities, and play a major part in the borough's identity and image. The Oldham Retail and Leisure Study 2009 concluded that Oldham Town Centre should be the main location for major retail and leisure development, with the focus being on the `Central Shopping Core` (the town centre's primary shopping area). Oldham Town Centre should at least maintain, and if possible enhance, its existing role by improving the quality as well as the quantity of its retail offer. There is a need to improve the commercial leisure offer of the town centre with appropriate uses that will create a pleasant and attractive environment. A key aim for the LDF is to promote and enhance the vitality and viability of all the borough's centres, and the council will therefore protect and maintain their function by controlling retail and leisure developments elsewhere in the borough.

The borough's retail hierarchy is defined as:

- Oldham Town Centre.
- the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill.
- local shopping parades.

The council will identify sites for comparison goods retail in the medium-term (post-2013) and for convenience goods retail in the longer-term (post-2018) in line with the findings of the Oldham Retail and Leisure Study 2009, or any updates, in the Site Allocations DPD.

Uses

Proposals for uses in `centres`, including retail, leisure and offices, wherever located, will be determined in accordance with national policies, currently Planning Policy Statement 4 `Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth` (PPS4).

Forecasting indicates that the borough may require additional retail floorspace during the plan period as shown in the 2009 Retail and Leisure Study. The council will identify sites in the Site Allocations DPD. The selection of development sites will have regard to a sequential approach as set out above. The majority of this will be located within, or on the edge of, our existing centres. Wherever located, suitable developments must be of an appropriate scale and nature, and must not cause unacceptable harm to the character, the role, the function or the vitality and viability of the borough's centres.

Primary Shopping Frontages

In addition to the above policy requirements, the council will permit developments or changes of use within the primary shopping frontages only where 70% of the ground floor frontage subsequently remains in A1, A2 or A3 use. Appendix 6 provides details of the primary shopping frontages.

Food, Drink and Night-time economy-related uses

In addition to the above policy requirements, proposals for food and drink and uses related to the night-time economy, such as hot food takeaways, restaurants, cafes, pubs, winebars, other drinking establishments and nightclubs, wherever located, either individually or cumulatively with similar uses within the area, must demonstrate that:

a. there is a need for the proposal, having regard to the number of existing and proposed establishments (including those already permitted) within the area [56]; and
b. it contributes positively to the local environmental quality, including the experience for visitors and users of the area; and
c. it does not have an unacceptable impact on the environment, or on human health and well-being, or on residential and workplace amenity of current, future and neighbouring occupants, or on users and visitors to the area, through air quality, odour, noise, vibration, light pollution, littering, graffiti, privacy, safety and security, access to daylight and other nuisances; and
d. it contributes positively to the visual appearance of the area during opening and non-opening hours; and
e. it does not have adverse impacts on traffic generation on the highway network and the free flow of traffic, and on highway and pedestrian safety; and
f. it contributes towards community safety and security, and does not contribute to increased crime and disorder.

Policy 16 provides policy on local services and facilities.

The 2006 UDP policies TC1.1 and TC1.2 `Allocated Sites`[57] are saved and will be assessed as part of the Site Allocations DPD.

56 Criterion (a) does not refer to quantitative need or qualitative need as defined by Planning Policy Statement 4 `Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth` (PPS4). See paragraph 6.76 of the supporting text.
57 Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council Unitary Development Plan, Oldham Council, 2006.

The council will assess all the boundaries in the Site Allocations DPD.

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges	This policy addresses the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward by relating to changing our local economy and improving the offer of our centres.
Strategic Objectives	SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC1, EC2, EC3, EC4, EC5, EC8, ENV3, ENV4, SOC4.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities. Sustainable Use of Resources.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place. An address of choice. Services of choice. A university town.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	10, 23.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Education providers. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector.
Transport Protocol Key Issue	5.

Supporting Text

6.65 This policy links to the preferred way forward and the objectives by promoting the vitality and viability of the borough's centres.

6.66 The council has assessed the boundaries, and where appropriate, the primary shopping areas and frontages, of the borough's centres. Any changes are shown on the attached plans in the appendices. The boundary of Oldham Town Centre has been amended to incorporate all the area covered by the Mumps masterplan. There are no defined primary shopping areas or frontages in Uppermill or Failsworth. The council will assess all the boundaries in the Site Allocations DPD. Policy 16 deals with local shopping parades.

6.67 The key objective for Oldham Town Centre and the borough's other centres is to promote their vitality and viability by planning for new development and permitting a range of appropriate uses and services including shopping, leisure, cultural activities and offices. The borough's centres may also act as a hub for transport.

6.68 The borough's retail hierarchy identifies Oldham Town Centre, where shops are focused within and around the existing primary shopping area (called the `central shopping core`), and the seven centres at Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill. The Oldham market is a feature of the town's shopping offer. Independent retailers also have a role to play in the shopping experience offered by Oldham Town Centre and the other centres. There are no defined `local centres` in the borough. Small-scale shops currently serve Saddleworth. Preference for major retail and leisure developments being within Oldham Town Centre, and for appropriate levels of development in the borough's other centres, is given over out-of-centre locations. Smaller local and neighbourhood centres play an important part in contributing towards sustainable communities and social inclusion, and are dealt with by Policy 16.

6.69 The council will be guided by the thresholds in national guidance in assessing the impact of a proposal. Proposals of 2,500 square metres gross floorspace or above must be accompanied by an impact assessment to determine its likely effects on the borough's centres. The extent and level of detail must be agreed with the council by the developer. Retail proposals up to 500 square metres gross floorspace and office and leisure proposals up to 1,000 square metres gross floorspace will be considered as meeting `local needs` and will be assessed against the requirements of Policy 16. Proposals above these `local needs` thresholds but below 2,500 square metres gross floorspace may have to be accompanied by an impact assessment. The council will determine and agree the extent of this assessment on a case by case basis with the developer having regard to the nature, scale and location of the proposal.

6.70 The Oldham Retail and Leisure Study 2009,[58] which was prepared by WYG Planning and Design, was published in August 2009. In overall terms, its broad messages were that the borough has sufficient commitments for additional convenience goods floorspace until 2018 and for comparison goods floorspace until 2013, it re-emphasised the importance of Oldham Town Centre as the main focus for an improved major retail and leisure offer, and advised that the council should resist further out-of-centre retail comparison proposals that would detract from our wider aspirations.

6.71 In relation to convenience goods, the study concluded that there is no immediate need for additional floorspace if all existing commitments are implemented. In overall, boroughwide terms the study identified capacity for future convenience goods of some £41 million in 2013, increasing to more than £101 million by 2026. This is estimated at between approximately 8,000 to 18,500 square metres new floorspace. However, at the same time the existing commitments accounted for more than £66 million of this potential convenience goods turnover. Accordingly, all the identified capacity will be met until after 2018 by these commitments. By 2023, there is identified to be residual capacity of less than £16 million, increasing to almost £30 million by 2026. The study concluded that there appears to be no demonstrable capacity for major additional convenience goods floorspace in the short to medium-term (i.e. the introduction of a new foodstore) over and above outstanding commitments within the borough – assuming all commitments are implemented. In coming to this conclusion the study did recognise the role of local shops and that there may be scope to provide appropriate local convenience goods floorspace that would meet a specific local need and provide more sustainable shopping patterns and accessible facilities, however any such development should be appropriate in scale to the catchment it is intended to serve.

58 Chapters 8, 10 and 11, Oldham Council, 2009.

6.72 In relation to comparison goods, the study also concluded that there is no immediate need for additional floorspace if all existing commitments are implemented. In overall, boroughwide terms the study identified capacity for future comparison goods of some £83 million in 2013, increasing to almost £300 million by 2026 if left unchecked. Should they all be implemented however, then outstanding commitments within the borough (most notably the redevelopment of Alexandra Retail Park), will absorb the identified capacity at least in the short-term (i.e. until after 2013). However, in the longer-term by 2026 even after taking into account outstanding commitments there is identified to be capacity of more than £26 million by 2016, almost £55 million by 2018, almost £115 million by 2023 and more than £183 million by 2026. This equates to a potential residual floorspace requirement of approximately 5,000 square metres (net) in 2016, increasing to approximately 10,000 square metres (net) in 2018, to approximately 18,000 square metres (net) by 2023 and to more than 28,000 square metres (net) by 2026, if left unchecked. The study further states that there is no certainty that all the outstanding commitments identified will be implemented, and that the council should closely monitor these future developments.

6.73 For comparison goods, the study identifies within the Oldham area (which cover Oldham Town Centre and the centres at Chadderton and `Hill Stores`) that there is potential capacity by 2018 for approximately 4,000 square metres floorspace, rising to approximately 12,000 square metres by 2023 and approximately 20,000 square metres by 2026 if left unchecked. The study further states that the focus for this growth should be Oldham Town Centre as there is limited scope in Chadderton given the strength and proximity of nearby provision, and that given the new Tesco Extra store at Hill Stores centre then there is considered to be limited scope to significantly improve the comparison goods offer of the centre in the short to medium-term. In Failsworth centre, the study shows potential for approximately 1,000 square metres floorspace in 2013 rising to approximately 2,300 square metres by 2026. In Royton centre, the study indicates potential capacity in 2013 of approximately 4,500 square metres rising to approximately 6,400 square metres by 2026, although the study further goes on to say that given the significant commitments nearby that will improve the comparison goods offer that the capacity is likely to reduce. In Shaw centre, the study also indicates potential for approximately 1,500 square metres in 2013 rising to approximately 3,500 square metres by 2026. For Uppermill centre and Lees centre, the study shows no significant growth potential. Uppermill serves an important role in meeting the day to day shopping needs of Saddleworth. Uppermill has a wide range of independents that makes for an attractive and interesting offer and experience, including its arts and crafts shops and library. It is an important visitor destination. The council will ensure that its distinctive identity and local character is maintained and enhanced.

6.74 The Site Allocations DPD will identify the locations for new developments, having regard to the findings of the study (and any subsequent updates). The majority of any additional floorspace will, in the first instance, be located within our existing centres in accordance with the sequential approach set out in the policy. Proposals must be of a suitable and appropriate scale and nature to the centre, and must not cause unacceptable harm to the character, role and function or the vitality and viability of the borough's centres. Failing that, edge-of centre sites should be considered next, with preference given to sites that are or will be well-connected to the centre. The council will assess the boundaries of the borough's centres in the Site Allocations DPD.

6.75 The council identified the most important retail frontages in the 2006 UDP. In most instances these have been retained in the LDF, although some amendments have been made which are shown in the appendices. The `primary shopping frontages` (PSF) are designated to prevent the main retail offer of the borough's centres becoming fragmented. It is recognised that a range of shops and services encourage people to visit and add to the attractiveness of a centre so enhancing its vitality and viability. For the purposes of implementing the policy, the calculation of uses within a PSF includes any blank elevations without shop fronts, and the PSF refers to the whole frontage in which the unit is located and not the total of all PSFs within the centre. For example, Oldham Town Centre has five PSFs not one. Appendix 6 provides full details.

6.76 Food, drink and other uses associated with the night-time economy need to be managed sensitively so as not to achieve unwanted outcomes. It is important that matters such as health and well-being, personal and road safety, protecting people's and workplace amenity, and impacts on public realm and local environments are fully considered when assessing planning proposals. The applicant will have to demonstrate to the council's satisfaction that the proposal is required. This will have regard to the council's wider aspirations for the area and must take account of the number of similar uses already within the area (both those that are already open and unimplemented permissions), whether an additional use adds to the attractiveness of the area and the nature of the benefits the proposal brings to the area.

6.77 The council will impose planning conditions relating to the amount of floorspace, the size of unit (including minimum thresholds and limits on sub-division) and the type of goods sold to control retail developments across the borough. UDP Appendix C (the `bulky goods` schedule) will be saved and will be applied to retail proposals outside the centres unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.78 The 2006 UDP policies may be viewed on the council's website at www.oldham.gov.uk.

Policy 16 Local Services and Facilities

Locally available services contribute towards vibrant communities by providing convenient facilities near people's homes, so reducing the need to travel and can provide a valuable service for less mobile members of the community. The council will ensure the need for local shops, leisure facilities and offices are met by protecting existing premises and permitting new local services and facilities where appropriate within existing built up areas.

a. The council will protect local shopping parades from development and changes of use so that at least 75% of the frontage remains in retail use. Local shopping parades are defined as a group of at least three units. Exceptions will be permitted where there are wider regeneration or community benefits or it can be demonstrated by the developer that it is not financially viable for the local shopping parade to continue unchanged.

b. Where appropriate and within existing built up areas, the following uses will be permitted outside Oldham Town Centre and outside the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores,

Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill provided they satisfy the requirements of national and local policies:

i. local shops with a gross floorspace of 500 square metres or less.
ii. leisure facilities with a gross floorspace of 1,000 square metres or less.
iii. office, business and industrial developments with a gross floorspace of 1,000 square metres or less.

For the avoidance of doubt, this policy applies to proposals whereby the overall gross floorspace does not exceed the relevant thresholds above. Proposals involving multiple units, which individually have a gross floorspace less than the relevant threshold above but when taken together cumulatively exceed the relevant gross floorspace thresholds above, will be assessed against the requirements of Policy 15.

Policy 15 provides additional policy on food, drink and night-time economy-related uses.

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy addresses the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward of changing our local economy, creating sustainable communities and addressing needs of local neighbourhoods.
Objectives	SO1, SO3, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC5, EC6, EC8, ENV3, SOC1, SOC4.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities. Sustainable Use of Resources.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place. An address of choice. Services of choice.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	10, 23.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector.
Transport Protocol Key Issue	5.

Supporting Text

6.79 This policy links to the preferred way forward and the objectives by promoting economic prosperity and creating sustainable communities.

6.80 Local shops represent convenient facilities that help meet the day to day shopping needs of residents. Such shops help reduce the need to travel, provide a focus for community interaction and help to distinguish one area from another. They provide an essential service for less mobile residents and residents in more rural areas.

6.81 Local shops include small food stores, post offices, pharmacies, advice centres and other small scale services of a local nature. For the purpose of this policy, retail developments with a gross floorspace of 500 square metres or less will be taken to represent a small scale shop.

6.82 Similarly, whilst office and leisure developments that generate significant numbers of trips should be directed towards Oldham Town Centre, the borough's other centres or areas that are accessible by public transport, small scale developments can help provide jobs and facilities for local people that reduce the need to travel. For the purpose of this policy, leisure or office developments with a gross floorspace of 1,000 square metres or less will be taken to represent small scale developments.

6.83 Protection is needed for local shops and facilities. The council will not support applications for change of use from local shops and facilities that exceed the threshold limit in the policy unless, where appropriate, it can be clearly demonstrated to the council's satisfaction that there are other community or regeneration benefits or its continued use is no longer financially viable.

Policy 17 Gateways and Corridors

Developments at key gateways and along transport corridors should be high quality uses and contribute towards making the routes greener and more attractive. Developments should relate to the importance of the gateway route in height, scale and quality. The council will seek to improve existing transport routes and networks and safeguard land for future infrastructure improvements.

Metrolink

The council will support the delivery of Metrolink which involves the conversion of the Manchester-Oldham-Rochdale railway line. This involves the creation of new stops at South Chadderton, Freehold, and Shaw and Crompton (the new stop will be near the existing rail station) and the conversion of the existing rail stations at Failsworth, Hollinwood, Oldham Mumps (conversion of existing rail station is a temporary measure), and Derker. A strategic park and ride site will be provided at the Hollinwood stop and at the Derker stop.

Land will also be safeguarded for the on-street extension of Metrolink (scheme 3b) through Oldham Town Centre, which is a committed scheme in the Greater Manchester Transport Fund and programmed for delivery by 2014. This will provide new stops at Westwood (Middleton Road), Oldham King Street, Oldham Central and Oldham Mumps with a new stop replacing the temporary stop, with bus interchange facilities.

Public Transport

The council will deliver development whilst promoting and securing public transport investment by: understanding the dynamic interaction between all public transport services and walk/cycle movements; and liaison with Transport for Greater Manchester and interested parties to deliver services/capacity consistent with the requirement of the Site Allocations DPD; and securing funding from developers where investment in public transport is required to release sites identified within the Site Allocations DPD.

Strategic Road Network

Given the findings of the Greater Manchester transport modelling, further investigation of issues on the Strategic Road Network associated with the proposed developments will be undertaken during the preparation of the Site Allocations DPD, consistent with the Protocol arrangements.

The additional demand will impact most evidently between Junctions 20 and Junction 22 of the M60. The M60 is a key part of the transport network, not only for Oldham but for Greater Manchester and as part of the network of national importance. It is therefore crucial that the performance of the Strategic Road Network is safeguarded in order that it can continue to provide this role and support the wider economic aspiration of Greater Manchester.

Further work will be considered as part of the Site Allocations DPD to understand and address any impacts on journey times, consistent with the Protocol and specifically key issues 2 and 3 (Table A).

Walking

a. The council will support the emerging Pedestrian Strategy and will support the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan (2008-2017)[59] which includes proposals to improve existing public rights of way and to create a:

i. `Green Walk` linking Oldham Edge to Alexandra Park; and
ii. `Green Loop` connecting Oldham Town Centre to key green space sites and rights of way routes to the south and east of Oldham.

Cycle and Bridleway Network

The council will support the cycle network and bridleways in the borough by:

b. protecting and improving existing bridleways and supporting new bridleways;

59 Oldham Council, 2007.

c. promoting the Cycling Strategy[60] (including the Oldham Cycle Network Map); and
d. encouraging improvement of the existing cycle network and expansion of new routes for non-motorised travel. Cycle networks should be designed to achieve high standards of coherence, directness, safety, attractiveness and comfort as outlined in Oldham's Cycling Strategy.

School Travel

The council will support the Sustainable Modes of Travel (to school) Strategy, which includes proposals to improve existing infrastructure to facilitate more sustainable travel to school.

Transport Infrastructure

The council will continue to safeguard, or identify, land for the following future transport infrastructure proposals:

e. re-opening of the remaining Standedge Tunnels and development of track between Diggle and Marsden;
f. proposed Diggle rail station;
g. extension of the Lees New Road; and
h. proposed Shaw and Crompton Park and Ride.

The council will protect from development former railway lines which have an existing or potential function as a pedestrian footpath, cycle or bridleway or on to which a new public transport facility or an extension to an existing network might be introduced in the future. Former railway lines will continue to be protected unless an overriding need for the development can be demonstrated or they are already protected or allocated for another use in the LDF.

Developments that generate significant freight movements should have regard to the access to trunk or primary routes and the rail network and be on sites away from Oldham Town Centre, the borough's other centres and residential areas where they are likely to cause highway safety, amenity or environmental problems.

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy addresses the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward by improving transport.
Objectives	SO1, SO4.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	ENV3, ENV4, SOC4, SOC10.

60 Oldham Cycling Strategy, Oldham Council, 2002 and Greater Manchester Cycling Strategy, GMPTA and partners, 2006.

Linkages	
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	An address of choice. A confident place.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	24, 26.
Infrastructure	Metrolink £600 million invested on four Metrolink lines to Oldham and Rochdale, Droylsden, Chorlton and Media City. £84 million committed to extend the system through Oldham Town Centre. Oldham Cycle Network, which is worth approximately £30 million. Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan. Transport Capital Programme.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Transport for Greater Manchester. Network Rail. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector. Highways Agency.
Transport Protocol Key Issue	1, 2, 3, 5.

Supporting Text

6.84 The proposed extension of Metrolink through the borough – from Hollinwood via Oldham and on to Shaw - will make a vital contribution to Oldham's regeneration. Locations in and around the Metrolink and its stops will be attractive for new economic and residential developments. The conversion of the Manchester-Oldham-Rochdale rail line has been approved and the scheme is underway. The second phase (3b), which will involve street running from Werneth through Oldham Town Centre to Mumps, is approved and design work is underway. The estimated opening date for phase 3b is Spring 2014.

6.85 The extension of the Metrolink from Manchester to Oldham and on to Rochdale will bring with it a number of benefits to the borough. It will increase the accessibility and attractiveness of our Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder areas with stops at Freehold and Derker. Hollinwood will become more attractive as a sustainable location for economic growth. Oldham Town Centre will be consolidated as the borough's main retail and commercial hub. The borough's other centres, in particular Shaw and Failsworth, will also benefit. The extension will add to the sustainable public transport offer in the borough, as well as enhancing the

connectivity to major employment centres within Greater Manchester, including Manchester City Centre and Kingsway in Rochdale. Metrolink will also contribute to reducing congestion on the borough's principle road network.

6.86 Standards of cycle networks will be designed and implemented to meet the high standards outlined in Oldham's Cycling Strategy achieving:

a. coherence – primary consideration will be given to the continuity of the network to avoid unnecessary gaps;
b. directness – the council will try to provide cycle routes which offer the shortest distance;
c. safety – the council will follow guidance aimed at reducing the accident rate in the borough for cyclists;
d. attractiveness – the council appreciate the importance of making the cycling network attractive in order to promote cycling so aesthetic features to the cycling infrastructure will be provided where possible; and
e. comfort – the network will be designed to maximise comfort for cyclists by provision of generous space for cyclists on the highway wherever possible and with the careful positioning of manholes, surfacing and minimising the number of stops and dismounts cyclists have to make.

6.87 Land will be safeguarded for the reopening of the Standege Tunnel to enhance rail speed and capacity on the Trans Pennine route. Land is also safeguarded for a railway station at Diggle, however the completion of this relies on the restoration of the four tracks through the Standedge Tunnel.

6.88 The re-opening of the remaining Standedge Tunnels and development of track between Diggle and Marsden have been identified as part of the preferred solution for resolving the `Manchester Hub` problem. The problem is identified in a Network Rail Study as the "*most significant rail bottleneck in the North and so the most significant rail impediment to maximising economic growth. This is because it constrains the growth of rail commuter services, rail links between the North's major cities and between the North and the South, rail links to Manchester Airport and rail freight*".[61] The Study identifies two strategic options for addressing the challenges of the problem, both of which include the re-opening of the remaining Standedge Tunnels and development of track between Diggle and Marsden. The Study also identifies a number of `opportunities for service improvements` that would arise from adopting its preferred option `Option 2`. These include the potential for a new station and turnback facility at Diggle, which would facilitate additional services.

6.89 The inclusion of the two schemes within the study highlights their importance to the borough as well as to Greater Manchester and the North.

6.90 The Lees New Road extension is necessary to unlock an area of developable land at Knowles Lane. The provision of the highway link would be part of the development costs and would not bear upon public finances.

61 Manchester Hub Rail Study, Network Rail, 2010. Now referred to as the `Northern Hub`.

6.91 Shaw and Crompton Park and Ride site is proposed as a scheme under the Greater Manchester Transport Fund and has been approved by the Greater Manchester Integrated Transport Authority and the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities. It is expected to add to the patronage of the Manchester – Oldham – Rochdale Metrolink line, which will open in Spring 2012.

Policy 18 Energy

There is the need to ensure that growth over the lifetime of the LDF is achieved in a sustainable manner so that we break the link between carbon emissions and growth, whilst also reducing fuel poverty. This will be achieved by promoting `green` energy by reducing energy consumption and increasing energy conservation through sustainable construction, renewable technologies and low carbon energy. We will promote and facilitate where appropriate viable `green` energy proposals.

When allocating sites and determining planning applications, the council will have regard to the aims, objectives and actions of:

- National guidance and policies.
- Code for Sustainable Homes targets in line with Part L Building Regulations to achieve Code Level 3 by 2010, Code Level 4 by 2013 and Code Level 6 (zero carbon) by 2016.
- Proposed extension of Code for Sustainable Homes to achieve Code Level 6 for non-residential uses by 2019.
- BREEAM standards for non residential developments.
- Greater Manchester Decentralised and Zero Carbon Energy Planning study.
- Oldham Climate Change Delivery Plan.
- Oldham Affordable Warmth Strategy.
- Assessment of Energy Saving Opportunities for St Mary's Heat Network, Oldham.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions Reduction Targets

Development must follow the principles of the zero carbon hierarchy. This is outlined in the Government's `Sustainable New Homes - The Road to Zero Carbon: Consultation on the Code for Sustainable Homes and the Energy Efficiency standard for Zero Carbon Homes`.[(62)] This will be achieved through:

- energy efficiency: the first priority is to ensure a high level of energy efficiency in the design and fabric of the building and
- carbon compliance: the second priority is the minimum level of carbon reduction through energy efficient fabric and on-site technologies (including directly connected heat networks) and
- allowable solutions: a range of measures available for achieving zero carbon beyond the minimum carbon compliance requirements.

62 DCLG, 2009.

The council will facilitate the achievement of national targets. In achieving these national targets, the council will adhere to the national programme for achieving zero carbon development. Where opportunities arise and where circumstances warrant it, the council may also require developers to meet higher targets, as identified in Table 8.

All developments over 1,000 square metres or ten dwellings and above (until such time that all development is required by the Code for Sustainable Homes [63] to achieve zero carbon) are required to reduce energy emissions in line with the targets set out in Table 8. These targets are taken from the Greater Manchester Decentralised and Zero Carbon Energy Planning study.[64] The target framework includes maximum and minimum targets. All targets are based on reductions over and above Part L of Building Regulations 2010 or 2013. The maximum target is based upon a sliding scale of costs and is location-specific depending on the cost and availability of solutions. An increase from the minimum target will only be expected if solutions cheaper than the base cost for the minimum target are available.

Compliance with the targets must be demonstrated through an energy statement which must be assessed to the council's satisfaction. Developers will be expected to meet the targets unless it can be clearly demonstrated by the developer that it is not financially viable and would prejudice the proposed development. The council's Affordable Housing Economic Viability Assessment[65] sets out the cost implications of Code for Sustainable Homes. Further details of the target framework is provided in Appendix 3.

Developments below the threshold should aim to incorporate appropriate micro-generation technologies.

Table 8 Energy Infrastructure Target Framework

	Target Area 1 Network expansion area: Locations where the proximity of new and existing buildings creates sufficient density to support district heating and cooling	**Target Area 2 Electricity intense area: Locations where the predominant building type has all electric services, resulting in higher associated carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions**	**Target Area 3 Micro generation area: Locations where lower densities and a fragmented mix of uses tend to favour building scale solutions**
Minimum carbon dioxide reduction requirements	Connect to a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) / district heating network	+ 17% increase on Part L for domestic; and + 10% increase on Part L for non-domestic buildings	+ 15% increase on Part L for domestic and non domestic buildings

63 The Code was originally launched by DCLG in 2006. The Code includes any future requirements for non-domestic buildings.
64 AGMA, 2010.
65 Oldham Council, 2010.

	Target Area 1 Network expansion area: Locations where the proximity of new and existing buildings creates sufficient density to support district heating and cooling	Target Area 2 Electricity intense area: Locations where the predominant building type has all electric services, resulting in higher associated carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions	Target Area 3 Micro generation area: Locations where lower densities and a fragmented mix of uses tend to favour building scale solutions
Maximum carbon dioxide reduction requirements	Up to 73%	Up to 56% for domestic buildings Up to 28% for non-domestic buildings	Up to 49% for domestic buildings; and Up to 42 % for non domestic buildings

Where possible, new development will be required to connect to or make contributions to existing or future decentralised heat or power schemes. Development should be sited and designed in a way that allows connection to decentralised, low and zero carbon energy sources, including connections at a future date or phase of the development. Consideration shall be given to the potential role that public buildings can have in providing an anchor load within a decentralised energy network or create opportunities for shared infrastructure. Where possible new development will be used to help improve energy efficiency and increase decentralised, low-carbon energy supplies to existing buildings.

Within the borough the following strategic areas may have a role to play in achieving an increase in the level of decentralised, low carbon and renewable supply available, subject to appropriate planning and other considerations including environmental and health impacts:

- Oldham Town Centre.
- The centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill.
- Business and employment areas (i.e. Hollinwood, Foxdenton).
- Regeneration areas, including Housing Market Renewal areas.

Green Energy Schemes

Where suitable and appropriate, proposals for low carbon, decentralised and renewable energy, including any ancillary infrastructure, will be permitted in accordance with national and local policies. A development proposal must be acceptable taking into account the number, size, scale, siting and cumulative impacts of green energy schemes in terms of:

i. natural resources, including air and water quality, soil including peat which can act as an important carbon sink and mineral sterilisation; and
ii. aviation and highways safety; and
iii. existing transmitting or receiving systems; and
iv. shadow flicker, electromagnetic interference or reflected light; and
v. public access to the countryside, including footpath and bridleway users; and

vi. high quality design; and
vii. residential and workplace amenity or human health; and
viii. the visual amenity of the local area, including the sensitivity of local landscape character, through the number, scale, size and siting of renewable energy infrastructure, such as wind turbines, impact on the skyline, cumulative impact or the need for new power lines for connection to the supply grid; and
ix. biodiversity, nature conservation and the historic environment; and
x. the openness and visual amenity of the Green Belt; and
xi. the statutory purposes of the Peak District National Park.

Where proposals are likely to result in an unacceptable impact, the harm must be minimised through appropriate and effective mitigation measures, to be agreed by the council, otherwise permission will not be granted. Redundant turbines, plant, transmission lines and access roads must be removed and the site restored.

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy in partnership with Greater Manchester authorities.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy addresses the main issues relating to `green` energy. It links to the vision and the preferred way forward by addressing climate change through promoting sustainable development and ensuring that new developments reduce their carbon emissions through low carbon and renewable technologies.
Objectives	SO1, SO3, SO4.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	ENV2, ENV8, ENV9.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities. Sustainable Use of Resources.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	An address of choice.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	20, 21, 30, 31, 44.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector.

Supporting Text

6.92 The policy links to the preferred way forward and the objectives generally by promoting sustainable development in the borough through supporting carbon-neutral developments following the principles of the zero carbon hierarchy. In applying the requirements of Policy 18 applicants must have regard to the other policies of the LDF, in particular Policy 6 (Green Infrastructure), Policy 21 (Protecting Natural Environmental Assets), Policy 22 (Protecting Open Land) and Policy 24 (Historic Environment).

6.93 Changes in Building Regulations in 2010, 2013 and 2016 will bring in tighter standards for carbon dioxide emissions as shown in Table 9. After 2016 the aim is for all new residential buildings to be zero carbon with equivalent standards for non-residential buildings being introduced in 2019. Policy 18 seeks to accelerate the move towards zero carbon developments ahead of the building regulations and introduces a target framework for reducing carbon dioxide emissions through decentralised, renewable and low carbon technologies and on/off site delivery mechanisms where it is viable. A range of compliance or allowable solution options will be worked up in further detail working with partners across Greater Manchester.

6.94 Reductions in carbon dioxide emissions will be calculated based on gross emissions, that is estimated regulated and unregulated emissions, weighted to reflect the proportion of electricity use. Regulated emissions are those such as space heating, ventilation, hot water and fixed lighting. Unregulated emissions are those associated with all other energy use in the building including IT equipment, task lighting, fridges. The `gross` emissions of a building account for both regulated and unregulated emissions.

Table 9 Carbon Dioxide reduction target over 2006 compliant building

Year	Residential (subsidised)	Residential (private)	Non-domestic (subsidised)	Non-domestic (private)
2007	25%	0%	0%	0%
2010	44%	25%	25%	25%
2013	Zero Carbon	44%	44%	44%
2016		Zero Carbon	100%	100%
2018			Zero Carbon	100%
2019				Zero Carbon

6.95 The framework is designed to safeguard the ability of the council to set higher targets based on local opportunities for decentralised and zero carbon energy generation. This is associated with the three target areas set out below.

- Target Area 1: Network expansion area: Locations where the proximity of new and existing buildings creates sufficient density to support district heating and cooling.
- Target Area 2: Electricity intense area: Locations where the predominant building type has all electric services, resulting in higher associated carbon dioxide emissions.
- Target Area 3: Micro generation area: Locations where lower densities and a fragmented mix of uses tend to favour building scale solutions.

6.96 The target depends on the type of location, development and surrounding opportunities. The questions used to establish which target applies are shown below:

Target Selection Questions

Question 1. Is the development in Oldham Town Centre or in one of the borough's other centres?

If yes see Question 2, if no see Question 3.

Question 2. Is there an existing or proposed district heating or cooling network the development could connect to?

If yes apply Target 1 `network connection policy area`, with `allowable` CO2 credits from connecting other buildings to the network. If no see Question 3.

Question 3. Does the development consist of at least three of the following uses – commercial office, hotel, residential apartments, public building and supermarket?

If yes a CHP/district heating feasibility study is required, encompassing buildings that could be connected in the surrounding area, and applying Target 1 if a scheme is taken forward.

If no see Question 4.

Question 4. Are the building(s) heating and cooling systems all electric?

If yes apply Target 2 `electricity intense policy area`, with `allowable` CO2 credits from low cost renewable electricity generation. If no see Question 5.

Question 5. Has a strategic opportunity been identified to supply the site/area with low or zero carbon energy?

If yes apply a target informed by the evidence base for the strategic opportunity. If no see Question 6

Question 6. Apply Target 3 `micro-generation policy area`, with `allowable` CO2 credits from unspecified renewable energy sources.

6.97 The target framework includes maximum and minimum targets for individual areas / development types. All targets are based on reductions over and above Part L of Building Regulations 2010 or 2013. The minimum target is based on the carbon reductions achievable from the least cost on-site technology to achieve 15% contribution from renewable energy or a district heating network connection requirement.

6.98 The maximum target is based upon a sliding scale of costs. The level at which the maximum target is set would be location-specific depending on the cost and availability of solutions. An increase from the minimum target would therefore only be justified if solutions cheaper than the base cost for the minimum target are available, the rationale being that the expenditure required to comply with the minimum target can then be used to achieve greater reductions.

6.99 Underpinning the targets for reducing carbon emissions is a strategy to shift the supply of energy to low carbon and, where possible renewable, decentralised heat and power networks, so increasing energy security. It is essential therefore that the council moves towards a network of strategic decentralised energy infrastructure. The council will seek to ensure that investment in zero/low carbon energy infrastructure to serve new development is used as a catalyst for strategically reducing carbon emissions.

6.100 Where appropriate, applicants may be required to provide land, buildings and/or equipment for an energy centre to serve proposed multiple developments. Such requirements will be important for ensuring availability of the necessary space in the right location for an energy centre designed to serve one or more developments. Requirements will be discussed in pre-application discussions and should be outlined in an energy statement. Target 1 requires developments to be able to connect once the network and infrastructure is in place and to be designed to be compatible with future networks, in terms of site layout and design.

6.101 Developers should demonstrate compliance by submitting an energy statement setting out how the target was determined, including any feasibility studies to assess feasibility of a heat network, and how the developers will meet the target.

6.102 The council will operate a co-ordinated approach towards the financing and investment in infrastructure projects that are of strategic significance. Strategic investment decisions by the public and private sector should be based on the need to strengthen the business case of energy investments and attract long term investment in the infrastructure required.

6.103 The Greater Manchester Decentralised and Zero Carbon Energy Planning study recommends that energy proposal plans are brought forward by each district where there are strategic areas of opportunity identifying the preferred energy infrastructure solutions. The council has highlighted where the broad areas of opportunity may be, subject to appropriate planning and other relevant considerations. The study highlighted where existing resource opportunities across Greater Manchester are. Further work will be undertaken looking at this in more detail across Greater Manchester, including the refinement of opportunities and application of constraints. In addition, the council is progressing work on a Oldham Town Centre Energy Network study called the Assessment of Energy Saving Opportunities for St Mary's Heat Network.

Achieving early reductions in unregulated emissions

6.104 Compliance with the maximum target would be achieved by making off-site contributions towards infrastructure, effectively putting in place the Government's `allowable` solutions approach in advance of 2016 and 2019. This is to bring forward the infrastructure needed to support the development and may come forward as third party match fund projects delivered by an Energy Service Company (ESCo). If compliance with the maximum target is achieved by making an off-site contribution this would not count towards achieving Code levels 1-5, and would instead be credited against 'unregulated' carbon dioxide emissions.

6.105 The assignment of carbon dioxide reductions against unregulated emissions is justified because this portion of energy use, which largely relates to electricity use, has been rising steadily since 1990. It will not be the subject of regulation until it is brought under the zero carbon definition

in 2016 and 2019 and so, in the context of Greater Manchester's stated objective to differentiate itself as a Low Carbon Economic Area, the maximum targets serve as a means of providing interim reductions.

Green energy schemes

6.106 Green energy schemes can include energy from waste, biogas, biomass, microgeneration, combined heat and power, geothermal, hydro and wind power. (A full list of definitions is provided in the Glossary.) The council will ensure that all appropriate planning and other relevant considerations (as listed in the policy) are fully assessed and satisfactorily addressed before permission will be granted for these types of schemes.

6.107 The council will require proposals to be accompanied by a full statement detailing the environmental effects of the development, and its benefits in terms of the amount of energy it is likely to generate. Permission will only be granted if unavoidable damage that would be caused during installation, operation or decommissioning is minimised and mitigated or compensated for. Applicants must show how this will be achieved. In all cases, redundant plant, buildings and infrastructure shall be removed and the site restored as part of any permission. Applicants proposing hydropower schemes should consult with the Environment Agency for guidance and advice.

Policy 19 Water and Flooding

Flooding is a natural process that is influenced by rainfall, geology, topography, rivers and streams and man-made interventions such as flood defences. Flooding can cause disruption to communities and it is therefore important to avoid developing in flood risk areas. Recent flood events across the country have reinforced the importance of considering flooding from all sources such as surface water flooding and the importance of permeable solutions in new development.

The council will ensure development does not result in unacceptable flood risk or drainage problems by directing development away from areas at risk of flooding, and protecting and improving existing flood defences, water resources and quality.

When allocating sites and determining planning applications, the council will have regard to the aims, objectives and actions of:

- European Union Water Framework Directive.
- National guidance and policies, such as Planning Policy Statement 25 `Development and Flood Risk` (PPS25) and the Practice Guide on Development and Flood Risk including the requirement to assess, avoid, substitute, control and mitigate flood risk.
- Code for Sustainable Homes.
- River Basin Management Plans.
- Catchment Flood Management Plans.
- Water Company Asset Management Plans.
- Water Cycle Study.
- Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

- Oldham Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
- Rochdale Canal Strategy.

Development proposals must use PPS25[66] and the Oldham Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)[67] to carry out and pass the Sequential Test and, where necessary, the Exception Test and a site-specific flood risk assessment. Consideration must be given to all sources of flooding and the vulnerability of development. In the case of non allocated sites applicants must demonstrate that other reasonably available sites have been considered. An area of search must be agreed with the council. Evidence must be submitted to demonstrate how the tests have been passed.

Information on flood risk is shown on the proposals map, the Environment Agency's website and the council's website.

Site-specific Flood Risk Assessments

In addition to the requirements of PPS25, and as set out in the Oldham SFRA, a site-specific flood risk assessment must be provided for development proposals:

- over 0.5 hectare within a Critical Drainage Area; or
- at risk of flooding from other sources of flooding; or
- situated behind flood defences; or
- within 20m of the bank top of a Main River, where appropriate; or
- involving any culverting operation or development which controls the flow of any river or stream.

Development proposals must:

a. where identified at risk from surface water flooding, adhere to the guidance in PPS25 and any subsequent additions and the recommendations made in the Oldham SFRA until Surface Water Management Plans (SWMP) are completed; and
b. minimise the impact of development on surface water run-off. The allowable discharge rates must be agreed with the council for all developments, which must where possible be achieved through the implementation of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS); and
c. ensure that culverting or channelisation of watercourses are avoided, unless limited access is required over the watercourse. Developments must remove existing culverts and artificial channels and restore the watercourse to a more natural state or open up and enhance existing culverted or channelised watercourses, where appropriate; and
d. retain a green corridor next to watercourses and rehabilitate and enhance watercourse corridors where possible. Where opportunities arise the council will seek to remove existing buildings that encroach to the bank top of watercourses and detract from the river corridor, prevent access and degrade habitat value; and

66 DCLG, 2010.
67 JBA Consulting and Oldham Council, 2010.

e. reduce the consumption of water and have high standards of water efficiency in new developments or incorporate water efficient technologies in existing buildings. Developments must conserve water resources and not adversely affect water quality or quantity and associated biodiversity; and

f. ensure potential capacity issues in the water supply and sewerage treatment works are taken into account through liaising with United Utilities until a River Mersey Water Cycle Study is completed.

The council will seek to relocate critical infrastructure from Flood Zones 3 and 2, where possible, as the operational life comes to an end.

The council will, where appropriate, seek developer contributions to improve flood defences.

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy addresses the main issues relating to water and flood risk. It links to the vision and the preferred way forward by addressing climate change, promoting sustainable development and protecting, conserving and enhancing the prudent use and sustainable management of our water resources.
Objectives	SO1.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	ENV1, ENV13, ENV14.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities. Sustainable Use of Resources.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place. An address of choice.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	28.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Environment Agency. Private Sector.

Supporting Text

6.108 The policy links to the preferred way forward and the objectives generally by mitigating and adapting to climate change, avoiding development within areas of flood risk and where necessary controlling and mitigating the impact and residual risks and improving water resources.

6.109 Applicants are required to use PPS25 and the Oldham SFRA and any subsequent updates to assess the flooding potential of a proposal. The SFRA provides guidance on the Sequential Test and the Exception Test. Applicants must not by-pass the Sequential Test.

6.110 PPS25 requires a site-specific flood risk assessment for developments over one hectare in flood zone one and all developments in flood zones two and three. The SFRA also sets out when a more detailed flood risk assessment is likely to be required. Applicants should refer to PPS25 and the SFRA for guidance on site-specific flood risk assessments and mitigation measures and agree its scope with the council and the Environment Agency before it is undertaken. In some cases it may be necessary for the developer to make a contribution to the improvement of flood defence provision.

6.111 The SFRA includes information and maps on surface water flooding, which must be taken into account. Critical Drainage Areas have been developed where there is a high risk of localised flooding and where areas of significant redevelopment are planned that could have a significant impact on surface water runoff to local watercourses and the sewer network. Currently, the Critical Drainage Areas that have been identified are Chadderton (Wince Brook), Hollinwood (Moston Brook), East Oldham (Upper Tame and Wood Brook) and Shaw (Beal). Maps are available showing the Critical Drainage Areas, however they may become refined over time as more detailed information becomes available.

6.112 It is important that new development minimises surface water run off. The automatic right to connect surface water drains and sewers to the public sewerage system has been removed and developers are required to put Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in place in new developments wherever practical. Above ground SUDs options should be used, such as ponds, swales and green roofs, where feasible, rather than underground storage systems, which offer less biodiversity and landscape value. The council is working with the Greater Manchester authorities on a SWMP and there may be future Greater Manchester and/or local drainage standards. Currently, the drainage standards that the council will consider are:

a. greenfield runoff on greenfield sites up to 1 in 100 year storm event, considering climate change;
b. a reduction in surface water runoff rates of at least 30% for brownfield sites up to 1 in a 100 year storm event, considering climate change;
c. a reduction in surface water runoff rates of at least 50% for brownfield sites within a Critical Drainage Area, with an aim of reducing runoff to greenfield rates up to a 1 in 100 year storm event, considering climate change; and
d. development must be designed so there is no flooding to the development in a 1 in 30 year event and so that there is no property flooding in a 1 in a 100 year plus climate change event.

6.113 Proposals that involve the culverting or channelisation of open watercourses will not normally be permitted. This is due to the associated problems, including flooding after high rainfall where grilles in culverts get blocked by debris or where culverts do not have grilles and get blocked. Other problems include the high maintenance and threat to biodiversity and the amenity of open green space. The council will use opportunities that arise from new developments to remove culverts and restore watercourses to their natural state.

6.114 The council will also use opportunities from developments alongside river or canal corridors to rehabilitate and enhance these corridors to provide green infrastructure benefits, for example increasing biodiversity and mitigating flood risk. Developments alongside watercourses are also expected to retain a green corridor next to the water.

6.115 Developments must seek to reduce the consumption of water and have high standards of water efficiency in new homes and have regard to the Code for Sustainable Homes.[68] Non-residential developments should also aim to reduce water consumption and install water efficient technologies. Developments must ensure that drainage systems are designed to minimise the risk of foul drainage being incorrectly connected to surface water systems and incorporate measures to minimise the risk of pollution in the event of the foul system failing.

6.116 It is anticipated that a Water Cycle Study will be undertaken for the River Mersey, which will include the Greater Manchester authorities. Until this time applicants should consult with United Utilities about potential capacity issues in the water supply and sewage treatment networks.

6.117 The Environment Agency has prepared Catchment Flood Management Plans for the Upper Mersey and Irwell Catchment.[69] A specific action for the Tame sub area of the Upper Mersey catchment is to put in place policies which seek to remove critical infrastructure from Flood Zones 2 and 3 at the end of its operational life to improve the borough's ability to respond to and deal with flood incidents in the future.

Policy 20 Design

The contribution that high quality design can make to regeneration and sustainable development is widely recognised. High quality design brings economic, social and environmental benefits, adding to quality of life, attracting new business and investments and reinforcing civic pride. High quality design is as much about the way buildings and environments function as with their appearance. Our design principles apply equally to urban and rural situations, and to the built and natural environment. They need to be expressed in ways that reflect the character of the area in which the development is taking place, reinforcing local identity. The council will promote high quality design and sustainable construction of developments that reflect the character and distinctiveness of local areas, communities and sites across Oldham. Development proposals must have regard to national and local guidance and policies on design.

Development proposals must meet the following design principles, where appropriate:

a. Local Character (including a character appraisal as appropriate)
b. Safety and Inclusion
c. Diversity
d. Ease of Movement
e. Legibility

68 The Code was originally launched by DCLG in 2006.
69 April 2009.

f. Adaptability
g. Sustainability
h. Designing for Future Maintenance
i. Good Streets and Spaces
j. Well Designed Buildings

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy addresses the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward by promoting and securing high-quality design across the borough.
Objectives	SO1, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC2, ENV2.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place. An address of choice.
Monitoring Indicators	20, 21, 37, 45.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Implementation	Oldham Council. HMR. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector.
Transport Protocol Key Issue	1.

Supporting Text

6.118 The policy links to the preferred way forward and objectives by improving the quality of places, mitigating and adapting to climate change, promoting sustainable development and creating safer and stronger communities.

6.119 Good design is a key element in achieving sustainable development. It can contribute to providing a safer and more attractive public realm, contribute to high levels of accessibility for all ages, genders and abilities. It can contribute to urban greening and increased biodiversity. Good design is increasingly important in achieving high levels of environmental performance such as greater energy efficiency. It's importance is recognised by Government and developers alike.

6.120 Planning can influence the design and use of public spaces, public realm and public art. Design focused policies can be used to ensure that streetscapes favour pedestrians over vehicles. They can also help to reduce visual clutter through careful location of signs and

street furniture and can build maintenance needs in to the design process. Public space is often considered as relating to all those parts of the built and natural environment where the public has free access, whether in public or private ownership. It includes streets, squares, rights of way, parks and so on, but is generally regarded as excluding internal spaces (such as shopping centres) and the open countryside.

6.121 Development proposals should address the following details in relation to design principles a-j above:

a. respond positively to its environment and site, and contribute to a distinctive sense of place.
b. positively contribute to making routes, streets and public spaces as safe, free from crime and accessible as possible; and minimise opportunities for car, cycle and property crime, assault and harassment without detracting from the quality of the townscape and landscape.
c. incorporate a mix of uses that add richness and variety to the local area; consider and, where possible, provide for the needs of all sections of society and add richness to the social and cultural diversity of the local area; and support variety and choice in the public realm for all sections of the community.
d. provide or reinforce a clear network of routes (roads, streets, paths and associated spaces) that provide easy access to an area, and the buildings and facilities within it; be located to support movement by means other than the car between facilities and the people who use them; and give priority to the needs of pedestrians, and encourage walking, cycling and public transport use to reduce reliance on the car.
e. contribute to a legible environment with a clear hierarchy of routes, streets and spaces; relate positively to the visual connections between it and its surroundings; and be designed so that intended functions of buildings and spaces are easily understood, and that the entrances to them are appropriately located and visible.
f. be adaptable and capable of accommodating the changing and future needs and activities of individuals, local communities and of society.
g. be designed to reduce the demands made on energy; incorporate measures for the conservation of water resources; make appropriate, well-designed provision for the sustainable management and discharge of waste; make a positive contribution to the greening of the urban environment; be carefully designed and detailed so that it makes a positive contribution to its surroundings, is robust, durable and ages well; and use construction methods and materials that are fit for purpose and make a positive contribution to design quality, character and appearance, whilst contributing to the sustainable use of resources.
h. consider maintenance early in the design process; and be designed for easy maintenance (buildings, streets and spaces).
i. make a positive contribution to the street scene and public spaces, reinforcing their relative importance in the townscape and creating attractive places for appropriate activity and social interaction; support an attractive, pedestrian-friendly environment for all which is not compromised by the need to accommodate traffic, servicing and parking; support a comfortable microclimate and provide appropriate protection for pedestrians from inclement

weather through design; and provide or support a public realm of streets and spaces that is well designed in its detail to be visually attractive.

j. have an appropriate scale, sensitive to its context; have three-dimensional form and massing that responds positively to the topography of the site, derived from the functions of the building and creating interest; be designed to consider proportion ensuring it is broken down into human-scale elements to which people can easily relate, that it relates to its context of neighbouring buildings and the wider area and providing variety and interest in its elevation treatment; and introduce visual richness through the use of good quality materials and texture and providing light and shade.

6.122 A statement will be required to show how development addresses the principles, including design character, where appropriate.

6.123 The design principles of this policy are based on those contained in the council's adopted Design Guide,[70] which was prepared as supplementary planning document to the 2006 UDP. The Guide, although not formally part of the LDF, is still considered to offer relevant advice and will therefore remain a material consideration until the council provides further advice and guidance on this LDF policy.

Policy 21 Protecting Natural Environmental Assets

New development and growth pressures must be balanced by protecting, conserving and enhancing our local natural environments, Green Infrastructure, biodiversity, geodiversity and landscapes to ensure a high quality of life is sustained. The council will value, protect, conserve and enhance the local natural environment and its functions and provide new and enhanced Green Infrastructure.

When allocating sites and determining planning applications, the council will have regard to international, national (including Planning Policy Statement 9 `Biodiversity and Geological Conservation`, PPS9) and local guidance and policies (including Policy 6 on Green Infrastructure and the findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment, HRA).

Development proposals must:

a. protect and maximise opportunities for Green Infrastructure at or near to the site.
b. protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, designated nature conservation sites, legally protected species and their habitats and Local Nature Reserves. The hierarchy for site protection is:

   i. Special Protection Areas for Birds (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC);
   ii. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs);
   iii. Sites of Biological Importance (SBI's); and
   iv. Local Nature Reserves and other non-designated sites containing substantive nature conservation value of local significance.

70 Oldham Council, 2007.

The council will ensure development does not have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European designated site on the basis of objective information. The council will work with Natural England and the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit to assess proposals that may have an adverse effect on the integrity of the European site and where appropriate, ensure effective mitigation measures are put in place before permission is granted.

In exceptional circumstances where development is unavoidable and cannot be accommodated elsewhere:

v. the applicant must demonstrate the need for, and the over-riding public interest and benefits of, the development.
vi. the development must set out how the proposals will protect and enhance the nature conservation, including how any harm will be minimised effectively through design and mitigation measures.

c. maintain, extend or link existing green corridors and links, including strategic recreational routes, where appropriate.

d. have regard to the principal landscape objective for the relevant landscape character area and type found within the Oldham Landscape Character Assessment.[71] Development must enhance the visual amenity of the area, including Green Belt land, through conserving and reinforcing the positive aspects and distinctiveness of the surrounding landscape character.

e. protect and, where appropriate, enhance the aquatic environment, such as canal corridors, rivers and peat lands including their value as biodiversity resources. The council will support appropriate canal and river side regeneration, whilst ensuring development does not act as an obstacle to canal maintenance and its operations, navigation for leisure or freight purposes and public access to towpaths.

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy addresses the main issues relating to our local natural environments. It links to the vision and the preferred way forward by addressing the need to protect, conserve and enhance the natural environment, green infrastructure, biodiversity and landscapes to ensure a high quality of life is sustained.
Objectives	SO1, SO4, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC2, ENV7, ENV8, ENV11, SOC10.

71 Oldham Council, 2009.

Linkages	
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Health and Well-being.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place. An address of choice.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	20, 21, 27, 28, 37, 38, 39.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Private Sector. Public Sector agencies.

Supporting Text

6.124 Policy 21 links to and helps deliver Policy 6 `Green Infrastructure`. The policy links to the preferred way forward and the objectives generally by maintaining the positive features and characteristics that add to the borough's local identity and protecting and enhancing the borough's natural assets.

6.125 The council will have regard to PPS9, including its key principles, when allocating sites and determining planning applications. The council will seek to ensure that proposals avoid loss or harm to biodiversity resource before considering the need for mitigation and satisfactory compensatory measures.

6.126 Developments will be expected to protect and enhance Green Infrastructure at or near to the site, where opportunities are identified for Green Infrastructure investment or where there are deficiencies identified under Policy 23. The council will have regard to the Greater Manchester Green Infrastructure Framework,[72] including its key diagrams which highlight where investment is needed and the Greater Manchester Ecological Framework [73] highlighting where biodiversity creation and repair is needed. The council will apply this requirement through the design of the proposal or through a planning condition or planning obligation seeking a contribution where appropriate and viable.

6.127 The council will protect nature conservation sites, which are defined in Policy 6, as well as habitats and specifies listed within the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan [74]and Oldham Biodiversity Action Plan.[75] Any subsequent changes to species or habitats protected by law or those within a Biodiversity Action Plan will be protected. Applicants should contact Greater Manchester Ecology Unit for the latest Sites of Biological Interest boundaries. The council will also protect any future Local Nature Reserves designated within the borough.

72 Towards a Green Infrastructure Framework for Greater Manchester, AGMA, 2008.
73 An Ecological Framework for Greater Manchester, AGMA, 2008.
74 AGMA, 2009.
75 Oldham Council, 2007.

6.128 The council will take a precautionary approach to development that has the potential to harm important species and habitats and the geological diversity of the borough. By harm, the council considers this to mean any impact which diminishes the scientific value for which the site was first designated or harm to the species or their habitats likely to be found on or adjacent to the site.

6.129 Proposals along key green infrastructure assets, wildlife corridors, designated sites or sites containing features of substantial nature conservation value should be accompanied by an appropriate ecological and/or geological assessment. The council will consult with Natural England on proposals affecting designated sites.

6.130 Where the development cannot be accommodated elsewhere it is the applicant's responsibility to demonstrate the exceptional circumstances to justify the development. The applicant must set out how the proposals will protect and enhance the nature conservation, including how any harm will be minimised through design and mitigation measures. The council will consider the use of planning conditions and/or planning obligations to ensure the protection of species and habitats.

6.131 Development proposals that are in close proximity to the Rochdale Canal should have regard to the findings of the HRA.[(76)] Recent (last ten years) developments along the Rochdale Canal corridor have shown that it is possible to allow for relatively large-scale developments close to the Canal (and affecting the Canal directly) without causing significant harm to the special interests of the SAC, providing that appropriate precautions are taken. The Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) would therefore consider it unreasonable (over-cautious) for the HRA to conclude that all development in areas of Oldham close to the Canal should be avoided. In reaching this conclusion the GMEU have considered the likely type of development that will be brought forward in these areas, (that is, development will not be related to potentially polluting heavy industries). The HRA has therefore concluded that, although development is proposed in areas relatively close to the Canal, providing that mitigating plans, policies and strategies are adopted and implemented appropriately through the development management process, in principle development areas planned for in the joint DPD can be allowed to go forward without harm being caused to the special interest of the Rochdale Canal SAC. This opinion is based on this Screening Opinion supplemented by the experience and knowledge of the GMEU in assessing the impacts of developments considered to have the potential to affect the special interest of the Canal.

6.132 The HRA further recommended that any developments coming forward within the areas identified in the joint DPD as Foxdenton, Hollinwood, Chadderton Technology Park and Failsworth Centre be referred for Appropriate Assessment as part of the development management process so that appropriate mitigation for any damaging impacts can be properly planned and implemented. In addition, it further recommended that any further developments of the HRA of the Greater Manchester joint waste plan (JWDPD) and the joint minerals plan (JMDPD) be considered as part of this Assessment when available.

76 Oldham LDF: Joint DPD - Proposed Submission - Habitats Regulations Assessment, Greater Manchester Ecology Unit, 2010.

6.133 Applicants are required, in addition to obtaining planning permission, to obtain a licence, from Natural England, for proposals affecting European Protected Species which involve the capture, disturbance and transportation of species as part of any mitigation measures.

6.134 Development proposals on sites affecting green corridors and links, including recreational routes, will be permitted where they do not dissect the open land corridor into sections or harm the potential for wildlife or people's access and enjoyment of the corridor. The council will seek to improve the green infrastructure network by requiring that development proposals adjacent to green corridors and links provide an extension or link between green corridors.

6.135 The council has prepared a Landscape Character Assessment (LCA).[77] Development must be sensitively located and designed, with minimal visual impact on the landscape. Each landscape character area in the LCA is split into landscape types with a principal landscape objective as shown in Table 10. The LCA also provides details on the sensitivity pressures facing the landscape. Development proposals will be required to demonstrate how the relevant landscape objective has been taken into account and how the development conserves and enhances, where possible, through the use of design, materials and layout, the distinctive features of the landscape. The south eastern corner of the borough lies within the Peak District National Park. Developments will, where appropriate, be assessed against their potential impact on the Peak District National Park, taking into consideration views into and out of the Park. It is important to ensure that development in the borough has regard to the Peak District Landscape Character Assessment, where appropriate.[78]

Table 10 Landscape Character Areas Objectives

Landscape Area	Principal Landscape Objective
Area 1: South Pennine Moors	
Type 1a Unenclosed Moorland Plateau	To conserve the open moorland character and its special sense of remoteness, isolation and wildness.
Type 1b Valley Headlands	To conserve the upland moorland character, with its remote, wild character and ensure current, or future, recreation use of the reservoirs does not have a negative impact on the landscape.
Area 2: Moorland Fringe	
Type 2a Remote Moorland Fringe	To retain and strengthen the transitional upland character of the Moorland fringe, which acts as an important backdrop to the settlements of Oldham borough.
Type 2b Settled Moorland Fringe	To maintain the distinction between the Settled Moorland Fringes and the more sheltered valleys that cut into the moors.
Area 3: Chadderton Rolling Hills	

77 Oldham Council, 2009
78 Peak District National Park Authority, 2008.

Landscape Area	Principal Landscape Objective
Type 3a Rolling Pasture Land	To retain and strengthen the distinctive rolling landscape surrounding the northern edge of the borough. The area acts as an important separation zone between the urban boundaries of Oldham and Rochdale.
Type 3b Rural Settlement	To conserve the distinct character associated with Chadderton Fold, Healds Green and Chadderton Heights through sensitive planning control and environmental improvements that conserve and enhance the visual amenity.
Type 3c Recreational Land	To promote the amenity value of Tandle Hill Country Park, to conserve and manage its SBI status and to provide environmental improvements that benefit the quality and facilities of the park for visitors. To promote effective screening and new planting for Crompton and Royton Golf Club whilst retaining its rolling landscape character.
Area 4 Tame Settled Valley	
Type 4a Rural Valley Sides	Conserve the characteristic landscape of woodlands and in-bye pastures on the steep hillsides in order to preserve the enclosed character of the valley.
Type 4b Urban Settlement	To preserve the characteristic linear settlement pattern with the narrow valley bottom
Type 4c Industrial Valley Bottom	To preserve the characteristic linear settlement pattern with its industrial heritage, along the narrow valley bottom.
Type 4d Open Valley Bottom	To provide areas for informal recreation whilst maintaining open space between the Tame Valley settlements
Type 4e Farmed Valley	Conserve the characteristic landscape of in-bye pastures on the hillsides leading to the upland pastures and moorland fringe.
Area 5 Beal Defined Valleys	
Type 5a Farmed Valley Sides	To retain the open landscape character of the valley sides and reduce the visual presence of industrial and warehouse buildings within this reasonably attractive scene.
Type 5b Flat Valley Bottom	To retain the flat topography and wet ground conditions of this landscape character type so that its distinctive marshy conditions, ecological interest and visual difference are not lost.
Type 5c Landscape in Transition	To plan for and deliver an attractive remediated landscape that compliments the surrounding landscape and that acts as a

Landscape Area	Principal Landscape Objective
	recreational resource for nearby communities that overlook the landfill site.
Area 6 Medlock Mixed Valley	
Type 6a Recreational Land	To promote the amenity value of the existing recreational resource whilst seeking to provide environmental improvements to the visual quality for visitors and the local community.
Type 6b Broad Valley Bottom	Conserve the characteristic open landscape of flat topography, pasture land with small, irregular field patterns, and narrow winding lanes.
Type 6c Clough Valley	To conserve the wooded, steep sided character of the cloughs and promote the informal recreational opportunities they offer. To protect and enhance the heritage features of the landscape.
Type 6d Suburban Settlement	To ensure the settlement at Woodhouses is restricted in development terns to prevent further urban sprawl within the open space of the Medlock Valley. Control the development of any new buildings so they benefit the appearance of Woohouses.
Type 6e M60 Corridor	To ensure that the visual and noise impact of the M560 corridor is reduced through the use of effective screen planting.
Area 7 Wharmton Undulating Uplands	
Type 7a Urban Fringe Farmland	Conserve the characteristic open landscape of out-bye pastures, dispersed settlement and narrow winding lanes.
Type 7b Recreational Land	To promote effective screening and new planting for existing recreational land in order to retain the characteristic open out-bye pasture landscape of the Wharmton Undulating Uplands.
Type 7c Landscape in Transition	The screening of the quarries during their working life and the eventual restoration within the surrounding open upland landscape.

6.136 The Huddersfield Narrow Canal and the Rochdale Canal are used primarily for tourism and leisure purposes. Their potential for canal side regeneration is supported. However, their use for local water-bourne transport of goods must also be safeguarded. The policy relates to the waterways and towpaths. Where there are sites along a canal that have been identified by British Waterways for mooring, refuelling or other boating activities they will be considered when assessing development proposals affecting any identified sites. The nature conservation of the canals will also be protected and, where possible, enhanced in relation to any boating related transport proposals.

Policy 22 Protecting Open Land

The majority of the borough's open land is designated Green Belt. The main purpose of the Green Belt is to keep land permanently open. Pressure for development in the Green Belt is generally small-scale developments such as the re-use of agricultural buildings. The borough also has locally protected open countryside called `Other Protected Open Land` (OPOL) which aims to preserve the distinctiveness of an area. Oldham also has a small amount of safeguarded land called `Land Reserved for Future Development` (LRFD) which protects land for future development needs.

The Green Belt boundary will be maintained. Development in the Green Belt will be permitted provided it does not conflict with national policies on Green Belt, currently Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 `Green Belts` (PPG2). The 2006 UDP Policy OE1.8 `Major Developed Site in the Green Belt` will be saved and will be assessed in the Site Allocations DPD.

Development on OPOL will be permitted where it is appropriate, small-scale or ancillary development located close to existing buildings within the OPOL, which does not affect the openness, local distinctiveness or visual amenity of the OPOL, taking into account its cumulative impact. Where appropriate, development will be screened or landscaped to minimise its visual impact.

Development on LRFD will only be granted where it would be acceptable in the Green Belt and which would not prejudice the later development of LRFD beyond the life of the LDF.

The council will assess OPOL and LRFD in the Site Allocations DPD. The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy addresses the main issues relating to open countryside. It links to the vision and the preferred way forward by addressing Green Belt and locally protected countryside land (`Other Protected Open Land`) and safeguarded land (`Land Reserved for Future Development`) and allowing only appropriate development in these areas.
Objectives	SO4.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	ENV6, ENV7.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Health and Well-being.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place. An address of choice.

Linkages	
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and Targets	20, 21, 27, 28, 36, 39.
Implementation	Oldham Council.

Supporting Text

6.137 The policy links to the preferred way forward and the objectives generally by maintaining and protecting the borough's open countryside.

6.138 The Green Belt boundaries will remain unchanged throughout the LDF period to 2026.

6.139 National policy on Green Belt (PPG2) states there is a presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt. It sets out the type of development in the Green Belt that is considered to be appropriate. Where inappropriate development is proposed, it is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate the `very special circumstances` to justify the proposed development.

6.140 The Peak Park is a `green lung` for Greater Manchester. The area was identified in `Oldham Beyond` [79] as one of the borough's tourism assets with potential for leisure. The former Robert Fletcher's mill complex in the area was designated as a `Major Developed Site in the Green Belt` in the UDP[80] for employment-generating uses and appropriate tourism and leisure. This UDP Policy (OE1.8) will be saved and assessed in the Site Allocations DPD. In looking forward to 2026, Oldham Council aims to ensure that this area is maximised to everyone's benefit. The council will work with interested parties, including the Peak Park, to bring forward the ideas and aspirations for this whole area.

6.141 The following OPOL, which are unchanged from the 2006 UDP, will be protected:

- Ryefields Drive, Uppermill; Dacres, Greenfield; Stoneswood, Delph; Stonebreaks, Springhead; Wall Hill, Dobcross; Ainley Wood, Delph; Oldham Edge, Oldham; Cowlishaw, Shaw; Bullcote Lane, Royton; Land at Greenacres, Lees; Shawside, Shaw (Moss Hey); Simkin Way, Bardsley; Royley Clough, Royton; Cowhill, Chadderton; Moston Brook and Hole Bottom Clough, Failsworth; Thornley Brook East, Lees; Land South of Oaklands Road, Grasscroft; Land at Summershades Lane, Grasscroft; Ferney Field Road, Chadderton; Foxdenton Hall Park, Chadderton; Rumbles Lane, Delph; and Cotswold Drive, Royton. These have been carried forward from the Unitary Development Plan.

6.142 OPOL is open land which, while not serving the purposes of the Green Belt, is locally important because it helps preserve the distinctiveness of an area. As well as providing attractive settings, they provide other benefits, such as informal recreation and habitats for biodiversity, therefore helping to provide sustainable communities and help mitigate climate change. The

79 Oldham Partnership, 2004.
80 Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council Unitary Development Plan, Oldham Council, 2006

main aim is to protect OPOL from development, however there may be instances where limited small scale or ancillary development will be permitted, such as visitor facilities or development that is ancillary to existing uses. This allows limited small scale development over and above that permitted in the Green Belt. The council will consider the visual impact that development has on the openness and distinctiveness of the OPOL, taking into account the cumulative impact.

6.143 The council has one site identified as Land Reserved for Future Development (LRFD) at Bullcote Lane, Royton. In future reviews of the LDF, this land will be considered if other allocated land and brownfield land is insufficient to meet future development needs. Permission for development will only be granted if the development would be acceptable in the Green Belt and would not prejudice the later development of the whole site. LRFD at Lancaster Sports Club (LR5), Warren Lane (LR6) and Haven Lane (LR7 and LR8) that were identified in the 2006 UDP will not be taken forward as LRFD in the LDF. These sites have potential for development and will be assessed in the Site Allocations DPD.

6.144 The 2006 UDP policies may be viewed on the council's website at www.oldham.gov.uk.

Policy 23 Open Spaces and Sports

Open space can contribute to people's quality of life. It has a key role to play in the protection of the environment, enhancing the biodiversity of the borough and creating habitats for flora and fauna. Access to quality open space is essential to health and well-being, encouraging increased physical activity and exercise and contributing to improved mental health. Quality open space provision can contribute to social inclusion and community cohesion in Oldham and can support and enhance the image and appeal of the borough for residents and visitors. Open spaces are defined in Policy 6 on Green Infrastructure.

Protection of Open Spaces

The council will protect, promote and enhance existing open space in the borough, and will seek to secure new and improved well-designed open spaces where appropriate.

New Open Spaces

All residential developments should contribute towards the provision of new or enhanced open space, unless it can be demonstrated by the developer that it is not financially viable for the development proposal or that this is neither practicable nor desirable. The council will have regard to the proposed development and the open space surpluses and deficiencies in the area to determine whether on-site or off-site new provision, enhanced existing provision or a financial contribution will be required. Open space surpluses and deficiencies will be defined through the Annual Monitoring Report.

The required type and amount of provision in any instance shall be calculated in accordance with the council's current local standards of provision and the surplus and deficiencies of open space provision identified in the Open Space Study.[81] These will be monitored and reviewed over the lifetime of the LDF.

Table 11 Current Local Standards of Provision

Type of Open Space	Quality The required quality of open spaces measured as a percentage. Good quality is measured as 70%	Quantity The number of hectares required per 1,000 population.	Accessibility The required walk time in minutes or metres from residential development to open spaces
Parks and Gardens	at least 70%	0.26	15 minutes / 720 metres
Natural and Semi-Natural	at least 70%	1.95	15 minutes / 720 metres
Amenity Greenspace	at least 70%	0.46	15 minutes / 720 metres
Allotments	at least 70%	No standard provided	No standard provided
Provision for Children	at least 70%	0.37	10 minutes / 480 metres
Provision for Young People	at least 70%	0.10	10 minutes / 480 metres
Outdoor Sports Facilities	at least 70%	1.35 (excluding golf courses)	15 minutes / 720 metres (all outdoor sport facilities excluding golf courses) 20 minutes / 12.63 kilometres (for golf courses)
Cemeteries and Churchyards / Green Corridors / Civic Spaces	at least 70%	No standard provided	No standard provided

Where new, replacement or enhanced provision or a financial contribution is provided, the developer will be required to enter into a planning obligation with the council for the provision and maintenance of the open space. This will be in accordance with the national circular on planning obligations and the council's Good Practice Guide.[82]

81 Open Space Study, PMP consultants and Oldham Council, 2006 - 2010.
82 Oldham Council, 2008.

Loss of Open Spaces

The loss of an open space will be permitted where:

a. land is allocated for built development; or
b. proposals relate to cleared sites on previously developed land, including those that have been landscaped, where there is a clear intention by the council for future development; or
c. proposals relate to a masterplan, policy, programme, strategy or action plan approved by the council or Oldham Partnership; or
d. proposals comprise of a small scale development which is ancillary or complementary to the open space function of the site, and the quality and character of the site is maintained; or
e. proposals are for a new outdoor or indoor sport or recreation facility which is of sufficient benefit to the development of sport and recreation, or to the open space function, to outweigh the harm resulting from its loss, and it could not be reasonably located elsewhere, and does not create or worsen an existing deficiency of open space in the area; or
f. in the case of playing fields only, the development only affects land which is incapable of forming a playing pitch or part of one.

Development of a site that is currently or was most recently used as open space or for sport or recreation will be permitted provided it can be demonstrated the development brings substantial benefits to the community that would outweigh the harm resulting from the loss of open space; and

g. a replacement facility which is at least equivalent in terms of usefulness, attractiveness, quality and accessibility, and where appropriate quantity, to existing and future users is provided by the developer on another site prior to the development commencing; or
h. if replacement on another site is neither practicable nor desirable, an agreed contribution is made by the developer to the council for new provision or the improvement of existing open space or outdoor sport and recreation facilities and its maintenance within an appropriate distance from the site, or within the site; or
i. a mixture of both g. and h; and
j. in the case of playing fields, the development is approved by Sport England.

The LDF proposals map shows strategic open spaces and Green Flag parks in Oldham. Strategic open spaces include strategic parks and gardens (sites of 15 hectares and above) and strategic natural and semi-natural open spaces (sites of 20 hectares and above). This policy applies to all open spaces, whether or not shown on the proposals map.

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy. The Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision SPD[83] sets out guidance and costs and will be reviewed to provide an update once this joint DPD has been adopted.

83 Oldham Council, 2008.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy links to the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward addressing Green Infrastructure needs and the health and well-being agenda.
Objectives	SO4, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC1, EC2, ENV1, ENV2, ENV5, ENV6, ENV7, ENV8, SOC1, SOC6, SOC10.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities. Cohesive Society.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	A confident place. An address of choice.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators	37, 41.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Private Sector.

Supporting Text

6.145 This policy links to the preferred way forward and objectives by creating safer and stronger communities, improving and valuing the borough's environment, and encouraging healthier lifestyles.

6.146 In accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 `Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation` (PPG17), all spaces, in either public or private ownership, which might have community or public value should be protected, irrespective of whether the public has access to them. This can include spaces on previously developed land. Open space types protected by the policy are based on definitions in national guidance.

6.147 In accordance with the requirements of PPG17, the council has undertaken an Open Space Study. It includes an audit of the quality, quantity and accessibility of existing open space provision in the borough and sets local standards of provision for quality, quantity and accessibility that the open space policy should aim to achieve. Standards are highlighted in the open space policy. The quality of open spaces is measured by giving sites a quality score out of ten based on the scoring criteria for the Green Flag standard. The score is then worked out as a percentage to form the Quality Percentage. Quality percentages are assessed against the following scale:

a. 90% to 100% is `Very Good`;
b. 70% to 89.9% is `Good`;
c. 50% to 69.9% is `Average`;

d. 30% to 49.9% is `Poor`; and
e. Below 30% is `Very Poor`.

6.148 As it is the aim of the council to have good quality open spaces, the quality standard for all typologies of open space in the borough is 70% and above (i.e. `Good` and above).

6.149 The quantity of open space is measured in hectares per 1,000 population at a lower super output area level (LSOA). (LSOA is a national designation which is designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics.) Accessibility is measured using a buffer set at a distance around open space facilities based on accessibility standards using appropriate walking distances for each typology. Surpluses and deficiencies of quantity, quality and accessibility are worked out per typology by assessing the current level of open space provision against the local standards of provision.

6.150 The standards will be monitored and reviewed over the lifetime of the LDF. The council will have regard to relevant new and updated documents, such as the Playing Pitch Strategy, where appropriate. The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy after the joint DPD has been adopted.

Loss of open space

6.151 As highlighted in the policy, the loss of open space will be permitted on land allocated for built development in the borough's development plan.

6.152 The loss of open space is also permitted where proposals relate to cleared/landscaped sites on previously developed land where there is a clear intention by the council for future development. Although there are instances where open spaces are located on sites defined as previously developed land, the policy does not apply to previously developed sites where there is a clear intention by the council, as expressed through a council minute, committee resolution or policy, that it is intended for some future development. Often this includes sites that have been landscaped following clearance or reclamation. However it was not intended that these temporarily landscaped sites should necessarily be protected as open space or for recreational purposes in perpetuity. The degree of investment and quality of the site, and the fact that the council may maintain the site, has no bearing regarding any indication of intention, or presumption that the site shall be retained as open space.

6.153 The policy states that small-scale development on open space which is ancillary or complementary to the open space function of the site will be permitted. Small-scale ancillary structures would include toilets, refreshment facilities, changing blocks and small buildings for storing equipment or housing interpretation centres.

6.154 The loss of open space would be permitted where proposals are for a new outdoor or indoor sport or recreation facility which is of sufficient benefit to the development of sport and recreation, or to the open space function, to outweigh the harm resulting from its loss, and it could not be reasonably located elsewhere and does not create or worsen an existing deficiency of open space in the area. In such an instance the developer would have to demonstrate this, and also demonstrate that they could not be reasonably located on a suitable accessible site elsewhere.

6.155 In the case of playing fields only, the loss of open space will be permitted where the development only affects land which is incapable of forming a playing pitch or part of one and does not result in: the loss of or inability to make use of any playing pitch; a reduction in the size of the playing areas of any playing pitch; or the loss of any other sporting/ancillary facilities on site. Sport England are a statutory consultee and must be consulted on any planning application that affects all or any part of land last used as a playing field.

6.156 Whilst PPG17 supports the protection of open spaces, it also highlights that not all spaces are of equal merit and that some could be made available for alternative uses, providing an opportunity to remedy deficiencies in the quality, quantity and accessibility of open space provision. It also states that any new land and facility should be at least as accessible to current and potential new users, and at least equivalent in terms of size, usefulness, attractiveness and quality.

Policy 24 Historic Environment

Oldham has a rich historic environment with many significant and valuable features, structures and characteristics. The council will protect, conserve and enhance these heritage assets and their settings which adds to the borough's sense of place and identity.

Development proposals must have regard to:

- National and local guidance and policies on the historic environment.
- Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Heritage Assessments.
- Greater Manchester and Oldham Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Study.
- Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, where appropriate.

When allocating sites and determining applications for planning and advertisement consents, the council will seek to protect, conserve and enhance the architectural features, structures, settings, historic character and significance of the borough's heritage assets and designations including:

a. Listed buildings.
b. Conservation areas.
c. Registered parks and gardens (their historic character and setting).
d. Scheduled ancient monuments (their archaeological value and interest).
e. Significant archaeological remains.
f. Locally significant buildings, structures, areas or landscapes of architectural or historic interest (including non-designated locally significant assets identified in the local lists compiled by the council).

The council will support heritage-led regeneration, including the reuse of historic buildings such as mills, to achieve economic, community and regeneration objectives, where appropriate.

Listed Buildings

Development to, or within the curtilage or vicinity of, a listed building or structure must serve to preserve or enhance its special interest and its setting. There will be a strong presumption against proposals involving the demolition of listed buildings or structures. Proposals which would lead to the loss or cause harm to grade I and II* listed buildings should be wholly exceptional.

Development proposals for a building incorporating a historic shop front should make provision for its retention, restoration and repair.

Conservation Areas

Development within or affecting the setting of a conservation area, including views in or out, must serve to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. Proposals for all new development, including alterations and extensions to buildings and their re-use, must have a sensitive and appropriate response to context and good attention to detail.

Proposals must not adversely affect important architectural or historic features or distinctive local features or structures unless it can be demonstrated that the development brings substantial benefits to the community.

Proposals for the demolition of a building in a conservation area must demonstrate that it is unrealistic for the building to continue in its existing use and a suitable alternative use cannot be found, or the building is in poor structural condition and the cost of repairing and maintaining it would be disproportionate to its importance and value and the demolition would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area. In exceptional circumstances, the fact that a demolition would bring substantial benefits to the local community may out weigh the balance in favour of the preservation of the building.

Registered Parks and Gardens

Development which would lead to the loss of, or cause harm to, the historic character or setting of any part of registered park and garden will not be permitted.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Development which would lead to the loss of, or cause harm to, scheduled ancient monuments should be wholly exceptional.

Local Designations

Development which would affect the following designations will only be permitted in cases where it can be demonstrated that the benefits of the development brings substantial benefits to the community which outweigh the preservation of the heritage asset:

- Significant archaeological remains
- Locally significant buildings, structures, areas or landscapes of architectural or historic interest

The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy addresses the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward by relating to our historic environment and by adding to our sense of place and identity.
Objectives	SO1, SO4, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	ENV6.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities.
Oldham Council Corporate Objectives	An address of choice.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators and targets	21, 22.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Public Sector agencies. Private Sector.

Supporting Text

6.157 The policy links to the preferred way forward and objectives by improving and valuing the borough's environment.

6.158 Currently, national guidance and policy includes Planning Policy Statement 5 `Planning for the Historic Environment` (PPS5)[84]. Local evidence includes the findings of the Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Heritage Assessments[85] and the Greater Manchester and Oldham Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation study (HLC).[86]

6.159 The HMR Heritage Assessment provides an extensive assessment of the heritage value of HMR areas and identifies the way in which the fabric of the borough reflects its social and economic development. The boroughwide study provides separate reports for HMR areas, including Derker, Werneth/Freehold, Primrose Bank, Alt, Sholver, Hathershaw and Fitton Hill.

6.160 The HLC study provides an understanding of the historical and cultural origins and development of the current landscape and identifies material remains at landscape scale which demonstrate the human activities that have formed the current landscape.

6.161 In accordance with the objectives of national guidance, the council will protect, conserve and enhance the architectural features, structures, settings and historic character of the borough's heritage assets and designations including:

84 DCLG, 2010.
85 Oldham Rochdale HMR Pathfinder and Lathams, 2006.
86 AGMA and Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit, 2010.

i. Listed buildings – historic buildings identified by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport as being of special architectural or historic interest. There are over 500 listed buildings across the borough;
ii. Conservation areas – statutory areas defined by national planning legislation as having special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. There are currently 36 conservation areas in the borough designated at Alexandra Park, Alexandra Terrace Moorside, Oldham Town Centre (in East and West Oldham); Crompton Fold, Park Cottages Shaw, Saint James Shaw, Saint Pauls Royton (in Royton, Shaw and Crompton); Bottom of Woodhouses, Failsworth Pole, Garden Suburb, Woodhouses (in Failsworth and Hollinwood); The Old Town Hall Chadderton, Victoria Street Chadderton (in Chadderton); and Bleak Hey Nook, Boarshurst, Delph, Denshaw, Diglea, Dobcross, Grange, Grasscroft, Harrop Green, Hey, Hey Top Greenfield, Holly Grove, Landhill Lane, Lees, Lydgate, New Delph, New Tame, Royal George Mills, Scouthead, Saint Chad's Church Saddleworth, Stone Breaks, Tame Water, Uppermill (in Saddleworth and Lees);
iii. Registered parks and gardens – sites on the historic parks and gardens register in Oldham include Alexandra Park, Chadderton Cemetery and Greenacres Cemetery. Inclusion on the register does not provide any additional statutory protection but represents a material planning consideration in relation to any development within or adjoining the park that may affect its setting. The policy applies to grade I, grade II* and grade II registered parks and gardens;
iv. Scheduled ancient monuments – archaeological remains of national importance that have special protection under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. The consent of the Secretary of State is required for any works that affect a scheduled ancient monument. Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Oldham include Castleshaw Roman Fort, Bowl Barrow near Knarr Barn, Delph and Dee Mill engine and engine house, Shaw;
v. Significant archaeological remains – remains that form part of a record of the past that begins with traces of early humans; and
vi. Locally significant, non-designated buildings, structures, areas or landscapes of architectural or historic interest – the council will compile a local list of buildings, structures and landscapes that, although non-designated, are of local significance and provide a positive contribution to the borough's historic environment.

Policy 25 Developer Contributions

Details about the borough's current infrastructure have been prepared. The council has worked with partners on preparing an infrastructure study. The Community Infrastructure Levy regulations came into force in April 2010 and the council will work on taking that forward, if and as appropriate, over the life of the LDF.

The council will work with partners and developers to secure, where appropriate, the provision of additional, extended or improved physical, social and green infrastructure that will be needed to support the delivery of the LDF. Developers will be required to provide or contribute through a commuted sum to the costs of appropriate infrastructure that results from the development and/or to mitigate the effects of the proposal. Infrastructure contributions will be sought unless

it can be demonstrated by the developer that it is not financially viable and would prejudice the proposed development, or there are wider community and regeneration benefits for not seeking a contribution. The council will provide further advice and guidance on this policy.

There are separate policies that cover developer contributions for affordable housing, open spaces and supporting the local economy.

Linkages	
Main Issues and Key Challenges / Vision / Preferred Way Forward	This policy addresses the main issues, the vision and the preferred way forward by relating to how we will improve the quality of people's lives, and how the council will work with partners and developers to improve Oldham.
Objectives	SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4, SO5.
Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	EC8, ENV2, ENV4, ENV6, ENV7, ENV8, ENV9, ENV12, SOC4, SOC5, SOC7, SOC10, SOC11.
Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Economic Prosperity. Health and Well-being. Safe and Strong Communities.
Oldham Council Corporate objectives	A confident place. An address of choice. Services of choice. A university town.
District Partnerships	East and West Oldham; Royton, Shaw and Crompton; Failsworth and Hollinwood; Chadderton; Saddleworth and Lees; and Oldham Town Centre Partnership.
Monitoring Indicators	All indicators, where appropriate.
Implementation	Oldham Council. Private Sector.
Transport Protocol Key Issue	1, 2, 3.

Supporting Text

6.162 The policy links to the preferred way forward and objectives by ensuring the infrastructure requirements arising from developments across the borough over the lifetime of the LDF are met.

6.163 Development proposals should be capable of being accommodated within the capacity limits of the borough's existing physical, social and green infrastructure. The local infrastructure study, which has been prepared, provides details of the many different types of infrastructure currently in the borough. Where the existing infrastructure is unable to accommodate the extra demands placed on it arising from the development, then developer contributions will be sought to improve the existing infrastructure or provide new infrastructure, where appropriate. This

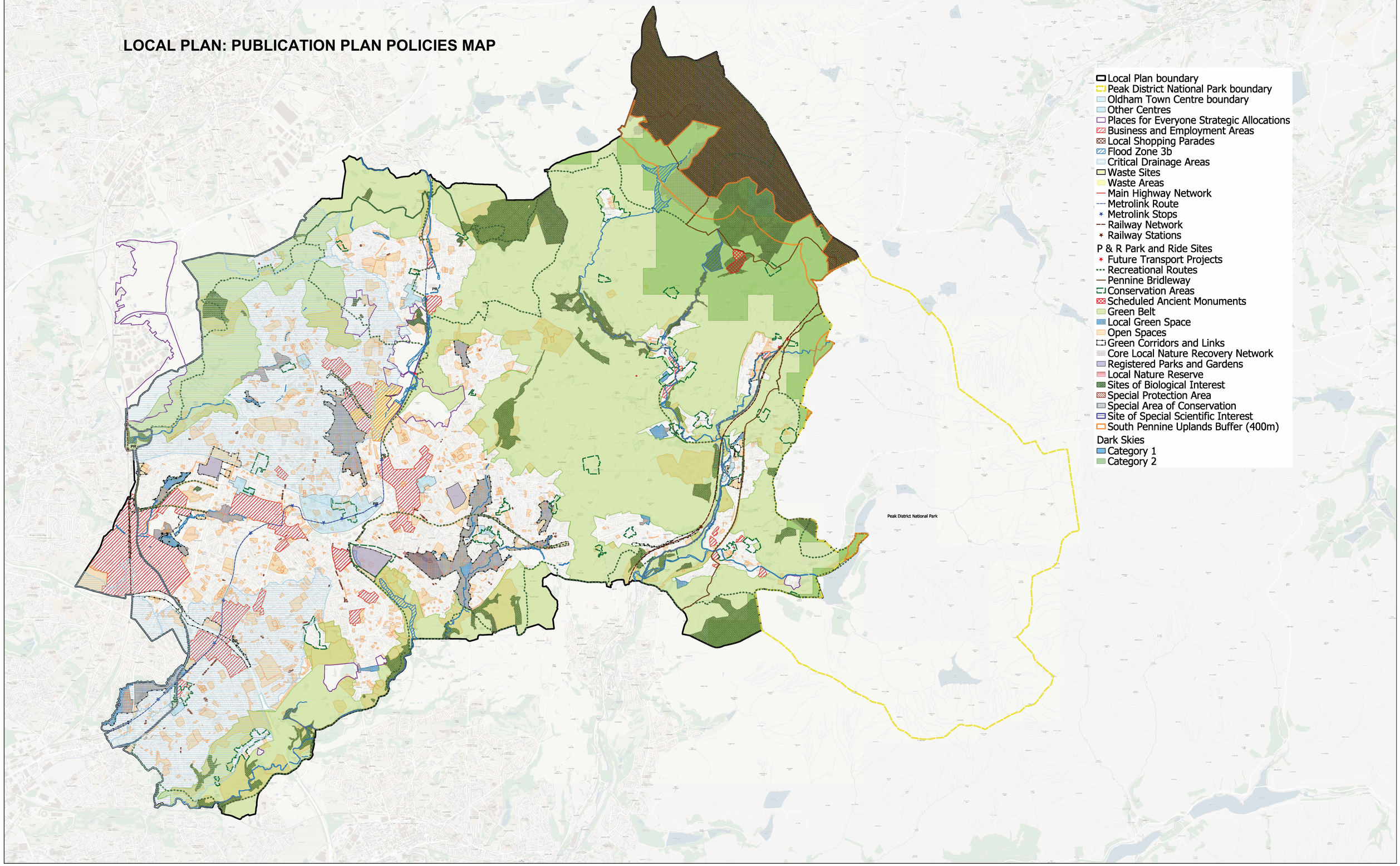
may include, amongst other things, transport improvements, teaching facilities in schools, public realm improvements, health provision, green infrastructure, biodiversity enhancements and surface water management. This is not an exhaustive list.

6.164 Access and transport contributions will take account of the DaSTS[87] methodology which places an emphasis on capitalising on the existing network capacity before major capacity enhancements are considered. The hierarchical approach will explore and exhaust all alternatives before presenting major works on the Strategic Road Network.

6.165 When negotiating developer contributions, the council will have regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development and its financial viability. Development proposals will be considered on an individual basis. The council will have regard to Circular 05/05 `Planning Obligations`.[88] The tests for planning obligations are that they must be: necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms; directly related to the development; and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

87 Delivering a Sustainable Transport System, DfT, 2008.
88 ODPM, 2005.

LOCAL PLAN: PUBLICATION PLAN POLICIES MAP



- Local Plan boundary
- Peak District National Park boundary
- Oldham Town Centre boundary
- Other Centres
- Places for Everyone Strategic Allocations
- Business and Employment Areas
- Local Shopping Parades
- Flood Zone 3b
- Critical Drainage Areas
- Waste Sites
- Waste Areas
- Main Highway Network
- Metrolink Route
- Metrolink Stops
- Railway Network
- Railway Stations

P & R Park and Ride Sites

- Future Transport Projects
- Recreational Routes
- Pennine Bridleway
- Conservation Areas
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Green Belt
- Local Green Space
- Open Spaces
- Green Corridors and Links
- Core Local Nature Recovery Network
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Local Nature Reserve
- Sites of Biological Interest
- Special Protection Area
- Special Area of Conservation
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- South Pennine Uplands Buffer (400m)

Dark Skies

- Category 1
- Category 2

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Oldham Council
Spindles
Shopping Centre
West Street
Oldham
OL1 1LF

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Oldham Local Plan

Publication Plan Document

January 2026

Oldham Council

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Appendix 2: Maps of each allocation and designation not to be carried forward through to the Local Plan

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Appendix 13: Monitoring indicators from Places for Everyone, The Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan Document and the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan Document

Seeking views on the Publication Oldham Local Plan

This Publication Plan follows on from the Draft Local Plan consultation that was carried out in early 2024. It builds upon the comments we received and has been informed by on-going studies and pieces of evidence work. It contains a vision for Oldham, a set of plan objectives and non-strategic planning policies covering a wide range of topic areas including housing, open land, centres, our economy, climate change, design, transportation and our communities. Planning affects many aspects of our lives and our environment – from where we live, work, shop and how we spend our leisure time. In producing this Local Plan, we are not just considering land uses, but we are also considering other issues that can be affected by land use, including health, education and community safety.

This document is called the 'Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan' ('Publication Plan') and is the final draft Local Plan that is consulted on prior to submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination. This stage of Local Plan consultation is known as a Regulation 19 consultation and representations at this stage must focus on the 'legal compliance' and 'soundness' of the Local Plan and whether we have complied with Duty to Cooperate.

Plans are 'sound' if they are:

a) **Positively prepared** – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the areas objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;

b) **Justified** – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;

c) **Effective** – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and

d) **Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant.

Comments are invited on the Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan. Details of the Publication Plan consultation can be found online[1], together with the information on how and where the plan may be viewed, as well as how to submit representations.

[1] Details of the Publication Plan consultation can be found online at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201232/engagement/1825/consultation

1 Introduction

1.1. Oldham's Local Plan will guide development in the borough up to 2039. The main purposes of the Plan are to:

- Set out the policies through which the Council will manage development coming forward and use to determine planning applications;
- Identify designations, such as those for the protection of the borough's environmental and historical assets, our town centres, and employment areas; and
- Facilitate the development of supporting infrastructure, such as transport, education and utilities.

1.2. The Local Plan covers the whole borough except that part which falls within the Peak District National Park (PDNP). Where development proposals lie within that part of Oldham which falls within the PDNP applicants must consider the Peak District National Parks' relevant planning policies and apply to the PDNP Authority for planning permission.

1.3. The Oldham Local Plan will sit alongside the Places for Everyone Joint Plan (PfE) as part of a suite of documents that form the development plan for the borough that also includes the Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan Document (adopted April 2012) and the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan Document (adopted April 2013). As well as any neighbourhood plans that may come into force during the lifetime of the Plan.

Interpreting policies within the Oldham Local Plan

1.4. The policies contained within the Oldham Local Plan are organised by theme, for example Homes, Economy and Employment, and Addressing Climate Change. Policy text is in bold and separated into a box for clarity. There then sits the reasoned justification which provides further detail regarding how the policy will be applied and what detail may be needed to accord with the policy requirements.

1.5. The policies contained within this plan must be read alongside Places for Everyone and the Greater Manchester Waste and Minerals Plans. These documents form part of our statutory development plan, alongside the Oldham Local Plan. Further detail regarding Places for Everyone and its relationship to the Oldham Local Plan can be found in chapter 2.

1.6. And at the end of each thematic chapter there is a monitoring section that shows the indicators through which the chapter will be monitored.

Integrated Assessment

1.7. Preparation of the Oldham Local Plan has informed by an Integrated Assessment (IA). The IA includes the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) and a Health Impact Assessment (HIA). The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) has been integrated into the IA.

1.8. The role of a SA is to promote sustainable development through assessing the emerging Local Plan against economic, environmental and social objectives (including opportunities for net gain). Significant adverse effects should be avoided and wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued. Where significant adverse impacts are unavoidable, suitable mitigation measures should be proposed (or, where this is not possible, compensatory measures should be considered). The purpose of the HRA is to ensure that protection of the integrity of European protected sites is an integral part of the planning process at the local level.

The Oldham Local Plan and the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document

1.10. Upon adoption, the Oldham Local Plan will replace the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD. It will also replace any saved planning policies, and associated allocations, that remain from the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2006, aside from those already replaced through Places for Everyone and the Greater Manchester Minerals and Waste Plans.

1.11. A list of all Core Strategy and saved UDP policies and how these have been replaced or deleted, including those that have been replaced through Places for Everyone and the Greater Manchester Waste and Minerals Plans, can be found at Appendix 1. Maps of each allocation and designation not to be carried forward through to the Local Plan can be found in Appendix 2 and 11.

2 Oldham's Local Plan and Places for Everyone

2.1 The Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan Document (DPD), is a strategic plan that covers nine of the ten Greater Manchester districts - Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan. The Plan took effect and became part of the statutory development plan for each of the nine PfE authorities on 21 March 2024.

2.2 Places for Everyone provides the strategic framework for the Oldham Local Plan, and:

- Sets out specific requirements to be taken forward through the plan in relation to housing, offices, and industry and warehousing.
- Identifies the main areas where growth will be focused as part of its spatial strategy.
- Identifies the important environmental assets which will be protected and enhanced.
- Allocates sites for employment and housing outside of the urban area to meet our growth needs. In Oldham this is JPA2 Stakehill (a cross-boundary allocation with Rochdale), JPA10 Beal Valley, JPA11 Bottom Field Farm, JPA12 Broadbent Moss, JPA13 Chew Brook Vale, JPA14 Cowlishaw, JPA15 Land south of Coal Pit Lane and JPA16 South of Rosary Road.
- Supports the delivery of key infrastructure, such as transport and utilities; and
- Defines a new Green Belt boundary.

2.3 The purpose and role of the Oldham Local Plan is to support delivery of PfE in Oldham. Providing more detailed non-strategic 'development management' policies that support the strategic policies in PfE, whilst ensuring that together they reflect, and support delivery of, the Council's priorities and those of our Building a Better Oldham regeneration ambitions. It is therefore important that policies contained within the Oldham Local Plan are read alongside those in PfE, to ensure that all policy requirements are understood and met.

2.4 The Oldham Local Plan has been aligned with the plan period of PfE – up to 2039, given that it is supporting delivery of the Joint Plan. In addition, as this Local Plan focuses on non-strategic planning policies that deal with primarily development management matters, it does not include allocations for future development, whether that be for new homes or employment. Instead, the Plan supports the delivery of our housing and employment land supply through the positive planning framework provided by the plan policies. During preparation of the Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in December 2024, where relevant. However, as the Oldham Local Plan includes policies that seek to deliver the housing requirement and development growth set out PfE it has been prepared in accordance with the relevant previous version of the Framework as per paragraph 235 of NPPF. In this instance this is NPPF 2021 under which PfE was examined. Nevertheless, the Council has sought to ensure that the Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan is in conformity with the December 2024 where relevant.

2.5 The Council recognises that the emerging planning reforms will require the preparation of a Spatial Development Strategy covering the Greater Manchester region. At an appropriate time, this will need to be supported by a new Local Plan for Oldham prepared under the new, and emerging, new plan-making system. If needed allocations will be considered as part of this future reiteration of the Local Plan to support the Spatial Development Strategy for Greater Manchester that will be required by the new local planning regulations when in place.

3 Building a Better Oldham

3.1 This chapter explores the Councils key priorities, ambitions and initiatives that have informed the policies within the Local Plan and which the Plan will help to facilitate and deliver.

Our Corporate Priorities

3.2 The Oldham Plan 2024-2030[2] is prepared by the Oldham Partnership and sets out a clear set of priorities for the borough that respond to the needs and aspirations of our communities. It recognises that no single organisation can tackle all our challenges alone and brings together leaders from across the Council, health services, housing, education, safety, and local businesses. Each one brings their own skills and resources to help make Oldham stronger and fairer for everyone.

3.3 The Partnership's vision for Oldham is 'a place where everyone can thrive, with great education, good jobs, safe homes and access to necessary services. We aim to build a greener, healthier borough focused on sustainability and well-being for all'. This vision is translated into the three missions set out below:

- **A Great Place to Live** – through providing more affordable, quality homes, improving public spaces, and creating a strong economy with vibrant communities.
- **Healthier, Happier Lives** – through ensuring that everyone has access to the care, support, and opportunities they need to live a good life. With a commitment to tackling poverty, improving health and well-being, providing high-quality social care, and promoting lifelong education.
- **Green and Growing** – where economic growth benefits all residents, creating opportunities for businesses to succeed while ensuring our community and environment thrive. Through attracting new investment, supporting local business and leading in green technologies, quality job opportunities will be generated, and people will be equipped with the skills they need to succeed.

3.4 Oldham Council's Corporate Plan 2024-2027[3] reflects the Partnership's missions and sets out how the Council will support their delivery. In an ever-changing environment, where strategies must remain flexible and responsive, our cooperative ambition drives us forward, guided by a core set of values and behaviours. These principles form the foundation of Oldham Council's approach, ensuring that we stay true to our core purpose and direction.

3.5 The Local Plan represents the spatial expression of The Oldham Plan and the Council's Corporate Plan and is a key tool through which the Council can help to support the Partnership's missions and achieve its ambition. Delivery of these missions are the golden thread that runs through the Oldham Local Plan.

[2] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201261/oldham_plan/3207/oldham_plan
[3] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200146/strategies_plans_and_policies/2888/corporate_plan

Building a Better Oldham

3.6 Building a Better Oldham[4] is the Council's ambitious transformation programme for the borough and will be achieved by:

- building quality homes
- providing opportunities to learn & gain new skills
- providing opportunities to grow local businesses and create jobs
- ensuring Oldham is the greenest borough
- embedding sustainability, energy efficiency & low (zero) carbon
- improving life-chances, health and well-being of our residents and local communities

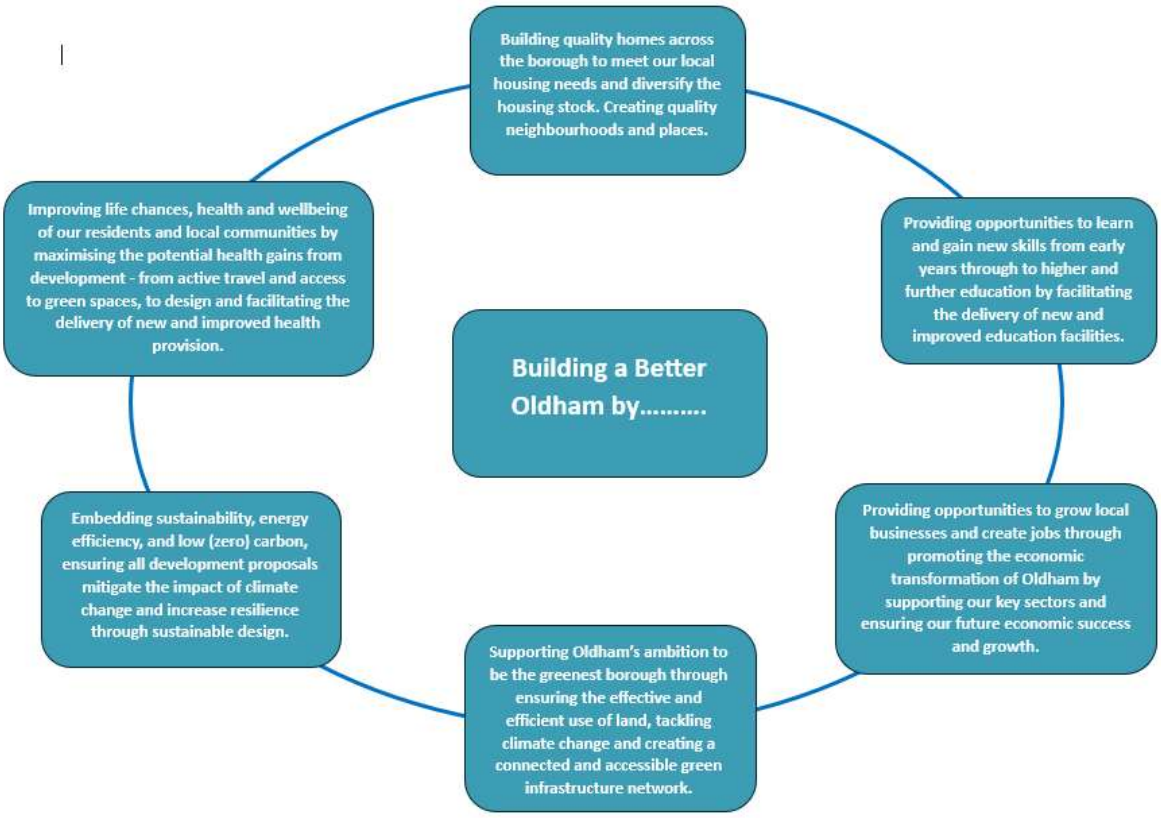
3.7 Projects include:

- Introducing residential living into Oldham Town Centre through the development of around 2,000 high-quality new homes alongside vibrant public spaces, and exciting commercial opportunities.
- The redevelopment of Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre to provide a new home for Tommyfield Market, new space for work and an improved leisure and entertainment offer for people of all ages, in a way that will safeguard the centre and create a sustainable retail offer for the future.
- Preserving our buildings and heritage to drive Oldham's cultural quarter through, for example, the restoration of the Old Library which will be home to the Oldham Theatre Workshop, a gallery, and a new Council chamber and offices.
- Making it easier and safer to travel around the town centre through Accessible Oldham which is transforming our streets by improving roads, footpaths and public areas, alongside public realm improvements comprising new rain gardens, seating areas and public spaces.
- Northern Roots Country Park[5], which as part of the Council's 'Green and Growing' priority will be the UK's largest urban farm and country park, providing new green space for communities from across Oldham and beyond.

[4] More information can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201248/building_a_better_oldham
[5] More information can be found online at https://northern-roots.uk/

3.8. The Oldham Local Plan support's delivery of this ambitious programme as illustrated in Figure BB1 below.

Figure BB1: Flow diagram illustrating how the Council's Building a Better Oldham agenda has been embedded into the planning framework



Oldham's Green New Deal

3.9 The Council's Green New Deal Strategy[6], sets challenging new carbon neutrality targets whilst bringing a new focus on building the green economic sector in Oldham to generate inward investment, jobs and training opportunities for residents.

3.10 Central to the Green New Deal Strategy are two new ambitious targets for achieving carbon neutrality:

- **carbon neutrality for the Council by 2025** – to be achieved through reducing CO2 emissions from council buildings and street lighting; investing in large-scale renewable energy generation; and implementing local, meaningful and verifiable 'carbon offset' measures (i.e. tree planting).

[6] More information can be found online at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201249/green_new_deal/3002/oldham_green_new_deal_strategy

- **carbon neutrality for the borough by 2030** – to be achieved through developing a Local Energy Market to incentivise renewable energy development; investing in and supporting the development and roll-out of large-scale low carbon anchor energy infrastructure such as low carbon heat networks; supporting the development of the Green Technology and Services sector across the borough; and maximising the local benefits from GM and national level schemes which aid decarbonisation, including air quality and transport.

3.11 The Green New Deal Strategy sets out the Council's approach to achieving these targets, enabled by the development of, and investment in, the 'green' sector in Oldham's local economy. There are also wider benefits in terms of improving the health and wellbeing and quality of life for residents, delivering social value and an improved environment for nature, wildlife and the green infrastructure.

3.12 In support of the Council's Green New Deal ambitions the Local Plan provides a robust framework for ensuring that development proposals mitigate the impact of climate change, make their contribution to meeting nationally binding targets to reduce greenhouse emissions and increase resilience. Through:

- Ensuring that development is located to take account of all sources of flood risk and that it is designed to increase water efficiency, reduce demand on water resources and protect water quality.
- Encouraging the use of decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy in new developments and that through their construction, design and layout they minimise energy consumption.
- Using the multi-functional benefits from Green Infrastructure creation, enhancement and protection to underpin our response to climate change and carbon reduction whilst providing connected and resilient networks.
- Reducing the need to travel and promoting active travel and the use of sustainable modes of transport, including supporting the expansion of electric vehicle charging capabilities.

3.13. Our approach to tackling the climate change emergency also has many benefits and outcomes that link to our health and wellbeing priorities in that it will help to ensure Oldham residents can afford to live comfortably in their homes; will increase access to an enhanced Green Infrastructure network; and promote active travel choices, including walking, wheeling and cycling.

Improving Oldham's Health and Wellbeing

3.14. Improving health and well-being for our residents is a key part of the Partnership's mission - Healthier, Happier Lives. Some of the most pressing health challenges faced in Oldham, such as obesity, physical inactivity, deprivation and social inequality, fuel poverty and the needs of an ageing population, can all be affected by the quality of our built and natural environment. Tackling these 'wider determinants of health' through the planning system however requires a holistic approach, ensuring that they are embedded throughout the Local Plan.

3.15. Through the policies contained within the Plan the Council will encourage and facilitate development in the borough that provides opportunities for healthy lifestyles, contributes to the creation of healthier communities, and helps to reduce health inequalities. These policies will help to:

- Create healthy, inclusive and safe places that are well connected to key services and facilities and high-quality open spaces.
- Provide a diverse, and affordable, housing offer that addresses local housing needs with homes that are adaptable.
- Promote sustainable and accessible transport that enables active travel, including walking, wheeling and cycling, and the maximises opportunities to enhance our green infrastructure.
- Support healthy eating and promote healthy food choices through, for example, increasing opportunities for community food growing spaces and setting a policy framework for the consideration of hot food takeaways.
- Support the delivery and improvement of access to healthcare facilities and education, employment and skills training.

4 Oldham's Local Plan and Neighbourhood Planning

4.1 Communities can prepare Neighbourhood Plans for a designated neighbourhood area. Once these are prepared and adopted they become part of the statutory development plan and are used to determine planning applications (alongside the Oldham Local Plan and PfE) for the designated neighbourhood area. The Neighbourhood Plan can have its own vision, objectives, strategy, policies and designations / allocations.

4.2 In the borough of Oldham currently Saddleworth Parish Council are preparing Saddleworth Neighbourhood Plan for the parish council area and The New Chadderton Partnership forum are preparing a neighbourhood plan covering three Chadderton wards.

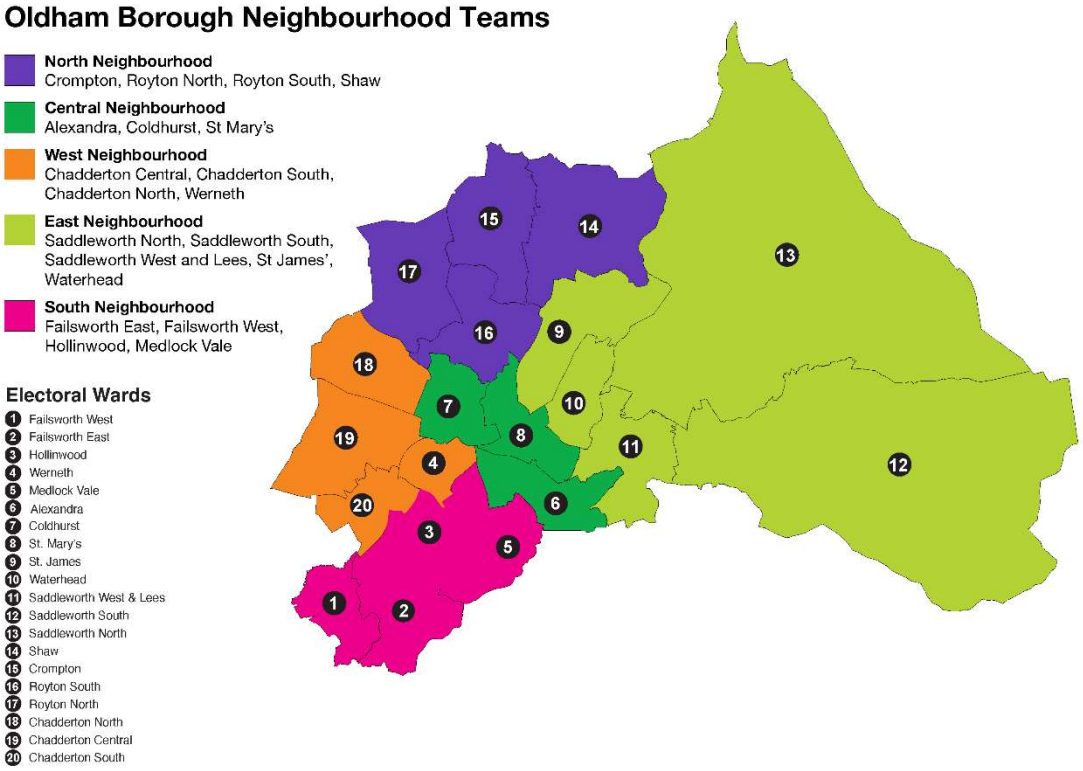
4.3 It is important that these plans, and any other neighbourhood plans that come forward, are positively prepared and support, and do not conflict with, the strategic policies of Places for Everyone and the Oldham Local Plan. In the case of Saddleworth Neighbourhood Plan, this will need to also be in conformity with the planning policies of the Peak District National Park.

5 Spatial Portrait

Context

5.1 Oldham is situated in the northeast of Greater Manchester. It covers an area of 55 square miles. Our neighbouring boroughs are Rochdale, Manchester, Tameside, Peak District National Park, Kirklees and Calderdale. The borough is made up of the town of Oldham and the areas of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hollinwood, Royton, Shaw and Crompton and Saddleworth and Lees. It has a real rural and urban mix, reaching from within five miles of Manchester City Centre, to the moorlands of Saddleworth, with almost a quarter of the borough within the Peak District National Park.

Figure SP1: Map illustrating Oldham's wards and neighbourhood teams



Population and Housing

5.2 Oldham is home to around 251,560 residents who live across five districts and twenty wards and make up 8.4% of Greater Manchester's population[7]. The borough has a higher proportion (34.8%) of ethnic minority residents than in Greater Manchester (28.7%), the North-West (18.8%), and England (26.5%)[8]. The ethnic composition in Oldham currently stands at 65.2% White British, 13.5% Pakistani, 9% Bangladeshi

[7] ONS, Population estimates for England and Wales: mid-2024. Information on the mid-year estimates can be found here: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationestimatesforenglandandwales/mid2024#local-authorities

[8] Census, 2021. Information on the Census can be found here: https://www.ons.gov.uk/census

and 9.3% 'other'[9]. Equality and diversity are embraced within Oldham and the number of ethnically diverse communities continue to grow. This diversity is reflected within schools, with 98 different languages recorded as being spoken[10]. Oldham brings together a variety of cultures and is proud of the uniqueness that this brings to the borough.

5.3 The borough has a relatively young population, with a high proportion (22.5%) of residents aged under 16 and proportionally fewer (15.7%) aged 65 and over[11]. Our increasing population profile is a result of improving life expectancy, internal migration and the growth in Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities.

5.4 In general, the people of Oldham have poorer health than the England average, with Oldham's life expectancy significantly lower than the England average - for males in Oldham it is 77.2 yrs and females 80.5 yrs and in England it is males 79 yrs and females 83 yrs[12]. Rates of childhood obesity, physical inactivity and smoking prevalence are also higher in Oldham than the England average[13]. There is also health inequalities linked to areas of deprivation – people living in more deprived neighbourhoods are more likely to experience poor health outcomes[14].

5.5 Oldham has a very high proportion of terraced housing (approximately 45% of all housing stock). This housing is largely concentrated in the parts of the borough, around inner Oldham, which also have the greatest levels of disadvantage and deprivation, according to the Indices of Deprivation[15]. Oldham also has a high proportion of properties in lower council tax bands, with 70% of homes in band A or B category[16]. Levels of overcrowding are high and there is a legacy of historic low supply of new larger family accommodation.

Economy and Employment

5.6 There are over 8,425 businesses, employing 84,000 people in Oldham[17]. Those businesses span key economic sectors including advanced manufacturing, health and social care, construction, education, digital and creative and financial and professional services. The borough is home to a number of well-known and high-profile businesses including Reach plc (formerly the Trinity Mirror Group), Diodes Incorporated, Seton Healthcare Ltd, Park Cake Bakeries, Innovative Technologies, Ambassador Textiles,

[9] Census, 2021. Information on the Census can be found here: https://www.ons.gov.uk/census
[10] School Census, 2025
[11] ONS, Population estimates for England and Wales: mid-2024. Information on the mid-year estimates can be found here: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationestimatesforenglandandwales/mid2024#local-authorities
[12] ONS, Life expectancy in the UK. Information on the mid-year estimates can be found here: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/lifeexpectancies/bulletins/nationallifetablesunitedkingdom/2021to2023additionaldata
[13] Oldham Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2022-2030), available at: https://committees.oldham.gov.uk/documents/s136004/ITEM%2010%20-%20health%20and%20wellbeing%20strategy.pdf
[14] Oldham in Profile (2025), available at: https://www.jsnaoldham.co.uk/cms-data/depot/profile-depot/Oldham-in-Profile.pdf
[15] Oldham Indices of Deprivation Report (2019), available at: https://www.jsnaoldham.co.uk/cms-data/depot/profile-depot/IMD-2019-briefing-1-Accessible-.pdf
[16] Oldham Local Housing Needs Assessment (2024) - Valuation Office Agency Data, 2022
[17] Interdepartmental Business Register, 2023

and Nov Mono Pumps. The Oldham Independent Economic Review[18] identified a strong "entrepreneurial culture" in the borough, with large numbers of business start-ups and small and micro businesses. Wholesale and retail, construction, and professional services contribute significant numbers of jobs, with manufacturing the largest single sector in terms of Gross Value Added (although this has declined).

5.7 The unemployment rate in Oldham currently stands at 6.8%, compared to 5% within Greater Manchester and 4.1% in England[19]. Oldham's overall rank in the indices of deprivation has maintained a clear downward trend since 2004, relative to other authorities. The worsening of the 'extent' rank may indicate that deprivation (relative to other areas rather than in absolute terms) is taking on a wider geographic scope across Oldham. Pockets of deprivation are particularly concentrated around the inner Oldham area. The borough is the 11th most deprived local authority area[20] in the country, with seven Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA's) sitting within the worst 1% nationally, two more than in 2019.

5.8 The median household income for Oldham in 2025 was £32,662, which is below Greater Manchester (£35,242) and national (£39,597) levels[21]. Oldham has traditionally had a weak skills base, a legacy of generations of manual employment, which means Oldham residents have found it difficult to enter key economic sectors in recent years. In relation to skills the latest census data shows that the proportion of residents with no qualifications has decreased from 22.2% in 2011 to 19.6% in 2021. However, the 2021 figure still remains above Greater Manchester (14.5%) and England (12.4%) proportions. The proportion of residents with NVQ 4+ (Degree level or above) has increased from 20.3% in 2011 to 26.6% in 2021. The 2021 figure still remains below both Greater Manchester (35.0%) and England (37.1%) proportions.

5.9 The Council's ambitions for Oldham Town Centre aim to create a more vibrant, revitalised centre that plays a greater role in Greater Manchester. Oldham's cultural offer includes Gallery Oldham which has collections of regional and national importance, a variety of museum collections, archives and arts, the Oldham Theatre Workshop and libraries. Gallery Oldham continues to attract a high number of visits with visitors enjoying the fantastic range of exhibitions and events on offer.

5.10 In relation to tourism, Oldham has two distinct areas that make up the main tourist destinations, Oldham Town Centre and Saddleworth. Oldham Town Centre has attractions such as Gallery Oldham and a growing evening economy around Odeon Cinema and a number of independent restaurants. Saddleworth's attractions include Saddleworth Museum and Gallery, Uppermill village, the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and the open countryside leading to attractions such as Dove Stone reservoir. A number of successful events are held annually in the borough including Santa's Reindeer Parade which attracts on average around 9,000 visitors, the Big Bang

[18] The document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201162/research_and_statistics/3306/oldham_economic_review_board
[19] ONS Claimant Count, August 2025. This information can be viewed at: CC01 Regional labour market: Claimant Count by unitary and local authority (experimental) - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
The English Indices of deprivation 2025 can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2025
[21] CACI, 2025

firework display and Illuminate, a late-night arts festival, which attracts performers from all over the world.

5.11 In terms of sports and open space, the emerging SportsTown centred around Boundary Park is a multi-million-pound investment which will deliver transformative sporting, health and education facilities. SportsTown will create business, educational and career opportunities in sport and health, as well as delivering improved and new facilities for a range of sports, including football, rugby, netball and cricket.

The Natural Environment

5.12 Over half of the borough is open land that provides an attractive setting to built up areas and is an important natural resource supporting agricultural, tourism and recreational activities.

5.13 Over a quarter of the borough falls within the Peak District National Park, offering residents and visitors access to the Peak Parks diverse landscapes and recreation. Oldham acts as a gateway to the Peak Park, particularly around the areas of Dove Stone Reservoir and Saddleworth Moors and provides the setting to the Peak District. Development can ensure that it helps to further the purposes of the Peak District National Park in relation to its natural beauty, wildlife, cultural heritage and understanding and enjoyment of it's special qualities.

5.14 The majority of the open land is designated Green Belt or locally protected open countryside. River valleys and waterways, including the Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, provide habitats and corridors for wildlife, as well as opportunities for recreation, tourism and regeneration.

5.15 There is also a range of nature conservation areas, from international through to those of local importance. Oldham has one Special Protection Area (SPA) for rare and vulnerable birds (South Pennine Moors).

5.16 Oldham has six Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within the borough. They are listed below):

- Rochdale Canal;
- South Pennine Moors;
- Standedge Tunnel;
- Ladcastle and Den Quarries;
- Lowside Brickworks; and
- Dark Peak.

5.17 In addition, there are currently 40 Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) across the borough (one within the Peak District National Park), one Local Nature Reserve (Glodwick Lows) and two Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites (RIGS) at Glodwick Brickpit and Rocher Vale. There are also areas of ancient woodland within Oldham.

5.18 The South Pennine Moors, which is designated a SPA and SAC, as well as a SSSI and SBI, has the highest degree of international importance for birds and habitats. The Uplands is also an important area for peat soils however there is a need for restorable

deep peat to be stabilised, restored and re-wetted to enable it to store carbon and support notable habitats. The Moors for the Future Partnership is dedicated to preserving 8,000 years of moorland history. Moors for the Future have been working to reverse more than 200 years of damage that left large areas of these uplands bare of vegetation. The partnership works at landscape scale across the Peak District and South Pennines Moors to stabilise degraded peat and help moorland plants re-establish. Their purpose focuses on enhancing habitats, improving water quality, tackling climate change, reducing flood risk and wildfires and providing space for health and wellbeing.

5.19 Northern Roots is a project in Oldham which is creating the UK's largest urban farm and eco-park on Snipe Clough, 160 acres of green space in the heart of Oldham. The aim is to develop Northern Roots to create a unique community hub and visitor destination. Northern Roots aims to create inspirational spaces and opportunities for people to connect around food, growing, nature, learning, creativity, sport, enterprise, work and play; and to do this in a way that supports nature, enhances wellbeing, creates jobs, and builds hope, pride and aspiration.

5.20 Transformation of the site has already begun with permission approved for a visitor centre with café, production kitchen, shop, performance, learning and meeting spaces. Permission has also been granted for a forestry skills centre to support vocational learning. Longer term plans include bike hubs and trails, play facilities, further learning and wellbeing facilities, a market garden and swimming pond.

5.21 Green Infrastructure provision helps to underpin people's quality of life. It has a key role to play in the protection of the environment: supporting biodiversity, habitats and nature conservation; and combating the effects of climate change. The borough has a number of large, attractive parks including Alexandra and Dunwood and boasts a wide range of green spaces, such as Daisy Nook Country Park and Tandle Hill Country Park.

The Historic Environment

5.22 Heritage and conservation are very important within the borough. There are 36 conservation areas totalling around 255 hectares, 550 listed buildings, three registered parks and gardens and two registered scheduled monuments, all of which contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of the borough. The Heritage at Risk Register is the tool used for the Heritage at Risk campaign to save historic sites and places from decay, neglect and inappropriate development. In Oldham there are nine entries on Historic England's "At Risk" Register (2024), including Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area.

5.23 Oldham Town Centre has a high number of listed buildings and numerous buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the town centre and conservation area. The high number of listed buildings and buildings of positive townscape character offers the opportunity for heritage-led regeneration, within the core of the town centre, as seen with the restoration of the Old Town Hall, a Grade II Listed Building, into a 805-seat Odeon cinema with restaurants, which opened in November 2016.

5.24 The Council adopted the 'Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document'[22] (SPD) in August 2019. The appraisal and management plan was a high priority due to the conservation area being "at risk". The SPD proposed four extensions to the conservation area, which have been designated under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and are reflected on the Policies Map

5.25 A plan showing these extensions can be found in Appendix 3. The Management Plan sets out policies and recommendations around enhancement, regeneration and community engagement.

5.26 The Oldham Mills Strategy (2021)[23] was commissioned by Oldham Council and Historic England in order to develop a positive strategy for the sustainable future of the textile mill stock across Oldham. The Mills Strategy identifies the non-designated mills across Oldham which are of particular landscape and heritage value and sets out a robust strategy to ensure their sustainable future, which considers their potential for future development focussing on residential and employment uses.

Transport

5.27 Oldham has good transport connectivity with its road and motorway network links, including the A62, A627 (M), A663, A671, A669, A635 and easy access to the M60 and M62. These transport links offer locational advantages for the borough with opportunities for accessing two major centres of importance, Manchester and Leeds, and also Manchester Airport.

5.28 Pollution from road traffic is the most significant cause of poor air quality, with sections of the A62, A627, A663 and the M60 the worst affected in the borough.

5.29 The Oldham Metrolink system opened as far as Mumps in June 2012, Shaw & Crompton in December 2012 and Rochdale Railway Station in February 2013. It operates from Rochdale, through to Oldham Town Centre into Manchester City Centre where the network links to Bury, Media City, Manchester Airport, Tameside, Eccles, Altrincham and East Didsbury. Park and Ride facilities within Oldham are located at Shaw, Derker, Mumps and Hollinwood. There are also Cycle Hubs at Mumps and Hollinwood. The rail network in Oldham provides connections to West Yorkshire and Manchester and beyond, with railway stations at Mills Hill and Greenfield. Oldham has an extensive walking and cycling network, including a Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network that covers around 450km and towpaths.

Energy

5.30 The Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership, funded via the DESNZ / GMCA Local Net Zero Accelerator programme will be a Joint Venture between the Council and a commercial low carbon energy infrastructure provider. The Delivery Partnership

[22] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/1599/oldham_town_centre_conservation_area_appraisal_and_management_plan_caamp_supplementary_planning_document_spd
[23] The Oldham Mills Strategy can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham_mills_strategy

will include key organisations from the private sector, the Oldham Partnership, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Electricity North West.

5.31 The project will focus on delivering the £5.6bn of low-carbon infrastructure Oldham needs to get to Net Zero, which is set out in Oldham's Local Area Energy Plan.

5.32 The Delivery Partnership initiative also aims to roll out the Community Led Energy Planning approach, piloted in Westwood and Sholver under the Oldham Energy Futures project.

5.33 Oldham will be the third local authority nationally to establish a Strategic Energy Partnership and will be the first to combine this approach with the delivery of a heat network zone as well as Community Led Energy Planning.

5.34 One of the anchor projects is a low carbon district heat network for Oldham Town Centre linking to Council assets and other key town centre asset owners as the core within a larger network.

5.35 A council-owned solar farm at Wrigley Head has also been approved and construction is underway.

5.36 The Council's main office has relocated to the spindles in an energy efficient fit out with long term plans to be zero carbon from electricity supplied from renewables.

6 Vision for Building a Better Oldham

Our Local Plan Vision

6.1 The vision for Oldham is that by 2039…

6.2 Oldham will have a clean, green and healthy environment. We will have responded to both the Biodiversity and Climate Change emergencies through the protection, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment and having a substantially reduced carbon footprint from meeting the Council's ambition to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. Oldham will be a carbon neutral exemplar with a resilient and multifunctional Green Infrastructure network which brings multiple benefits to the natural and built environment as well as to the health of its residents and visitors.

6.3 Through delivering at least 11,560 new homes of different sizes and types, including affordable housing, Oldham will have quality homes for everyone that meet the needs of Oldham's residents. New homes, delivered in sustainable and accessible locations, will contribute to inclusive and vibrant communities where everyone can live.

6.4 Oldham will be a key contributor to Greater Manchester's economy, with a strong reputation for clean growth and green innovation. It will be a place of dynamic businesses with better job opportunities, where those businesses local to Oldham are supported to thrive and grow, and those new to Oldham are attracted to invest. Every resident will be enabled to contribute to, and benefit from, economic growth of the city region providing significant progress in living standards, wages and skills for everyone in Oldham.

6.5 Oldham will have accessible and sustainable transport choices, providing improved connectivity across the borough, the city-region and beyond - for all. We will have an integrated transport system that enables the local economy to prosper and our residents to fully contribute to and benefit from job opportunities, and a comprehensive network of on and off-road walking, wheeling and cycling routes that encourage active travel, making it easier and safer for people to get to key local destinations.

6.6 Oldham Town Centre will be a place that thrives by combining a retail core with quality homes, opportunities to learn, develop new skills and gain employment, and a diverse culture, leisure and night-time offer that supports its local communities and attracts visitors. Oldham Town Centre will be supported by the borough's other centres – Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Shaw, Royton and Uppermill which will continue to provide a vital role in meeting the needs of the borough's communities, connecting our residents to local services and facilities in a way that fosters a sense of community and local identity.

6.7 Oldham residents will be healthy, safe and well-supported, having a great start from early years and with skills for life. They will have access to local community facilities and health and well-being provision and will have active and healthier lifestyles gained from access to active travel, green infrastructure and opportunities for sport and recreation.

6.8 Opportunities for excellent training and life-long education will be available to all Oldham residents, raising aspirations, reducing inequalities and tackling poverty. Providing residents with a great start and skills for life so that they can make the most of opportunities available to them, whilst meeting the needs for local businesses and helping to attract and retain new business opportunities.

6.9 New development will be net zero and in line with co-design expectations and design codes developed with Oldham's communities, whilst the key characteristics of Oldham's townscape and landscape types and Oldham's historic environment and rich heritage will be conserved and enhanced.

7 Plan Objectives

7.1 The following plan objectives will be central to achieving the spatial vision. The Local Plan Vision for Oldham up to 2039 will be achieved by:

PO1 Building quality homes to meet local needs and diversify the housing offer by:

- providing for, and supporting the delivery of, at least 11,560 new homes;
- delivering a diverse housing offer to meet the needs of all our residents including affordable housing and homes for families, older people and disabled people;
- ensuring the delivery of high-quality, sustainable and well-designed new homes; and
- ensuring appropriate densities and making the best and most effective use of brownfield land.

PO2 Providing opportunities to learn and gain new skills by:

- supporting the provision of suitable, modern services and facilities for the education and training of all age groups, including addressing the needs for primary and secondary school places; and
- encouraging employment and skills opportunities for local people as part of new developments.

PO3 Boosting northern competitiveness by providing access to employment opportunities and growing local businesses by:

- providing for, and supporting the delivery of, at least 57,481m² of office floorspace and at least 240,656m² of industrial and warehousing floorspace;
- protecting designated sites that are suitable and attractive for existing and new businesses to locate to and expand on;
- encouraging and facilitating the development of the borough's key economic sectors with a focus on clean growth and green technologies;
- supporting the expansion of digital infrastructure to assist economic growth; and
- supporting a range of sustainable leisure and tourism activities.

PO4 Supporting the regeneration of Oldham Town Centre and creating thriving centres by:

- supporting the delivery of the Oldham Town Centre Development Framework and appropriate plans or projects that facilitate the regeneration of the borough's other centres; and
- promoting and enhancing the vitality and viability of the borough's centres to ensure their long-term sustainability.

PO5 Protecting and enhancing Oldham's landscapes by:

- protecting and furthering the purposes of the Peak District National Park;
- promoting the positive use of the Green Belt;
- identifying Local Green Spaces and supporting their enhancement; and
- ensuring high quality new development makes a positive contribution to Oldham's landscape and townscape features and characteristics.

PO6 Protecting, restoring and enhancing the natural environment by:

- protecting and restoring core areas of wildlife;
- promoting nature recovery networks and improving connectivity in areas of lower biodiversity;

- using nature-based solutions to mitigate against, and be resilient to, climate change;
- delivering on the priorities for nature recovery within the Local Nature Recovery Strategy; and
- implementing Oldham's Green Infrastructure Strategy and supporting projects such as Northern Roots.

PO7 Promoting sustainable development that mitigates and adapts to climate change by:

- achieving high standards of sustainable design and construction;
- adopting a positive approach towards energy schemes and the identification of low carbon and renewable energy opportunities;
- reducing the risk of flooding to people and property taking into account climate change;
- managing flood risk using integrated water management and the provision of multi-functional green infrastructure;
- promoting the efficient use of water resources and water quality; and
- protecting and reinstating restorable peat, allowing it to act as an important carbon sink.

PO8 Uplifting the health and well-being of our residents and local communities by:

- facilitating and encouraging local and accessible health and well-being provision;
- protecting and enhancing access to, and providing for / or improved, open spaces, sports and recreation facilities, to meet the needs of new development and communities;
- supporting sport and recreation projects such as Oldham's SportsTown;
- providing spaces to grow food in new and existing communities, such as allotments and community gardens and connecting people to nature;
- supporting and protecting new and existing community facilities;
- reducing crime and fear of crime and promoting community safety, through good design of the built environment;
- improving air quality for the benefit of everyone; and
- providing and maintaining high standards of amenity and local environmental quality.

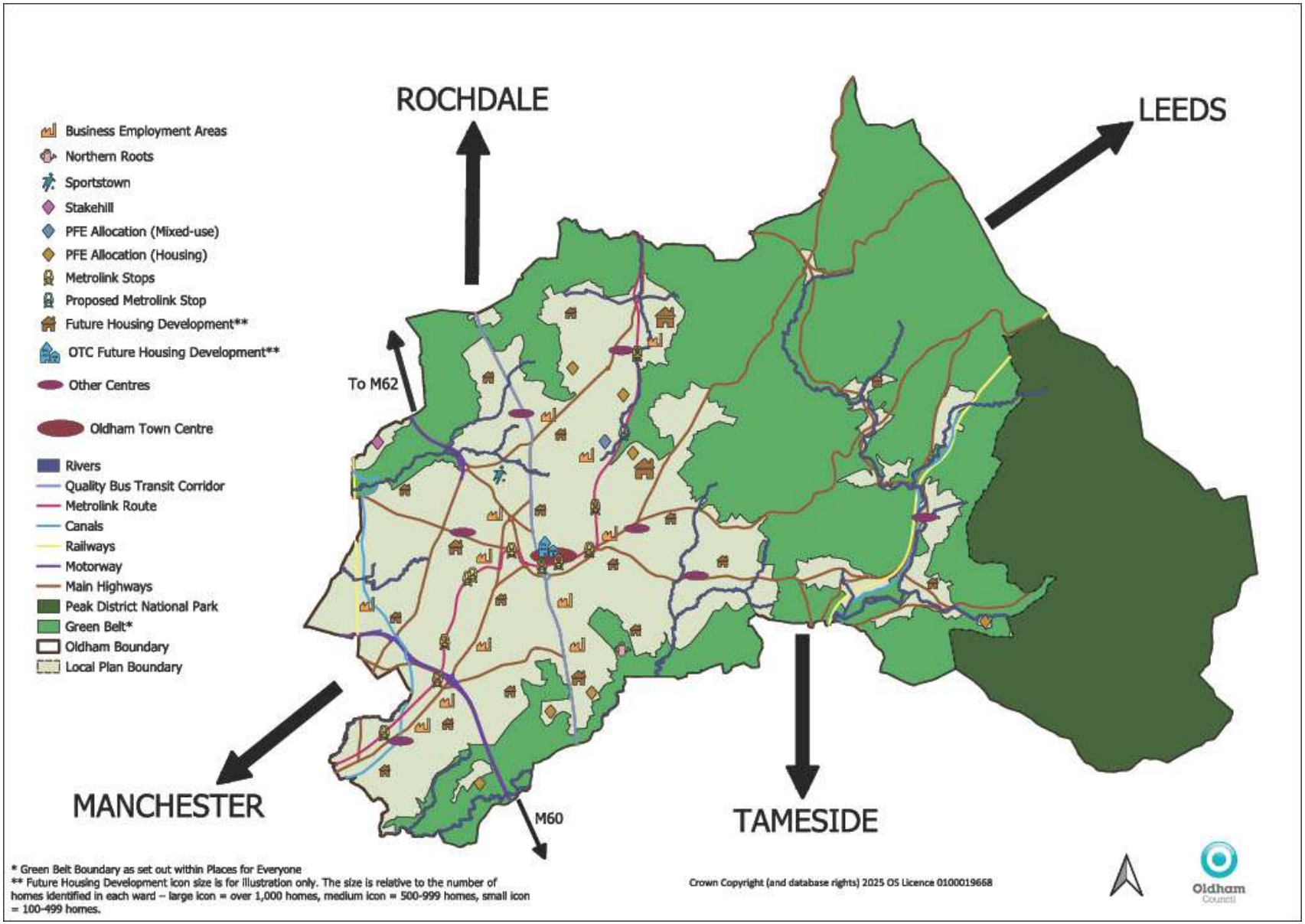
PO9 Improving and valuing a better historic and built environment, by:

- delivering high-quality design and placing greater emphasis on place-making, with buildings and spaces that respond positively to local distinctiveness and character;
- conserving and enhancing the borough's historic environment and heritage assets, including the borough's textile mills; and
- ensuring that proposals within Oldham Town Centre follows the recommendations set out in the Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Management Plan with the aim of removing the Conservation Area from the 'at-risk' register.

PO10 Promoting accessible and sustainable transport choices, by:

- supporting delivery of Oldham's Transport Strategy and the Right Mix approach to encourage active travel (walking, wheeling and cycling) and an increase in travel by sustainable modes;
- reducing the need to travel by car through ensuring new development is located in areas with access to public transport, local services and facilities; and
- improving public transport connectivity for Oldham's residents to key areas of employment within the borough, the city region and beyond.

Key Diagram


ROCHDALE
LEEDS
To M62
MANCHESTER
M60
TAMESIDE
Business Employment Areas
Northern Roots
Sportstown
Stakehill
PFE Allocation (Mixed-use)
PFE Allocation (Housing)
Metrolink Stops
Proposed Metrolink Stop
Future Housing Development**
OTC Future Housing Development**
Other Centres
Oldham Town Centre
Rivers
Quality Bus Transit Corridor
Metrolink Route
Canals
Railways
Motorway
Main Highways
Peak District National Park
Green Belt*
Oldham Boundary
Local Plan Boundary
* Green Belt Boundary as set out within Places for Everyone
** Future Housing Development icon size is for illustration only. The size is relative to the number of homes identified in each ward – large icon = over 1,000 homes, medium icon = 500-999 homes, small icon = 100-499 homes.
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Oldham Council

8 Homes

8.1 Oldham has a strong housing market, offering a unique draw for residents by having a wealth of green spaces and open countryside, whilst being well-connected to Manchester City Centre and neighbouring towns. Despite the positive characteristics the ever-increasing need for housing has meant there is a shortage of suitable housing to meet local needs. Like other Greater Manchester borough's, the industrial legacy has meant some of Oldham's existing housing stock is not suitable to meet current needs and new housing needs to be built.

8.2 Every Oldham resident should have access to good quality, suitable housing. Housing is a significant determinant for health and wellbeing and is a draw for investment and employment opportunities. The construction of new homes can contribute to the local economy and generate local employment opportunities.

8.3 The Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) (2024)[24] has assessed current housing provision and future needs and has found that there are imbalances in the size, mix and type of new homes required across the borough to meet local housing needs. There is also increasing numbers of people at risk of, or currently experiencing, homelessness in the borough. In addition, there is an outward migration of young people in the borough, as such there is a need to ensure there is an attractive housing offer available in the borough to retain and attract young people. There are also issues of overcrowding in some of Oldham's neighbourhoods, an increased need for larger inter-generational family housing, and an increasing ageing population and a need for housing suitable for disabled people.

8.4 It is important that the Local Plan ensures a diverse range of housing that is attractive and meets the needs of different sections of the population at different life stages.

[24] Policies within this section have been informed by the evidence set out within the 2024 Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA). The document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/5590/housing_strategy_needs_assessment

Policy H1 - Delivering a Diverse and Sustainable Housing Offer

The Council will promote a diverse housing offer to meet the differing needs of all Oldham's residents.

Oldham's minimum local housing need (the number of new homes needed) is set out in Policy JP-H1 of PfE.

PfE sets out that Oldham is required to deliver at least 11,560 homes over the period of 2022-2039, which equates to an average of 680 homes per year. The housing requirement is phased through a stepped housing requirement as set out in Table H1.

Table H1 Phasing of Housing Requirement[25]

	Annual Average	2022-2025	2025-2030	2030-2039	Total
Number of homes required	680	404	680	772	11,560

Planning applications for residential development, in whole or as part of a mixed-use scheme, will be permitted where the proposed development is consistent with national planning policy and guidance, PfE and other Local Plan policies. Proposals for the development of previously developed land will be considered favourably.

The Council will support residential development proposals that are in sustainable and accessible locations and that promote and encourage use of public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling. All residential development should be accessible by active travel and achieve Greater Manchester Accessibility Level (GMAL)[26] 4 or above. In all cases, distances should be measured from the centre of the application site. This requirement should be met unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant that it is not appropriate, or the development provides exceptional benefits to the surrounding environment and community.

Reasoned Justification

8.5 The Council will support sustainable housing development for all housing need groups where it complies with national planning policy and guidance, the policies within PfE and this Plan.

8.6 Oldham's minimum housing requirement for 2022-2039 is set out within PfE Policy JP-H1.

8.7 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)[27] and Brownfield Register[28] provide details of sites considered suitable, available and achievable for residential development, and should be used as a starting point to identify potential development sites. Sites may be allocated for residential development in a future development plan document.

[25] Adapted from PfE policy JP-H1 Table 7.2.
[26] Or any future measures of accessibility that become available and are relevant to assessing the accessibility of development.
[27] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201230/monitoring/2134/strategic_housing_land_availability_assessment_shlaa
[28] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/homepage/1386/brownfield_land_register

8.8 The redevelopment of brownfield land is central to achieving sustainable development and maximising our housing land supply. The Council will encourage the redevelopment of suitable brownfield land. The majority of sites identified within the SHLAA are brownfield, however there are also a number of sites which are made up of both brownfield and greenfield land, and also some greenfield sites. It is important in meeting our housing requirement and addressing local needs, that we deliver all sites within our housing land supply. This policy will also support the delivery of the housing on other suitable sites that may become available.

8.9 Ensuring that new residential development is sustainably located is essential in encouraging the use of sustainable travel alternatives, reducing climate change and supporting healthy communities.

8.10 Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels (GMAL) are a detailed and accurate measure of the accessibility of a point to both the conventional public transport network (i.e. bus, Metrolink and rail) and Greater Manchester's Local Link (flexible transport service), taking into account walking time and service availability. The method is a way of measuring the density of the public transport provision at any location within the Greater Manchester region. The GMAL measure reflects:

- Walking time from the point-of interest to the public transport access points;
- The number of services (bus, Metrolink and Rail) available within the catchment;
- The level of service at the public transport access points - i.e. average waiting time; and
- The operating areas of Local Link (flexible transport) services.

8.11 Areas are scored on a scale of 1 to 8, with 8 being the most accessible. GMAL scores are published online at data.gov.uk. Public transport accessibility will be regularly monitored and updated, as necessary, over the life of the local plan. Other measures of transport accessibility may be used for this policy in the future, as and when they become available, which could replace GMAL.

Policy H2 - Density of New Housing

It is important in making the most efficient use of land, to achieve appropriate densities on residential developments. In line with PfE Policy JP-H4, new residential developments should achieve the minimum densities set out in Table H2 below.

Table H2: Minimum Densities for Residential Developments[29]

Location (use highest density that applies when a site falls within more than one location)[30]	**Minimum net residential density (dwellings per hectare)**	**Minimum net residential density (dwellings per hectare)**	**Minimum net residential density (dwellings per hectare)**
Designated Centres	*Within the location*	*Within 400m*	*Within 800m*
Oldham Town Centre	120	70	50
The borough's other centres (Lees, Hill Stores (Huddersfield Road), Failsworth, Chadderton, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill)	70	50	35
Public transport stops/ hubs	*Within the location*	*Within 400m*	*Within 800m*
Metrolink stops within Oldham Town Centre	N/a	120	70
Rail stations with a frequent service (Greenfield and Mills Hill Stations) and all other Metrolink stops	N/a	70	50
Areas within GMAL 6[31] and above or its equivalent	50	35	35

Outside of the areas identified within Table H2 above, a minimum density of 35 dph will be applied.

[29] Adapted from PfE Policy JP-H4 – Density of New Housing (Places for Everyone).
[30] Where more than one density applies to the same part of the site, the highest density should be used. Different densities may apply to different parts of the site. Distances should be measured from the boundary of the designated centre or GMAL area. All distances are measured in a straight line.
[31] GMAL is an abbreviation of Greater Manchester Accessibility Level, which measures the accessibility of locations across Greater Manchester by walking and public transport. Areas are scored on a scale of 1-8, with 8 being the most accessible. GMAL scores are published online at data.gov.uk and are available on MappingGM.

In some circumstances exceptions to the minimum densities may apply, such as:

- **to meet a funding requirement or to deliver a particular housing need[32];**
- **to respond to specific site characteristics (i.e. flood risk, design context, heritage assets, green infrastructure); and**
- **to provide for specialist housing accommodation (i.e. extra care housing, bungalows).**

The Council will assess this on a site-by-site basis and only allow exceptions where necessary.

To help assess and monitor the density of residential development, planning applications should provide the gross and net developable area of the proposed housing development in hectares.

Reasoned Justification

8.12 Ensuring brownfield land is used efficiently means that less land will be required for housing, thereby assisting the protection of our green spaces. PfE Policy JP-H4 sets out minimum densities for developments relative to their accessibility to public transport and key services. This policy sets out the requirements of JP-H4 as relevant to Oldham - defining Oldham's centres and public transport stops.

8.13 Increasing the densities of development in appropriate locations will help reduce the need to travel by car, as more people will live closer to shops, services and public transport links, enabling more active travel. Increasing densities for development within our town centres will also support the regeneration of them, creating centres where people can live, work and partake in leisure activities.

8.14 To achieve an appropriate mix of housing, developments should include the provision of houses and/or apartments having regard to the following assumptions:

a. 35-70 dwellings per hectare: primarily houses.

b. 70-120 dwellings per hectare: mix of houses and apartments.

c. 120+ dwellings per hectare: primarily apartments, incorporating houses and/or ground floor duplexes where practicable.

8.15 In some circumstances, developments may be allowed to be built at lower densities to the minimum densities, relative to their location, set out in Table H2. Examples of circumstances where this may be acceptable are set out within the policy. The Council will assess this on a site-by-site basis and only allow exceptions where necessary and fully evidenced.

[32] As informed by local evidence, such as the LHNA (2024), or subsequent updates.

Policy H3 - Housing Mix

New residential developments should contribute to a diverse housing mix across the borough, ensuring that Oldham's housing needs can be met.

Oldham's Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA)[33] provides evidence in relation to housing mix, including tenure, bed size and house type. Table H3 (reasoned justification) identifies the recommended housing mix for all tenures[34].

It is important to ensure that new housing development contributes to meeting the need for level-access homes and bungalows. Level-access homes will come forward as part of the overall housing mix, especially within town centres and highly sustainable locations, in line with Policy H2.

For some developments an alternative housing mix to what is set out in Table H3 may be appropriate, including in the circumstances listed below:

1. **It can be clearly evidenced that an alternative mix is required in relation to specific funding requirements and the proposed development is still able to contribute to meeting local housing needs;**
2. **It can be clearly demonstrated that the site has distinct characteristics that make an identified housing mix inappropriate or impracticable, such as flood risk, design context, impact on heritage assets;**
3. **The development is for specialist accommodation, such as for older and/ or disabled people, or there is a demonstrable need for different types of homes that cannot be delivered at a particular density (for example bungalows or residential institutions); and/ or**
4. **There is a need to vary existing housing mix in the locality of the proposed development, for example, to provide smaller or larger house sizes.**

Alternative housing mix for development should be agreed with the Council at the earliest opportunity, ideally through seeking pre-application advice. All mix requirements shall be rounded to the nearest full dwelling once the relevant proportion has been applied.

The Council will also support the delivery of housing for Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding.

Reasoned Justification

8.16 The Council will support the delivery of a mix of housing suitable to meet a range of housing needs and which provides housing choice and diversity. This can include family housing, smaller housing for single people and couples, bungalows and level-access homes, and plots for Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding.

8.17 The LHNA (2024) provides evidence relating to housing need and mix. Table H3 below identifies the recommended overall housing mix by size/ type and tenure. The mix is

[33] LHNA 2024, or future updates.
[34] Where necessary, housing mix will be updated over the lifetime of the Local Plan in line with updated local evidence.

presented as a range to ensure flexibility. The table should be used to inform the housing mix for new development across the borough.

Table H3: Summary of Overall Recommended Dwelling Type/ Size and Mix by Tenure[35]

Dwelling type/size	Market	Affordable/ Social rented	Affordable home ownership	Total
Overall % split	**80%**	**12%**	**8%**	**100%**
Dwelling type				
House	70-75%	35-40%	65-70%	60-65%
Flat	2-5%	30-35%	15-20%	10-15%
Bungalow/level-access	25-30%	30-35%	15-20%	25-30%
Size (bedrooms)				
1 to 2	30-35%	70-75%	35-40%	40-45%
3	40-45%	20-25%	40-45%	35-40%
4+	25-30%	5-10%	20-25%	20-25%

8.18 Table 5.2 in the LHNA[36] provides a further breakdown of the recommended housing mix for each tenure by district, including for Oldham Town Centre.

8.19 A significant proportion of Oldham's housing land supply is expected to be delivered within Oldham Town Centre. As such, it is important that this housing is attractive, diverse and contributes to meeting Oldham's housing needs. In line with policy H2, the majority of housing within Oldham Town Centre will be for apartments, ensuring an appropriate density is achieved. However, the LHNA has also identified a need for houses, including larger homes of 3 and 4 beds[37]. Future developments should consider the existing housing mix and aim to provide a diverse mix of house types across the town centre.

8.20 In terms of affordable housing, the LHNA identifies that a broad mix of dwelling sizes is required. For affordable/ social rented homes a similar proportion should be provided of all house types, with a slightly higher need for houses. This housing should mainly be for smaller house sizes of 1 to 2 bedrooms (72%), with a smaller proportion provided for larger homes (23% 3 bedrooms and 5% 4+ bedrooms). For affordable home ownership, the majority should be houses, with a smaller amount provided for flats and bungalows/ level-access homes. This housing should mainly be for 1 to 2 bedrooms (37%) and 3 bedrooms (43%) with a smaller amount provided for larger homes of 4+ bedrooms (21%).

Bungalows and Level-access Homes

[35] Adapted from Table 5.1 of the LHNA (2024). Tables 5.1 and 5.2 of the LHNA provide further guidance on the recommended housing mix by tenure and by district.
[36] See LHNA (2024) Table 5.2 'Overall dwelling type/size mix recommendations by tenure by district'.
[37] See Table 5.2 (LHNA 2024).

8.21 The LHNA has identified a need for level-access homes and bungalows to meet the needs of older people and disabled people. The LHNA has identified that approximately 25 to 30% of the overall housing mix should be for level-access homes or bungalows, to meet local housing needs. There is a greater need for bungalows/ level access homes of affordable/ social rented tenures, compared to market homes and affordable home ownership. The area with the greatest need for level-access homes is the north district.

8.22 It is important that new housing development contributes to this need. Level-access homes/ apartments will come forward as part of the housing land supply, particularly in our town centres and sustainable locations in line with policy H2.

8.23 The Council will also encourage new developments to incorporate the provision of bungalows or level-access homes into the overall housing mix.

Housing Standards

8.24 In terms of house sizes, as set out within PfE Policy JP-H3, all new homes must comply with the nationally described space standards. It is important that houses are safe and suitable for residents and can contribute to a good standard of living. Exceptions to the application of the described space standards apply, as is set out in national planning policy and guidance.

8.25 In addition, in line with PfE Policy JP-H3, all new homes must be built to the 'accessible and adaptable' standard in Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations unless specific site conditions make this impracticable. These will be determined by the Council on a case-by-case basis.

Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding

8.26 There is a need to provide a range of house types, including opportunities for those individuals or groups wishing to build their own homes, to ensure Oldham has an attractive and varied housing offer.

8.27 The Council will support planning applications for the delivery of homes for Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding where the proposed development is compliant with national planning policy and guidance, the policies within PfE and this Plan.

8.28 As required by national planning policy, the Council maintain a Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register of individuals or groups seeking plots to build their own homes within the borough. To ensure availability, where plots are provided as part of larger development schemes, developers should ensure that the plots are actively marketed at an appropriate price, and the information be provided to the Council to be distributed to all appropriate individuals on the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register.

Policy H4 - Providing for Local Housing Needs

The Local Plan will support the delivery of housing, which is suitable for residents with specialist housing needs, including housing suitable for older people, disabled people, looked after children and care leavers.

Specialist housing provision should have easy access to community facilities, local services and public transport, and be well integrated within the wider neighbourhood.

The Council will seek to secure a range of housing options for older people and disabled people, by:

a. **Requiring all new homes to be built to the 'accessible and adaptable' standard in Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations[38];**
b. **Supporting physical home adaptions and improvements to existing specialist accommodation, where there are no unacceptable impacts on the amenity of neighbouring properties;**
c. **Supporting the development of new specialist accommodation and supported housing, including:**
    i. **Age-restricted general market housing;**
    ii. **Extra Care Housing;**
    iii. **Sheltered Housing/ Assisted Living; and**
    iv. **Nursing and Care Homes.**

Specialist housing provision of 10 homes and above are expected to provide affordable housing, in line with Local Plan Policy H5.

The development of housing for older people and disabled people, should be guided by the following principles:

a. **Promote ease of movement on foot and with mobility aids;**
b. **Be sustainably located, with access to public transport, local services and facilities (including a hospital or GP practice), accessible to the development via active travel means;**
c. **Feature parking spaces and setting down points in proximity to entrances; and**
d. **Have accessible and appropriately designed built environments, including seating areas, step free spaces and gentle approaches suitable for wheelchair users and people with visual or mobility impairments.**

The delivery of housing for children and care leavers will be supported where the proposed development is compliant with other policies in PfE and the Local Plan, and:

[38] In accordance with PfE Policy JP-H3.

e. **Is in a sustainable and accessible location, with easy access to education facilities, public transport and open space, sport and recreation;**

f. **Provides appropriate accommodation for the number of proposed occupiers and their needs; and**

g. **Gives priority to children and young people from Oldham in the first instance, in line with local need.**

For the development of all specialist housing provision, early discussions with the Council through pre-application advice are encouraged to discuss local housing needs. Regard should be had to the evidence of housing need set out within the Local Housing Needs Assessment, and other local evidence, for specialist need groups. Where appropriate, provision should be delivered via a specialist provider or other appropriate body.

Reasoned Justification

8.29 This policy supports the delivery of housing, which is suitable for residents with specialist housing needs, including housing suitable for older people, disabled people[39], looked after children and care leavers. Specialist housing provision should be sustainably located, in line with Local Plan Policy H1, and well-integrated into existing communities.

Older People and Disabled People

8.30 Oldham has an ageing population. Oldham Council's Market Position Statement (MPS) identifies that there are approximately 39,000 people aged 65 and over living in Oldham currently, which is expected to increase by 26.62% to over 49,500 people by 2040. Also, the number of people in Oldham over the age of 85 is projected to increase by 43% by 2040. Between 2023 and 2040 there is an expected increase of 38.4% in people over 65 with dementia.

8.31 As a result, there will be an increase in the number of people needing care and also the care needed will become increasingly complex. The LHNA has identified a net need for:

- 3,139 additional specialist older persons dwellings over the period 2022 to 2041 or 165 each year;
- a need for 955 C2 Extra Care units or 50 each year; and
- 775 C2 residential care bedspaces or 41 each year.

8.32 There is a particular need for leasehold sheltered housing, enhanced sheltered, and Extra Care housing for sale.

8.33 There is also a need to build more adapted, or adaptable, accommodation so that people can be supported at home for as long as possible (51% of over 65s would prefer

[39] Including people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and mental health needs.

to be at home with support). Oldham's Adult Social Care Team can assist in supporting people to 'Live Well at Home'[40].

8.34 There is expected to be an increase in the number of households experiencing a disability in Oldham over the plan period. The LHNA identified that around 48,800 people reported as experiencing a disability in 2022 - this represented 20% of households in Oldham. This is expected to increase by 14.7% by 2041, which represents an additional 7,200 people experiencing an illness or disability[41].

8.35 In particular, the MPS identifies that in 2023 there were estimated to be 795 adults with a moderate or severe learning disability in Oldham – this is expected to increase by over 6% to 846 adults in 2040. There is also expected to be an increase over the plan period in the number of people with autism spectrum disorders and people experiencing a mental health disorder.

8.36 There is a need for more wheelchair accessible homes and appropriate housing for those with other physical disabilities, dementia, a learning disability and mental health disorders. The LHNA has identified a need for 5% of new dwellings to be built to the M4(3) wheelchair accessible standard (an average target of around 34 per year over the plan period).

8.37 PfE Policy JP-H3 requires all new homes to be built to the 'accessible and adaptable' standard in Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations. Accessible and adaptable housing enables people to live more independently, whilst also saving on health and social costs in the future.

8.38 The definitions of provision that is suitable for older people, including the level of care that is associated with the provision, is set out in Planning Practice Guidance[42]. There is a significant amount of variability in the types of specialist housing for older people. The list provided within the policy is an indication of the different types of housing available but is not definitive. Any single development may contain a range of different types of specialist housing.

8.39 It is recognised that provision for older people may also be suitable for those with disability in some circumstances, especially where the disabled resident is of an older age. However, there is a need for suitable provision for disabled people who are not within this group, who are able to live independently or semi-independently and those living in their own homes. There is also a particular need for suitable accommodation for young adults and those with complex behavioural needs.

8.40 Inclusive design is integral to ensuring provision is fit for purpose and reflects the needs of its users. Planning Guidance has informed the inclusive design principles set out in points 1 to 5 of the policy. In addition, the HAPPI Principles[43] are a good starting point for designing provision suitable for older people and disabled people:

- Integration with the surrounding context
- Social spaces that link with the community
- Space standards that facilitate flexibility

[40] Further information on the 'Live Well at Home' agenda and access to support is available at: https://livingwellathome.co.uk/ and https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200369/live_at_home
[41] LHNA (2024), data interpreted from ONS Family Resources Survey 2018/19 and ONS 2018-based population projections.
[42] This guidance can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-for-older-and-disabled-people
[43] This document can be viewed at: https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/Design-building/HAPPI/

- Enhanced natural light
- Priority for pedestrians in outdoor spaces

8.41 Accessible and adaptable housing will provide safe and convenient approach routes into and out of the home and outside areas, suitable circulation space and suitable bathroom and kitchens within the home. Wheelchair user homes include additional features to meet the needs of occupants who use wheelchairs or allow for adaptations to meet such needs.

Children and Young People

8.42 Caring for looked after children is a key part of the Council's role. A children's residential care home falls within Class C2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). Such uses are intended for the provision of care and are therefore governed by the provisions of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015. A child may live in a residential care home up to the age of 18 if their needs are judged to require the provision of care as defined by the Regulations.

8.43 There is a need to ensure that suitable housing is available for all looked after children, with a range of housing options, including smaller group homes and homes suitable for children with disabilities.

8.44 Provision for looked after children should reflect the needs of the occupants. It should be sustainably and accessibly located and integrated into the local community. Provision should also be of an appropriate size for the number of proposed occupiers and meet their housing needs, including ensuring any necessary adaptions are in place to support children with disabilities.

8.45 The delivery of appropriate housing options for support care leavers[44] is important to support the increasing numbers of young people moving from the care system into independence[45]. For some, this housing might be supported group living accommodation, homes in multiple occupation (with or without a care element), or an affordable flat or house. The Local Plan will support the delivery of housing, which is suitable for care leavers, where it is compliant with other relevant policies.

8.46 Oldham Council has a Care Leavers After Care Team which supports care leavers to find a suitable home, access employment, education and training opportunities and provide support and advice in relation to health and wellbeing and finance.

8.47 Housing provision for children and care leavers should also comply with the necessary regulations.

8.48 It is important that any provision within Oldham supports local housing needs. In terms of any proposed development for children and care leavers - applicants should liaise with the Council at the earliest opportunity to ensure priority is given to children and young people from Oldham in the first instance, in line with local housing need.

[44] A 'care leaver' is defined by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 as someone aged 16 or 17 who has been looked after by a local authority for a prescribed period, or periods amounting in all to a prescribed period, which began after they reached a prescribed age and ended after he reached the age of 16.
[45] Local Authorities are required to prepare a pathway of support for when they cease to look after them, which can include helping them to find suitable housing to meet their needs.

Policy H5 - Affordable Housing

The Local Plan will ensure that a diverse type and tenure of affordable housing is provided to accommodate all households in need. Affordable housing will be provided alongside other tenures of housing, pepper potted throughout the site to ensure balanced and mixed communities.

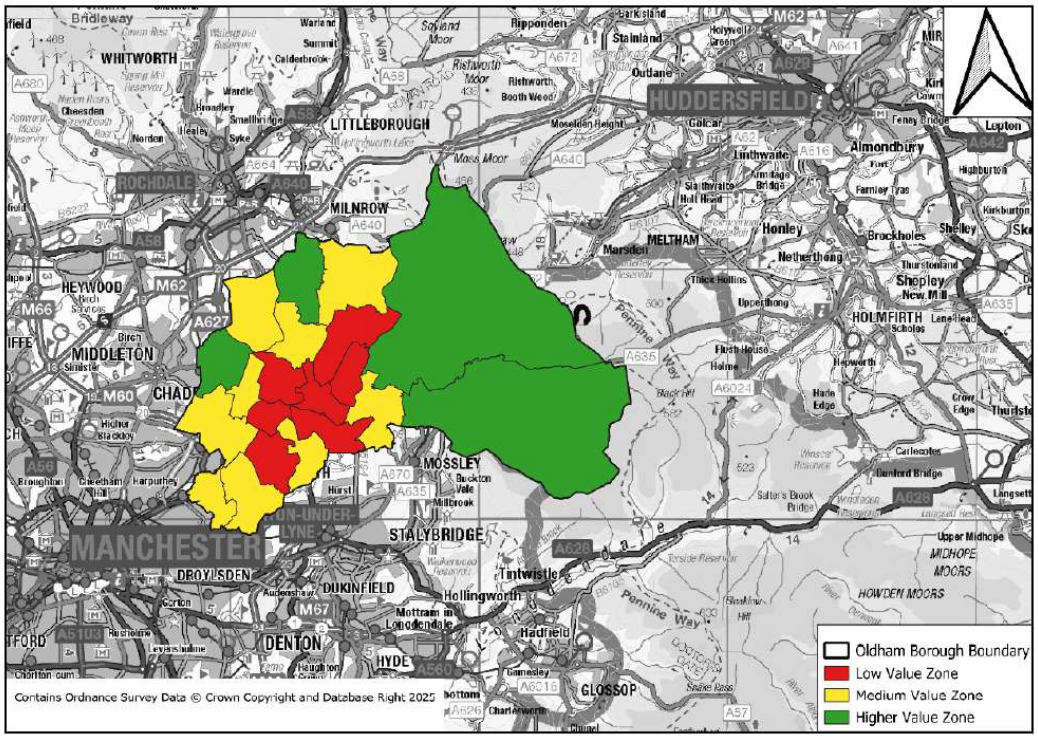
Amount, Type and Tenure of Affordable Housing

All developments that provide 10 or more net additional homes[46], will be required to deliver an appropriate portion of the total site capacity as affordable housing[47] in line with the value area in which the site is located and the land type – as set out in Table H4. A map of the borough's value areas is provided at Figure H1.

Table H4: Affordable Housing Requirements

Value Area	Brownfield Land	Greenfield Land
High Value	20% of site capacity	25% of site capacity
Medium and Low Value	10% of site capacity	10% of site capacity

Figure H1: Oldham's Value Areas[48]



[46] Developments of less than 10 dwellings are not generally required to provide affordable housing unless they form part of a rural exception site.

[47] Affordable housing as defined in Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

[48] Source: AspinallVerdi, QGIS December 2025

In line with the evidence set out in the Local Housing Needs Assessment, the tenure split for new affordable housing should be provided as follows[49]:

- **25% affordable rented;**
- **35% affordable home ownership; and**
- **40% social rented.**

Exemptions to this tenure mix apply where the proposed development:

a) **Provides solely for Build to Rent homes[50];**
b) **Provides specialist housing to meet local housing needs;**
c) **A specific tenure mix is required to meet funding requirements;**
d) **Is exclusively for self-build or custom-build; or**
e) **Is exclusively for affordable housing or is an exception site[51].**

Policy H3 identifies the house type and size recommendations for affordable housing (see Table H3). The applicant is required to evidence an alternative tenure split or mix, considering local affordable housing needs. Any proposed alternatives will be agreed with the Council at planning application stage.

The tenure split set out above, and the housing mix set out within Policy H3, will be reviewed as part of future updates of the Local Housing Needs Assessment or other evidence, as appropriate.

All affordable housing requirements shall be rounded up to the nearest full dwelling once the relevant proportion has been applied.

Affordable Housing Delivery

Developments should provide affordable housing onsite. However, by exception, it may be more appropriate, in meeting local needs for the payment of a commuted sum/ developer contribution to off-site provision, or a mixture of onsite/off-site provision. Off-site contributions should provide the number of units that would have been delivered on site.

The value of any commuted sum/ developer contribution shall be calculated in negotiation with the Council and a registered affordable housing provider. Relevant evidence, such as the LHNA, will be used to assist the calculation of a contribution, where relevant.

Where appropriate, affordable housing will be secured in perpetuity to retain the benefits of affordability for initial and subsequent owners and occupiers. This will be secured by conditions or planning obligations (see Policy IN2).

[49] These tenure requirements have been rounded based on evidence set out in the LHNA 2024. These requirements may be updated in line with future updates of the LHNA, or other relevant evidence.
[50] All Build to Rent homes should be provided in line with the definitions set out in Annex 2 of NPPF. Build to Rent schemes are required to provide affordable housing, with Affordable Private Rent (APR) being the normal and preferred tenure for on-site provision.
[51] Including community-led development exception sites, First Homes exception sites or rural exception sites. Any exception sites should meet the relevant requirements set out within NPPF and/ or PPG, and relevant local plan policies.

The affordable homes provided will be offered to those on the Council's affordable housing need register in the first instance and in line with the local authority's local connection test[52], to ensure the affordable homes provided help address the borough's affordable housing need.

Exceptional Circumstances

Whilst it is important to ensure the delivery of affordable housing to meet local needs, there may be some exceptions to providing the full amount of affordable housing required (either on or off-site)[53]. The following exceptions may be acceptable, at the Council's discretion on a case-by-case basis:

1. **There is a high level of existing affordable housing and there is a need to diversify the housing offer in a particular location (to be agreed with the Council); and**

2. **Developments which involve the conversion or demolition of a vacant building, through the application of Vacant Building Credit (VBC), to support viability. In determining whether VBC applies, the Council will assess the evidence submitted by the applicant and its compliance with the criteria set out in PPG[54].**

Reasoned Justification

8.49 The Local Plan will ensure a diverse mix of quality housing, which is affordable for local residents, is provided by working with partners and registered providers.

8.50 Oldham's existing affordable housing stock is not able to accommodate the demand. Nor is the existing stock suitable for all types of people in need of affordable housing. In the current economic climate, including the increasing cost of living, the need for affordable housing continues to increase in Oldham, and across the country.

8.51 The LHNA (2024) has found that there is a shortfall of affordable housing across the borough, which equates to a need for approximately 669 additional affordable homes each year over the next 10 years[55]. Whilst PPG is clear that only a portion of this need will be met through the planning system, it emphasises the significance of affordable housing need in Oldham. Also, when this need is compared to the findings of the previous LHNA (2019), which identified a need for approximately 204 additional affordable homes each year, it is clear that the need for affordable housing is increasing.

8.52 There are disparities in the affordability of housing in parts of the borough, with some areas distinctly lacking adequate affordable housing provision to meet local needs. There are deficiencies in smaller accommodation in the form of 2 and 3 bed houses. However, this is indicative of a lack of choice in the market and respondents'

[52] Further information on the Councils housing needs register and the criteria of the local connection test are available within the Oldham Council Allocation Scheme.
[53] In line with Local Plan Policy IN2.
[54] See Planning Practice Guidance 'Planning Obligations' – paragraphs 26-28 – for vacant building credit criteria: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-obligations
[55] As set out within the LHNA (2024) the ten-year period modelling aligns with the affordable need calculation methodology – see table C7.

expectations, as Oldham's local housing register indicates a need for larger family housing in certain areas of the borough also.

8.53 There are issues with attracting and retaining young professionals and families. In some parts of the borough, there are not enough affordable homes for people to live in the area in which they grew up, leading to an out-migration of these households to neighbouring boroughs. There is also a lack of smaller single person affordable housing and affordable housing for older people and disabled people. Suitable affordable housing should also be provided for key workers.

8.54 National Planning Policy Annex 2 'Glossary'[56] defines affordable housing as housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers)[57]. This includes Social Rent, other affordable housing for rent, discounted market sales housing and other routes to home ownership, including shared ownership and Rent to Buy.

8.55 To ensure that affordable housing is provided where it is most needed and to account for viability challenges within the borough, the affordable housing requirement for new residential (or mixed-use) development is variable. The amount of the total site capacity which is required to be delivered as affordable housing is varied, informed by the value area within which the site is located and the land type of the site as set out in Table H4.

8.56 Generally, greenfield sites are more viable than brownfield sites, as are sites within high value areas compared to those within low value areas. The policy requirement reflects this.

8.57 In addition, the varied requirement aims to rebalance the lack of affordable housing in several areas of the borough, including high and medium value areas. The LHNA has identified a need for affordable housing within these areas, particularly to ensure that people who have grown up there can afford to buy their own homes. There is also a need for affordable family housing and larger homes in these areas.

8.58 The affordable housing requirements should be considered as a minimum. The Council support and encourage higher proportions of affordable housing to be provided, including sites which are fully for affordable housing.

8.59 The tenure of affordable housing should be provided in line with the mix set out within the policy, which is based on local evidence[58]. The mix is informed by evidence of affordable tenure preferences and incomes of existing and newly forming households. It also takes account of the increased government emphasis on delivering social rented affordable housing and Oldham Council's commitment to delivering social housing.

8.60 The LHNA has identified that social rent is the only affordable housing option available to people in Oldham on lower incomes. Households of medium income earners have access to a broader range of affordable housing, such as affordable rent and affordable home ownership options. As such, it is important that housing is delivered at a price which is affordable to local people, and our affordable housing supply should support this.

[56] This annex can be found at: National Planning Policy Framework - Annex 2: Glossary - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

[57] This definition should be read in conjunction with relevant policy, including that of First Homes, as set out in the Affordable Homes Update Written Ministerial Statement published on 24 May 2021. There is no longer a requirement to provide a certain amount of affordable housing as First Homes as is clarified in footnote 33 in NPPF.

[58] As identified in the LHNA (2024) or other subsequent updates/ local evidence. The tenure mix has been rounded based on the evidence set out within the LHNA (see table C13 of the LHNA 2024).

8.61 Policy H3 (Table H3) identifies the affordable housing mix (house type and size) which should inform development proposals for affordable housing. For affordable/ social rent the mix is identified as follows:

- 35-40% houses, 30-35% flats and 30-35% bungalow/ level-access.
- 70-75% 1 to 2 bedroomed, 20-25% 3 bedroomed and 5-10% 4+ bedroomed.

8.62 For affordable home ownership the mix is identified as follows:

- 65-70% houses, 15-20% flats and 15-20% bungalow/ level-access.
- 35-40% 1 to 2 bedroomed, 40-45% 3 bedroomed and 20-25% 4+ bedroomed.

8.63 Exceptions to the identified tenure split (and mix) may apply in certain circumstances and where evidenced, as set out in the policy.

8.64 Affordable housing requirements (Table 4), tenure and mix will be kept under review throughout the lifetime of the Plan and will be updated as appropriate, through supporting guidance if needed, in line with updated local evidence.

8.65 Early discussions with the Council and registered providers are encouraged, preferably at the pre-application stage, to ensure that affordable housing provision will meet relevant requirements and standards.

8.66 As is set out in the policy, affordable housing should be provided onsite. This will support the delivery of balanced and sustainable communities. Affordable housing should be well integrated into developments, being pepper-potted throughout the development alongside market housing, where appropriate. It should not be obvious which homes are affordable compared to market housing. The design principles set out within Policy D1 will apply to all types of housing.

8.67 The Council can support developers in engaging with registered providers and to access funding opportunities to support the delivery of affordable housing as part of development.

8.68 By exception, the payment of a commuted sum/ developer contribution to off-site provision, or a mixture of onsite/off-site provision, may be acceptable to meet local housing needs. Contributions towards off-site provision should be sufficient to provide the number of affordable units that would have been delivered on site. The value of any commuted sum/ developer contribution towards off-site provision shall be calculated in negotiation with the Council and a registered affordable housing provider and considering relevant evidence – including that set out in the LHNA relating to tenure costs and household income[59].

8.69 Where necessary, the provision of affordable housing will be secured in perpetuity through a Section 106 agreement. The agreement will specify the timing for delivery of the homes and/ or the payment schedule of commuted sums. Any future variation to an affordable housing contribution must be done in line with the terms set out in the agreement. This is to ensure we have a constant supply of affordable homes available for those in need.

8.70 Where necessary and fully evidenced, exceptions to providing the full amount of affordable housing may apply, as set out in the policy. Policy IN2 provides further detail on planning obligations and viability.

[59] See tables 3.7 and 3.8 of the LHNA (2024).

8.71 One exception to providing the full amount of affordable housing includes through the application of VBC. VBC allows for a deduction of a financial 'credit', equivalent to the existing gross floorspace of any relevant existing vacant buildings within the redline boundary of the application site brought back into lawful use or demolished for redevelopment, from the overall affordable housing contribution.

8.72 The aim of VBC is to stimulate the development of vacant buildings, supporting the delivery of housing on brownfield sites VBC will apply where is complies with the criteria set out within PPG. A site which has last been used for employment purposes must also meet the requirements for redevelopment as set out in policies E3 and E4, regardless of whether the building is now vacant. The requirements of policies E5 and HE4 will also apply if the building is a mill[60].

[60] Oldham Mills Strategy identified Oldham's Textile Mills, available at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham_mills_strategy

Policy H6 - Houses in Multiple Occupation

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) will be supported where the proposed development:

1. **Does not result in the loss of, or impact on the character or amenity to the area as a consequence of increased traffic, noise or general disturbance;**

2. **Does not result in an undue concentration of HMO provision in any particular area of the borough. Permission may not be granted where the proportion of HMOs (either C4 or Sui Generis)[61] will result in HMOs representing 10% or more of properties within a 50 metre radius measured from the centre of the application site;**

3. **Ensures that no two adjacent properties apart from those that are separated by a road are converted to HMOs; and**

4. **Complies with the relevant design and amenity standards as outlined in policy D1, and any existing or future HMO standards or guidance developed by the Council.**

The Council will make a decision on HMO applications on a case-by-case basis considering the factors listed above.

For the development of a HMO that requires a license, the applicant should meet the Council's licensing requirements[62].

Applications for all HMOs are required to provide a Statement of Community Engagement and Impact Assessment.

HMOs within Oldham Town Centre

It is important to ensure a well-balanced mix of housing across the Town Centre. Oldham Town Centre is well-connected to services, facilities and public transport. HMOs are best suited to areas with these assets.

However, it is important to protect the core functions and character of Oldham Town Centre. As such, applications for HMOs in this location will be considered in line with the criteria listed above. In addition, within the town centre HMOs should not occupy ground floor uses, unless the proposed development would comply with the exceptions listed in Policy C3.

Reasoned Justification

8.74 A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is a property rented out by at least three people who are not from one 'household' (for example a family) but share facilities like the bathroom and kitchen. HMOs can provide various types of accommodation including

[61] Including those which are permissioned but have not yet been implemented
[62] As set out on the Council's website:
https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201198/help_for_landlords/258/houses_in_multiple_occupation

bedsits, a hostel, private halls of residence, a shared house, a block of converted flats and shared self-contained cluster flats.

8.75 HMOs can be a valuable source of housing to meet the local housing needs of various groups, including students, young adults and people with disabilities. They also provide smaller and affordable accommodation which has been identified as being required in the borough. However, there is also a need for larger family housing. As such it is important that large family homes are not extensively lost to subdivision as a result of HMO development.

8.76 Furthermore, extensive concentrations of HMO development can result in amenity issues and change the character of an area. Amenity and local character have a significant impact on the way in which people live and experience spaces. It is important that HMO development does not result in the loss of, or impact on the character or amenity to the area as a consequence of increased traffic, noise or general disturbance. Factors which may be considered in terms of assessing amenity include privacy levels, overbearing effects, natural light and outlook, environmental effects and design. The local character of a place should help people understand a place through reinforcing its historic legacy and links to the natural and built environment. Development should therefore be sympathetically designed to the existing local character.

8.77 It is considered that a concentration of HMOs which would result in 10% or more of properties within a 50 metre radius (measured from the centre of the application site), could impact on the character of an area. As such, applications for HMOs should include an assessment of the existing concentration as per the criteria listed in the policy and provide this as part of their planning application. GIS and other desktop assessment tools will be utilised in assessing the information provided.

8.78 Oldham Town Centre is a highly accessible and sustainable location which is suited to HMOs, particularly for students and young adults. However, it is important that HMO development is carefully managed in this location to ensure the viability and vitality of Oldham Town Centre, protect its unique character and maintain its core retail and leisure function. As such, applications for HMOs in this location will also be considered in line with the criteria listed within the policy. The Council will also not support proposals for the development of HMOs that would occupy ground floor uses, unless the proposed development would comply with the exceptions listed in Policy C3, at the Council's discretion. The Oldham Town Centre boundary is defined on the Policies Map.

8.79 Any applications for HMOs must ensure that the proposed development is of a high standard and complies with the relevant design and amenity standards within Policy D1, and any existing or future HMO standards developed by the Council.

8.80 In addition, HMOs should be sustainably located, with public transport, local services and facilities, accessible to the development by active travel. Further information for developers and landlords of HMOs regarding development and living quality and HMO regulations is available on the Council's website[63].

8.81 By requiring all planning applications for new HMOs to provide a Statement of Community Engagement and Impact Assessment, this will ensure that issues of community cohesion, integration and concerns relating to the perceived negative impacts of HMOs can be addressed and discussed with the community at an early

[63] https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201198/help_for_landlords/258/houses_in_multiple_occupation

stage. This assessment should be appropriate and proportionate to the size of the proposed development.

Policy H7 - Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Proposals for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sites will be supported where they are consistent with national and local guidance and policies and meet the following criteria:

1. **The site is located within a sustainable location, with access to local services and facilities, including schools, healthcare, shops and public transport;**
2. **The site is not subject to physical constraints or other environmental issues that cannot be mitigated to an acceptable level;**
3. **The site provides adequate space for pitches / plots, on-site facilities and operational needs including the on-site parking, turning and servicing of vehicles and storage and maintenance of equipment;**
4. **There is safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access to the road network;**
5. **The development protects the residential amenity and safety of current and future occupiers of the site and neighbouring uses;**
6. **There is, or can be, access to appropriate infrastructure required to meet the needs of the occupiers (including facilities for sewage and waste disposal, water, power supplies and drainage); and**
7. **Appropriate screening and landscaping is used to mitigate the visual impact on the surrounding area.**

Proposals for Travelling Showpeople sites will also be required to demonstrate that:

8. **There is safe and functional access for larger vehicles; and**
9. **The proposed development is compatible with surrounding land uses.**

Reasoned Justification

8.82 As set out in national planning policy, the specific housing needs of different groups in the community, including travellers, should be assessed and reflected in local planning policies.

8.83 The latest evidence (set out in the 2018 and 2024 Greater Manchester Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAA)) identified no need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches in Oldham up to 2041. For Travelling Showpeople the 2018 assessment found a shortfall of 204 plots across Greater Manchester up to 2035/36, driven by household formation and overcrowding on existing yards. In addition, the need to provide for 59 transit pitches across the study area was also identified.

8.84 Whilst there is no identified need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches in Oldham, it is recognised that additional need may arise over the plan period. Further work to understand and identify the spatial distribution of plots for Travelling Showpeople and transient pitches may also include the identification of specific sites in Oldham in the future.

8.85 The criteria set out within this policy will therefore provide a basis on which planning applications for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation can be determined. The policy will ensure that sites come forward in sustainable and appropriate locations, having regard to the needs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople community as well as surrounding neighbourhoods. In addition, criteria 8 and 9 addresses the specific size and locational requirements that plots for Travelling Showpeople may have to ensure that plots are able to cater for larger vehicles and the storage and maintenance of equipment.

Monitoring

8.86 The main Local Plan indicators that will be used to monitor this chapter are:

- Plan period and housing targets; Net additional dwellings - in previous years; Net additional dwellings - for the reporting year; Net additional dwellings - in future years; and Managed delivery target
- New and converted dwellings – on previously developed land
- Number of planning applications approved achieving the minimum density requirements as appropriate
- Total housing completions by size and type on major sites
- Number of completions for new-building affordable housing by tenure, type and size
- Total number of planning applications approved for specialist housing provision
- Number of planning applications approved for Homes in Multiple Occupation
- Number of vacant properties
- Net additional pitches (Gypsy and Traveller)

8.87 The main PfE indicators that will be used to help monitor this chapter are[64]:

- Deliver approximately 9,063 homes annually by 2025
- Deliver approximately 10,305 homes annually by 2030
- Deliver approximately 10,719 homes annually by 2039
- Number of new affordable homes completed
- Percentage of new homes meeting Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS)

[64] Please note, as PfE is a Joint Plan of Bury, Bolton, Oldham, Manchester, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan, the PfE indicators apply plan-wide (including all districts). As such, indicators where delivery figures are monitored represent the delivery across all districts, not just Oldham. The minimum amount of homes Oldham is required to deliver over the plan period is set out in Policy H1 and PfE Policy JP-H1.

- Percentage of new homes meeting Accessible & Adaptable (A&A) standard
- Percentage of residential development on brownfield land
- Developer contributions for the delivery of affordable housing

9 Economy and Employment

9.1 NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. It goes on to say that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development and that the approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.

9.2 As set out in Oldham's Corporate Plan[65] our ambition is to make Oldham a place where economic growth benefits all residents, creating opportunities for businesses to succeed. By attracting new investment, supporting local businesses and leading in green technologies we will generate quality job opportunities and equip people with the skills they need to succeed. If Oldham is to achieve this ambition it is essential that we have a portfolio of diverse, sustainable, suitable and attractive employment sites for existing businesses to grow and relocate to and to attract new businesses to invest in the borough. We need to ensure that we seek higher value jobs and job creation through maximising the potential of the boroughs key economic sectors.

9.3 In the past, Oldham's economy has failed to benefit fully from growth at a Greater Manchester level in many ways, including business start-ups, Gross Domestic Product, wages and skills levels. The fact that Oldham has a significantly higher percentage of its working age population with no qualifications, is a major issue if we are to compete with other Local Authorities and attract new businesses. The 'Levelling Up Oldham'[66] paper produced by the Oldham Economic Review Board in March 2022 estimated that in 2020 the share of the local workforce working in the foundational economy could have been as high as 70% of all workers. The 'foundational economy' includes jobs in utilities, food production and processing, retail and distribution, and health, education, housing and welfare. The jobs that lie within the foundational economy perform an essential role in the economy; however they tend to be low paid and the contracts relatively unstable.

9.4 If we are to make a shift from an overreliance on a foundational economy, our employment areas must be attractive to key economic sectors going forward so we can support and promote their growth in Oldham. PfE identifies a number of key economic sectors to the Plan area, including advanced manufacturing, business, financial and professional services, creative and digital, health innovation and logistics. In promoting these key economic sectors, it will be important to ensure there are links with the Council's ambitions regarding the building of the Green Technologies and Services sector (GTS). This will include supporting companies who are looking for opportunities to develop sustainable, environmentally friendly materials; decarbonise energy; tap digital innovation for doing more with less; and extend the life cycle of goods within a "zero waste to landfill" framework. All of these companies would fall under the 'advanced manufacturing' and 'creative and digital' sector.

9.5 In terms of economic development, PfE establishes the quantitative floorspace requirements for industrial and warehousing and office development across the Plan area and seeks to ensure a distribution of development that helps to achieve the strategic economic priorities for Greater Manchester. This includes the aim to rebalance the Greater Manchester economy by boosting the economic output of the northern districts and the identification of the Northern East Growth Corridor strategic

[65] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200146/strategies_plans_and_policies/2888/corporate_plan
[66] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201162/research_and_statistics/3306/oldham_economic_review_board

employment site to help to achieve this. The North East Growth Corridor, which extends eastwards from Junction 18 to 21 of the M62 to include parts of Bury, Rochdale and Oldham and incorporates the Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone, will deliver a nationally-significant area of economic activity. In Oldham this includes Stakehill (PfE Policy JPA 2) which will deliver a 150,000m² green employment park with a focus on suitable provision for advanced manufacturing and/or other key economic sectors. It is also important that policies within this plan help to enhance connectivity between these wider employment opportunities and beyond for our residents.

9.6 The Oldham Mills Strategy (2021)[67] was commissioned by Oldham Council and Historic England in order to develop a positive strategy for the sustainable future of the textile mill stock across Oldham. The Mills Strategy identifies the non-designated mills across Oldham which are of particular landscape and heritage value and sets out a robust strategy to ensure their sustainable future, which considers their potential for future development focussing on residential and employment uses. In relation to employment uses the Mills Strategy provided a high-level overview of the economic potential of each mill based upon a limited range of criteria relating to heritage, condition, suitability, allocation and strategic location. However, it is important to note that the Strategy stated that even in instances where a mill was identified as having the potential for housing it does mean that this would be the best use, as many of these sites are in active employment use, in well-established employment areas and are of benefit to the communities in which they are situated as a source of employment.

9.7 There is very little land available within our existing employment areas, and with over half the borough being open land and the pressure of delivering future housing growth it means that opportunities for new employment land across the borough are limited. How our employment allocations within PfE come forward, how we make better economic use of our existing mill stock and how we ensure that our designated Business and Employment Areas (BEAs) remain attractive to a range of employment generating uses, particularly key economic sectors, will therefore be fundamental to ensuring our future economic success and growth.

Policy E1 - Employment Floorspace Requirements

To contribute towards achieving the overall employment floorspace requirements set out in PfE policies JP-J3 and JP-J4, at least 57,481m² of office (E(g)(i)) floorspace and at least 240,656m² of industrial and warehousing (B2 and B8) floorspace will be provided in Oldham over the period of 2022-2039.

Reasoned Justification

9.8 PfE policies JP-J3 and JP-J4 identify gross floorspace requirements for the PfE plan area for offices and industry and warehousing development over the period 2022 to 2039. The requirements are for at least 2,019,000m² of office floorspace and 3,513,000m² of industrial and warehousing floorspace, across the PfE plan area.

9.9 Within PfE, tables 6.1 (JP-J3) and 6.2 (JP-J4) set out the distribution of the identified *supply* for offices and industry and warehousing across the PfE districts. However, PfE does not set out distributed *requirement*s for offices and industry and warehousing floorspace.

[67] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham_mills_strategy

9.10 As such, this policy sets out Oldham's employment floorspace requirements for the Local Plan period (2022-2039) of at least 57,481m² of office floorspace and at least 240,656m² of industrial and warehousing floorspace. This is to ensure that Oldham makes a sufficient contribution to meeting the overall PfE plan area employment requirements identified in policies JP-J3 and JP-J4.

9.11 These requirements have been determined by:

- Calculating Oldham's proportion of the total supply of office and industry and warehousing floorspace across the 9 districts as shown in PfE tables 6.1 (JP-J3) and 6.2 (JP-J4); and
- Applying this proportion to the overall office and industry and warehousing requirement figures in PfE policies JP-J3 and JP-J4.

9.12 This methodology is set out in Table E1 below.

Table E1: Methodology used to calculate Oldham's employment land requirement

	Total PfE supply	**Total Oldham (only) supply**	**Oldham's supply as a % of PfE total supply**	**Minimum PfE Requirement**	**Oldham's 'Requirement' based on % of PfE supply**
Office	2,880,150	81,998	3%	2,019,000	57,481
Industry and Warehousing	4,100,571	278,922	7%	3,513,000	240,656

9.13 The approach taken to disaggregate the overall employment requirements to a district level, as set out above, is that which was put forward by the PfE districts through main modifications proposed during the examination of the PfE Plan. Ultimately, it was determined in the Inspectors' Report[68] that such modifications were not necessary to make the plan sound given there is no specific requirement in national policy to establish district level employment requirement figures as part of a Joint Plan.

9.14 Notwithstanding this, the methodology is considered to remain appropriate for disaggregating the employment requirements set out in PfE to apply to Oldham district for the purposes of this Local Plan.

9.15 The amount of office and industrial and warehousing floorspace completed will be monitored annually to ensure that the existing supply is sufficient to meet quantitative and qualitative needs of Oldham and our local businesses, and to ensure that PfE's overall strategy is being adhered to. Should monitoring indicate that the employment requirement (at a district or strategic level) needs to be reviewed, an update will be carried out as necessary. Sites may be allocated for employment development in a future development plan document.

[68] This document can be viewed here: https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/9282/pfe-inspectors-report-01-final.pdf

Policy E2 – Business and Employment Areas

It is important that Oldham has a range of sustainable employment areas to support the local economy. There will be a strong emphasis on protecting and enhancing our existing employment areas. Designated employment areas are spread across the borough. These Business and Employment Areas (BEAs) provide land for existing firms to expand and for new firms to locate to, so providing for job opportunities.

There are 23 BEAs designated across the borough. These are identified on the Policies Map and set out In Table E1 below.

Table E1 Business and Employment Areas

Business and Employment Areas	
BEA 1 Wrigley Street	BEA 2 Hawksley Street
BEA 3 Greengate / Broadgate	BEA 4 Busk
BEA 5 Primrose Bank	BEA 6 Hathershaw (site a and site b)
BEA 7 Higginshaw	BEA 8 Shaw Road
BEA 9 Shaw	BEA 10 Linney Lane
BEA 11 Greenacres	BEA 12 Hollinwood
BEA 13 Broadway Green	BEA 14 Chadderton
BEA 15 Oak View Mills	BEA 16 Hey Bottom Mill
BEA 17 Chew Valley Road	BEA 18 Boarhurst Lane
BEA 19 Waterside Mill	BEA 20 Delph New Road
BEA 21 Valley Mills	BEA 22 Warth and Ellis Mills
BEA 23 Greenbridge Lane	

The uses that will be permitted within our BEAs are:

1. **General industry – B2**
2. **Storage and Distribution – B8**
3. **Offices (E(g)(i)) where it does not detract from the role of the borough's centres as the primary focus for office activity)**
4. **Research and development (E(g)(ii))**
5. **Light industrial (E(g)(iii))**
6. **Building and construction related uses – Sui Generis**
7. **Transport and transport related uses (including garages, scarp yards, car show rooms, taxi companies, bus depots etc) – Sui Generis**
8. **Waste management facilities (in line with the Greater Manchester Waste Development Plan Document policies) – Sui Generis**
9. **Other Sui Generis uses that are considered compatible in an employment area.**

Permitted change of use rights for other Class E uses will be withdrawn by condition of planning permission.

Reasoned Justification

9.16 It is important that Oldham has a range of sustainable sites to support the local economy. The Council has designated Business and Employment Areas (BEAs) across the borough for a broad and diverse range of appropriate employment-generating uses.

9.17 The BEAs will help meet the needs of our changing local economy. They provide land for existing firms to expand and for new firms to locate here, so providing job opportunities. Protecting the BEAs for employment uses provides businesses with a degree of certainty as to the future use of these areas, avoiding the introduction of conflicting land uses and they have an important part to play in retaining local employment opportunities.

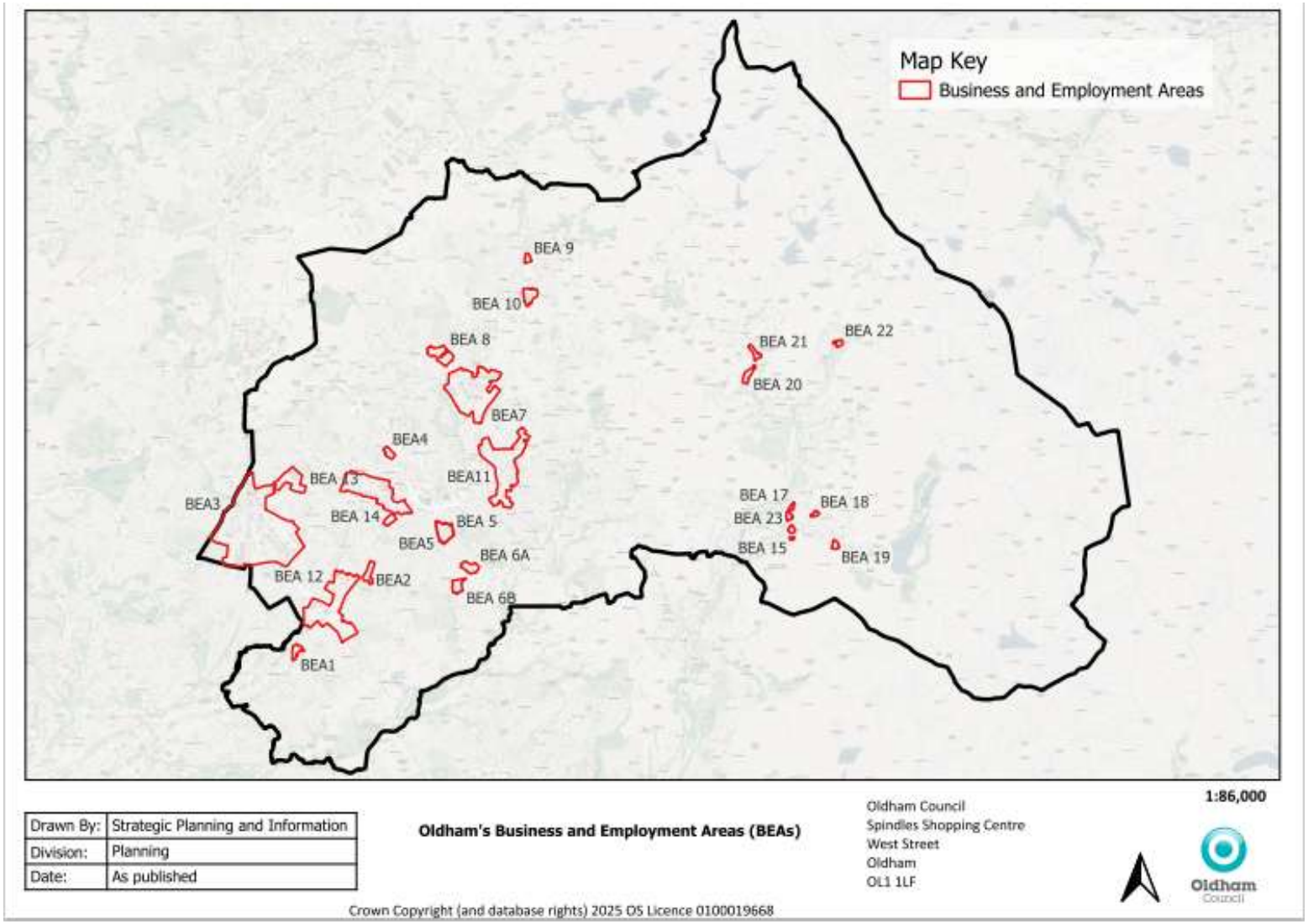
9.18 Many of our BEAs accommodate appropriate sui generis uses. They can include uses such as builders' merchants, builders' yards, engineering depots, demolition yards, transport depot, haulage yards, motor vehicle hire and sales, scrap yards, utility company depots, private hire and mini-cab businesses, plant hire and skip hire. The location and nature of our BEAs is that they can sometimes be the most appropriate location for such uses.

9.19 Planning Use Class E includes a variety of uses that have permitted development rights and the GPDO (part 7) contains various permitted development rights, including for shops, offices, GPs, cafés and restaurants. In our BEAs it will be necessary to withdraw these permitted development rights using conditions through the planning application process, as appropriate, so that such changes would not materially impact on the nature and function of the employment area or its economic potential.

9.20 It may be appropriate to locate some small scale and complementary uses to the employment function within the BEAs, where appropriate. This could include gyms, cafes and convenience shops, provided that the scale of such uses, and their location and arrangement within the BEA, means that they will primarily serve those employed in that area.

9.21 There have been some amendments made to the boundaries and the titles of the BEAs and Saddleworth Employment (SEAs) that were designated in the 2011 Core Strategy. Appendix 4 sets out these amendments and all the BEAs are identified on the Policies Map.

Figure E1: Oldham's Business and Employment Areas (BEAs)



Policy E3 - Exceptions within Business and Employment Areas

Uses other than those set out in Policy E2 will not be permitted within BEAs unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it is no longer appropriate to continue the existing use. This can be done by the applicant providing information to the Council to demonstrate one of the four criteria below:

1. **The site and premises have been subject to a detailed marketing appraisal, for a period of not less than 12 months, that clearly demonstrates that there is no current or likely future demand for them to continue for any of the above employment or commercial uses; or**

2. **The site is specifically identified as being appropriate for other uses in a masterplan or framework and its retention as an employment site would conflict with the masterplan or framework; or**

3. **The site is required for a facility or infrastructure meeting a regional or national need and there is no more suitable alternative site within the borough of Oldham; or**

4. **The site and premises are no longer suitable for the existing use when taking into account the modern needs of businesses for highways access, site location, infrastructure, physical constraints, environmental considerations or neighbour amenity issues.**

In addition to meeting one of the above criteria the applicant would also need to submit a statement outlining that the proposal meets both of the following criteria:

5. **That there is a clear need for the proposed land use; and**

6. **That the proposed redevelopment would not compromise the primary function and operations of neighbouring users.**

Mill Buildings

Proposals for the loss of an employment site that relates to a mill building[69] will be assessed against Policy E5 'Reuse and redevelopment of Mill Buildings'.

Reasoned Justification

9.22 Instances can arise when uses other than those listed within the policy may be appropriate within the BEAs. The policy outlines circumstances where development proposals for other uses may be permitted.

9.23 In relation to carrying out a marketing appraisal the Council would expect, as a minimum, the following details to be included:

[69] This must either be a listed mill or a mill that is included within the Oldham Mills Strategy which can be found here: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham_mills_strategy

- A long-term view of the economic prospects of the site or premises and that consideration be given to both the re-use or refurbishment of any buildings on site;

- An explanation as to why it is not possible to retain or replace any existing occupiers;

- Consideration of the potential to reuse, refurbish and redevelop the site to accommodate the full range of uses that would be appropriate within an existing employment area. A flexible approach should be adopted including both freehold and leasehold options; and

- An analysis of recorded and potential interest in the site or premises for a use appropriate within an existing employment area. Where possible the applicant should try and obtain from interested parties reasons as to why they were not willing or able to proceed. This analysis should be informed by the findings of a comprehensive and prolonged marketing exercise of the site and premises and have regard to enquiries and deals relating to similar sites or premises in the local area.

9.24 A lesser financial return on investment relative to other development options will not be sufficient to justify the site not continuing to be available for employment use. In instances where the Council considers the marketing exercise has been inadequate, the applicant will be advised that the planning application will be recommended for refusal.

9.25 With regard to the site specifically identified as being appropriate for other uses in a masterplan or framework, it is expected that the masterplan or framework will have been subject to public consultation and prepared collaboratively with, and formally endorsed by, the Council. The development proposals must be in accordance with the endorsed masterplan or framework.

9.26 A concern for the Council when considering proposals for non-employment uses within the BEAs will be whether the proposed development would be likely to have any adverse implications for other existing businesses operating within the BEA as well as for the prospective occupiers of the non-employment uses. For example, where housing is proposed near existing employment uses, this may give rise to pressure to curtail employment uses to the detriment of the wider BEA. Therefore, a statement will be expected to be submitted alongside the application demonstrating that there is a need for the proposed development and that there will be no unacceptable adverse impact of remaining businesses within the BEA.

9.27 This policy does not apply where the proposal relates to a mill building that is either a listed mill or was included within the Oldham Mills Strategy[70]. In relation to these mills, it is acknowledged that there may be circumstances where securing its reuse outweighs the loss of the site for employment purposes. Policy E5 'Reuse and redevelopment of Mill Buildings' sets out how the Council will determine those proposals.

[70] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham_mills_strategy

Policy E4 - Employment sites outside of Business and Employment Areas

Outside designated BEAs, the Council will seek to retain existing employment sites in employment generating uses[71] to help to create a sustainable and competitive local economy, to ensure a diverse supply of employment sites and to maintain accessible employment opportunities for our residents.

Where the applicant has demonstrated that an employment site is unsuitable, in land use terms, the Council will give favourable consideration to alternative uses.

However, in instances where an existing site is still considered a suitable employment location, an applicant will be required to provide evidence to show that the re-use of the site for employment purposes is not commercially viable. In doing this, evidence that the site has been robustly marketed for a minimum of 12 months at a realistic value should be supplied to demonstrate that there is no reasonable prospect of the site (either in full or part) continuing to be used for employment purposes under current market conditions.

In all cases, proposed alternative uses should comply with other relevant Local Plan policies.

Mill Buildings

Proposals for the loss of an employment site that relates to a mill building[72] will be assessed against Policy E5 'Reuse and redevelopment of Mill Buildings'.

Reasoned Justification

9.28 Outside the BEAs set out under Policy E2, Oldham contains a significant amount of either individual or small clusters of employment uses which, given the borough's industrial heritage, can often comprise older premises in secondary locations and close to residential areas.

9.29 These sites can often provide more affordable accommodation and offer the opportunity for people to work close to where they live, in turn potentially reducing travel distances. Therefore, this policy aims to support the retention of appropriate sites as important local opportunities for employment.

9.30 Where existing employment sites are inappropriate in land use terms, for example due to neighbouring uses, proposals for other non-employment uses will be supported provided they accord with other Local Plan policies.

9.31 Where non-employment uses are proposed on a site that is considered appropriate in land use terms, the Council will require the applicant to submit robust evidence to demonstrate that there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for employment purposes under current market conditions. In doing so, an applicant will be required to provide evidence to show that the re-use of the site for employment purposes is not

[71] Employment generating uses are set out in Policy E2.
[72] This must either be a listed mill or a mill that is included within the Oldham Mills Strategy which can be found here: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham_mills_strategy

commercially viable and that the site has been robustly marketed for a minimum of 12 months at a realistic value, showing the full extent of interest in the site as a result.

9.32 This policy does not apply where the proposal relates to a mill building that is either a listed mill or was included within the Oldham Mills Strategy[73]. In relation to these mills, it is acknowledged that there may be circumstances where securing its reuse outweighs the loss of the site for employment purposes. Policy E5 'Reuse and redevelopment of Mill Buildings' sets out how the Council will determine those proposals.

Policy E5 – Reuse and redevelopment of Mill Buildings

Proposals for non-employment generating uses within mills[74] either in designated BEAs or elsewhere in the borough may be permitted in appropriate circumstances where the benefits of retaining and securing the active re-use of mill buildings could be seen to outweigh the loss of the use of the site for wholly employment generating purposes.

The applicant is required to demonstrate that the proposed redevelopment would not significantly compromise the primary function of the BEA or locality, or the operations of neighbouring users.

The applicant would also need to demonstrate through a viability exercise that their proposals would secure the future of the mill that otherwise would be left vulnerable to deterioration. Any proposals would need to be in conformity with the Policy HE4 Oldham's Mills.

Reasoned Justification

9.33 Oldham has a rich industrial heritage with around 100 textile mills remaining. Many of the mills are in active use, offering low-cost premises to certain employment uses, residential use, retail or for social uses such as sports clubs. However, some mills have been derelict for many years or are underused with upper storeys not in use, which puts them at risk of falling into poor condition and may make conversion more difficult in the future. They are also often close to existing residential properties and may not always be in the best location for their current use. Building on work done as part of Oldham's Mill Strategy[75], the 'Levelling Up Oldham[76]' paper stated that Mill conversion has the potential to deliver significant returns for the borough in terms of employment, skills and jobs while also retaining a link to Oldham's heritage.

9.34 The reuse of mills can add to local distinctiveness as part of place making, attract investment and help retain Oldham's strong identity and sense of place. However, it is recognised that, due to the age, scale, format and condition of former mill buildings, it may not always be economically viable to secure the repurposing of individual mills to provide modern, fit for purpose employment and/or commercial floorspace. It is acknowledged that innovative solutions and flexibility regarding the uses permitted may

[73] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham_mills_strategy
[74] This must either be a listed mill or a mill that is included within the Oldham Mills Strategy which can be found here: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham_mills_strategy
[75] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham_mills_strategy
[76] This document can be found at: https://oerb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/ING6167_UofM_Levelling-up-Oldham-22-03-22.pdf

sometimes be required to support the full occupation of individual mills that are currently underutilised, particularly the upper floors of such buildings.

9.35 There may, therefore, be circumstances where securing the reuse of mill buildings outweighs the loss of the site for employment purposes. In this instance a statement is required to be submitted alongside the application demonstrating that there will be no adverse impact on the operations of neighbouring users. In addition, a viability assessment should be submitted, the scope of which having been agreed with the Council prior to its completion, and the level of detail included should be proportionate to the proposed development. Further guidance on viability assessments can be found in Planning Practice Guidance: Viability[77].

9.36 How we move forward with the repurposing of our mills will be crucial in terms of economic development, housing provision and in the protection and enhancement of our historic environment. More detail on the future of our mills can be found in Policy HE4 Oldham's Mills.

Monitoring

9.37 The main Local Plan indicators that will be used to monitor this chapter are:

- Total amount of additional floorspace (office, industry and warehousing) developed by type square metres (sqm) gross
- Total amount of employment floorspace (office, industry and warehousing) developed on previously developed land by type (sqm) gross
- Employment land available by type hectares (ha)
- Total amount of employment land (office, industry and warehousing) developed by type hectares (ha) gross
- The percentage of areas in Oldham among the 10% most deprived areas in England
- Unemployment rate
- Youth unemployment rate
- Number and type of developments permitted on non-designated Mills

9.38 The main PfE indicators that will be used to help monitor this chapter are:

- Percentage of gross employment development on brownfield land
- Percentage increase in GVA per job
- Proportion of our residents (working age) in employment
- Number of local labour agreements
- Increase in office floorspace (gross)
- Increase in industry and warehousing floorspace (gross)

[77] This document can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/viability#viability-and-decision-taking

10 Our Centres

10.1 Oldham's centres play a vital role in meeting the needs of people of all ages, through the provision of a range of shops, services, community, leisure, cultural and employment opportunities. The centres are an important contributor to local identity, acting as a focal point for surrounding communities. NPPF states that planning policies should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.

10.2 There is a need to diversify our centres to promote vitality and vibrancy and their long-term sustainable future. As the role of traditional retail reduces within our centres and new homes are built within them, their importance as community lifelines that connect our residents to services and the local environment will increase. The connectivity they provide as transport hubs to key services, open spaces and neighbourhoods will be essential and the services that are provided within them will foster a sense of community and vibrancy.

10.3 The management of the future development of our centres will ensure their long-term success, with a clear focus on sustaining and creating vibrant destinations where activity can continue into the evening, with the retention of a robust retail presence complemented by a varied mix of uses including a leisure and community offer. Opportunities will be taken to make the most of the unique identity of each of the borough's centres and the opportunities within them, access to and through centres will be improved and improvements to the public realm of our centres will be delivered.

Policy C1 - Our Centres

A key aim for the Local Plan is to promote and enhance the vitality and viability of the borough's centres, to ensure their long-term success. The centres hierarchy in Oldham is as follows:

1. **Oldham Town Centre;**
2. **The borough's other centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill; and**
3. **Local Shopping Parades.**

Oldham Town Centre will meet the majority of the everyday needs for our residents for shops and other town centre uses as defined in national planning guidance.

The enhancement of each of the borough's other centres will take advantage of the unique character of each centre. In a co-ordinated approach they will deliver a diverse mix of uses, that supports their future vitality and viability.

There will be an emphasis on each centre providing a strong convenience retail function so they can continue to minimise the need for our residents to travel further. In addition, they will be complemented by a range of other main town centre uses and housing.

Our Local Shopping Parades will contribute towards vibrant communities by providing convenient facilities near people's homes, reducing the need to travel and providing a valuable service for less mobile members of the community.

Reasoned Justification

10.4 Oldham's centres play an important role in meeting the varied needs of people of all ages, through the provision of a range of shops, services, community, leisure and employment opportunities, and public transport options. The centres are an important contributor to local identity, acting as a focal point for surrounding communities.

10.5 In addition, local services and facilities that are clustered in our Local Shopping Parades represent convenient facilities that help meet the day-to-day needs of our residents. Such services help reduce the need to travel, provide a focus for community interaction and help to distinguish one area from another. They also provide an essential service for less mobile residents and residents in more rural areas. Appendix 5 shows the Local Shopping Parades, and these are also identified on the Policies Map.

10.6 A Boroughwide Retail and Leisure Study[78] was completed in September 2020 by Stantec. The report provided an assessment of retail and leisure needs in Oldham and carried out a health check on all the borough's centres.

10.7 The Retail and Leisure Study concluded that there is no 'need' for additional convenience retail provision over the life of the new Local Plan and therefore the Local Plan does not need to plan for any. There will be a small need over the plan period for comparison retail floorspace (2,381m^2) and it was recommended that this is focused in Oldham Town Centre.

10.8 There have been some amendments made to the boundaries of Oldham Town Centre and the centres of Lees and Shaw since the 2011 Core Strategy. Appendix 6 sets out these amendments and all the centres are identified on the Policies Map.

Policy C2 – Protecting the vitality of our centres

In order to recognise our centres as the heart of their communities, proposals for centre uses[79] such as retail, leisure and offices, outside of our existing centres will be resisted.

Unless the proposal is for small scale stand-alone local service provision where Policy C4 'Local Services and Facilities' applies, or unless it can be demonstrated that all relevant tests can be satisfied, as set out below, proposals will be refused.

Sequential Test

Centre uses shall be located in accordance with the sequential approach outlined in national planning policy.

[78] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1157/retail_and_leisure_study
[79] As set out in Annex 2 of NPPF: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf

Proposals in sequentially less preferable locations will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that there are no available suitable sites or premises in sequentially preferable locations, and that a flexible approach to scale and format has been applied.

Impact Assessment

Proposals for centre uses outside the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill of between 300m^2 gross and 1,499m^2 gross will be required to be accompanied by an impact assessment to determine its likely effects on all centre(s)[80] located within the anticipated catchment area of the new development.

Proposals for centre uses of 1,500m^2 gross floorspace or above, outside of one of our centres, will be required to be accompanied by an impact assessment to determine its likely effects on Oldham Town Centre and all other centres located within the anticipated catchment area of the new development.

The assessment should consider the following criteria:

1. **All relevant impacts set out in national planning policy;**
2. **Likely effects of development on any appropriate plans or projects that facilitate the regeneration of the borough's centres;**
3. **Whether the proposal is of an appropriate scale in relation to the size, role and character of the intended catchment area;**
4. **The cumulative impact of the proposal and other similar outstanding permissions or recent completions; and**
5. **Where the catchment area of the proposed development includes a market location, the specific predicted impact on market trading.**

For the avoidance of doubt, this policy applies to new floorspace, extensions to existing floorspace, changes of use, applications seeking variations to conditions and developments within our existing out of centre retail and leisure parks[81].

Where any proposal fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have a significant adverse impact on a defined centre, it will be refused.

Reasoned Justification

10.9 Town centre uses are defined in national planning policy as retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development

[80] This should not include Oldham Town Centre
[81] Oldham's existing out of centre retail and leisure parks are Elk Mill, Alexandra Retail Park and Gateway Retail Park

(including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

10.10 Locating larger scale retail and leisure facilities within the borough's centres is considered the most sustainable way of meeting the needs of our residents. It helps to reduce the need to travel and can increase footfall and improve trading conditions within centres. Allowing larger scale town centre uses in other areas would be likely to adversely affect the vitality and viability of the centres, leading to their gradual decline and reducing their ability to attract new retail floorspace to the borough and serve the needs of residents.

10.11 It is therefore essential that as much of the new retail floorspace and as many other leisure and community facilities as possible are located within our centres, in accordance with the national planning policy.

10.12 The Retail and Leisure Study considered the scale of Oldham Town Centre and its relatively high turnover, but also its health, high vacancy rate and potential vulnerability to market changes. Taking all that into account the study recommended that the impact threshold for Oldham Town Centre should be set at 1,500m² gross. It then went on to conclude that the borough's other centres are considered much more vulnerable to impacts from edge-of-centre and out-of-centre retail proposals and therefore a threshold of 300m² gross was considered appropriate for those.

10.13 Where impact testing is required, it should assess the net and (where relevant) cumulative impact of the proposal on the vitality and viability of any centre from which the proposal may derive its spending or its users. Whether such impact is acceptable will depend on a combination of factors including the existing health of the centre and how this will affect its ability to withstand impacts from competing development within the defined centre, any reduction in local consumer choice, any increase in vacancies and/or any loss or delay to planned investment.

10.14 The detail for carrying out the sequential test can be found in national planning policy.

Policy C3 - Changes of use and redevelopment within the borough's centres

The role of our centres in meeting a wide range of local needs will be protected and enhanced. A strong retail function will be retained for each centre and will be complemented by a broad range of other services and facilities, including leisure and community uses.

Changes of use and redevelopments within our centres will be managed to ensure that they support, rather than detract from, the successful functioning of the centres and their ability to meet local needs. All such proposals will be required to:

1. **Make a positive contribution to the vitality, viability and diversity of the centre;**
2. **Not have a detrimental impact on footfall;**
3. **Maintain a strong role for the centre in providing a varied range of convenience goods and meeting other day-to-day needs;**

4. **Positively restore and/or enhance the character and appearance of the frontage;**

5. **Maintain the continuity of active frontages; and**

6. **Be of a scale and type of use appropriate to the size and function of the centre, or part of the centre concerned.**

Within our centres, proposals for uses that do not fall within NPPF's definition of main town centre uses, such as hot food takeaways, payday loan shops and gambling uses, will only be supported where the development would:

a. **Not be harmful to the overall shopping function of the centre;**

b. **Not result in a concentration of uses that would be harmful to the vitality of our centres;**

c. **Extend the offer and range of activities available to shoppers and other users to enhance the visitor experience of the centre; and**

d. **Provide an active frontage and a direct service to visiting members of the public.**

Any proposals for hot food takeaways should also be in line with Policy CO7.

The provision of homes will generally be supported in our centres where it is demonstrated the residential use will not be detrimental to the vitality and viability of the centre, including through the conversion of under-utilised upper floors of commercial buildings into residential properties.

Ground floor residential uses will be permitted in our centres where it is demonstrated by the applicant that the proposed development:

e. **Is in an area of frontages with low levels of footfall;**

f. **Does not unreasonably restrict existing businesses and community facilities in line with Policy LE1 in relation to the 'agent of change'; and**

g. **Is designed to ensure the character of the centre is not harmed and allows the premises to be easily converted back to retail use in the future.**

The applicant is required to also demonstrate that there is no realistic prospect of securing an active retail or commercial use in the unit.

Reasoned Justification

10.15 Successful centres are underpinned by a strong retail function both in terms of convenience and comparison goods, and this role should be protected and retained. This is important in meeting the day-to-day needs of residents. Centres must also have an appropriate mix of leisure, community, cultural and service provision, whilst creating new business opportunities and making them 'destination' places of social and cultural interest.

10.16 This will be increasingly important for ensuring that they can generate the footfall necessary to remain attractive in the face of the growth in online shopping and the shift in working patterns to more people working from home.

10.17 It is vital that changes of use and redevelopments within our centres are carefully managed, so as to support the long-term success of the centres and their ability to meet local needs. In this context, it is recognised that Oldham's centres vary in scale, function and composition of uses, and this needs to be taken into account in the determination of individual proposals.

10.18 Paragraph 10.9 above sets out NPPF's definition of main town centre uses. In addition, national planning policy states that planning policies should recognise the important role that residential development has in ensuring the vitality of centres. These are the uses that will help ensure our centres remain at the heart of their communities and therefore are the uses we are supporting in our centres.

10.19 In responding to the changes within the retail sector, the Use Classes Order was amended in 2020 and now allows much greater flexibility with the introduction of a new use class, Class E (Commercial, Business and Service). Changes of use between the different uses within Class E, which includes typical high street uses, can take place without the need for planning permission. This is to help our high streets and town centres adapt quickly to changing demand and trends.

10.20 Given this greater degree of flexibility, and in order to protect the vitality and viability of our centres, applicants for uses that may undermine the role and function of our centres will have to demonstrate in their planning statement that the proposed development meets the four criteria (a to d) set out in the policy above.

10.21 Issues associated with some uses can include, in relation to hot food takeaways, a detrimental impact on residential amenity, environmental quality, and the health of the local population, and in relation to pay day loan shops and gambling uses social, economic and health impacts. A proliferation of hot food takeaways and gambling uses are not considered compatible with the positive outcomes sought through our plans for the regeneration of our centres. See Policy CO7 for policy and guidance on hot food takeaways and fast-food outlets.

10.22 The Council will support proposals for the development of new homes that would occupy ground floor uses within our centres where it is demonstrated that the proposed development would comply with the exceptions listed in the policy (e to g above). This is to ensure that there are no detrimental impacts to the vitality and viability of the centre.

Policy C4 - Local Services and Facilities

Locally available services contribute towards vibrant communities by providing convenient facilities near people's homes, reducing the need to travel and providing a valuable service for less mobile members of the community.

The Council will facilitate the need for local shops and services, where appropriate and in line with other Local Plan policies, by protecting existing clusters of these premises and by permitting new local services and facilities within existing built-up areas.

Protecting Local Shopping Parades

The Council recognises the importance of local retail and service facilities within our Local Shopping Parades[82]. In determining proposals for the change of use at the ground floor level from a commercial, business or service use (Use Class E[83]) to alternative uses, the Council will have regard to the following factors:

1. **The vitality and viability of the parade and whether this would be benefited by the proposal;**
2. **The particular nature and character of the use proposed, including the level of activity associated with it;**
3. **That the proposal is appropriate in scale and character and is necessary to serve local needs which would not otherwise be met; and**
4. **Whether the proposal would result in an over concentration of uses that do not provide a local retail or service facility which could change the nature or character of a parade as a whole.**

New Local Services and Facilities

Where appropriate, and within existing built-up areas, local shops and services that fall within Use Class E with a gross floorspace of 300m^2 or less will be permitted outside Oldham Town Centre and the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill.

For the avoidance of doubt, this policy applies to proposals whereby the overall gross floorspace does not exceed 300m^2. Proposals involving multiple units, which individually have a gross floorspace less than 300m^2 but when taken together cumulatively exceed 300m^2, will be assessed against the requirements in Policy C2 Protecting the vitality of our centres.

Reasoned Justification

10.27 Local services and facilities represent convenient facilities that help meet the day-to-day needs of our residents. Such services help reduce the need to travel, provide a

[82] See Appendix 5 for details of the Local Shopping Parades
[83] For a full list of the uses permitted in Use Class E, please see the Planning Portal at: https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission/common-projects/change-of-use/use-classes

focus for community interaction and help to distinguish one area from another. They provide an essential service for less mobile residents and residents in more rural areas.

10.28 Local services and facilities include small food stores, post offices, pharmacies, advice centres, cafes and other small-scale services of a local nature. For the purpose of this policy, developments with a gross floorspace of 300m² or less will be taken to represent a small-scale service or facility.

10.29 The Use Classes Order was amended in 2020 and now allows much greater flexibility with the introduction of a new use class, Class E (Commercial, Business and Service). Class E includes retail, the sale of food and drink, and professional services. Changes of use between the different uses within Class E can take place without the need for planning permission. Therefore, the uses that could operate within our Local Shopping Parades are wider ranging than those which might traditionally have been considered to be a local service. Notwithstanding this, the Council's preference for our Local Shopping Parades is that they are occupied as local retail and services, such as those mentioned above, that help meet the day-to-day needs of our residents.

10.30 Appendix 5 shows the Local Shopping Parades, and these are also identified on the Policies Map.

Monitoring

10.31 The main Local Plan indicators that will be used to monitor this chapter are:

- Number of planning applications granted in Oldham Town Centre and the borough's other centres, for main town centre uses
- Number of homes completed within the borough's centres
- Number of day visits and staying visits to Oldham borough

10.32 The main PfE indicators that will be used to help monitor this chapter are:

- GVA in and within 800m of the main town centres

11 Oldham Town Centre

11.1 Over the last decade, Oldham Town Centre has witnessed several major transformational projects, in particular the redevelopment of the Old Town Hall, improvements to the public realm and investment in public transport infrastructure.

11.2 The focus is now on redefining Oldham Town Centre's retail and residential offer over the next 15 years as part of Building a Better Oldham.

11.3 Our vision is to create a town centre with character, with thousands of new homes and an emphasis on sustainability, community and quality – an inclusive and welcoming place to live and spend time in. A town centre that acknowledges Oldham's industrial heritage while looking towards a bright, modern future. With homes built in a safer and healthier environment and where we prioritise local jobs and learning opportunities for Oldham residents.

11.4 Our key proposals set out in the Oldham Town Centre Development Framework 2024, and which policies within this Local Plan will support the delivery of, are:

- The introduction of up to 2,000 new homes located within safe, inclusive and attractive neighborhoods.
- The redevelopment of Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre to redefine the retail core.
- The Green Shoots Business and Innovation Centre, and Minewater District Heat Network Energy Centre, which form part of the Council's Greener Oldham commitment.
- The re-use and refurbishment of several prominent heritage assets, specifically the Prudential Building, the Old Library and Gallery, and the Lyceum Building.
- Enhancing accessibility, connectivity and movement, providing sustainable infrastructure connections through the Accessible Oldham programme.
- The enhancement of the town centre's Green Infrastructure with the creation of Tommyfield Park and Snipe Gardens.
- Upgrading the night-time and creative economy, to make the town centre a destination of choice.

11.5 These proposals focus around five key areas which have informed our approach within the Local Plan. These are illustrated in Figure OTC1 and are:

- Area 1 – Civic and Residential Quarter
- Area 2 – The Retail Core
- Area 3 – The Cultural and Creative Quarter
- Area 4 – Eastern Edge and Oldham Mumps
- Area 5 – Western Edge and Educational Quarter

Figure OTC1: Character Zones taken from the Oldham Town Centre Development Framework[84]



Policy OTC1 - Oldham Town Centre

To deliver our vision, proposals for the continued enhancement, redevelopment and regeneration of Oldham Town Centre will be supported where they align with and reflect the following character areas:

The Civic and Residential Quarter will be the focus for our residential offer on sites such as the Civic Centre and Queen Elizabeth Hall. These new homes will be supported by complementary active uses at ground floor level and social infrastructure to create mixed-use neighbourhoods where residents can readily access amenities and day to day needs are met.

The Retail Core will be the focus for an enhanced, vibrant and sustainable retail offer, including the relocated Tommyfield Market and the new events space 'The Loom', in the Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre, as well as a new outdoor market space on George Square complementing the existing independent retailers on George Street. Retail uses will be consolidated to the ground floor of the shopping centre, linking into the new market through a retail 'loop' that will provide shoppers with an improved shopping experience. This will be supported by quality office space for both private sector tenants and Oldham Council, and events space linked to Parliament Square that will boost the cultural, leisure and entertainment offer within Oldham.

[84] Taken from the Oldham Town Centre Development Framework 2024 which can be found online at https://oldhamtownliving.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/DP824-Oldham-Development-Framework-NOV-2024-WEB.pdf

Within Oldham Town Centre's retail core, proposals will be supported that contribute towards the redefining of the core and a consolidation of retail uses within the retail 'loop'.

The Cultural and Creative Quarter, centered around the historic core of the town centre and the Creative Improvement District (CID), will be the focus for our night-time and visitor economy, providing an improved food and drink offer, expanded entertainment and leisure sector and cultural attractions, with opportunities for residential development. The re-use of existing listed buildings, such as those on Union Street, will make space for live performance, complementing a refurbished Coliseum Theatre, and innovative and flexible office space aimed at attracting creative and digital businesses to Oldham. Development proposals will need to positively respond to surrounding heritage assets, including the Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area and listed buildings in the vicinity.

The Eastern Edge and Oldham Mumps area acts as a key gateway into Oldham Town Centre from the east of the borough. It will be the home of the low carbon district heat network that is to be developed, which will create an environmentally friendly power source that will help deliver our ambitions for carbon neutrality, and the Green Shoots incubation space. In addition, a new residential offer will be provided across several sites, including Prince's Gate.

The Western Edge and Educational Quarter acts as a key gateway from the west of the borough and will remain home to high-quality further and higher education establishments, with enhanced connectivity into Oldham Town Centre.

In addition to those set out in policies OTC2, OTC3 and OTC4, principles that are expected to form part of any development proposals for Oldham Town Centre include:

1. **The promotion of high-density, high-quality and sustainable development that reflects the distinctive role of the town centre and positively responds to key landmarks and views;**

2. **The use of low carbon design that contributes to the borough becoming carbon neutral by 2030 is incorporated as standard and connections are made to the District Heat Network where feasible;**

3. **The conservation and enhancement of heritage assets across the town centre, including their setting, so as to maximise their contribution to the distinctiveness of Oldham and contribute to the removal of Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area from Historic England's heritage at risk register;**

4. **The incorporation of well-designed and integrated ground floor uses and environments to create an active street scene and enhance the residential offer;**

5. **The incorporation of cycling, wheeling and walking links, and improved wayfinding, to create and contribute to, enhanced permeability and connectivity, in a way that supports active travel and helps to define, and enhance local character and sense of place;**

6. **Car parking in line with Policy T3, reflecting the sustainable location. Where car parking is provided, this will include provision for Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure. Secure cycle parking will also be required; and**

7. **Opportunities to maximise the generation of social value through design, construction and operation.**

Reasoned Justification

11.6 Oldham Town Centre is at the heart of the Building a Better Oldham and this policy seeks to support and facilitate delivery of the ambitious regeneration programme, ensuring the development coming forward aligns with its key principles.

11.7 The town centre can be divided into several quarters, or zones, that will be the focus for certain types of development – whether that be residential, culture and leisure, education, commercial or its core retail function. Whilst ensuring that each quarter comes forward in a sustainable, accessible and connected way through the integration of complementary uses, the creation of a green infrastructure network and public realm.

11.8 The retail core has been redefined through amending the town centre boundary (see Policy C1) to better reflect the Council's priorities in relation to Building a Better Oldham and consolidating retail uses so there is a more focused retail 'loop' that will provide visitors with a better user experience. The re-location of Tommyfield Market into the Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre will complement and strengthen the existing uses which will also be supported by quality office space which will help to increase footfall and presence throughout the town centre.

11.9 The town centre will be transformed with the new Tommyfield Park, one of the largest, new, urban parks to be proposed in England. This will be connected to the wider town centre and beyond through the creation of 'stepping-stone' open spaces and the integration of green infrastructure as part of new developments. Alongside sustainable infrastructure connections and high-quality public realm the green infrastructure network will aid and enhance accessibility, connectivity and movement through the town centre connecting key locations and new developments together and with the wider area.

11.10 Upgrading the night-time and creative economy, including improving the food and drink offer, expanding the entertainment and leisure sector and developing the cultural attractions, is an essential part of ensuring a sustainable future for Oldham Town Centre. The Council is working on delivering several projects around the historic core of the town centre as part of the Cultural and Creative Quarter and Creative Improvement District (CID). The CID covers an area of the town centre directly adjacent to, and interfacing with, the retail core and which includes the Town Centre Conservation Area and listed buildings within it and many historic landmark buildings.

11.11 The creation of opportunities for residential living across the town centre is a key part of the Building a Better Oldham and ensuring the efficient use of land across the borough so as to minimise the use of greenfield land. Around 2,000 new homes will be delivered within the town centre across several sites which form part of our housing land supply, including at:

- Civic Centre and Queen Elizabeth Hall
- Manchester Chambers and the former Magistrates Court site

- Former Oldham Sports Centre
- Mumps and Wallshaw Street
- Prince's Gate
- Southgate Street
- Waterloo Street
- Bradshaw Street

11.12 This policy also supports the combination of these residential opportunities with complementary uses, so as to support the development of sustainable and functional neighbourhoods within the town centre.

11.13 A central part of the Council's Green New Deal is development of the Town Centre low carbon district heat network. This aims to develop a district heat network in the town centre that will use heat from renewable sources, such as Air Source Heat Pumps, whilst also exploring the potential to use heat, reclaimed from floodwater in disused coal mines beneath the Town Centre. This could heat a range of Town Centre buildings, including the Old Library and new Performance Space, as well as other Council and residential sites. It will be important to ensure that new developments coming forward take every opportunity to connect to this network.

Policy OTC2 - Protecting and Enhancing Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area

It is important that development within Oldham Town Centre conservation area contributes towards the aim of removing the conservation area from Historic England's heritage at risk register.

Proposals affecting the setting and character of the conservation area should take into consideration the Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document.

Development proposals will be encouraged and supported where they:

1. **secure the viable reuse of vacant heritage assets to prevent their decay and dereliction, including opportunities for short-term temporary uses that engage the local community whilst ensuring their long-term preservation;**
2. **include positive interventions to improve the condition of buildings, or reverse inappropriate alterations;**
3. **improve active uses at ground floor level, ensure high quality shopfronts are installed, and that adverts and signage are of a quality and design appropriate to the conservation area;**
4. **promote the identity, and ensure the significance and appearance of the conservation area is preserved and positive characteristics enhanced;**
5. **carefully consider and reflect the character and appearance of the conservation area through the use of high-quality design of an appropriate scale, density, height, form, massing, layout, plot position, materials, colours, composition and detailed design;**
6. **protect established and valued views, into and out of the surrounding area which contribute to the historic context and setting of Oldham Town Centre, as well as local views into and out of the conservation area as defined in the CAAMP[85] and the Oldham Town Centre Development Framework[86];**
7. **ensure new interventions in the public realm are considered carefully in the context of good surviving examples of street furniture, surface coverings and public art / sculptures / monuments so as to preserve and enhance the essential character of the conservation area;**
8. **encourage the introduction of appropriate multi-functional green infrastructure and landscaping;**
9. **improve wayfinding into and around the conservation area and between key transport links; and**

[85] Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document available at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/1599/oldham_town_centre_conservation_area_appraisal_and_management_plan_caamp_supplementary_planning_document_spd

[86] Oldham Town Centre Development Framework available at: https://oldhamtownliving.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/DP824-Oldham-Development-Framework-NOV-2024-WEB.pdf

10. engage the public through measures such as public art to enliven the conservation area and better define the conservation area.

Reasoned Justification

11.14 The Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)[87] was prepared to address the issues facing the at-risk conservation area and sets out a positive approach to enable the conservation area to be enhanced and its eventual removal from the at-risk register. The appraisal outlined that some of the negative features in Oldham Town Centre are detracting features, such as vacancy levels and buildings being in poor condition. However, the most significant detracting feature is retail frontages, where the poor-quality contemporary shopfronts dominate handsome buildings. Roller shutters also create a deadening frontage and add to the perception of crime and antisocial behaviour. The lack of wayfinding, need for a stronger identity and the appearance / re-use of vacant sites are also key issues to be addressed.

11.15 The Management Plan includes policies to address these issues, providing opportunities to enhance, and uplift the human experience of, the conservation area. The policy areas are reflected in the above policy to ensure they are given full consideration specific to Oldham Town Centre conservation area. The policy areas include securing the viable reuse of vacant heritage assets, opportunities to improve shop fronts, retail frontages and signage and the opportunities that new development can make to improving the character and appearance of the conservation area. Through addressing these issues, the conservation area, and Oldham Town Centre, will become a place that people find welcoming, and which contributes to sense of identity, local pride and well-being.

11.16 Improved wayfinding, use of public art and co-ordinated street furniture will further emphasise the conservation area, and its local character and identity, helping people to identify when they have entered or left the area. To support this, street furniture and surface coverings will be of a suitable standard of design, which accords with the patterns of items already in use (such as the established green / gold design in the retail core and owl motif). Generally, it should also be sited to be visually unobtrusive, having regard to the character and quality of the existing townscape.

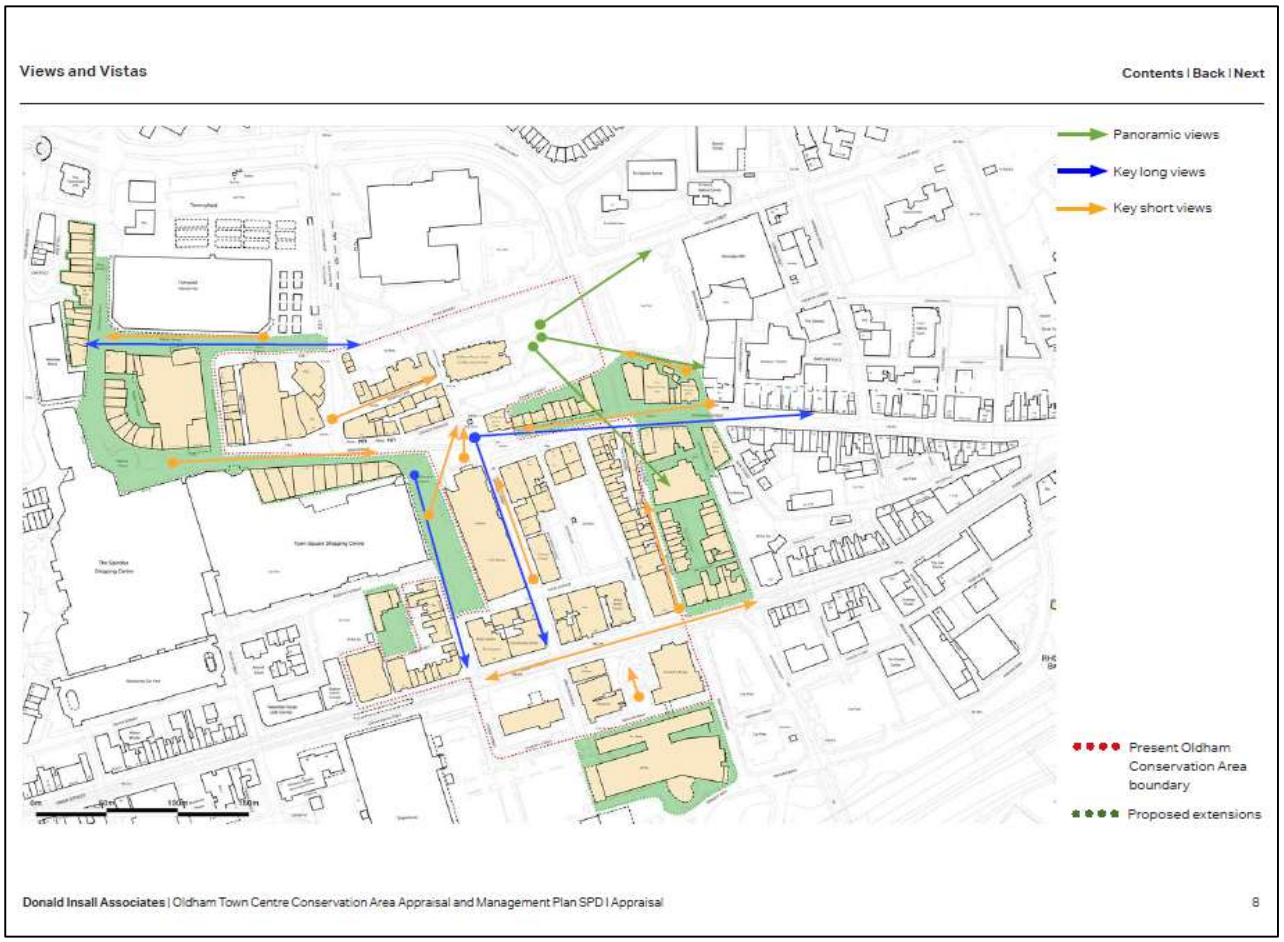
11.17 In accordance with the Management Plan, the area will require a conservation-led approach that seeks sensitive, well-proportioned and designed new development, which retains the unique historic character reflected in the street pattern, urban grain and townscape and responds to the town centre's distinctive topography and resulting views. The appraisal identifies those buildings which make a positive, neutral or negative contribution to the conservation area, key views and vistas, and townscape. These established and valued views (as shown in Figure OTC2), into and out of the conservation area, are protected through the policy as they make an important contribution to the historic context and setting of Oldham Town Centre and include:

- the Church of St Mary and St Peter and along Church Lane,
- views through Parliament square;
- looking west up Yorkshire Street towards Parliament Square;
- along Greaves Street;

[87] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201229/current_local_planning_policy/256/supplementary_planning_documents

- views along Albion Street, Retiro Street, Union Street; and
- from Gallery Oldham.

Figure OTC2: Valued Views and Vistas



11.18 The appraisal proposed four extensions to the existing Oldham Town Centre conservation area boundary. The extensions have been designated under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and will be adopted as part of the Local Plan. The amended boundary for Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area is on the Policies Map, and further in Appendix 3.

11.19 The Gazetteer, which forms part of the SPD, provides an important reference of each of the buildings at a point in time within the extended conservation area, noting condition of the assets and a character description. This can be useful for enforcement as well as for development proposals.

Policy OTC3 – Creating a Better Public Realm for Oldham Town Centre

Major development that makes a positive contribution to the public realm of Oldham Town Centre and its identity by virtue of its siting, design and materials, will be supported.

The public realm will be developed and enhanced in Oldham Town Centre in accordance with the following principles:

1. **A simple and uncluttered environment that enhances the character of the existing buildings and provides a functional and accessible streetscape;**

2. **Adds to, and complements, the existing spatial hierarchy of routes through and around the town centre, underpinned by a coherent and consistent palette of materials;**

3. **It should be designed for all to feel welcome, comfortable and safe, carefully considering the use and location of lighting, overlooking onto routes, and having regard to relevant standards and guidance;**

4. **The introduction of trees and landscaping (supported by a management scheme) in appropriate locations to create a greener, cooler and biodiverse town centre with the delivery of sustainable drainage solutions where appropriate;**

5. **At appropriate locations opportunities should be taken to create areas where the public may stop and dwell, providing opportunities for play and leisure, and encouraging social interaction for all ages; and**

6. **The use of robust and durable materials that promote cost effective and sustainable maintenance to ensure long-term quality.**

For major development a financial contribution towards public realm improvements may be required where appropriate.

Reasoned Justification

11.20 At present the public realm, whilst improving and of high quality in certain locations, is generally in poor condition with limited cohesion across the town centre. Alongside green infrastructure, enhancing the public realm is therefore central to bringing the town centre and key development proposals together, and improving its vitality and viability.

11.21 The Oldham Town Centre Development Framework identifies enhancing the public realm as a key opportunity - developing a high-quality and distinctive public realm that is cohesive and contributes to a sense of place. This will be done through creating attractive gateways into the Town Centre, improving the experience around key public transport arrival points and maximising the public realm impact of key intersections within the built environment. High-quality and robust materials will be used, and spaces will be welcoming and inclusive for all ages and cultures, facilitating improved health and well-being.

11.22 A Landscape and Public Realm Strategy has been prepared alongside the development framework, which:

- seeks to create accessible and balanced landscaped streets;

- secures public realm enhancements along key routes through and into the town centre, maximising opportunities for softening of the streetscape;
- identifies key junctions for public realm enhancement and improved gateways into Oldham Town Centre; and
- responds positively to long-range landscape outlooks towards Oldham's surroundings.

11.23 The development framework also identifies several opportunities for the public realm as part of an Access and Movement Strategy, including the creation of better public realm and wayfinding between transport hubs, the retail core and key developments. This links to the Accessible Oldham programme, the principles of which have informed the establishment of a hierarchy for streets and spaces that guide the quality of the public realm including new spaces and refurbishments within Oldham Town Centre.

11.24 Enhancements to the public realm will need to respond positively to the local character and distinctiveness of the town centre and its townscape.

11.25 The principles established in this policy, will have a significant impact on the quality of the public realm in the town centre as it continues to re-imagine itself as a place for people to live, work and socialise in. The principles will also help create a people friendly town centre that encourages a diverse street culture.

Policy OTC4 - Green Infrastructure within and around Oldham Town Centre

Proposals will be supported that protect, create and enhance multi-functional Green Infrastructure within and around Oldham Town Centre, including:

1. **the creation of Tommyfield Park, a focal point open space providing a linear route of Green Infrastructure;**
2. **the creation of active travel routes across the town centre, linking it to Northern Roots and Oldham Edge, and PfE JPA12 Beal Valley and JPA14 Broadbent Moss beyond;**
3. **the use of greenspaces as stepping stones to promote nature recovery networks linking Alexandra Park, Glodwick Lows Local Nature Reserve and Oldham Edge;**
4. **having regard to the nature network within the Local Nature Recovery Strategy including opportunities in relation to woodland, upland and urban green spaces and buildings.**
5. **the incorporation of biodiversity enhancements such as green walls and roofs, trees, and landscaping - encouraging wildlife, and creating interest and shade; and**
6. **the use of nature-based solutions and sustainable drainage systems to manage surface water flood risk in the town centre and its integration as part of multi-functional green infrastructure.**

Reasoned Justification

11.26 Proposals will be supported that protect, create and enhance Green Infrastructure within and around Oldham Town Centre, having regard to the Oldham Town Centre Development Framework, the place-based opportunities within the Oldham Green Infrastructure Strategy for the central district, and the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

11.27 The Oldham Green Infrastructure Strategy[88] identifies that Oldham Town Centre has virtually no open space or other types of green infrastructure which is typically limited to mown grass and ornamental trees. The Oldham Way is also a major section of road infrastructure that creates severance in terms of movement from the town centre to the south and west.

11.28 The Oldham Town Centre Development Framework identifies enhancing the town centre's green infrastructure and its connections to the surrounding area, as a key priority and opportunity. The framework sets out a series of strategic objectives for the town centre, many with implications for green infrastructure, and which include:

- Supporting bespoke Town Centre Green Infrastructure principles which align with Oldham's Green Infrastructure Strategy;

[88] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2183/oldham_green_infrastructure_strategy

- Connecting Oldham Edge in the North with Northern Roots / Alexandra Park in the South through a series of 'stepping stones';
- Providing sustainable drainage solutions, including through multi-functional green infrastructure, as part of new development.

11.29 A central part of the strategy for Oldham Town Centre is the creation of Tommyfield Park – a linear park that will be a focal point running through the town centre and connecting with the built environment, delivered as part of a wider Landscape and Public Realm Strategy sitting alongside the development framework. The Oldham Greenway is then a movement strategy that will link the town centre with Northern Roots in the south, and Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss PfE allocations in the north beyond Oldham Edge. The aim being to create stepping stones of green spaces that will create green branches of active travel routes, and strategic landscape and wildlife corridors, reaching from the town centre and beyond.

11.30 Green infrastructure needs to be multi-functional, not only providing biodiversity benefits but also providing nature-based solutions, such as to manage surface water flood risk in the form of sustainable drainage systems.

11.31 The Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) identifies a nature network including opportunity areas which include parts of Oldham Town Centre. Mapped actions identified include:

- Woodland - Bigger and better-connected woodlands, trees and scrub, integrated with patchworks of other habitats;
- Woodland - Enhance existing woodlands, scrub, and hedgerows through positive management, diversify them and increase their resilience to pests, disease and climate change;
- Upland - Encourage the restoration and regeneration of existing upland woodlands and clough woodlands; and
- Upland - Create transitional habitats or corridors to increase linkage between our uplands and lowland habitats, where conditions allow.

11.32 Outside of the mapped actions the LNRS also identifies actions for urban green spaces and buildings acknowledging that outside the nature network areas are equally as important for pursuing nature recovery.

Monitoring

11.33 The main Local Plan indicators that will be used to monitor this chapter are:

- Number of planning applications granted in Oldham Town Centre and the borough's other centres, for main town centre uses
- Number of homes completed within the borough's centres
- Number of day visits and staying visits to Oldham borough
- Number of listed buildings in Oldham Town Centre and number of buildings in the Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area lost through new development
- Number of S106 Planning Obligations for new or enhanced open space provision in Oldham Town Centre

11.34 The main PfE indicators that will be used to help monitor this chapter are:

- Number of residential units (net) delivered in main town centres

- GVA in and within 800m of the main town centres
- Gross area of new habitat created from the application of biodiversity net gain
- Number of trees planted annually (metric to be determined with respect to tree planting programmes and on-site delivery as a result of planning decisions where available)

12 Addressing Climate Change

12.1 The UK government has set a target to become carbon neutral by 2050. National planning policy stipulates that the planning system should help the transition to a low carbon economy. The Local Plan needs to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, mitigate storm and flood risks, reduce overheating and water scarcity, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience, and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

12.2 Creating a carbon neutral city region by 2038 where all citizens have access to affordable renewable energy and warm climate resilient homes is part of the vision outlined in the Greater Manchester Five-Year Environment Plan[89]. It sets out aims for our energy infrastructure to be smart, flexible and fit for a low carbon future; our buildings to be sustainable and energy efficient and our city region to be better adapted and more resilient to the increasing impacts of climate change.

12.3 Places for Everyone policies JP-S2 and JP-S3 sets out how development can help achieve the drive to carbon neutrality. In addition, the Greater Manchester Net Zero Design guidance[90] has been produced to support the implementation of these adopted PfE policies.

12.4 The Council's Building a Better Oldham reflects Oldham's commitment to climate change and seeks to build a better Oldham by ensuring Oldham is the greenest borough through embedding sustainability, energy efficiency & low (zero) carbon. In June 2019, Oldham Council declared its ambition to be the UK's first Green New Deal Council. It subsequently declared a Climate Emergency in September 2019.

12.5 The Council's Oldham Green New Deal Strategy[91] was adopted by the Council in March 2020. The Strategy's objective is to 'Future-proof the regeneration of the borough by establishing Oldham as an exemplar Green City on energy, carbon, water and green infrastructure'. The Strategy puts in place a framework to work with our residents and partners to make Oldham an even greener, smarter, more enterprising place.

12.6 Nature plays an important role in providing key services for climate change adaption such as cooling, shading, clean air and water, as well as building in resilience and accommodating changes in the natural environment by restoring natural processes. Nature-based solutions can help communities become more resilient to climate change, whilst enhancing nature and biodiversity.

12.7 Through the Local Plan we will seek to address climate change through a positive approach on renewable and low carbon energy, flood risk, green infrastructure, design, air quality and transport infrastructure and accessibility. We will also support growth of the green technologies sector. Below we set out our policies on energy, flood risk and water supply. Other plan policies linking to climate change can be found throughout the plan.

[89] This document can be found at: https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/five-year-environment-plan/
[90] The Net Zero guidance can be found at: https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-housing/strategic-planning/places-for-everyone/net-zero-design-guidance/
[91] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/gnds

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

Policy CC1 - Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

Proposals for renewable and low carbon energy development including supporting infrastructure, will be supported where the following criteria have been appropriately addressed:

1. **Local amenity, including noise, air quality, traffic, vibration, dust and visual impact, light (including reflection, glint, glare and shadow flicker);**
2. **Highway safety and network capacity;**
3. **Biodiversity, including nature designations, particularly in relation to displacement and disturbance and functionally linked land within 2.5km of the South Pennines Moors Special Area of Conservation (SAC)/Special Protection Area (SPA);**
4. **Agricultural land, high quality soil and peat where it is in a condition to support habitats or can be restored to a condition to support notable habitats;**
5. **Geodiversity;**
6. **The openness of the Green Belt and whether very special circumstances have been demonstrated to justify otherwise inappropriate development;**
7. **Loss of open space;**
8. **The significance of Local Green Space;**
9. **Flood Risk, hydrology, water supply, and water catchment land;**
10. **Land stability and contamination;**
11. **Public rights of way including access tracks and recreational routes;**
12. **Telecommunications and other networks, including operational equipment required to connect to the National Grid, electromagnetic production and interference and aeronautical impacts such as radar systems;**
13. **The qualities and sensitivities of key landscape characteristics and townscapes and visual impacts;**
14. **The purposes of the Peak District National Park;**
15. **The historic environment including heritage assets and their settings;**
16. **Mineral Safeguarding Areas; and**
17. **Cumulative effects with other existing and proposed energy developments.**

Where a development proposal would have a landscape impact, proposals should be accompanied by a detailed Landscape Impact Assessment carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced professional.

Proposals for wind energy can be considered across the borough, except within 400m of the South Pennies Moors SAC /SPA as shown on the Policies Map.

Where appropriate, any proposal should include full details of the arrangements for decommissioning and the reinstatement/restoration of the site at the end of its operational life.

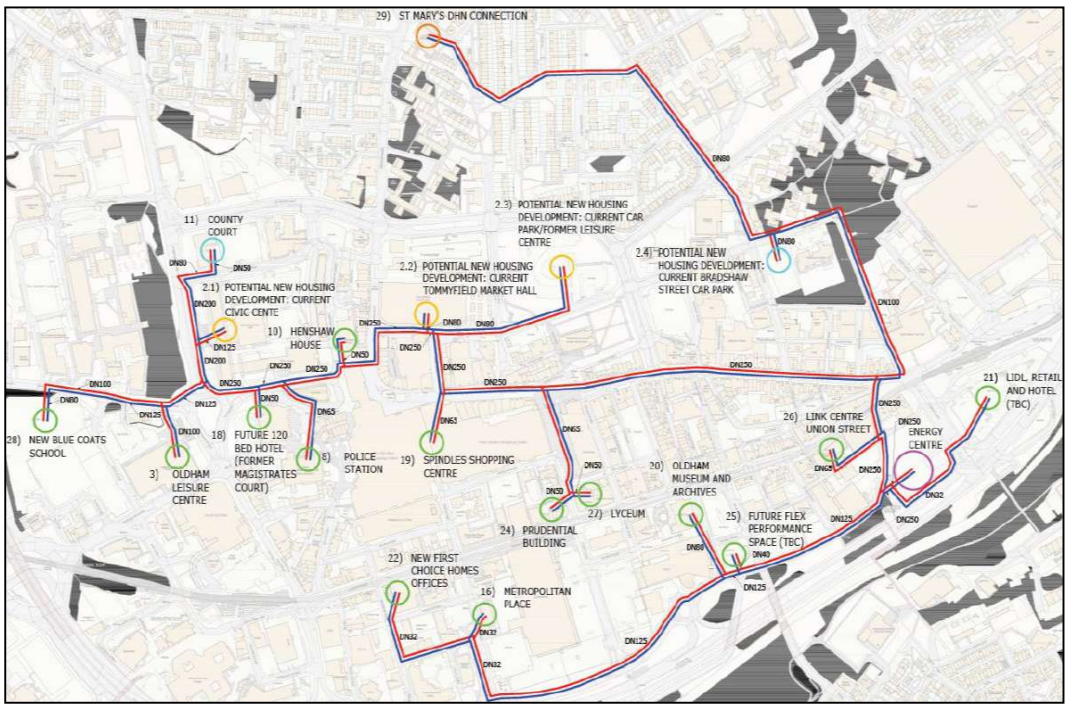
Reasoned Justification

12.8 The renewable and low carbon energy sector plays a significant role in ensuring the energy security of the UK. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions limits the impacts of human induced climate change and stimulates investment in new jobs and businesses, with a range of environmental and economic benefits, such as reduced air pollution and lower energy bills for residents and businesses.

12.9 Planning has an important role in the delivery of new renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure in locations where the local environmental impact is acceptable.

12.10 The Oldham Local Area Energy Plan[92] (LAEP) identifies opportunities for low carbon energy including solar, hydrogen, heat pumps, electric vehicle charging and a district heat network. In addition, the Council is working on an Oldham Mine Water Heat Network project which can be seen in Figure CC1 below.

Figure CC1: Potential expansion of St Marys Heat Network across Oldham Town Centre including a new Minewater Energy Centre



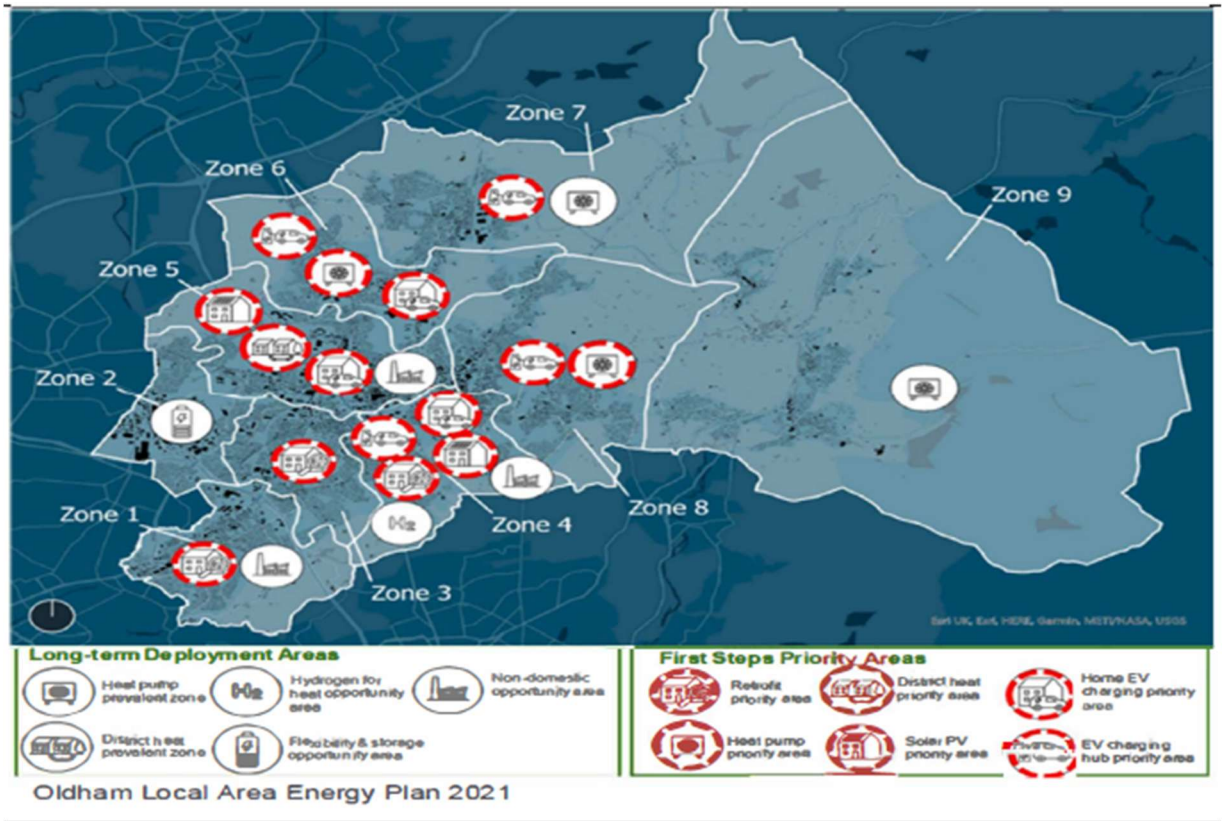
[92] This document can be found at: https://committees.oldham.gov.uk/documents/s129736/OS%20Feb%2022%20-%20OGND%20Appx%20C_Oldham%20LAEP.pdf

12.11 The Council will support proposals for renewable energy providing that any environmental and social aspects are appropriately addressed including: impacts on landscape, townscape, natural, historical, and cultural features, Green Belt, biodiversity, flood risk and areas of nature conservation interest. Proposals should also ensure that high quality design features are used to minimise the impacts on the amenity of the area in respect of visual intrusion, noise, dust and odour and traffic generation.

12.12 Planning applications for hydropower should normally be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment. Early engagement with the Council and the Environment Agency will be necessary to identify any potential planning issues which are likely to be specific to the location. The Environment Agency has published advice on environmental protection for new hydropower schemes[93].

12.13 Most renewable and low carbon energy developments have a limited lifespan after which they will need to be decommissioned. Planning permissions for renewable energy proposals will be subject to a planning condition requiring the removal of infrastructure and reinstatement of the site should the development cease to be operational.

Figure CC2: Oldham Local Area Energy Plan



12.14 The local plan area is considered an area of search for wind energy proposals, except for within 400m of the South Pennine Moors SAC/ SPA due to PfE Policy JP-G5 Uplands. Whilst this policy relates to urban edge effects it is considered that a precautionary approach should be applied to wind energy with regards to the SAC/SPA. The South Pennines Moors SAC / SPA SPD should also be referred to. The SPD provides further guidance on Policy JP-G5 'Uplands', which seeks to ensure that development does not have an adverse impact on the SAC/SPA from urban edge

[93] This document can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-hydropower-scheme-apply-to-build-one

effects or from loss of and/or disturbance to functionally linked habitats within 2.5km of the SAC and SPA boundaries.

12.15 The policy lays out constraints that need to be considered for wind energy proposals. Planning Practice Guidance on 'Renewable and low carbon energy' also outlines considerations for renewable and low carbon energy.

12.16 Battery energy storage systems (BESS) stores electricity when supply is higher than demand, which can then be released when needed. BESS play a role in the replacement of fossil fuels and contribute to supporting net zero.

12.17 The acceptability of individual proposals will be subject to a detailed assessment demonstrating clearly how all the policy criteria has been addressed satisfactorily before granting planning permission.

12.18 Designations and constraints such as Green Belt, Local Green Space, conservation areas, nature designations, geodiversity sites and Minerals Safeguarding Areas are shown on the Policies Map. Other constraints can be found through other sources such as Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England. Greater Manchester Ecology unit also hold a database of information.

12.19 Within the Green Belt, applications for energy are classed as inappropriate development and will need to demonstrate very special circumstances.

12.20 Peat plays an important role in nature-based solutions such as carbon storage and biodiversity support. It is important to protect peat where the condition allows it to perform important functions, including supporting notable habitats. This will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

12.21 Development proposals on land used for public water supply purposes will be required to consult with the relevant water undertaker. The first preference will be for proposals to be located away from land used for public water supply purposes. Where proposals are brought forward on catchment land used for public water supply, careful consideration must be given to the location of the proposed development and a risk assessment of the impact on public water supply may be required with the identification and implementation of any required mitigation measures.

Flood Risk and Water Quality

12.22 Planning has a role to play when it comes to considering new development and assessing flood risk and water resources. There is a need to direct development away from areas of flood risk (looking at Flood Zones and other sources of flood risk), taking into account climate change, and to manage and mitigate flood risk.

12.23 National planning policy and its practice guidance sets out clear tests for assessing planning applications to ensure that development is focussed on sites with lower flood risk probability and that developments are made safe for their lifetime. Flood risk is also addressed in PfE, particularly Policy JP-S4.

12.24 PfE addresses water quality. In addition, the Integrated Water Management Plan[94] aims to work together to manage Greater Manchester's water to enhance the environment, support people and forge prosperous places. The plan links to policies

[94] This document can be found at https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-housing/strategic-planning/integrated-water-management-plan/

within the Local Plan on sustainable drainage and nature-based solutions to create water positive developments.

Policy CC2 - Managing Flood Risk

Development proposals will be determined in line with national planning policy and guidance on Flood Risk, applying a sequential approach to all forms of current and future flood risk.

The functional floodplain (Flood Zone 3b) is identified on the Policies Map. The functional flood plain will be used to store water and for Green Infrastructure benefits. No development shall take place in Flood Zone 3b unless for essential infrastructure, which has passed the Exception Test, or where development is water compatible.

Development will ensure the flow of water within Flood Zone 3b is not impeded or the volume available for the storage of floodwater reduced.

Development should be located in areas with the lowest risk of flooding, taking all sources of flood risk and climate change into account. The Council's preference is for new development proposals to be located outside of Flood Zones 2 and 3. Development proposals outside of Flood Zone 1, which require a sequential test will apply an area of search, to be agreed with the local planning authority in advance of undertaking the search.

A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required where a site is:

1. **Within Flood Zone 3a or Flood Zone 2;**
2. **Within Flood Zone 1 and 1 hectare or greater in size;**
3. **At risk from surface water flooding or on land which has been identified by the Environment Agency as having critical drainage problems (i.e. within an Area with Critical Drainage Problems (ACDP));**
4. **Over 0.5 hectares within a Critical Drainage Area (CDA);**
5. **Situated in an area currently benefiting from flood defences or an area where flood defences are planned;**
6. **Land identified as being at increased flood risk in future;**
7. **At risk of flooding from other sources than fluvial, such as Canal Hazard Zones, or at residual risk;**
8. **Subject to a change of use to a higher vulnerability classification, as set out in national planning guidance, which may be subject to other sources of flooding; or**
9. **Situated over a culverted watercourse or where development will require controlling the flow of any river or stream or the development could potentially change structures known to influence flood flow.**

Where required, development proposals will be granted subject to a satisfactory site-specific Flood Risk Assessment showing that:

a) The national planning policy and guidance have been adhered to together with appropriate consultation with the relevant local planning authority, Lead Local Flood Authority, the Environment Agency and United Utilities, where applicable;

b) The effects of climate change have been taken into account using the latest allowances developed by the Environment Agency;

c) There is no loss in floodplain storage resulting from the development;

d) The development will not increase flood risk elsewhere;

e) The operational functions of any existing flood defence infrastructure is not affected;

f) Proposed resistance and resilience measures designed to deal with current and future risks are appropriate;

g) Appropriate sustainable drainage techniques, prioritising the use of natural flood management techniques that connect to the wider Green Infrastructure network, will be incorporated into the design of the site, where applicable;

h) Whether the development will be safe for its lifetime and has passed the Exception Test, if applicable; and

i) An appropriate Emergency Plan is included that accounts for the possibility of a flood event and shows the availability of safe access and egress points accessible during times of flood.

Reasoned Justification

12.25 Flood Zone 3b, described as the functional flood plain, has been mapped as part of the Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and outputs from the updated Beal modelling. Land falling within Flood Zone 3b will be safeguarded from development and forms part of the borough's Green Infrastructure network.

12.26 Where the sequential test is required an area of search will be agreed with the Council on a case-by-case basis and agreed through pre-application discussions.

12.27 Some developments are not subject to the sequential test, as outlined in national planning policy, such as change of use (except for a change of use to a caravan, camping or chalet site, or to a mobile home or park home site); minor development such as householder development (except where a separate dwelling would be created within the curtilage or the subdivision of houses to flats); and alterations that do not increase the size of buildings. These developments may require a site-specific flood risk assessment, however.

12.28 Change of use applications need to consider how the vulnerability classification, as set out in national planning guidance, may change as a consequence of development and ensure that where required the site-specific flood risk assessment takes this into

account to ensure the development can be designed to be safe, including access and egress.

12.29 Where the exception test is required and development is within higher flood risk areas after applying the sequential test development must be of exceptional quality, which includes design features that allow resilience to flood risk and climate change such as spaces for water to flow, locating the development to the lowest risk areas within the site boundary, considering resilient design, including internal fittings such as cupboard's and sockets located higher and the use of water resilient materials. Development should include multi-functional sustainable drainage.

12.30 When undertaking site-specific flood risk assessments regard should be had to the latest Environment Agency peak rainfall allowances in the climate change allowances: flood risk assessments. This is important to understand and manage the effects of climate change on surface water flood risk and informing the design of drainage systems for new development.

12.31 ACDPs may be designated where the Environment Agency is aware that development within a certain catchment / drainage area could have detrimental impacts on fluvial flood risk downstream, and / or where the Environment Agency has identified existing fluvial flood risk issues that could be exacerbated by upstream activities.

12.32 In these instances, the Environment Agency would work with the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and local planning authority to ensure that adequate surface water management measures are incorporated into new development to help mitigate fluvial flood risk. There are currently no ACDPs in Greater Manchester, however, the Environment Agency can designate areas.

12.33 In addition, CDAs can be identified through local evidence such as Strategic Flood Risk Assessments. CDAs are those identified from historical flood events and/ or modelled data as having a significant risk from surface water flooding and include drainage catchments for the sewer network. The CDAs for Greater Manchester were updated in 2023.

12.34 Although well managed there is a residual risk from the Rochdale Canal and Huddersfield Canal that should be considered where developments fall within the Canal Hazard Zone.

12.35 The borough also has a number of reservoirs, which form part of the historic environment and unique landscape of Oldham. Where applicable site-specific flood risk assessments should also have regard to any reservoir extents to take into account risk if the reservoir was breached.

12.36 Natural processes should be used, as far as practicable to mitigate flood risk and deliver multi-functional benefits. The Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Oldham's Green Infrastructure Strategy can be helpful in considering this.

12.37 Early discussions should take place with the LLFA and where required the Environment Agency and United Utilities. The LLFA are a statutory consultee for major developments. Applicants must engage with United Utilities if a site is identified as being at risk of flooding from a reservoir. Consultation with United Utilities should confirm:

a) if there are any sewer surcharge levels at the point of connection that could influence site design;

b) whether there is an incident of sewer flooding at, or in the vicinity of, the proposed development site; and

c) if sewer modelling data indicates that existing sewers that pass through or near to the site present a modelled risk of sewer flooding.

12.38 Applicants must not assume that changes in levels or that changes to the public sewer (including diversion), will be acceptable as such proposals could increase / displace flood risk.

Foul and Surface Water

12.39 Surface water flood risk is a boroughwide issue and will affect most development sites to varying degrees. It is important that foul and surface water is managed appropriately and that opportunities to improve the current discharge of surface water on previously developed sites are implemented.

Policy CC3 - Sustainable Drainage – Foul and Surface Water

Applications will be supported by a strategy for foul and surface water management, where appropriate, that takes account of the following components:

Surface water must be discharged in the following order of the surface water hierarchy (moving from steps 1 to 5) of:

1. **Collected for non-portable use**
2. **An adequate soakaway or some other form of infiltration system.**
3. **An attenuated discharge to a surface water body.**
4. **An attenuated discharge to public surface water sewer, highway sewer or another drainage system.**
5. **An attenuated discharge to public combined sewer.**

Proposals should be designed to maximise the retention of surface water on-site and minimise the volume, and rate of, surface water discharge off-site.

Developments on greenfield sites are expected to achieve greenfield run off rates[95].

Developments on brownfield sites will be required to achieve greenfield run off rates, particularly within Critical Drainage Areas. A relaxation on outflow controls and/or the extent of attenuation storage will only be permitted with the agreement of the LLFA and LPA at an early stage of the project but should never exceed the rate of discharge from the existing development. Applicants will submit clear evidence of existing operational connections from the site with associated calculations on rates of discharge to demonstrate any reduction that deviate from achieving greenfield run off rates.

Applicants should consider site topography, naturally occurring flow paths, temporary watercourses, and any low-lying areas where water naturally accumulates. Applications will be required to consider exceedance / overland

[95] See Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage for further advice on greenfield run off rates.

flow paths from existing and proposed drainage features and confirm ground levels, finished floor levels and drainage details. Resultant layouts will reflect such circumstances to ensure a flood resilient design is achieved and water is not deflected or constricted.

Applications for major development will be supported by a sustainable drainage strategy and designed in accordance with the four pillars of sustainable drainage[96], in preference to underground piped and tanked storage systems, unless there is clear evidence why such techniques are not possible. It should be integrated with the landscaped environment and the strategy for biodiversity net gain.

For any development proposal which is part of a wider development / allocation, foul and surface water strategies will be part of a holistic site-wide drainage strategy. Pumped drainage systems should be minimised and a proliferation of pumping stations on a phased development will not be acceptable.

Applications are required to be accompanied by drainage management and maintenance plans, having regard to any watercourse within the application site or an adjacent watercourse where the application site is afforded riparian rights.

Any development proposals which have the potential to cause foul and surface water discharges to water-sensitive designated sites should be subject to project-level HRA.

Reasoned Justification

12.40 Application of the hierarchy for managing surface water is a key requirement for development sites to reduce flood risk and the impact on the environment. National standards for sustainable drainage systems[97] place increased emphasis on non-portable use - reusing water (rainwater harvesting) for uses such as toilet flushing, washing machines and gardening applications. Clear evidence must be submitted to demonstrate why alternative preferable options in the surface water hierarchy are not available.

12.41 Developers should be aware that surface water discharges to some waterways, including canals owned by the Canal and River Trust, may require the consent of riparian landowners. Developers should ensure that they gain relevant consent(s) as appropriate.

12.42 Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs) have been mapped across Greater Manchester (2023) and are shown on the Policies Map.

12.43 Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 in England will provide a framework for the approval and adoption of sustainable drainage systems into new developments. Foul and surface water drainage must be considered early in the design process. Sustainable drainage should be integrated with the landscaped environment and designed in accordance with the four pillars of sustainable drainage (water quantity, water quality, amenity and biodiversity) reflecting the opportunity for nature-

[96] The four pillars of sustainable drainage are referenced in Ciria SuDS Manual and planning practice guidance
[97] National standards for sustainable drainage systems is available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-standards-for-sustainable-drainage-systems

based solutions. It should identify SuDS opportunities, including retrofit SuDS opportunities, such as green roofs; permeable surfacing; soakways; filter drainage; swales; bioretention tree pits; rain gardens; basins; ponds; reedbeds and wetlands. Any drainage should be designed in accordance with 'Ciria C753 The SuDS Manual', Greater Manchester's Sustainable Drainage Design Guide[98] the National standards for sustainable drainage systems[99], sewerage sector guidance, or any subsequent replacement guidance.

12.44 Drainage details, ground levels and finished floor levels are critical to ensure the proposal is resilient to flood risk and climate change. It is good practice to ensure the external levels fall away from the ground floor level of the proposed buildings (following any regrade), to allow for safe overland flow routes within the development and minimise any associated flood risk from overland flows. In addition, where the ground level of the site is below the ground level at the point where the drainage connects to the public sewer, care must be taken to ensure that the proposed development is not at an increased risk of sewer surcharge. It is good practice for the finished floor levels and manhole cover levels (including those that serve private drainage runs) to be higher than the manhole cover level at the point of connection to the receiving sewer.

12.45 Holistic site-wide drainage strategies will be required to ensure a coordinated approach to drainage between phases, between developers, and over a number of years of construction. Applicants must demonstrate how the approach to drainage on any phase of development has regard to interconnecting phases within a larger site with infrastructure sized to accommodate interconnecting phases. When necessary, the holistic drainage strategy must be updated to reflect any changing circumstances between each phase(s). The strategy shall demonstrate communication with infrastructure providers and outline how each phase interacts with other phases.

12.46 Applicants are expected to provide information on their sustainable drainage proposals in the following documents:

- Completed SuDS Pro-forma; and
- Sustainable drainage strategy which takes account of the recommendations from the site-specific flood risk assessment where applicable; and where necessary.

12.47 Where a site-specific flood risk assessment is required, this can be combined with the drainage strategy.

12.48 The HRA for the Local Plan recommends that any development proposals which have the potential to cause foul and surface water discharges to water-sensitive designated sites should be subject to project-level HRA.

[98] Greater Manchester's Sustainable Drainage Design Guide is available at https://gmgreencity.com/resource_library/greater-manchesters-sustainable-drainage-design-guide/
[99] The National standards for sustainable drainage systems is available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-standards-for-sustainable-drainage-systems

Water Efficiency and Climate Change

12.49 Water is essential to life - to flora, fauna and the human population. It is vital that water resources are carefully managed to reduce water stress and scarcity. Pressures such as population, housing growth and climate change adds stress to water resources therefore we need to manage sustainable growth and resilience to climate change through policies which can help manage water supplies sustainably.

Policy CC4 - Water Efficiency

All new residential developments are expected to achieve, as a minimum, the optional requirement set through Building Regulations Requirement G2: Water Efficiency or any future updates.

Major non-residential development will be required to achieve five credits for category Wat 01 of BREEAM unless demonstrated impracticable.

Reasoned Justification

12.50 A tighter water efficiency standard in new development has multiple benefits including a reduction in water and energy use, as well as helping to reduce customer bills. Building Regulations currently includes a requirement for all new dwellings to achieve a water efficiency standard of 125 litres of water per person per day (l/p/d). In 2015 an 'optional' requirement of 110 l/p/d for new residential development was introduced.

12.51 Non-residential development must achieve full credits (5 credits) for category Wat 01 of BREEAM unless it is impracticable. A further exemplary credit is available for outstanding performance. Five credits will typically give a 55% improvement over the baseline. A BREEAM pre-assessments will need to be submitted as part of the planning application to demonstrate that BREEAM credits for Wat 01 are being targeted. Compliance can then be secured through a planning condition.

12.52 The Local Plan requires this higher standard, which ties in with our approach to be a greener borough and declaring a climate emergency and Greater Manchester declaring a biodiversity emergency. Pressures from water supply also affect the achievement of the Water Framework Directives through impacts on water quality, species and habitats. As such there are environmental reasons for addressing water efficiency as well as helping our residents achieve lower bills in new housing, reducing effects of deprivation.

12.53 Major non-residential development applies to developments over 1000m^2.

12.54 This is justified by evidence provided by United Utilities, which is summarised in the supporting Topic Paper on climate change.

Ground Water Source Protection Zones

12.55 The Environment Agency defines Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) and these are available on the Environment Agency's website. These are areas that are often used for public drinking water supply purposes. Preventing pollution to drinking water is critical to ensure it is safe to use for public health.

Policy CC5 - Groundwater Source Protection Zones

In consultation with the Council and relevant statutory bodies, applicants are required to consider the potential impacts on water quality resulting from the design, construction and operation of proposed development. Where necessary, development proposals must include measures to reduce any risk to the water environment and aim to protect and improve water quality.

Development proposals within Groundwater Source Protection Zones are expected to accord with the latest national guidance on Groundwater Protection and will be expected to conform to the following:

1. **Risk Assessment - a quantitative and qualitative risk assessment and mitigation strategy with respect to groundwater protection will be required to manage the risk of pollution to public water supply and the water environment;**

2. **Masterplanning – is required to mitigate the risk of pollution to public water supply and the water environment; and**

3. **Construction Management Plan – a Construction Management Plan will be required to identify the potential impacts from all construction activities on both groundwater, public water supply and surface water and identify the appropriate mitigation measures necessary to protect and prevent pollution of these waters.**

Reasoned Justification

12.56 The SPZs are shown in Appendix 7 and are defined around large and public potable groundwater abstraction sites. The purpose of SPZs is to provide additional protection to safeguard drinking water quality through constraining the proximity of an activity that may impact upon a drinking water abstraction. This is part of an initial screening process in assessing impacts to groundwater resources. Zones around location sites are defined by groundwater travel time to an abstraction.

12.57 SPZs provide a visual representation of the increased risks as you get closer to the abstraction. The following subdivisions are defined within SPZs:

- Zone 1: (Inner Protection Zone) - This zone is defined by a travel time of 50-days or less from any point within the zone at, or below, the water table. Additionally, the zone has as a minimum a 50-metre radius. It is based principally on biological decay criteria and is designed to protect against the transmission of toxic chemicals and water-borne disease.
- Zone 2: (Outer Protection Zone) - This zone is defined by the 400-day travel time from a point below the water table. Additionally, this zone has a minimum radius of 250 or 500 metres, depending on the size of the abstraction. The

travel time is derived from consideration of the minimum time required to provide delay, dilution and attenuation of slowly degrading pollutants.

- Zone 3: (Total catchment) - This zone is defined as the total area needed to support the abstraction or discharge from the protected groundwater source.

12.58 In Oldham, SPZs 1 and 2 have been defined and include parts of Shaw, Crompton and St James wards. New development should ideally seek to be located away from SPZs, especially Source Protection Zone 1.

12.59 Applicants should take note of 'The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection' position statement[100].

12.60 The risk assessment requires applicants to follow the source-pathway-receptor approach. This means thinking how activity from development may be a 'source' of pollution to groundwater (such as landfill), the 'pathways' that the pollution could take to reach groundwater from the development site (such as engineered measures such as a landfilled lining system, or infiltration system), and the potential groundwater 'receptors' that could be affected by that pollution (such as abstraction boreholes, the ecosystem dependent on groundwater or the groundwater). It shall identify all possible contaminant sources and pathways for the life of the development and provide details of measures required to mitigate any risks to groundwater and public water supply during all phases of the development.

12.61 Subject to the outcome of the risk assessment, the mitigation measures may include the highest specification design for the new foul and surface water sewerage systems (pipework, trenches, manholes, pumping stations and attenuation features).

12.62 Within source protection zones careful masterplanning is required. For example, open space can be located so that it is closest to the boreholes in order to minimise the potential impact on groundwater with an appropriate management regime.

Monitoring

12.63 The main Local Plan indicators that will be used to monitor this chapter are:

- % of households living in fuel poverty
- Number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on water quality grounds
- Number of new developments agreed with the Council incorporating Natural Flood Management (NFM)

12.64 The main PfE indicators that will be used to help monitor this chapter are:

- Number of planning permissions approved against EA advice

[100] This document can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/groundwater-protection-position-statements

13 Natural Environment and Open Land

Oldham's Open Land

13.1 The Peak District National Park is a protected landscape that's falls within the borough of Oldham. It was designated in 1951 and was Britain's first National Park. The diverse landscape contrasts with Oldham's industrial and urban landscapes.

13.2 The purposes of designation for National Parks are to:

- conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage; and
- promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public.

13.3 National Parks protect landscapes and wildlife habitats, whilst also providing places where people live and work, and provide a focus for recreation and tourism. They also offer places of tranquillity.

Policy OL1 - Consideration for the Peak District National Park

Development within the planning boundary of Oldham Borough will be permitted where it does not conflict with the purposes of the Peak District National Park.

Where possible, opportunities to further the purposes of the Peak District National Park will be sought.

Reasoned Justification

13.4 National planning policy applies great weight to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks.

13.5 The determination of planning applications within the part of Oldham falling within the Peak District National Park is undertaken by the Peak District National Park Authority. However, parts of Saddleworth that fall within Oldham Council's planning boundary may be considered to fall within its setting and contribute to the Peak District National Park's natural beauty.

13.6 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 section 245 states in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in any National Park in England, a relevant authority must seek to further the purposes and if it appears that there is a conflict between those purposes, must attach greater weight to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area comprised in the National Park.

13.7 This applies to functions outside of the designated area which affects land within the protected landscape. Defra guidance[101] confirms that natural beauty, special qualities and key characteristics can be dependent on the contribution provided by the setting of a protected landscape. Aspects such as tranquillity, dark skies, cultural heritage and remoteness are important considerations.

[101] This document can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-protected-landscapes-duty/guidance-for-relevant-authorities-on-seeking-to-further-the-purposes-of-protected-landscapes

13.8 In determining planning applications, the Council will need to be satisfied that granting planning permission will leave the special characteristics of the national park unharmed. Contributions to the conservation and enhancement of the protected landscapes natural beauty, special qualities and key characteristics are encouraged.

Oldham's Green Belt

13.9 The Green Belt is land which meets at least one of the following five purposes:

1. to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
2. to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
3. to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
4. to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
5. to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

13.10 Places for Everyone (PfE) has revised the Green Belt boundary for each of the nine Greater Manchester authorities included within the plan, including Oldham, and this is shown on the adopted Policies Map. The Local Plan does not address strategic Green Belt boundary revisions.

13.11 However, a 'tidy up' of minor boundaries of a technical mapping nature has been undertaken and these are also reflected on the Policies Map. Appendix 8 sets out boundary revisions to the Green Belt.

Policy OL2 - Oldham's Green Belt

The openness and permanence of Oldham's Green Belt will be preserved, in line with national planning policy.

Within the Green Belt, national planning policy will be applied including the refusal against inappropriate development except in very special circumstances.

Proposals for agricultural buildings constitutes appropriate development, however the Council will have regard to the design, layout, and form of construction of any buildings to assess the suitability for agricultural purposes.

Proposals for the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or change of use), including those for outdoor sports and recreation, as described in national planning policy, must preserve the openness of the Green Belt, and not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. Therefore, built development and associated infrastructure such as car parking, lighting and hardstanding must be kept to a minimum and be sensitively designed.

In assessing whether a proposed stable constitutes 'appropriate' development for sport and recreation in the Green Belt, the Council will have regard to the design, layout, and form of construction of any buildings to assess the suitability for stabling purposes.

National planning policy allows for the limited infilling in villages within the Green Belt. Determining whether a proposed development is within a village will be assessed on a case-by-case basis having regard to the particular character, layout, and function of the settlement.

Similarly, whilst there is no set definition for 'infilling', the Council would consider such sites to comprise the following:

- **a small gap or space between other buildings or structures; and**
- **within a continuous built-up frontage or within built development; and**
- **which relates well to the existing built form.**

The development of gaps which merge sites or buildings which are presently not spatially or visually well-related to the existing settlement would not be deemed to conform to the aim and purposes of the Green Belt.

Reasoned Justification

13.12 National planning policy and supporting guidance sets out what types of development are not inappropriate within the Green Belt. This has been extended to include additional development, such as that on 'grey belt'. These will be permitted where they also satisfy other relevant planning policies.

13.13 Inappropriate development is considered harmful to the Green Belt and will only be approved in 'Very Special Circumstances', which clearly demonstrate that the potential harm is outweighed by other considerations. 'Very Special Circumstances' will be judged on a case-by-case basis.

13.14 Applicants are required to clearly set out the level of harm to the Green Belt including definitional harm (by reason of inappropriateness); harm to the openness[102] - volume, visual impact, duration of development and related activities such as traffic generation; and harm to Green Belt purposes where the land is not previously developed or grey belt. Any other planning harm should also be clear as part of the planning application. Any measures to reduce or mitigate the harm and the 'Very Special Circumstances' (i.e. all the benefits) of the proposed development must also be clearly set out. A statement should be submitted with sufficient detail to allow the Council to be able to make an informed decision on whether the test is passed, and development permitted.

13.15 The General Permitted Development Order also allows some types of development without the need for planning permission. This applies to the Green Belt but does not usually apply where land within the Green Belt also falls within a conservation area.

[102] National planning policy does not require substantial weight to be applied to harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness, where the development is on previously developed land or grey belt land.

Policy OL3 - Extensions and Alterations to Existing Buildings within the Green Belt

Extensions and alterations to existing buildings will be supported where they are not disproportionate to the size of the original building.

In considering whether extensions and/or alterations are disproportionate consideration will be given to all the following criteria to help determine whether the development preserves openness:

1. **the size and scale of the extension / alteration should be subordinate to the original building. Where the building has previously been extended, the assessment will consider the cumulative impact of the existing and proposed extensions taken together;**

2. **the design, including materials, colours and style is required to be sympathetic in keeping with the character of the original building, and as appropriate the surrounding vernacular; and**

3. **where the individual or cumulative total volume exceeds more than 40% of the volume of the original building, approval is more unlikely to be granted.**

Reasoned Justification

13.16 National planning policy allows for the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. The above policy is intended to help guide development proposals that require permission for extensions and alterations to existing buildings.

13.17 National planning policy defines an original building as "A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was originally built." Subordinate means of lesser importance / not equal to the original building.

13.18 The policy seeks to strike a balance between the needs of residents living in the Green Belt to adapt their properties, whilst protecting the purposes of the Green Belt.

13.19 The Council has previously informally used up to one third of the original building as a guide for what constitutes an acceptable extension / addition, and this may well be appropriate to most extensions / additions requiring permission. However, there have been proposals where permission has been granted within the borough which exceed one third and these have been found to be acceptable. Therefore, some flexibility has been built into the policy allowing up to 40% as an indicative guide. Extensions under 40% may still be found unacceptable. Applications will be determined on a case-by-case basis and the 40% is in no way a target. Anything that exceeds 40% would need to be justified to demonstrate that the proposal is proportionate or that very special circumstances apply.

Local Green Space

13.20 A number of areas have been identified as 'Local Green Space' (LGS) in line with national planning policy. LGS are spaces that are important to local communities due to their proximity to the community and because they are demonstrably special and hold

local significance due to beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, or richness of its wildlife.

Policy OL4 - Local Green Spaces

The Local Green Spaces in Table OL1 are identified on the Policies Map and will be protected from inappropriate development to ensure the significance of the Local Green Space is protected and can be enhanced.

Table OL1: Local Green Spaces

Local Green Spaces	
LGS 1 Royley Clough	**LGS 2 Ferney Field Road**
LGS 3 Foxdenton Hall Park	**LGS 4 Crossley Bridge Playing Field**
LGS 5 Moston Brook and Hole Bottom Clough	**LGS 6 Simkin Way**
LGS 7 Oldham Edge	**LGS 8 Land at Greenacres**
LGS 9 Thornley Brook	**LGS 10 Stonebreaks**
LGS 11 Dacres Hall	**LGS 12 Wall Hill**
LGS 13 Ryefields Drive	**LGS 14 Stoneswood**
LGS 15 Ainley Wood	**LGS 16 Land at Summershades Lane**
LGS 17 Rear of Elk Mill / Cotswold Drive	**LGS 18 Sholver (Land between Pearly Bank and Longfellow Crescent)**

Development proposals, including new housing, will generally be deemed inappropriate in order to protect the significance of each Local Green Space.

Exceptions to this include the following types of development, provided they do not substantially harm qualities related to the Local Green Space:

1. **Small scale proposals that enhance recreational value such as appropriate facilities, including buildings, for outdoor sport and recreation;**

2. **Appropriate facilities for cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments;**

3. **Proposals to enhance the historic significance, such as interpretation trails;**

4. **Buildings for agriculture and forestry;**

5. **The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;**

6. **The replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;**

7. **Engineering operations;**

8. **Local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Local Green Space location;**

9. **The re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;**

10. **Material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and**

11. **Development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.**

When assessing development proposals, the Council will consider the impact of development on the designated Local Green Space as a whole and its qualities which make it significant. There will be a presumption against development proposals that will substantially harm the significance of the Local Green Space.

Reasoned Justification

13.21 The methodology and evidence for identifying LGS is set out in the Local Green Space Assessment[103]. Appendix 9 shows the LGS' and these are identified on the Policies Map.

13.22 Some enhancement opportunities have been identified in the LGS assessment; however, these are not exhaustive. It should be noted that enhancement of LGS is not to be used to justify the harm caused to part of a LGS as a result of development proposals.

13.23 The LGS designation gives the land additional protection against inappropriate development in addition to any other constraints / designations, such as open space and nature designations relevant to the site. Parts of Sholver LGS is also a Millenium Green. In time LGS sites could also be used as BNG habitat banks too which would also mean they are legally secured for at least 30 years and not available to new development unless excluded from the habitat bank. Some of the LGS also include playing pitches which must be protected in line with Policy CO1. This includes works such as tree planting, pathways, etc that may affect sports facilities.

[103] This document can be found at:
https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7043/local_green_space_assessment

13.24 The policy allows for small scale development to support the role of particular LGS', for example changing facilities for a cricket pitch, which would enhance its significance.

13.25 New housing development would not be appropriate development within a LGS.

13.26 Planning applications are required to be supported by a statement explaining how the development proposal will impact on the significance of the LGS (i.e. the reason why it was designated), the level of harm and benefits that the proposal will deliver.

13.27 Harm will be assessed by determining the impact on the significance of the LGS. Substantial harm for example may include the loss of recreation facilities or the ability of people to use that recreation facility in the same way; the loss, reduction or severance of wildlife; and the reduction in the ability of the LGS to provide a tranquil space - for example because the site will become more urbanised. Less than substantial harm may involve minor developments, for example an extension to an existing building that does not affect the significance of the LGS.

13.28 Proposals must, where necessary, be supported by sufficient ecological surveys in line with Policy N1.

13.29 A Community Right to Build Order is a type of Neighbourhood Development Order which are subject to their own legal tests and processes. A designated community organisation could obtain outline or full planning permission through a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order, for example for homes, including affordable homes, community facilities or playgrounds for the benefit of the community.

13.30 The type, quantity and design of buildings and the location is decided through the neighbourhood planning process and consulted on before being submitted to the local planning authority. The Order would then be subject to an independent examination, which will look at whether the basic conditions have been met[104]. A local referendum can then be held, and the Order bought into force if over 50% of those voting have supported the Order. If an Order is for outline planning permission, then reserved matters would still need to be addressed through the planning process.

Protecting Oldham's Dark Skies

13.31 The eastern part of the borough, particularly that which is closest to the Peak District National Park, Kirklees and Calderdale, includes areas that currently offer darker skies within the borough. Dark skies contribute towards tranquillity and natural wildlife behaviour and is a key characteristic of the countryside.

13.32 Light pollution affects human health as well as wildlife through for example disturbing sleep patterns and is associated with poorer mental health. There is also little evidence that brightly lit areas reduce crime and road accidents.

13.33 Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), The Countryside Charity, has produced interactive maps of light intrusion and dark skies. As you would expect the denser the area in terms of development the brighter the level of night lights.

[104] The basic conditions are set out in Paragraph 8(2), Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Panning Act 1990.

Policy OL5 - Protecting Dark Skies and Tranquillity

The borough's dark skies are an important part of Oldham's countryside character and will be protected. Development will be supported that protects dark skies, as shown on the Policies Map, and avoids light pollution.

The Policies Map outlines Category 1 and Category 2 dark skies. Category 1 are our darkest parts of the borough, followed by Category 2.

Within the areas classed as dark skies where there is a demonstrated need for external lighting the use of dark sky friendly lighting will be used.

Elsewhere good lighting management and design will be expected to minimise and where opportunities arise reduce light spillage and glare.

Proposals for any development involving outdoor lighting schemes will be expected to demonstrate as part of the planning application that:

a. **The proposed lighting is the minimum required for security or working purposes;**

b. **Light spillage and glare are minimised, particularly in areas of open countryside or on the edge of settlements; and**

c. **There is no significant harm impact on sites of nature conservation value.**

The impact on amenity including on surrounding residents and highway safety will also be considered.

Reasoned Justification

13.34 National planning policy states that decisions should ensure new development is appropriate for its location taking into account likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. Decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.

13.35 Oldham's dark skies (category 1 – blue areas) are the darkest parts of the borough. These areas also fall within important areas for nature conservation (South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation / Special Protection Area / Site of Biological Interest), making the case for protection even more important. These dark skies should be protected, and opportunities taken across the borough to reduce light pollution. Therefore, if there is a demonstrated need for external lighting for short periods the use of dark sky friendly lighting should be used.

13.36 Category 2 (green areas) overlaps with Oldham's Green Belt and several nature designations. This area has limited light intrusion.

13.37 Opportunities should be taken to reduce light pollution, including for example considering the types of materials used and landscaping measures. Choosing appropriate street lighting can make a strong contribution to reducing light pollution and reducing energy consumption.

13.38 Development proposing external lighting should consider guidance set out in GN01 For the reduction of obtrusive light 2021[105] (or any successor guidance). Developments within Category 1 should be in line with Zone E1 and developments in Category 2 should be in line with Zone E2. There may be areas outside of Category 1 and 2 where the use of Zone 2 guidance will be considered, determined on a case by case basis.

Monitoring

13.39 The main Local Plan indicators that will be used to monitor this chapter are:

- Number and type of developments permitted in the Green Belt
- Number and type of developments permitted in Local Green Spaces

[105] GM01 For the reduction of obtrusive light 2021 is available at GN01 For the reduction of obtrusive light 2021

14 Addressing the Biodiversity Emergency

14.1 Biodiversity has a strong role to play in our lives and offers many benefits as outlined in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy including:

- Benefits for people: a green and healthy environment; more recreation and leisure opportunities; improved air quality and less noise pollution; improved physical and mental health; more resilience and adaptation to climate change; and stronger communities;
- Benefits for businesses: a more attractive place to work, encouraging local economic growth; increased resilience through reduced risk of, and better adaptation to, environmental hazards; a healthier, happier and more productive workforce; higher land and property values; increased green jobs and skills; more visitors and sustainable tourism opportunities; and more productive land for food security and other resources that can be grown locally;
- Ecological benefits: Protection of rare and threatened species and habitats; repaired natural cycles and natural processes; a greater abundance and diversity of wildlife and healthier ecosystems, reversing biodiversity decline; capture and sequestration of carbon dioxide, helping tackle climate change; more resilience to future changes in climate and greater resilience of species to pests and diseases.

14.2 Across the country there has been a decline in land and freshwater based species since 1970 and a rapid change in the abundance of species and declines in key indicator species. The Greater Manchester State of Nature[106] report was compiled to highlight the urgent challenges faced by nature across the city-region, which was reflected in the declaration of a biodiversity emergency in GM in March 2022. The report covers trends in our wildlife, the use of land and pressures on nature, the wider benefits we receive from nature and people's access to nature and engagement with it.

14.3 Echoing national trends, key species of birds and mammals in GM and the North West of England are declining. Individual bird species population show declines of up to 40% over the last 40 years and the abundance of once common mammals has dropped by between 20-40% since 1995. GM is home to many populations of birds. Mirroring national trends, we have seen some worrying declines in our bird populations including Tree Sparrows, Skylarks, Redpoll, Twite, Snipe, Spotted Flycatcher, Tree Pit and Lapwings. Regionally there has been a significant decline in rabbits, red fox, brown hare and hedgehogs.

14.4 Pressures on nature as noted in the State of Nature report include competing land uses, pressures on waterbodies and water; pathogens and diseases, invasive species and climate change.

14.5 For nature to recover, species need habitats that are bigger and better but importantly connected. The Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy[107] (LNRS) sets out a shared vision for nature recovery in Greater Manchester; shared priorities, targets and actions for different habitats and species we can all work towards to help deliver them. Actions that are not mapped are applicable for consideration across the borough wherever they are relevant. For example, urban actions are not mapped but are applicable in any urban location and all habitat themes can be checked for relevance with regards to unmapped actions that can inform site layout and design.

[106] This document can be found at: https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/9526/gm-state-of-nature-report.pdf
[107] This document can be found at: https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/natural-environment/our-plan-for-nature-recovery/

14.6 Maps of a Greater Manchester Nature Network have been developed made up of:

- Core local nature sites - existing valuable areas for nature which include our nature designations; and
- Nature Recovery Opportunity Areas - opportunity areas where action should be focused across the city-region.

14.7 Biodiversity will also be enhanced through developments including through the use of the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain tool, which can take account of the LNRS as well as through embedding Green Infrastructure generally.

Policy N1 - Protecting Nature

The borough's hierarchy for designated sites and wider ecological networks is identified below and will be safeguarded in line with national policy:

1. **Internationally designated sites including the Peak District Moors SPA, South Pennine Moors Phase 2 Special Protection Areas for Birds (SPAs) and South Pennine Moors Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), and the Rochdale Canal SAC;**

2. **Nationally designated sites including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) at Dark Peak, South Pennine Moors, Ladcastle and Den Quarries, Lowside Brickworks, Rochdale Canal and Standedge Road Cutting;**

3. **Irreplaceable habitat including ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees and blanket bog;**

4. **Locally designated sites including Sites of Biological Importance (SBI's), Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites (RIGS) and Local Nature Reserves;**

5. **Sites that are not designated for nature but contain substantive nature conservation value of local significance including priority habitats and species and other protected species, peat which is capable of restoration to support notable habitats, green corridors and recreational routes.**

Avoiding significant harm includes protecting biodiversity on site, whilst also avoiding harmful impacts to biodiversity outside the development site from development.

Development will not be permitted where it would impact on the integrity of the above SAC/SPAs.

An ecological assessment will be required as part of the planning application where a site contains, adjoins or may impact on a site which contains nature as described in the above hierarchy.

Reasoned Justification

14.8 Designations for nature are shown on the Policies Map. New designations, such as SBI, may be made over time, and these will be shown on an ecological layer on the Council's website to ensure the latest information can be reflected and accessed.

14.9 PfE Policy JP-G5 sets out that development is not permitted within 400 metres of the South Pennine Moors SAC/SPAs boundaries unless, as an exception, the development and/or its use would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC or SPAs. The South Pennine Moors SAC/SPAs SPD sets out guidance on what the exceptions may include.

14.10 PfE Policy JP-G5 also sets out that within 2.5k of the SAC/SPAs boundaries developments are required to provide assessment to determine if the application site provides foraging habitats for the qualifying bird species of the SPAs. The South Pennine Moors SAC/SPAs SPD provides further guidance on the assessment and mitigation.

14.11 Planning applications which are required to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment will need to consider air quality impacts on Holcroft Moss, within the Manchester Mosses SAC with reference to PfE Policy JP-C8 and the Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations SPD, as explained under Policy T5.

14.12 Where developers are required to assess the impact on an internationally designated site Natural England must be consulted and developers are encouraged to use Natural England's conservation advice for land-based protected sites.

14.13 Natural England is a statutory consultee on development proposals that might impact on SSSIs. Natural England has produced Impact Risk Zones, which can be viewed online, to give an initial indication of potential risks to SSSIs posed by development.

14.14 Irreplaceable habitat is defined in national planning policy as habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen. Maps of ancient woodland can be seen on MappingGM.

14.15 There are currently 39 Sites of Biological Importance within Oldham and the number and extent of SBIs has gradually increased since 1984. The existing SBIs within Oldham are shown on the Policies Map and listed at Appendix 10.

14.16 Where a new SBI, RIGS or Local Nature Reserve is proposed, the Council will seek to designate these, where they do not conflict with other strategic objectives.

14.17 Green corridors are important for ecological movement and also assist recreational movement. They are shown on the Policies Map. Most green corridors and links overlap with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy nature network. Some parts of the green corridors will include areas already important for biodiversity – core areas including nature designations, where it will be important that the biodiversity hierarchy is applied. Maps of the Green Corridors and Links being de-designated and with boundary changes can be found in Appendix 11.

14.18 There are also a number of strategic recreational routes across the borough and many of these also overlap with the LNRS nature network. Development proposals on sites

affecting green corridors and recreational routes, will be permitted where they do not dissect the open land corridor into sections or harm the potential for wildlife or people's access and enjoyment of the corridor.

14.19 Some brownfield sites can be of high environmental value. Open mosaic habitats can be found on sites such as railway sidings, quarries, former industrial works and brick pits. Brownfield sites with open mosaic habitats show previous disturbance through soil being removed or severely modified by previous use, or the addition of materials such as industrial spoil, with spatial variation developing across the site. The variation results in a mosaic of different habitats being supported in close proximity. This habitat diversity can support rich assemblages of invertebrates, which has led to 'open mosaic habitats on previously developed land' being added to the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) as a Priority habitat listed on Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act).

14.20 Restorable peat has an important role to play in supporting notable habitats (blanket bog, lowland raised bog and fens) but also for carbon storage. Peat is not currently an irreplaceable habitat however account should be taken on any national policy changes in relation to peat should this change. Whether peat is restorable will need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

14.21 A Peat Map for England (May 2025) has been published by Natural England. This may provide useful information when looking at proposals. Natural England may request on a case-by-case basis peat surveys to inform applications where they consider that development may affect deep peat masses either directly or indirectly and may request mitigation measures for impacts on peat. Where a peat survey is needed Natural England recommend that The Peatland Code Fields Protocol[108] is used.

14.22 There can sometimes be an overlap between different levels of nature designations, for example Glodwick Lows Local Nature Reserve contains a SSSI and a RIGS. Proposals must ensure that they satisfy all relevant policy, with the highest level of nature designations taking priority.

14.23 Priority habitats are shown on Natural England's Priority Habitats Inventory[109]. Other protected species may be identified through the planning application process.

14.24 When determining impacts on nature conservation interests any requirement for species enhancements and management would need to be considered.

14.25 Mitigation measures can vary and will depend on the site and proposal. Mitigation measures may include setting appropriate buffer zones between development plots and biodiversity, the erection of screening barriers to protect from noise and dust, measures to reduce noise or light and managing recreational pressures. Buffer zones and other mitigation measures should seek to connect to the wider green infrastructure network.

14.26 Mitigation for rivers and streams may include adopting or extending green space buffers, restoration techniques such as de-canalising or de-culverting waterbodies, restoring lost floodplain connectivity, removing invasive non-native species, removing or modifying redundant weir structures or adopting true multifunctional SUDs solutions when designing new site surface water drainage schemes. These opportunities should be assessed early in the design process.

[108] The latest Peatland Code Field Protocol can be found at Peatland Code Field Protocol: Assessing eligibility, determining baseline condition category and monitoring change : NbS Knowledge Hub

[109] This dataset can be found at https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/Defra::priority-habitats-inventory-england/about

14.27 Compensation may be secured through a planning condition or obligation covering the long-term management, monitoring and / or maintenance of the site.

Policy N2 - Restoring Nature

A net increase in biodiversity will be achieved across the borough. Development will have regard to the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and should seek to support and deliver on the priorities and actions for nature recovery within the strategy.

The core local nature sites in our nature recovery network will be safeguarded and development will avoid harm to the core network in line with national planning policy. Where mitigation measures are considered, they should have regard to the priorities and actions within the LNRS and /or any actions within relevant management plans.

Development[110] on land within an opportunity area should seek to:

1. **Protect and enhance existing habitats; and**
2. **Restore and create habitats in a way that significantly improves connectivity within the development site and beyond.**

Where the opportunities arise to enhance connectivity, particular consideration should be given to:

3. **The expansion and enhancement of existing habitats;**
4. **The strategic creation and restoration of habitat to better connect existing habitats;**
5. **The design and layout of the development; and**
6. **Any infrastructure that could be detrimental to achieving enhanced connectivity, such as roads, buildings and other barriers to species movements (e.g. fences).**

The LNRS opportunity areas are to be regarded as being of strategic significance in terms of the Biodiversity Net Gain metric.

Where relevant development has demonstrated, following application of the biodiversity gain hierarchy, all reasonable opportunities to achieve measurable Biodiversity Net Gain of at least 10% onsite have been exhausted, the following principles apply to the selection off-site areas:

a. **Proximity to loss – there is an expectation that off-site areas will be located as close as possible to the development site, incentivised by the biodiversity metric's spatial risk multiplier, so that the area experiencing**

[110] This is considered to apply to major and minor developments. Change of use and householder applications should consider other ways to incorporate biodiversity as set out in Policy N3 and actions under Urban green spaces and buildings in the Greater Manchester LNRS.

loss of biodiversity through the proposed development benefits from the compensation.

b. Best biodiversity value – offsite areas should be chosen in line with local priorities and actions for nature recovery, particularly those set out in the LNRS.

Reasoned Justification

14.28 The core areas of the nature network include national and local nature designations and irreplaceable habitats and these are shown on the Policies Map. These are areas where nature is already recognised for its importance and this will therefore include parts of the hierarchy in Policy N1. Development will not be permitted that does not adequately address the principles of biodiversity as set out in national planning policy. If mitigation needs to be considered this should consider the priorities and actions within the LNRS but also any relevant conservation objectives or management plans that may be prepared.

14.29 Across Oldham the LNRS sets out opportunities (and which species they will support) for:

- Woodlands, Trees, Scrub and Hedgerow;
- Grasslands, Farmland and Lowland Heath;
- River, Canal and Waterbodies;
- Lowland, Wetland and Mossland;
- Upland Moorland; and
- Urban green spaces and buildings.

14.30 The LNRS also identifies local species particularly at risk and practical actions for the target species or species groups.

14.31 The LNRS opportunity areas are strategically identified areas that are crucial to developing a coherent nature recovery network across Greater Manchester, through expanding or joining up our core local nature sites. These opportunity areas have no existing statutory protection and have significant potential to become of particular importance for biodiversity. They represent the best areas to connect-up spaces for nature across Greater Manchester and are where effort should be concentrated to achieve the most for biodiversity. Developments within opportunity areas should be ambitious for nature recovery.

14.32 The LNRS notes that high-impact invasive species, such as Himalayan balsam, Japanese knotweed and Giant hogweed, and diseases, such as ash dieback, are found across Greater Manchester and impact upon the quality of our remaining habitats and their ability to support wildlife. The actions within the LNRS also include tackling invasive species.

14.33 For implementation of statutory Biodiversity Net Gain, the areas identified in the LNRS as areas that could become of particular importance for biodiversity (or "opportunity areas") are to be categorised as "formally identified in local strategy" for the purposes of scoring high strategic significance in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric[111].

[111] The Guidance Note can be found at https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/natural-environment/biodiversity-net-gain/biodiversity-net-gain-in-greater-manchester/

14.34 Applicants should also follow advice as set out in the Greater Manchester BNG Guidance[112] in addition to relevant regulations and legislation. This guidance outlines the biodiversity gain hierarchy which is to avoid adverse effects to on-site habitats firstly, mitigate any adverse effects which cannot be avoided and enhance and then create on-site habitat before looking at offsite solutions.

14.35 Where applicants are wishing to secure a third-party habitat bank via a Section 106 with the Council it is advised that they refer to the Greater Manchester Habitat Bank Verification and Auditing Guidance[113].

14.36 In addition, biodiversity mitigation / enhancements should not be located directly over water and wastewater assets or where excavation onto the asset would require removal of the biodiversity.

14.37 Planning applications for householders and change of use are currently not required to use the Statutory Biodiversity Metric to demonstrate net gain. Instead, applicants can provide a plan or statement for the measure(s) they will undertake. These measures could include nest boxes or the planting of a native tree species, should space allow. Alternatively, the applicant could consider donating to a third party to plant a tree such as the Woodland Trust, their local Wildlife Trust or City of Trees.

14.38 The loss of irreplaceable habitat should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where bespoke compensation has been agreed. Any mitigation and/or compensation requirements for “Habitats Sites”, other statutory designated sites or irreplaceable habitats should be dealt with separately from biodiversity net gain provision.

Oldham's Green Infrastructure

14.39 Green Infrastructure is an umbrella term used to describe a range of assets such as open spaces, playing fields, woodland (including ancient woodland), residential gardens, sustainable drainage features, trees, green roofs and walls and ‘blue infrastructure’, such as river corridors, ponds and canals, which all offer habitats for biodiversity.

14.40 Over 75% of Oldham consists of Green Infrastructure. This includes agriculture (25%), semi-natural habitat (18%), private gardens (12%), deciduous woodland (6%) and amenity space (6%). Although Green Infrastructure is extensive, we need to manage it more effectively to better respond to the needs of people and nature, and ensure it is resilient to the changing climate.

14.41 The vision for Oldham's Green Infrastructure is that by 2037, Oldham will be a carbon neutral exemplar with a resilient, multifunctional Green Infrastructure network which brings multiple benefits to the natural and built environment and provides a solid foundation for the Council’s response to climate change. Oldham will be a greener and healthier place to live, work and visit.

[112] This document can be found at: https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/natural-environment/biodiversity-net-gain/biodiversity-net-gain-in-greater-manchester/
[113] The Greater Manchester Habitat Bank Verification and Auditing Guidance is available at https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/natural-environment/biodiversity-net-gain/biodiversity-net-gain-in-greater-manchester/.

Policy N3 - Enhancing Green Infrastructure through development

New development is expected to make an appropriate contribution to addressing local needs and opportunities for Green Infrastructure provision by retaining, enhancing and creating green spaces and corridors.

All development will make a proportionate contribution to Green Infrastructure, taking into account the scale and type of development. Opportunities for development to enhance Green Infrastructure include:

1. **Protecting and improving the Green Infrastructure network, including the ecological network, on and around the site through providing or enhancing functional links or corridors between different Green Infrastructure assets;**

2. **Providing new Green Infrastructure and/or introducing multifunctional use of existing green spaces in response to a site-specific assessment of need and Green Infrastructure opportunity;**

3. **Protecting existing high quality and multifunctional corridors, and where present, using opportunities for riparian development sites to create a high-quality river corridor and Green Infrastructure asset; and**

4. **Aligning with the priorities and actions set out in the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy.**

Developments for 20 homes[114] or more, or non-residential development of 1,000m^2 or more, will be required, where appropriate, to:

5. **Enhance the landscape setting of the site by improving the character, appearance and condition of access corridors into the site, gateways, settlement edges and landscape features, including historic environment assets;**

6. **Enhance pedestrian and cycle connectivity between residential areas, town centres, schools and workplaces, outdoor sports, tourism and recreational facilities, public transport services and the countryside around the site; and**

7. **Facilitate for the production of food (e.g. allotments and community gardens) within residential or mixed-use developments.**

Major developments[115] should use the latest version of the national Urban Greening Factor calculator, or equivalent, to demonstrate that the development will achieve Urban Greening Factor scores, or equivalent, of at least:

a. **0.3 for developments that are predominantly commercial; and**

b. **0.4 for developments that are predominantly residential.**

[114] Developments of 20 homes and above or those of 1,000m^2 and above are of an appropriate size and scale to accommodate meaningful green infrastructure as part of the development. A higher number of homes can justify the additional requirements for green infrastructure.
[115] The definition for Major Developments is set out in national planning policy.

An operation and maintenance plan must also be included which satisfactorily demonstrates that the green features will be successfully retained throughout the life of the development.

Applications for householder and changes of use are not required to meet the above criteria but are expected to protect and aim to enhance Green Infrastructure and incorporate practical measures to support biodiversity such as swift bricks, hedgehog highways, bat boxes or access tiles and living walls. Applicants should provide a statement detailing the measures that will be incorporated.

Reasoned Justification

14.42 Development should have regard to the Oldham Green Infrastructure Strategy[116], including the assessment of Green Infrastructure functions, needs and opportunities set out within the following seven priority themes:

1. thriving wildlife for Oldham;
2. carbon neutral Oldham;
3. healthy and active communities;
4. green access for all;
5. distinctive landscapes;
6. slowing the flow and a quality water environment; and
7. sustainable growth and green jobs.

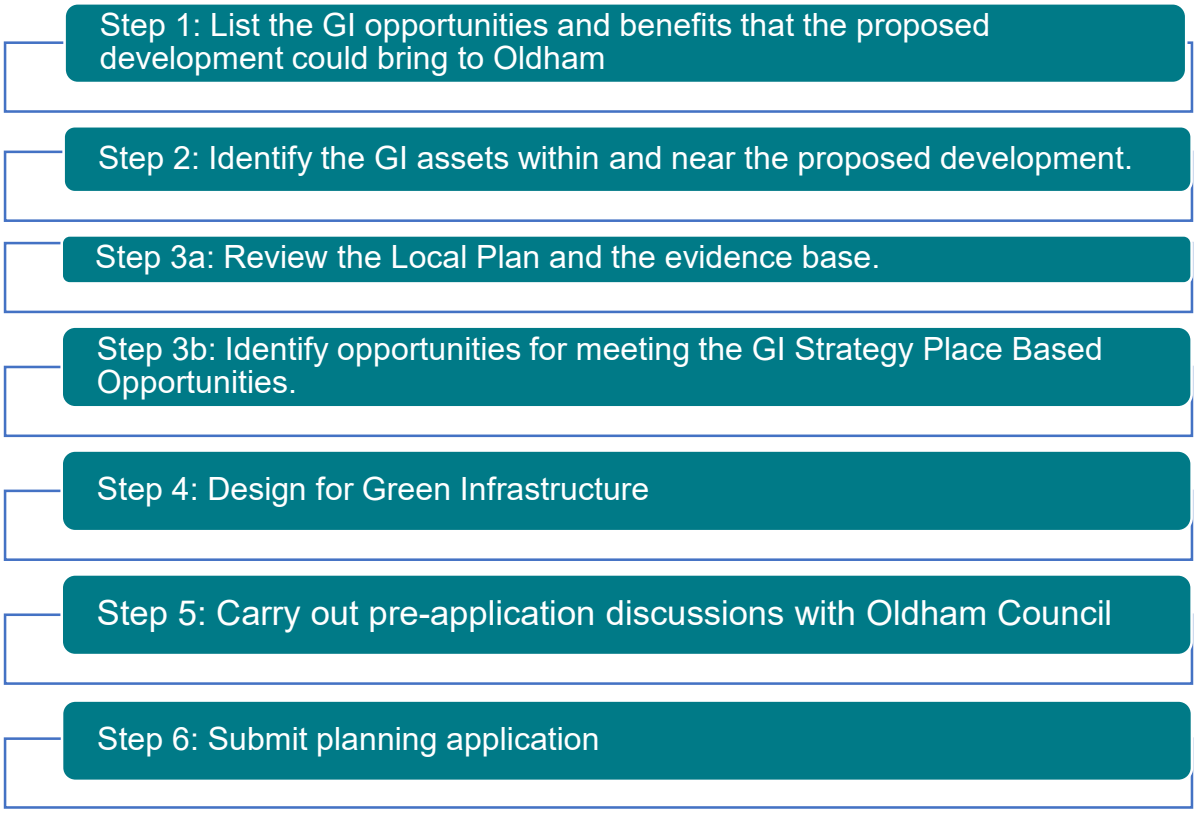
14.43 Green Infrastructure assets can each serve one or more functions. Development should aim to incorporate Green Infrastructure assets that are multi-functional by supporting as many of the above themes as possible.

14.44 The Green Infrastructure Strategy provides an up-to-date assessment of current Green Infrastructure provision and opportunities using existing data sets. The spatial data sets produced within the Green Infrastructure Strategy, highlight opportunity areas aligned to local need and can be used to guide development decisions.

14.45 The Green Infrastructure Strategy proposes place-based opportunities including Nature Recovery Networks and some of these are these are shown on the Green Infrastructure Network and Opportunity Map[117].

14.46 The Green Infrastructure Strategy sets out a step-by-step guide as to how to implement the strategy when considering a development proposal. An outline of the steps is set out below:

[116] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2183/oldham_green_infrastructure_strategy
[117] This map can be found at: https://map.oldham.gov.uk/map?name=Green%20Infrastructure



14.47 Development proposals are expected to protect the ecological network and where possible extend or enhance this network.

14.48 The Council will seek to improve the Green Infrastructure network by requiring that development proposals adjacent to green corridors and recreational routes provide an extension or link between green corridors and routes.

14.49 The Urban Greening Factor (UGF) is a planning tool to improve the provision of Green Infrastructure particularly in urban areas and can be used to contribute towards BNG, the Local Nature Recovery strategy and Oldham's Green Infrastructure Strategy. The target scores reflect the recommended targets by Natural England.

14.50 Urban Greening Factor requirements should be considered at the earliest possible stage of design development alongside mandatory BNG requirements to ensure these requirements are considered from the outset of design.

14.51 Applicants should set out in a statement detail of how this policy has been incorporated into the design of proposals. Account may also be taken of Sport England's Active Design Principles[118] and the voluntary use of other standards such as Building with Nature.

14.52 Riparian development sites can contribute to creating a high-quality river corridor by considering opportunities for creating a continuous and enlarged open space adjacent to the rivers; removing poor quality buildings that encroach up to the bank top of watercourses; restoring heavily canalised or culverted waterbodies; removing or

[118] Sport England's Active Design Principles can be found at: https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/active-design

modifying redundant weirs; reconnecting a river to its floodplain; and removing invasive non-native species. Further policy on water quality is included within PfE.

14.53 Landscaping proposals, including proposals for tree-lined streets, should be integrated with the strategy for sustainable surface water management.

14.54 Landscaping proposals including changes in levels and proposals for ecological mitigation, will have regard to the impact on existing utility infrastructure.

14.55 Where on-site Green Infrastructure provision is not feasible, the Council will, where reasonable, seek developer contributions either towards the improvement of existing green spaces or towards the provision of new Green Infrastructure in an area of need.

14.56 Where compensation is required for the loss of existing Green Infrastructure, then the provision of new or enhanced Green Infrastructure as required by the scale of the development should be in addition to the requirement for compensation.

14.57 The Council will also seek developer contributions for the future management and maintenance of Green Infrastructure, where appropriate.

14.58 For minor applications such as householder and change of use the Local Nature Recovery Strategy outlines actions that can help enhance nature such as supporting species by installing homes for wildlife and reduce barriers to species movements across and between gardens.

14.59 This is supported by national planning guidance which states developments should integrate nest boxes (swift bricks), where possible.

Increasing Tree Cover

14.60 The National Tree Mapping dataset confirms that the average canopy cover across the borough is 13.4%. The Green Infrastructure Strategy highlights each wards canopy cover and notes the absence of tree canopy in some of the more elevated areas of Saddleworth and Shaw wards due to the presence of peatland habitat where large areas of tree planting is not always suitable.

14.61 The Green Infrastructure Strategy recommends the tree canopy should aim for 20% cover, taking account of the retention of existing trees and the future canopy growth of trees to be planted as part of the landscape for the site. The exception to this is in parts of the Shaw and Saddleworth wards, where the existing peatland habitat takes precedence.

14.62 Therefore, it is important that as well as planting new trees existing trees are protected. Where they do need to be replaced this needs to contribute towards this target.

14.63 PfE Policy JP-G7 requires replacement trees on the basis of two new trees for each tree lost, or other measures that would also result in a net enhancement in the character and quality of the treescape and biodiversity value in the local area, with a preference for on-site provision. The below policy incorporates two new trees as a minimum but adds further detail to ensure a net enhancement locally.

Policy N4 - Trees

Development proposals are required to aim to protect and retain tree cover within a development site. Developments will:

1. **Demonstrate how existing trees and hedgerows and their health have been retained, wherever possible, through careful siting and design, which avoids overshadowing of development;**
2. **As appropriate, having regard to its scale and nature, contribute to increasing the borough's tree canopy cover and its multi-functional benefits. This should take account of the Green Infrastructure Strategy, the GM LNRS, BNG metric and competing land uses which take precedence such as restorable peat.**

The loss of or damage to trees may only be justified where:

1. **Adequate replacement planting is proposed; and**
2. **It is demonstrated that the tree is dead, dying or dangerous; or**
3. **The tree is causing significant damage to structures; or**
4. **The tree has little or no amenity value; or**
5. **It has been demonstrated that all suitable options to retain the tree have been explored and its retention is not possible as part of the development; or**
6. **Felling the tree is considered good arboricultural practice.**

There will be a presumption against development that causes loss of or deterioration to ancient woodland, and ancient and veteran trees.

The Council will use a fixed number system to secure new trees in replacement for those to be removed. The number of replacement trees required will depend on the trunk diameter of the tree proposed for removal as shown in Table N1. The requirement will apply to A and B category trees, category C trees will be replaced on a 2:1 basis in accordance with PfE.

Table N1: A and B Category Tree Replacement Requirements

Trunk Diameter of tree proposed for removal (mm measured in line with BS5837 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction')	Number of replacement trees required
75-199mm	2
200 – 299mm	3
300-399mm	4
400-499mm	5
500-599mm	6
600-699mm	7
700-799mm	8
800mm+	9

Trunk Diameter of tree proposed for removal (mm measured in line with BS5837 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction')	Number of replacement trees required
Veteran/Ancient/Historic / Exceptional	Case by case based on CAVAT value and current government, Woodland Trust and Ancient Tree Forum guidance.

Reasoned Justification

14.64 Size class distribution is an important factor in managing a sustainable tree population, as this will ensure that there are enough young trees to replace those older specimens that are eventually lost through old age or disease. The majority of trees in Oldham are in the lowest size categories, 72% of the trees recorded have a diameter at breast height (dbh) of less than 30cm, whilst around 40% of the trees have diameters less than 15cm. Across Oldham approximately 28% of the tree population is larger than 30cm dbh. This compares favourably with cities and towns in other regions of England, where the Trees in Towns 2 survey found that on average only 10–20% of trees have a dbh that is greater than 30cm. Large mature trees offer unique ecological roles not offered by smaller or younger trees. Furthermore, older trees with larger crowns provide greater benefits than a similar number of smaller sized trees.

14.65 To maintain or increase a level of mature trees, young trees are needed to restock the larger size classes (with surplus) to include planning for mortality. Therefore, the tree replacement requirements aim to retain mature trees by having a higher number of trees that would be required if a more mature tree was lost or damaged rather than a blanket approach of 2:1. This approach aims to ensure developments avoids loss of trees, particularly mature trees, where possible.

14.66 Section 4.5 of BS 5837:2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations' describes the different tree categories - Category A (trees of high quality); Category B (trees of moderate quality); and Category C (trees of low quality).

14.67 BS 5837 also describes how only trees with a DBH of 75mm or above are to be included within BS 5837 Tree Surveys, hence why the ratios start at 75mm.

14.68 Exceptional trees could include rare, unusual, commemorative trees or trees with significant conservation or ecological value.

14.69 In accordance with national planning policy, development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists. Where it is necessary to remove Veteran/Ancient/Historic or Exceptional trees compensation will be considered on a case by case basis using CAVAT (Capital Asset Valuation of Amenity Trees) value as well as current government guidance[119], Woodland Trust and Ancient Tree Forum guidance. A sum would be paid as a commuted sum to the Council for tree planting improvements across Oldham.

[119] Government guidance on ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-ancient-trees-and-veteran-trees-advice-for-making-planning-decisions

14.70 CAVAT provides a method for managing trees as public assets rather than liabilities. It is designed not only to be a strategic tool and aid to decision-making in relation to the tree stock as a whole, but also to be applicable to individual cases, where the value of a single tree needs to be expressed in monetary terms.

14.71 Replacement trees will be a minimum of 12-14cm girth trees (Containerised – bag-grown or root balled). Watering and maintenance must be included until trees are established in the landscape. Where replacement trees cannot be provided on site a contribution will need to be paid to the Council. Trees will be planted and managed in accordance with BS8545 – Trees: form Nursery to Independence in the Landscape – Recommendations.

14.72 Species and locations for planting should be appropriate and agreed by the Council's Arboricultural and Countryside Team and where necessary highways.

14.73 Where the tree replacement requirements are not already met in full by biodiversity net gain requirements, development will still be expected to meet the tree replacement standard on-site or off-site through an appropriate legal agreement.

14.74 Where an applicant has demonstrated that replacement trees cannot be accommodated within the development site the Council will consider a monetary payment as part of a section 106 agreement so that the required trees can be planted on land nearby or where priorities are highest across Oldham. In these cases, the value per tree will be commensurate with the latest landscape institute figures for tree replacements (£412.00 – 2022).

14.75 Planning applications must include an accurate survey of the location, size, condition and species of all trees on the site and whether the trees are used by bats or breeding birds. One should not fell trees before the planning application is granted in order to fully consider the retention of trees and the policy aim.

14.76 Where trees are to be retained on a development site, buildings must be located at a sufficient distance to preserve levels of amenity for future users of the property, particularly in the case of residential development, and rear gardens must not be unduly overshadowed. It will be a planning requirement, secured by condition, that adequate measures are taken to protect trees during construction.

14.77 Landscaping proposals including proposals for tree-lined streets should be integrated with the strategy for sustainable surface water management.

14.78 Local authority consent must be obtained to carry out works to a tree with a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) on it. Permission must also be obtained to fell or prune trees within conservation areas. Decisions are usually made within six weeks.

14.79 The Council may take out TPOs on sites with significant tree cover as development proposals for sites emerge.

14.80 Applicants should not fell trees in order to degrade the development site. As well as seeking to avoid loss of biodiversity existing trees should be taken into account in the biodiversity net gain metric. Where there is evidence that the existing tree cover of a site has been deliberately reduced prior to the application being submitted, the number of replacement trees required will be calculated based on the number of trees that existed on the site immediately prior to those activities taking place.

Monitoring

14.81 The main Local Plan indicators that will be used to monitor this chapter are:

- Single data list 160-00 Proportion of local sites where positive conservation management is being or has been implemented
- Change in areas of biodiversity designations (i.e. SBI updates)
- Percentage of sites designated for nature in active management for nature conservation
- Percentage of tree canopy cover

14.82 In addition, Biodiversity Duty Reports will be prepared including information on BNG.

14.83 The main PfE indicators that will be used to help monitor this chapter are:

- Gross area of new habitat created from the application of biodiversity net gain
- Number, area and condition of SBIs
- Number of trees planted annually (metric to be determined with respect to tree planting programmes and on-site delivery as a result of planning decisions where available)

15 Oldham's Historic Environment

15.1 Building a Better Oldham seeks to ensure we are building quality homes; providing opportunities to learn and gain new skills; to grow local businesses and create jobs; ensuring Oldham is the greenest borough and improving health and well-being. The historic environment can contribute towards each of these objectives.

15.2 Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to quality of life.

15.3 Oldham with its hugely significant industrial past is rich in history and heritage with both designated and non-designated assets. In particular, the clusters of mills contributing to Oldham's landscape character, give the borough an exceptionally strong identity and sense of place[120].

15.4 The Local Plan sets out a positive strategy for heritage. Two areas that the Local Plan has focussed on is a strategy for the boroughs non-designated mills[121] and an appraisal and management plan to enhance Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area with the aim of removing the conservation area from the 'at risk' register[122].

15.5 The borough of Oldham is characterised by rich and diverse heritage that plays an important part of Oldham's identity. Significant historic buildings, industrial townscapes, and landscapes amid the South Pennines, make up and provide a multitude of designated and non-designated heritage assets. Therefore, new development will be sought in a way that compliments and respects this rich history. Consisting of the historic buildings, conservation areas, parks and gardens, archaeology, waterways, areas of distinct local character and townscapes. The Local Plan seeks to proactively manage change and move forward, whilst reflecting the borough's capacity to preserve its irreplaceable heritage.

Policy HE1 – The Historic Environment

Development proposals that positively conserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their setting, will be supported by the Council. In addition to fulfilling its statutory obligations, and working with partners, we will:

1. **Secure the preservation and enhancement of Oldham's heritage assets;**
2. **Promote and support heritage-led regeneration and development;**
3. **Produce or update conservation area appraisals and management plans;**
4. **Continue to enhance Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area with the aim of removing it from the 'at risk' register;**

[120] Information on mill clusters can be found within the Oldham Mills Strategy, including the landscape overview available at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham_mills_strategy
[121] Oldham Mills Strategy can be found at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham_mills_strategy
[122] The Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan can be found at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham_mills_strategy

5. **Manage development proposals affecting conservation areas and ensure that elements which contribute to a conservation area's special character and appearance are preserved and enhanced;**

6. **Seek to identify and acknowledge local non designated heritage assets;**

7. **Work positively to help implement the Oldham Mills Strategy to safeguard the future of heritage assets at risk;**

8. **Protect and enable restoration and appreciation of the canals; and**

9. **Maximise opportunities to increase the understanding and interpretation of the borough's historic environment.**

Reasoned Justification

15.6 As a result of Oldham's extensive and evolving past, the borough has a rich historic environment. Oldham's heritage can be traced back for nearly 10,000 years, with worked stone tools from the Mesolithic period found in the eastern part of the borough. The Bowl Barrow of Knarr Barn, provides important information on the diversity of beliefs and social organisations amongst early prehistoric communities, thus being worthy of protection as a scheduled monument. A further scheduled monument in Oldham is the Roman Fort of Castleshaw. This fort served as permanent bases for auxiliary units of the Roman Army and provides important information on the early occupation of the north of England.

15.7 Changes in the division of land in the 16th century resulted in the escalation of farming and their associated farm complexes, folds and workers cottages. However, over time land sizes shrunk and thus profits reduced, pushing the production and sale of textiles. The emergence of independent yeoman clothiers saw the development of grander, wealthy clothier houses and by the mid 1700's rows of weavers' cottages to house the small communities of people dependent on the textile industry. Many significant examples of such are still seen across Saddleworth and are designated as listed buildings. Local market centres, such as Greenfield, Shaw and Delph were established and places such as Uppermill developed on important trade routes. Many of which are now designated as conservation areas.

15.8 Through Industrialisation, a large number of water powered cotton and woollen mills were built on the rivers Irk and Irwell. With the development of steam power, resulting in large multi storey mills and associated terraced housing, to accommodate industrial workers, that had a major impact on the landscape across Oldham. Although many existing mills are designated heritage assets, the Oldham Mills Strategy[123] aims to safeguard the remaining mill stock that is non designated. The associated development of transport, such as canals and railways, had a significant impact on the industry and landscape of the district and are still evidenced across the borough. Including the listed Uppermill Viaduct and the historic canals. These assets should be protected, restored where needed and appreciated for the role they played.

15.9 In the late 1800's/ early 1900's Oldham Town Centre adopted a commercial and civic identity. A new market, civic buildings, banks, arcades, hotels and shops were built.

[123] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham_mills_strategy

However, the industrial decline of the early 20th century and economic depression led to unemployment and thus vacancy and degradation of these grand buildings.

15.10 Additionally, during Oldham's prosperity, middle class suburbs developed on the fringes of the historic core. Some of these around public parks with formal layouts, landscaping and structures such as the registered Alexandra Park and Garden and surrounding conservation area. Remaining large detached and semi-detached homes represent an early element of suburbanisation which helps to increase the understanding and interpretation of the borough's historic environment.

15.11 It is therefore essential that the most important elements of Oldham's historic environment are protected as positive assets whilst contributing to the ongoing growth of the borough. Therefore, change must come forward in a managed way and be informed by a proper understanding of the evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal significance of these heritage assets.

15.12 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990[124] sets out statutory duties and responsibilities in relation to designated heritage assets, their listing and protection. It also outlines the procedures for the designation and management of conservation areas. Part I deals with listed buildings and Part II deals with conservation areas. The act includes controls for the demolition, alteration or extension of buildings, objects, or structures of particular architectural or historic interest, as well as conservation areas.

15.13 In addition, the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979[125] provides specific protection for monuments of national interest and The Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953[126] makes provision for the compilation of a register of gardens and other land (parks and gardens, and battlefields).

15.14 A Greater Manchester Local Heritage Listing Project is also underway and is being coordinated by Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS). The aim is to identify and recognise non designated heritage assets that make a significant contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of an area and place them on a local list. The Local List will be added to the Council's website when completed.

15.15 The Historic Environment Record (HER) is also being updated and digitised by GMAAS. Details of where this can be accessed will be added to the Council's website when available.

Policy HE2 - Securing the Preservation and Enhancement of Oldham's Heritage Assets

Development proposals will be supported which sustain and enhance heritage assets and their settings. The Council will support opportunities to put heritage assets to viable sustainable uses consistent with their conservation and sensitive restoration.

Proposals will be assessed in line with national planning policy having regard to circumstances of the case. Proposals affecting a designated heritage asset (or an archaeological site of national importance) and its setting should identify the degree of harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset.

[124] This Act can be found at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/contents
[125] This Act can be found at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1979/46/contents
[126] This Act can be found at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Eliz2/1-2/49/contents

Harm to designated heritage assets will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

The Council will take a proactive approach to secure the appropriate restoration or maintenance of heritage assets at risk, including enforcement action which includes compulsory purchase orders, urgent works notices, repair notices and dangerous structure notices, where appropriate.

Development will be supported where it is designed sympathetically having regard to the significance of the asset, its character, features and setting.

Development proposals affecting an archaeological site of less than national importance is required to conserve those elements which contribute to their significance in line with the importance of the remains. Where developments affecting such sites are acceptable in principle, the following approach will be followed:

1. **Mitigation of damage will be ensured through the preservation of archaeological features in situ as a preferred solution; and**

2. **In cases where the balanced judgement concludes preservation in situ is not justified and should not be pursued, it will be a requirement that they are appropriately excavated and recorded, before or during development. Subsequent analysis, publication and dissemination of the findings will be required to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and deposited with the Historic Environment Record.**

Applications, which will affect an archaeological site of either less than national importance or of national importance, should submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

Proposals that would result in the total or partial loss of a heritage asset, will require the full recording of the heritage asset and the record and commentary deposited with the Local Planning Authority and the Historic Environment Record.

Applications affecting heritage assets and their setting should be fully justified and accompanied by full information necessary to assess the impact of the proposals on the heritage asset. Proposals that affect heritage assets will require the submission of a Heritage Statement (which may form part of a Design and Access Statement) proportionate to the asset's significance.

The statement should:

a. describe the significance of the asset, including its setting;

b. assess the impact / identified harm the proposal has on its significance; and

c. provide clear and convincing justification for the proposed works that outweigh any identified harm.

Reasoned Justification

15.16 The Council will work supportively with applicants on proposals to ensure the continued use of heritage assets, particularly where they are 'at-risk' or vulnerable to ensure that Oldham's distinctive character is maintained, that heritage assets play a role in helping to meet our development needs and that heritage can be an asset for future generations to enjoy.

15.17 The Council will take a proactive approach to secure the appropriate restoration or maintenance of heritage assets at risk, including enforcement action which includes compulsory purchase orders, urgent works notices, repair notices and dangerous structure notices, where appropriate. The owners of heritage assets are encouraged to be proactive in seeking grant funding opportunities.

15.18 The setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral. The Council will support opportunities within new developments to enhance the setting of heritage assets for example removal or replacement of negative buildings with better design, introducing new views that add to public experience or improving public access to, or interpretation of, the asset and its setting. Applicants should follow guidance set out in Historic England Good Practice Advice Planning Note 3 (The Setting of Heritage Assets)[127].

15.19 Significance is defined as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. The Council recognises the valuable contributions that heritage assets make to the borough, therefore, a clear understanding of the significance of these assets should be presented as part of any planning application. Historic England's Advice Note 12[128] provides guidance on analysing significance in line with national planning policy.

15.20 National planning policy identifies the degree of harm (from a designated assets alteration, destruction, or from development within its setting) as either 'total loss', 'substantial harm' or 'less than substantial harm'. Within each category, the extent of harm may vary and must be clearly articulated and justified by the applicant. Appendix 12 expands upon national planning policy to try and help towards a potential further understanding of the scale of harm that can be used to assess the degree of harm to an asset's significance.

15.21 In terms of public benefits these could be anything that flows from the proposed development and delivers economic, social and/or environmental objectives of a scale that would make a positive contribution to the local surrounding area. This may be in terms of tackling any local issues such as low income, health deprivation, skills attainment and employment levels as well as enhancement of the environment. Having

[127] This document can be found at: https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/
[128] This document can be found at: https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/statements-heritage-significance-advice-note-12/

regard to strategic opportunities such as those identified in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy or the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy[129].

15.22 A range of supporting evidence can be considered when considering heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. These can include Landscape Character Assessments, conservation area appraisals and management plans, urban design frameworks, masterplans and design codes.

15.23 When undertaking a Heritage Statement, the Historic Environment Record should be consulted as a minimum and the Council would expect applicants to liaise with GMAAS, in addition to any further available evidence and expertise. The Council would expect to see which heritage assets and their settings are affected, a thorough understanding of the significance of the asset and its settings; and how significance has been considered and reflected in any proposal to ensure harm is minimised and enhancement maximised.

15.24 Historic England maintains the Heritage at Risk register[130]. The register identifies assets that are most at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development. The register is intended as a way to focus on the heritage assets that are at greatest risk and that offer the best opportunities for positive development.

15.25 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act provides the Council with powers to intervene where heritage within the borough is at risk. Additionally, masterplans and development frameworks should look for opportunities to use vacant heritage assets and improve the condition where they are deteriorating.

15.26 A Local List is currently being prepared and should be consulted when considering proposals for non-designated heritage assets. Occasionally, a new, undesignated asset - usually archaeological - will be found in the course of investigating a site or preparing it for development. Further investigation is usually required to understand the significance of the heritage asset, particularly archaeological sites. Development proposals which may affect archaeological heritage assets shall be informed by sufficient evidence. Information on archaeology and the planning systems can be found in Historic England's Advice Note 17 'Planning and Archaeology'[131] (or any subsequent updates).

15.27 Where potential heritage assets have not been included on the HER, they will be assessed according to the criteria set out for local listing in Historic England's Guidance Note 'Local Heritage Listing: Historic England Advice Note 7[132]', or subsequent national guidance.

15.28 Where proposals are likely to affect significant archaeological sites of known importance, or those that become apparent through the development management process, background research followed up by archaeological investigation will be required prior to their determination.

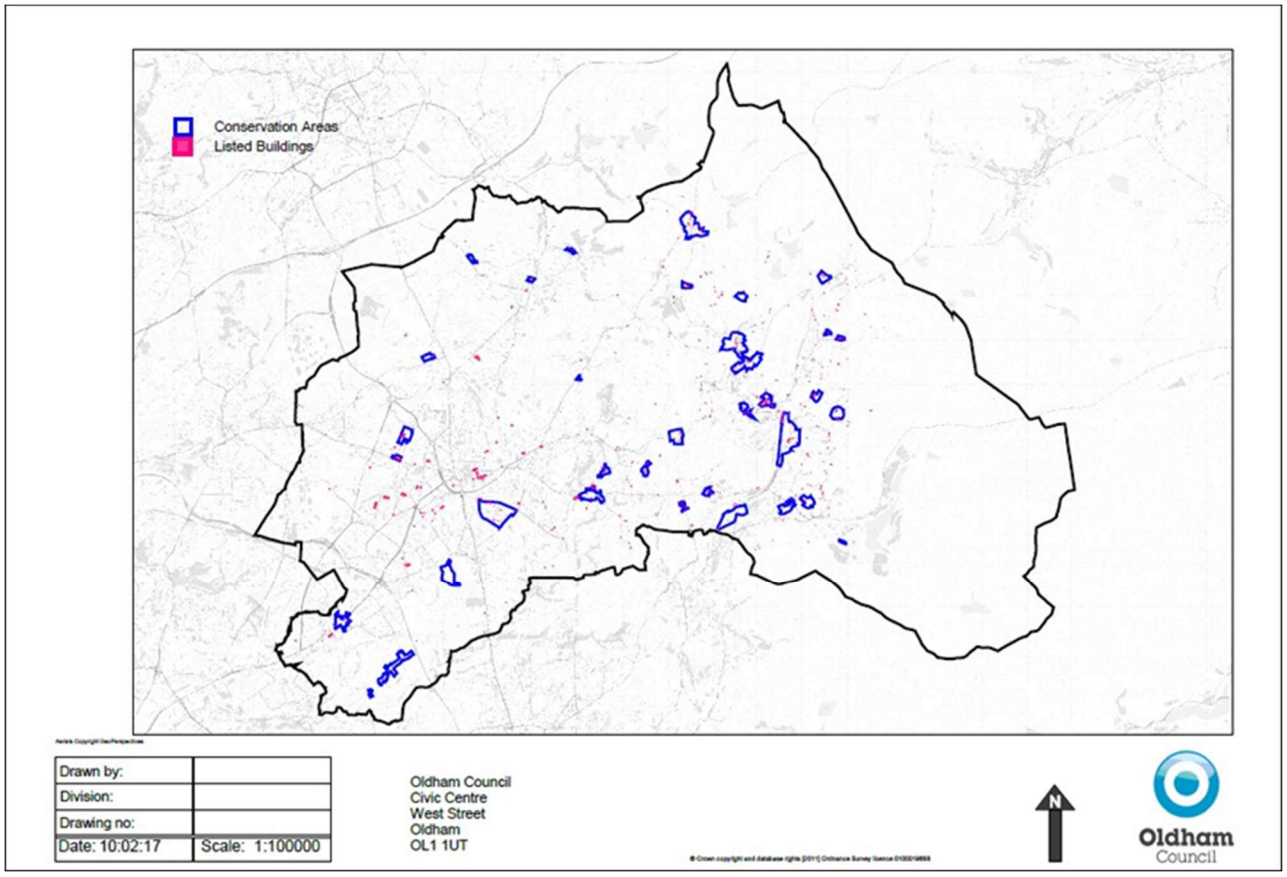
[129] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2183/oldham_green_infrastructure_strategy
[130] For the latest Historic England at risk register please visit: https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/
[131] This document can be found at: https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/planning-archaeology-advice-note-17
[132] This document can be found at: https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7/

Conservation Areas

15.29 There are 36 conservation areas in the borough covering 250.79 hectares. The existing conservation areas were designated in the 1970s and 1980s and with the exception of Oldham Town Centre would benefit from updated appraisals and management plans, particularly as 20 conservation areas in the borough are 'vulnerable'. Management Plans will ensure that identified risks are appropriately managed to prevent further conservation areas from being identified on the 'at risk' register.

15.30 The existing conservation areas are shown on Figure HE1 below and will be shown on the Policies Map.

Figure HE1: Oldham's Existing Conservation Areas



Policy HE3 - Development Proposals Affecting Conservation Areas

Impact on Conservation Areas:

Proposals affecting a conservation area should preserve or enhance those elements which contribute to its character and appearance especially any elements identified in Conservation Area Appraisals as making a positive contribution to the significance of that area.

Proposals that would result in the loss of a building or other element which make a positive contribution to the significance of the conservation area will be treated as substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) or less than substantial harm. Proposals leading to substantial harm will not be

supported unless exceptional[133] circumstances apply. If the harm is less than substantial, this will be weighed against any public benefit that the same development might make.

Proposals within a conservation area or affecting the setting should:

1. **be of high quality, which respects and reflects the character and appearance of the conservation area and should be of appropriate scale, density, height, form, massing, layout, plot position, materials, colours, composition and detailed design. Imitation of earlier styles is not encouraged;**

2. **retain original building plots, where their relationship with the pattern of development and other plots makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area;**

3. **protect existing street patterns, open spaces, walls, railings, materials and other elements that are an integral part of the conservation area; and**

4. **carefully consider the consequent changes to a use of a building, including amongst others, delivery access, parking, and external services, such as condensing units. Changes that have a detrimental impact on the conservation area will not be permitted.**

Shopfronts, retail frontages and signage within Conservation Areas:

5. **New shopfronts will be in-keeping with the character and appearance of the host building and relate to the design of the upper parts of the facade;**

6. **New shopfronts within historic buildings will preserve those elements that contribute to the traditional character of the building including historic corbels, pilasters, fascias and stall risers, or seek to reinstate them where missing. Size, scale, elaborate or simple design and detailing, the use of correct materials and colour schemes must all be considered in making shopfronts acceptable;**

7. **Signage will be sensitively designed and integrated into the shopfront and streetscene;**

8. **Signage should relate to its character, scale and architectural features, avoiding dominating the building façade;**

9. **Proposals are required to avoid internally illuminated box fascia or projecting signs;**

10. **Shop signs will be located at fascia level and follow the pattern within the street, avoiding high level signs;**

11. **The location of signage on non-retail buildings must be carefully considered so as to not harm the appearance of the building;**

12. **Opportunities should be taken to remove detracting elements of shopfronts and signage; and**

[133] See national planning policy.

13. Solid external security roller shutters will not be permitted unless the need for them can be robustly justified. Lattice grilles or internal roller shutters would be acceptable alternatives.

Applications affecting the character or appearance and / or the setting of a conservation area will be required to submit a Heritage Statement.

Applicants are required to take into account statutory provisions for the protection of trees.

Reasoned Justification

15.31 The total loss of a building or element (for example open space) that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area would not be supported unless exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated. For example, if the proposal allows an asset back into viable use or the loss of an asset that would better reveal or enhance another asset or the character, appearance and / or setting of the conservation area. A positive building or element may be listed or unlisted. Nearly all conservation areas within the borough have listed assets within them. Development proposals should seek to preserve the elements of the conservation area which make a positive contribution and should aim to enhance any neutral and negative contributions. There will be the presumption that only negative or neutral buildings or elements will be permitted for demolition where the public benefits outweigh the loss.

15.32 It is felt that some policies from the Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) SPD[134] are applicable to many other conservation areas. As such, specific policies on shop fronts and signage (for example a conservation area including a centre) and new development have been incorporated into the Local Plan. The CAAMP highlighted that poor signage and shopfronts can be very detracting features, affecting the significance of conservation areas as well as the amenity of the area. Solid external roller shutters will not be permitted unless the need for them can be robustly justified, for example through details of unreasonable increases in insurance costs.

15.33 Trees in conservation areas are covered by Section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act. Anyone wishing to carry out works to a tree in a conservation area must notify the local planning authority through a 'section 211 notice'. This may or may not result in a TPO being made. Consent must be obtained, unless covered by exceptions, to carry out works to trees covered by a TPO from the Council.

15.34 Development proposals should have regard to any existing and future conservation areas appraisals and management plans.

15.35 The Council may also designate further conservation areas, where justified by robust appraisals.

[134] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/1599/oldham_town_centre_conservation_area_appraisal_and_management_plan_caamp_supplementary_planning_document_spd

Oldham's Textile Mills

15.36 The Oldham Mills Strategy was commissioned by Oldham Council and Historic England to develop a positive strategy for the sustainable future of the textile mill stock across Oldham. This work complements Historic England's wider project Mills of the North.

15.37 The Oldham Mills Strategy identifies the non-designated mills across Oldham which are of particular landscape and heritage value and sets out a robust strategy to ensure their sustainable future, which considers their potential for future development focussing on residential and employment uses.

15.38 This is also part of our positive approach to making the most efficient use of brownfield land and existing buildings, reducing the need for additional pressure on greenfield sites and reducing our carbon footprint. The reuse of mills can add to local distinctiveness as part of place making, attract investment and help retain Oldham's strong identity and culture.

Policy HE4 - Oldham's Mills

The Council will proactively support, through planning decisions and in fulfilling its wider functions, proposals that establish a positive future for Oldham's Textile Mills through their reuse and repair. Development proposals affecting Oldham's mill stock will need to be supported by a robust assessment of viability, heritage significance and structural and building condition, in line with the findings of the Mills Strategy.

Proposals should retain those elements of the mill stock which contribute to the local identity and sense of place of Oldham and ensure they are appropriately conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Development proposals will be assessed having regard to the following criteria relevant to the identified level of priority and clusters contained within the Oldham Mills Strategy.

High Priority Mills:

The high priority mills make a clear positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness and are identified as non-designated heritage assets. The Council will support applications which include the retention and reuse of the identified high priority mills and all associated buildings and structures. Proposals which would remove, harm or undermine the significance of a high priority mill or its contribution to local distinctiveness and sense of place will be permitted only where the public benefits of the development would outweigh the harm.

Medium Priority Mills:

The Council will actively encourage and support applications that include the retention and reuse of identified medium priority mills and associated buildings and structures. Development proposals that include the alteration, extension or demolition of any medium priority mills and their associated buildings will need to demonstrate with clear justification, in relation to the significance and setting of the asset and identified public benefits.

Low Priority Mills:

The identified low priority mills are generally considerably altered and make a limited contribution to local distinctiveness and sense of place. Development proposals involving the comprehensive redevelopment of low priority mills and / or their retention will be supported in principle subject to compliance with other policies of the Local Plan.

Table HE1: Mills Level of Priority

Priority	Mills
High Priority Mills	Ace Mill (Gorse Mill No.2); Bell Mill; Briar Mill; Cairo Mill; Earl Mill; Falcon Mill; Gorse Mill No.1; Heron Mill; Ivy Mill; Longrange Mill (Orme Mill); Majestic Mill (Lower Mill); Malta Mill; Marlborough (No.1) Mill; Osborne Mill; Ram Mill; Rasping Mill (Valley Mill); Raven Mill; Slackcote Mill; Swan Mill; Warth Mill (Wharf Mill); and Werneth Mill (Henley Street / Featherstall Road North)
Medium Priority Mills	Adelaide Mill (Hartfold Old Works); Albert Mill; Austerlands Mill; Belgrave Mill; Delta Mill; Duke Mill; Fountain Mill; Gatehead Mill; Grape Mill; Haybottoms Mill; Jubilee Mill; Jubilee Mill (Fulling) (Woodbottom Mill); Knarr Mill; Lilac Mill; Lumb Mill; Oak View Mills; Pingle Mill (Pringle Mill); Stockfield Mill; Thornham Mill; Vale Mill (Chamber Road); Vine Mill; Waterside Mill; and Wellington Mill (Knoll Mill)

Priority	Mills
Low Priority Mills	Alliance Mill; Bee Mill; Britannia Mill; Dob Lane End Mill; Forge Mill; Greengate Mill; Kinders Lane Mill[135]; Lane End Mill (Royton Lane Mill); Morton Mill; Prince of Wales Mill[136]; Springfield Mill; Springfield Works; Vale Mill (Stockfield Road); Werneth Mill (Manchester Road); and Woodend Mill

Mill Clusters:

The clustering of particular groups of mills provides a unique character to the local landscape and give Oldham an exceptionally strong sense of place and local distinctiveness. The Council will support applications which retain mills and their associated buildings that have been identified as contributing to an identified cluster:

Cluster 1 – Briar Mill, Lilac Mill and Duke Mill;

Cluster 2 – Majestic Mill, Cairo Mill and Longrange Mill;

Cluster 3 – Manor Mill, Werneth Mill (Featherstall Road North), Osborne Mill, Anchor Mill, Stockfield Mill and Hartford Works;

Cluster 4 – Chadderton Mill, Nile Mill, Raven Mill, Ace Mill, Gorse Mill and Ram Mill;

Cluster 5 – Vale Mill, Devon Mill, Heron Mill, Earl Mill and Bell Mill; and

Cluster 6 – Ivy Mill, Regent Mill and Marlborough Mill

Development proposals which will detract or harm a mill cluster through demolition, interruption of key identified views or through inappropriate development by virtue of its design will not be supported unless there is a clear and convincing justification.

Proposals that would result in the total or partial loss of elements of Oldham's mill stock, will require the full recording of the heritage asset and the record and

[135] Kinders Lane Mills scored medium on the heritage assessment and therefore planning applications for these mills must be accompanied by heritage statements proportionate to the heritage significance to provide clear justification for the proposed approach and applicants should consider incorporating social significance into the scheme.

[136] Prince of Wales Mill scored medium on the heritage assessment and therefore planning applications for this mill must be accompanied by a heritage statement proportionate to the heritage significance to provide clear justification for the proposed approach and applicants should consider incorporating social significance into the scheme.

commentary deposited with the Local Planning Authority and the Historic Environment Record.

Reasoned Justification

15.39 The non-designated mill stock forms a fundamental part of Oldham's historic environment and gives the landscape of the borough a clear distinctive character thereby contributing to local identity and sense of place. Proposals should retain those elements of the mill stock which contribute to the local identity and sense of place of Oldham and ensure they are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

15.40 The Mills Strategy has provided the Council and applicants with a policy framework, within which to assess proposals affecting textile mills. When valuing and assessing the viability of an individual mill for whatever purpose, it is essential to take into account market conditions prevailing at the date of assessment, location, individual physical characteristics, structural condition, tenure, planning restraints (if any) covenants and all other relevant factors. The appraisals and strategies contained within the Mills Strategy are, therefore, to be taken solely as a guide and each mill should be assessed individually on its own merits and on the market conditions at the time when decisions are being made about its future.

15.41 It should also be noted that many of the mills are in employment use and are likely to continue in employment use over the medium to long term. Therefore, proposals for alternative uses, whether this is conversion, refurbishment or redevelopment will need to ensure that policies relating to the loss of employment land are met.

15.42 The high priority mills are non-designated heritage assets. Planning applications relating to high priority mills must be accompanied by detailed Heritage Statements to provide clear justification for the approach adopted and should also consider how social significance of the mills could be incorporated into the scheme. For example, this could include the delivery of public art within the scheme linked to the past use of the mill or reflecting the social significance of a mill within the public realm. Proposals involving the full demolition or partial loss of important mill elements will need to be supported by robust evidence including detailed viability assessments and evidence of marketing to demonstrate the re-use of the mill for alternative uses is not viable. Building recording must be undertaken in connection with proposals involving the loss of key elements of high priority mill building fabric.

15.43 The medium priority mills are considered as non-designated heritage assets on a case-by-case basis as planning applications come forward for their redevelopment based upon their relative heritage and landscape value. Planning applications relating to medium priority mills must be accompanied by detailed Heritage Statements to provide clear justification for the approach adopted and should also consider how social significance of the mills could be incorporated into the scheme. The alteration, extension or demolition of any buildings contributing to the landscape or heritage interest will require clear justification in relation to the significance and setting of the asset. Building recording must undertaken in connection with proposals involving the loss of key elements of medium priority mill building fabric.

15.44 Low priority mills could be considered as non-designated heritage assets on a case-by-case basis as planning applications come forward for their redevelopment based upon their relative heritage and landscape value. Planning applications relating to low priority mills must be accompanied by Heritage Statements to provide justification for the approach taken. Building recording must be undertaken in connection with

proposals involving the loss of key elements of low priority mill building fabric, where deemed appropriate.

15.45 The Landscape Overview highlights the contribution that the mill stock makes in defining the distinctive character of Oldham and demonstrates that Oldham's landscape character would be irreversibly changed if particular individual mills or clusters of mills were demolished or significantly altered to the extent that the original mill character is permanently lost.

15.46 The mill names shown are as listed in the Public Gazetteer in the Mills Strategy. However, many people will know the mills by alternative mill names, and these are shown in brackets within the policy, where applicable. Sometimes a road name is also shown to clarify which mill this is where there are mills with the same name.

15.47 The policy focuses on non-designated mills, with the exception of the mill clusters. Mills that are listed (or in conservation areas) are already protected by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and covered by other planning policies.

Canals

15.48 The Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Rochdale Canal both pass through Oldham Borough. The canal network has played a significant part in the development and heritage of the settlements in Oldham since the 18th century. The conservation, development and improved access to Oldham's canal corridors will allow for the community and visitors to celebrate the unique industrial heritage of these historic manmade waterways. They also have recreational and ecological roles, contribute to the borough's local identity, and enhance Oldham's tourism offer.

Policy HE5 - Canals

The Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Rochdale Canal will be protected as heritage assets (designated and non-designated heritage), which contribute to the borough's sense of place.

To ensure that the future restoration of the canals is enabled, development alongside the line of the canal and towpath shall not prevent its restoration, conservation and enhancement of the waterway's heritage and built environment. Green Infrastructure incorporating walking, wheeling and cycling routes and heritage interpretation features along its line should be provided.

Proposed development that harms the setting or appearance of the canal will not be supported. Any new development should respect the canal frontage, ensuring active quality elevations, whilst respecting the unique character of the waterway and its associated heritage assets. Opportunities should be taken to improve the appearance and vitality of the canal side environment.

Reasoned Justification

15.49 The canal system of water transport played a vital role in the industrial revolution at a time when the road network was not able to transport mass goods from place to place.

15.50 This is especially evident at Failsworth Pole Conservation Area and Uppermill Conservation Area, where the Rochdale and Huddersfield Narrow canals respectively provide an important focal point alongside neighbouring historic former industrial buildings. The canals provide part of the setting, experience and communal value contributing to the sense of place for many of Oldham's textile mills. The canals contain several heritage assets, including lock cottages, lock features, stone walls and bridges, some of which are designated.

15.51 As well as being important heritage assets, the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Rochdale Canal also yield other benefits to the borough, such as providing recreational routes for exercise and an associated tourism offer and ecological networks.

Monitoring

15.52 The main Local Plan indicators that will be used to monitor this chapter are:

- Number of heritage assets on the National Heritage List for England
- Number of listed buildings and number of buildings in conservation areas lost through new development
- Number and type of developments permitted on non-designated Mills

15.53 The main PfE indicator that will be used to help monitor this chapter are:

- Increase percentage of buildings on the “at risk register” with a strategy for their repair and re-use

16 Achieving High Quality Design

16.1 National planning policy places great importance on design as a key aspect of sustainable development and an essential part of good planning. This is demonstrated through the National Design Guide[137] (NDG), and the National Model Design Code[138] (NMDC) , which illustrate how well-designed places that are beautiful, healthy, greener, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

16.2 Well-designed places have individual characteristics which work together to create their physical character and distinctiveness. The NDG identifies the following ten characteristics which contribute towards the cross-cutting themes for good design set out in national planning policy:

- **Context** – understanding the location of a development and how it relates to its surroundings.
- **Identity** – that is attached to buildings and spaces which contributes to character and local distinctiveness.
- **Built form** – the pattern of the built environment and how this contributes to local character and sense of place.
- **Movement** – ensuring that places are accessible and easy to move around.
- **Nature** – by ensuring that nature forms an integral part of well-designed places that contribute to quality of place and people's quality of life.
- **Public spaces** – ensuring that these are safe, social and inclusive.
- **Uses** – by creating sustainable places with a mix of uses that support everyday activities.
- **Homes and Buildings** – by creating functional, healthy and sustainable homes and buildings.
- **Resources** - The creation of efficient and resilient places and buildings that conserve natural resources, including land, water, energy and materials.
- **Lifespan** – developments that are made to last and adaptable.

16.3 The policies below seek to reflect the above characteristics and clarify our design expectations and establish some of the key principles against which the design and layout of all new development will be considered.

Policy D1 – Achieving High Quality Design

All development is required to achieve a high standard of design, consistent with local design guides or design codes where available. Developments that are of a poor standard of design will be refused.

Development proposals, where applicable, should through their design:

1. **deliver buildings and spaces that are appropriate, in terms of their form, massing and height, for the site and surrounding context, and positively respond to local distinctiveness and character;**

[137] This document can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide
[138] This document can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-model-design-code

2. **encourage and facilitate active travel with convenient, safe and inclusive pedestrian and cycling routes and promote wayfinding for all travel modes;**
3. **be based on a clear street hierarchy, with clearly defined public and private environments;**
4. **ensure that site layout, orientation, design, and where applicable, common spaces provide privacy, adequate daylight and active frontages with the public realm. Noise from any common areas to individual dwellings should be reduced;**
5. **provide adaptable and resilient buildings and places, that are easily maintainable and resistant to the effects of ageing, weather and climatic conditions;**
6. **ensure buildings and spaces are designed in a way to be inclusive to different users (e.g. age, gender, mental and physical ability);**
7. **ensure that recycling and waste disposal, storage and any on-site management facilities are conveniently located, appropriately screened and are designed to work effectively;**
8. **promote health and well-being through active design;**
9. **incorporate appropriate landscaping and urban greening, such as green roofs, green walls, trees and shrubs and support nature through the incorporation of wildlife-friendly features (such as nest boxes) and integration with the nature recovery network;**
10. **adopt a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to development, respecting existing site constraints including utilities situated within, and running through, the site;**
11. **ensure that the design and layout minimises actual and perceived opportunities for crime, anti-social behaviour, disorder and terrorism;**
12. **ensure parking areas reduce their visual impact through landscaping and boundary treatments; and**
13. **in the case of residential development, make appropriate provision for gardens and / or outdoor amenity space that reflects the type and size of each dwelling.**

In addition to the above development proposals involving tall buildings should:

a) **ensure the lower section or base of the building is designed to relate well to the street environment and context, through the use of architectural detailing and definition of any upper storey setback;**

b) **not unduly affect their surroundings adversely in terms of microclimate, wind turbulence, overshadowing and shading, noise, reflected glare, aviation, navigation and telecommunication interference; and**

c) **incorporate active frontages at ground level where appropriate.**

Where required details of how the proposal addresses these principles are to be set out in a Design and Access Statement.

Proposals for strategic developments should be supported by a design-led masterplan or framework and, where appropriate, a site-specific design code to show how it achieves the principles above.

Developments that raise significant design issues will be expected, where appropriate, to undergo a local design review[139] before any planning application is determined.

Reasoned Justification

16.4 The goal of a design-led approach is to ensure that new development not only meets functional and regulatory requirements but also enhances the overall quality of life in a community. It aims to create places that are not only visually appealing but also sustainable, functional, and resilient, fostering a sense of identity and belonging among residents and visitors.

16.5 High quality design can respond to a wide range of issues such as tackling climate change, improving local biodiversity, enhancing a sense of place, promoting inclusivity and providing healthier and more active places. Important design considerations therefore feature in other policies in this plan, particularly in relation to the historic environment, biodiversity, flood risk and transport. Being able to respond appropriately to these considerations and understanding how they interact is a key part of achieving high quality design.

16.6 As part of the preparation of any statements, applicants may consider referring to guidance produced by specialist organisations in relation to specific design issues, such as:

- Streets for All Design Guide published by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM);
- Greater Manchester's Sustainable Drainage Guide published by TfGM;
- Active Design Guidance and The Ten Principles of Active Design published by Sport England;
- Designing Out Crime published by the Design Council;
- Manual for Streets
- Raising the healthiest generation in history: why it matters where children and young people live published by the TCPA;
- Building with Nature;
- Building for a Healthy Life (formerly Building for Life 12) published by Homes England;
- Green infrastructure Planning and Design Guide published by Natural England; and
- In relation to historic buildings, sites and landscapes, technical guidance notes from Historic England.

16.7 For the purposes of this policy, a tall building is defined as any building that is significantly taller than its surroundings and/or any building of five storey's or more.

16.8 Strategic developments that are required to be supported by a design-led masterplan or framework include relevant allocations within Places for Everyone as well as other sites that come forward which may be of strategic importance. For example, Oldham

[139] An independent consideration of the planning application proposal undertaken by a panel of relevant professionals prior to the formal determination of the proposal by the Council, with all costs met by the applicant.

Town Centre, sites comprising multiple landowners or where it is necessary to secure consistency in layout and/or design across more than one site.

16.9 Where required, the format of design reviews for any development should have regard to the Design Council's guidance Design Review Principles and Practice[140].

16.10 It is intended that this policy will be supplemented by design guides and codes as appropriate which will set out more detailed advice on achieving high standards of design that reflect the local character of the area. Regard will be given to the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code where no locally produced design guides or codes are in place.

Policy D2 – Advertisements, Signage and Shop Fronts

Advertisements and Signage

Advertisements and signage shall contribute positively to the visual amenity and safety of the built environment. To ensure this, advertisements and signage will be supported where they:

1. **have regard to the character and appearance of the local area, site and host building;**
2. **are appropriate in terms of siting, design, size, scale, number, colour, and method and level of illumination;**
3. **would not lead to an excessive, cluttered or overbearing appearance on the host building or vicinity of the site;**
4. **would not interfere with public highway safety or management (including associated footpaths), cause or worsen light pollution or any other safety hazard;**
5. **would not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of nearby residents and / or occupiers of sensitive uses; and**
6. **do not harm the significance of any listed buildings, conservation areas, or other designated heritage assets in accordance with the heritage policies.**

Shop Fronts

Shop fronts should be designed to fit with the character and context of the building itself and the surrounding area. When determining planning applications, the Council will have regard to whether a proposal contributes positively to the visual appearance of the area during opening and non-opening hours. Considerations will include:

[140] This document can be found at: https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/fileadmin/uploads/dc/Documents/Design%2520Review_Principles%2520and%2520Practice_May2019.pdf

7. **how the fascia design respects the proportions of the shop front by being appropriately scaled, and follows the vertical and horizontal symmetry of the building;**
8. **how the fascia takes into account the height, position, design and scale of adjacent shop fronts in the same parade;**
9. **how the design of the entrance ensures safe and easy access for all;**
10. **that the colours and materials proposed do not clash with building materials of the host and adjoining buildings; and**
11. **the use of solid security shutters, which should be avoided wherever possible and will not be permitted in Oldham Town Centre, any of the borough's other centres, local shopping parades or along main arterial routes, unless the need for them can be robustly justified. Lattice grilles or internal roller shutters would be acceptable alternatives.**

Applications affecting heritage assets or conservation areas should comply with policies HE2 and HE3 respectively.

Reasoned Justification

16.11 The design of shop fronts is important as firstly they can attract the attention of customers in order to ensure economic success and secondly, they can improve the appearance and attractiveness of our shopping streets and our centres. The shop front, advertisements, signage, canopies, external lighting, shop security measures and access facilities are all elements, which if well designed can help to promote a confident image of the shop itself. They can make positive contributions to the character and trading success of the street or centre in which it is located.

16.12 The policy aims to set clear criteria to enable adverts to be placed in the right places without detriment to the amenity of the surrounding area and whilst protecting character and appearance, as well as public and highway safety. The policy applies to all advertisements requiring consent under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) England) Regulations 2007.

16.13 The borough has a mixture of different places from town centres to rural communities and countryside. The type of advertisements prevalent in these areas can vary greatly but often the concerns remain the same, to protect visual amenity and highway and public safety. However, there are also key differences between what may be accepted in a town centre and what will be appropriate in a rural settlement. Applicants should be aware of this when considering aspects such as scale and the method and level illumination, taking into account Policy OL5.

16.14 It is important that any advertisements do not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of nearby residents or occupiers of sensitive uses such as schools, nurseries and care homes. In addition, the Council will resist advertisements where they contribute to or constitute clutter or lead to an unsightly proliferation of signage in the area.

16.15 Where advertisements are displayed on buildings, they should complement the facade and must not obscure architectural features. On buildings with heritage value this will be particularly critical where features contribute to heritage significance. Some commercial areas are set within places that contribute to the distinctive character of

the borough, such as the predominantly Georgian townscape of Greenfield, Diggle, Delph and Uppermill and the historic character of Oldham Town Centre. The design of advertisements should not detract from the heritage value of these areas and where possible should be used as an opportunity to enhance their distinctive character and sense of place.

16.16 Applications for advertisements in areas where there are already a high number displayed will be considered in relation to existing advertisements, or signage for the same business. Where the need for additional controls over advertisements in particular areas can be demonstrated, for example through conservation area appraisals or neighbourhood plans, the Council may consider the introduction of Areas of Special Control of Advertisements, as appropriate.

Policy D3 – Creating a Better Public Realm in Oldham

Development proposals that include the creation of new public realm should, where applicable:

1. **ensure it is well-designed, easy to understand, and related to the local and historic context;**
2. **ensure it is inclusive and fully accessible to all users, including people with disabilities, older people, and families with children;**
3. **create a sense of place, with opportunities for social activities and interaction during, formal and informal play and social interaction during different times of the day and night, days of the week and seasons;**
4. **ensure that appropriate shade, shelter, seating and, where possible, areas of direct sunlight, are provided having regard to microclimatic considerations such as temperature and wind;**
5. **ensure that lighting is carefully considered and well-designed in order to minimise intrusive lighting infrastructure and reduce light pollution in line with Policy OL5;**
6. **use durable, attractive, and locally appropriate materials in paving, street furniture, and landscaping and ensure appropriate management and maintenance arrangements are in place;**
7. **support biodiversity, and integrate green infrastructure and surface water management in line with Policy N3;**
8. **prioritise active travel through providing safe, legible and well-connected routes whilst discouraging travel by car and excessive on-street car parking; and**
9. **ensure that any buildings are of a design that activates and defines the public realm and provides natural surveillance.**

Where appropriate, opportunities should be identified for the meanwhile (temporary) use of phased development sites to create attractive public realm.

Reasoned Justification

16.17 Public realm has a significant influence on quality of life because it affects people's sense of place, security and belonging, as well as having an influence on a range of health and social factors. As such, development proposals must contribute positively to the public realm by delivering well-designed, accessible, and safe spaces that reflect local character and support social interaction and environmental sustainability.

16.18 The public realm includes all the publicly accessible space between buildings, whether public or privately owned, from alleyways and streets to squares and open spaces. It should be seen as a series of connected routes and spaces that help define the character of a place. Legibility and signposting make an important contribution to whether people feel comfortable in a place and are able to understand it and navigate their way around.

16.19 The specific balance between the different functions of any one space, such as its place-based activities, its function to facilitate movement and its ability to accommodate different uses, should be at the heart of how the space is designed and managed. The Streets for All approach[141] explains how the design and management of streets can support a wide range of activities in the public realm as well as encourage and facilitate a shift to active travel.

16.20 Places should be distinctive, attractive and of the highest quality, allowing people to meet, congregate and socialise, as well as providing opportunity for quiet enjoyment. Public realm is valuable for Oldham's cultural activity, providing a stage for informal and everyday activities and organised events. The opportunity to incorporate these uses should be identified and facilitated through community engagement, careful design and good acoustic design. Careful consideration is needed of the benefits of using the public realm for events and their impact on the use and enjoyment of the space by the public.

16.21 The effective management and ongoing maintenance of public realm should be a key consideration in its design and secured through the planning system where appropriate. Materials used for paving, street furniture and landscaping must be durable, attractive, and locally appropriate. Lighting also requires careful consideration to ensure it is appropriate to address safety and security issues and make night-time activity areas and access routes welcoming and safe, whilst minimising light pollution.

16.22 Whether publicly or privately owned, public realm should be open, free to use and offer the highest level of public access. These spaces should only have rules restricting the behaviour of the public that are considered essential for safe management of the space.

16.23 Opportunities should be identified by applicants for the meanwhile (temporary) use of phased development sites to create attractive public realm. Parameters for any meanwhile use, particularly its longevity and associated obligations, should be established from the outset and agreed by all parties. Whilst the creation of temporary public realm makes the best use of land and provides visual, environmental and health benefits to the local community, planning permission for more permanent uses is still required.

[141] Further information can be found at: https://tfgm.com/strategy/streets-for-all

Policy D4 – Extensions and alterations to, and development within the curtilage of, a dwellinghouse

An extension or alteration to an existing dwelling, or the construction of an ancillary outbuilding, structure, boundary treatment or hardstanding within the residential curtilage, will be supported where, having regard to any previous development affecting the original building or its curtilage, the following criteria are met:

1. **it is in keeping with the character and appearance of, and is subordinate to, the original dwelling and surrounding properties;**
2. **it would not have a significantly adverse effect on the amenity of nearby residential properties, or the future occupiers of the dwellinghouse;**
3. **suitable provision is included for:**
    a. **access and parking;**
    b. **waste and recycling storage; and**
    c. **private residential amenity space;**
4. **there is the implementation of sustainable surface water management by directing surface water to a permeable surface or an infiltration system wherever possible; and**
5. **where the building was originally constructed for a non-residential purpose e.g. agricultural, religious or industrial use, the resulting development would be of a scale consistent with the architectural and functional character of the original building.**

In the case of a replacement dwelling these will be supported where criteria 2) and 3) above are met, and it would not be significantly larger than the existing dwelling and is in keeping with the scale, character and appearance of its surroundings.

Proposals within the Green Belt will need to meet policies OL2 and OL3 and proposals within a Local Green Space will need to meet Policy OL4.

Reasoned Justification

16.24 This policy seeks to ensure that extensions or alterations to an existing dwelling, or development within the curtilage of a residential property (such as ancillary outbuilding, structure, boundary treatment or hardstanding) is in keeping with the character and appearance of the original dwelling and surrounding property / area, without having a detrimental impact on amenity.

16.25 When permitting such development, it is important to ensure that there continues to be suitable provision for access and parking; waste and recycling storage; and private residential amenity space.

16.26 Surface water should be directed to a permeable surface or an infiltration system wherever possible.

16.27 Ensuring that the extension or alteration to, or the replacement of, an existing residential dwelling respects the character, appearance and scale of the original building and its surroundings will also help to ensure a diverse range of dwelling sizes and types.

16.28 As a general guide:

- subordinate and small-scale extensions/outbuildings are less likely to be approved where they would increase the size of the original dwelling by more than 40% (notwithstanding permitted development rights); and
- replacement dwellings are less likely to be approved where they are significantly larger (i.e. more than 40%) than the existing dwelling.

16.29 The increase in size of the original or existing dwelling will generally be determined by assessing the net increase in floorspace (measured externally). In cases where the increase proposed involves an increase in the overall building height, the net increase in volume (measured externally), will also be taken in to account. This assessment will not include any allowance or credit from the demolition of existing detached buildings or structures. If planning permission is granted, planning obligations/conditions may be applied to remove permitted development rights where necessary.

16.30 All outbuildings or structures within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse which are built after the construction of the original dwelling, will be treated as being an extension to the original building.

16.31 The assessment of whether a development is in keeping with the character and appearance of, and is subordinate to, the original dwelling and surrounding properties, and the wider setting, will have particular regard to the design, scale, height, massing, material finishes, visual appearance and character of buildings, and the prevailing layout and landscaping of the development.

Monitoring

16.32 The main Local Plan indicators that will be used to monitor this chapter are:

- Number of major developments refused on landscape grounds
- Number of approved applications for strategic developments with a masterplan or framework and design code

17 A Sustainable, Active, Accessible Network for Oldham

17.1 Oldham's Transport Strategy and Delivery Plan[142] sets the strategic direction for travel and mobility within Oldham, identifying transport requirements that align with our future growth needs and in response to changing travel technologies.

17.2 It reflects the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040[143] which sets out the long-term vision for how the transport system needs to change across Greater Manchester and the key priorities for achieving this, including reference to:

- the 'Right-Mix' ambition for at least 50% of all journeys to be made by active travel and public transport by 2040;
- details of the Greater Manchester Mayor's 'Our Network' plan to create an integrated, modern and accessible transport network;
- an increased emphasis on the importance of cycling and walking; and
- the climate emergency declared by GMCA and all ten councils; and the development of the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan.

17.3 As set out in Oldham's Transport Strategy, planning for transport that is suitable for the future requires a balance of healthier travel behaviours and reducing harmful transport emissions. The Strategy is structured around six principal transport ambitions which have a focus on:

- Healthy Oldham: providing for healthier active travel choices through, for example, improving walking, wheeling and cycling routes and facilities to enhance connections across our neighbourhood, the borough and beyond;
- Safe Oldham: improving road and travel safety;
- Thriving Oldham: supporting Greater Manchester's ambitions to grow economically and connecting our communities to services and opportunities across the borough and beyond;
- Clean Oldham: improving air quality and supporting Greater Manchester's ambitions for becoming carbon neutral by 2038;
- Connected Oldham: prioritising the maintenance of highways, footways and Public Rights of Way; and
- Accessible Oldham: improving access to public transport and active travel reflecting its importance for reducing deprivation whilst supporting our communities.

17.4 The Local Plan will help deliver an integrated transport system that enables and encourages sustainable and active travel choices, provides good accessibility for the borough's population to jobs and services, and supports a healthy environment.

17.5 The Bee Network[144] was launched in September 2023 and is Greater Manchester's vision for a joined up, touch in, touch out, London-style transport system. Since its launch the Bee Network has delivered transformational change, with growing numbers

[142] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7693/oldham_transport_strategy_and_delivery_plan
[143] This document can be found at: https://tfgm.com/2040-transport-strategy
[144] Further information can be found here: https://tfgm.com/the-bee-network#bee-network

of people travelling on more reliable bus services. It's also seen the introduction of affordable fares, new and extended routes and better, more accessible buses connecting communities to jobs, skills and education opportunities. All local bus and tram services are now part of the Bee Network with eight commuter rail lines planned to join in three phases through to 2028, with improved services and stations. The continued delivery of the Bee Network will encourage much higher levels of both walking, wheeling and cycling and help to address low levels of physical activity and promote mental wellbeing.

17.6 Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) have produced Streets for All[145] which places a strong emphasis on reducing traffic and road danger, and on improving the street environment for everyone travelling along, spending time in, or living on them. It is a people-centred approach to street planning, design and network management and is needed to deliver the Bee Network, support growth and productivity and enable us to meet our decarbonisation targets. The Streets for All vision is that 'We will ensure that our streets are welcoming, green and safe spaces for all people, enabling more travel by walking, cycling, and using public transport while creating thriving places that support local communities and businesses' and the policies within this Local Plan aim to support that vision.

Policy T1 – Delivering Oldham's Transport Priorities

To support Oldham's role in the Greater Manchester economy, measures will be supported where they:

1. **Help improve connectivity and accessibility from Oldham to the key growth locations identified in PfE[146].**
2. **Encourage and enable the movement of people and goods in the most efficient, sustainable, safe way using on the most appropriate modes, on the most appropriate routes, at the most appropriate times.**
3. **Demonstrate a reduction in congestion and emissions.**

The Local Plan will support the delivery of Oldham's Transport Strategy by ensuring that new development:

4. **Prioritises and promotes active travel to key points of interest by integrating Active Design principles into their design.**
5. **Maintains and improves the Public Rights of Way network, including by increasing the networks accessibility.**
6. **Ensures the amenity and safety of the public realm is protected, avoiding street clutter and unnecessary obstructions.**
7. **Maintains safe and suitable access for all users and mitigates any significant impacts from the development on the existing transport network or on highway safety.**

The Council will seek developer contributions[147], where appropriate, towards the provision or enhancement of highway, public transport and / or active travel schemes.

[145] This can be found at: https://tfgm.com/strategy/streets-for-all
[146] Policies JP-Strat1 to JP-Strat12 in PfE set out the key growth locations in Greater Manchester.
[147] This will include through section 106 agreements and section 278 agreements.

The Council will support improvements to our public transport network and facilities to promote more sustainable transport choices and reduce reliance on private motor vehicles.

The Local Plan will support future transport projects, including Standedge Tunnels, Diggle Station and Cop Road Metrolink stop and Park and Ride.

Any development that may impact the Strategic Road Network (SRN) should involve National Highways at the earliest opportunity.

Reasoned Justification

17.7 A key requirement of Oldham's sustainable transport network going forward is that people are easily able to travel between neighbourhoods and that connectivity and accessibility from Oldham to the key growth locations identified in PfE is improved. This will require an integrated, high quality, sustainable transport system, which the Bee Network will provide. People need sufficient travel choices so that they can conveniently travel to visit friends and relatives, community facilities, and services, across Oldham, Greater Manchester and beyond.

17.8 Freight and logistics are essential for both our economy and productivity. Government's Future of Freight: a long-term plan[148] states that the multi-modal freight and logistics sector is critical to every supply chain into, across and out of the UK and is fundamental to our economic wellbeing. It goes on to say that the planning system has a crucial role in promoting development that supports the efficient supply of goods.

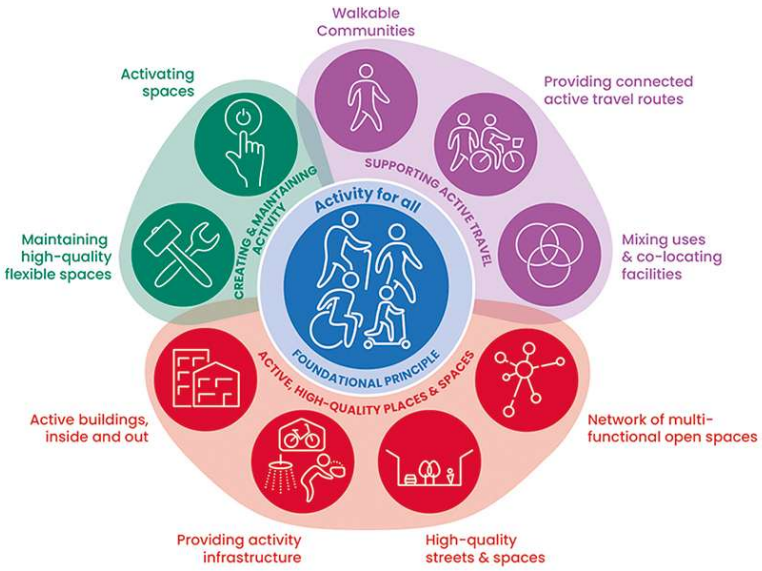
17.9 In Oldham, the distribution of people and goods by sustainable modes, and methods that reduce the number of vehicular trips, will be encouraged and supported. Innovative solutions such as urban distribution centres, last mile access by cargo bikes or electric vehicles, and emerging technologies, all have the potential to service the demand for deliveries in a more sustainable way.

17.10 Transport planning and investment can play a significant role in delivering a healthy borough in three primary ways. Firstly, through encouraging active travel such as walking, wheeling and cycling, with the significant direct health benefits that are derived from physical exercise; secondly, through making it easier for people to get to services they need for their personal well-being and the things that will help them live healthier lives; and thirdly, through designing a safer, more accessible and environmentally sustainable transport system.

17.11 Integrating Sport England's Active Design principles[149] is one way to help create a safer, more accessible, and environmentally sustainable transport system.

[148] The document can be found at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62b9a2ec8fa8f53572e3db68/future-of-freight-plan.pdf
[149] This document can be found at: https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/active-design

Figure T1: Sport England's Active Design principles



17.12 The design of transport infrastructure should be high-quality and appropriate to the location in terms of getting the right balance between place and movement, supporting the public realm, protecting the setting of historic assets and removing street clutter and barriers, thereby making it easier for people to move around. The Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 explains that truly connected neighbourhoods enable everyone to access work, local facilities and recreation and to interact with other people in a pleasant environment.

17.13 Designing new infrastructure and services to improve accessibility for people with mobility problems, including reducing street clutter and unnecessary obstructions, will have the additional benefit of future-proofing the transport network to meet the needs of an ageing society.

17.14 Streets for All places a strong emphasis on reducing traffic and road danger, and on improving the street environment for everyone travelling along, spending time in, or living on them. Developers and applicants will be expected to have regard to the vision and principles within the Greater Manchester Streets for All Design Guide[150] which sets the standard for how our streets and public spaces will look, feel and function in the years ahead.

17.15 Oldham's Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network covers around 450km, and the Council is committed to maintaining and improving the network. A key focus for improvement is to increase the network's accessibility to make it more inclusive for all users. Measures could include substituting stiles for gates or surface and/or drainage works to provide more level surfaces for those with mobility impairment.

17.16 An attractive, efficient and cost-effective public transport network that is fully integrated with other forms of transport and which provides a genuine alternative to travelling by private motor vehicle will be key if public transport is to play a fundamental role in

[150] This document can be found at: https://downloads.ctfassets.net/nv7y93idf4jq/2RzPPk1drrKMvdlfPtZwYP/365c591edec7439b449d385d745b831f/Greater_Manchester_Streets_For_All_Design_Guide_v1.2.pdf

achieving a modal shift in the way we travel. In Greater Manchester our public transport network is known as the Bee Network and proposals to improve this network and its facilities will be supported, particularly where they are in line with Greater Manchester and Oldham's Local Transport Plans.

17.17 In line with DfT Circular 01/2022 The Strategic Road Network and the delivery of sustainable development[151] ('the Circular') policies must not compromise the SRN's prime function to enable the long-distance movement of people and goods. The SRN within Oldham consists of sections of the M60 and M627(M) motorways, as well as the A663 Broadway trunk road. Development within Oldham might also impact the SRN outside of our boundary, such as the M62 motorway.

Policy T2 – Travel Hubs and Park and Ride Facilities

The Council will support schemes for new and improved travel hubs and park and ride facilities where it can be demonstrated that the proposed facility:

1. **forms part of a wider strategy for increasing the use of public transport and active travel and has been developed in conjunction with Transport for Greater Manchester and, where appropriate, other organisations such as Highways England and Network Rail;**
2. **will improve the attractiveness and increased use of public transport thereby reducing overall levels of private vehicular traffic on the borough's highway network;**
3. **will not lead to unacceptable levels of traffic congestion in the vicinity of the facility;**
4. **ensures a safe and secure environment for users and where appropriate provide a high standard of vehicle security; and**
5. **includes provision for secure non-motorised vehicles such as bicycles and scooters.**

In the case of replacement provision this should be of equivalent or greater capacity and have equivalent or improved connections to the relevant transport infrastructure, where appropriate.

Reasoned Justification

17.18 The Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 sets out that the aim in Greater Manchester is to work with partners to improve access to public transport, including enhanced park-and-ride provision and the evolution of park-and-ride towards multi-modal travel hubs that improve access and integration. These facilities are essential for enabling seamless and convenient multi-modal journeys and to improve access to the Bee Network, particularly for residents without direct links to rapid transit.

17.19 Transport hubs are designed to co-locate transport modes, improve first and last mile connectivity, and deliver a consistent, high quality customer experience. They are central to supporting modal shift, reducing car dependency, and expanding access to

[151] This document can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-road-network-and-the-delivery-of-sustainable-development/strategic-road-network-and-the-delivery-of-sustainable-development

sustainable travel. Park and ride facilities, when appropriately located, can complement this approach by intercepting longer car journeys and connecting users to the rapid transit network.

17.20 It is important that any such facilities are provided in the right location and are designed in a way that actively encourages their use whilst avoiding potential issues of congestion in the vicinity of the facility. Poorly located and designed proposals can sometimes actively encourage more car journeys and may generate significant traffic levels on surrounding roads to the detriment of residential amenity and highway function. Therefore, it is important that any such facilities are provided in the right location and are designed in a way that actively encourages their use whilst avoiding potential issues of congestion in the vicinity of the facility.

17.21 It is also important that the needs of cyclists are met within the facility in terms of including provision for safe and secure cycle parking.

Policy T3 – Parking Provision

To ensure the careful management of parking, development[152] will be supported that provides appropriate levels of parking spaces.

The level of parking proposed as part of new developments should:

1. **Support the efficient use of land;**
2. **Reflect the type, mix and use of the development;**
3. **Ensure the safe and efficient use of the highway is maintained; and**
4. **Take account of the location of the development site, including its accessibility by walking, wheeling and cycling and public transport.**

Parking spaces will be expected to be provided for general car parking, accessible parking, cycle and motorcycle parking and parking for electric vehicle charging (See Policy T4 for more details on electric vehicle charging).

In justifying the parking levels proposed as part of any development, the applicant should, either in the Design and Access Statement or the Transport Statement/Assessment, have regard to the following:

a. **Consideration of likely trip generation and parking needs for the proposed development evidenced as appropriate;**
b. **Parking capacity and occupancy levels in the surrounding area;**
c. **Local car ownership levels;**
d. **Evidence that there is no alternative way of accommodating all the travel demands likely to be generated by the development, and that all reasonable efforts are being made to minimise reliance on the private car;**

[152] This includes planning applications for the material changes of use

e. **The public transport accessibility of the site, including the distance to bus and tram stops and to train stations, along with the frequency of those services;**

f. **Details of road safety and traffic management in the area;**

g. **The quality of provision for pedestrians and cyclists such as width of footways, quality of surfaces, access and egress points to the site, provision of street furniture and lighting, cycle parking and any restrictions on cycle movement; and**

h. **Details of how the parking will be managed and how that will mitigate any potential under or over-provision.**

The information provided in relation to the above would be expected to be proportionate to the scale and nature of development proposed.

The design of parking areas needs to include pedestrian-only safe routes through and around parking areas.

In relation to non-residential developments there is a need to increase the attractiveness of commuting to work by walking, wheeling and cycling. Appropriate facilities should therefore be provided for staff, including the provision for lockers and changing and showering facilities.

Provision of coach and lorry parking will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the proposed development's use, volume of users/visitors and location. Storage and distribution uses (B8 uses) should accommodate all lorry parking within the site.

Where development would be likely to lead to levels of off-site car parking that would have a negative impact on the surrounding area, appropriate mitigation measures will be required. This could include, for example, developments funding, or contributing towards, resident parking schemes, public transport provision, and on-street parking restrictions and their enforcement.

Reasoned Justification

17.22 The level of parking within developments should strike a balance between accessible, cycle, electric vehicle and general spaces to ensure that it supports the successful functioning of the site, whilst also discouraging unnecessary private car journeys and the inefficient use of land. Parking that minimises land consumption and reduces congestion can contribute to a more efficient use of land.

17.23 Oldham is committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and the transport choices that individuals make will strongly influence the Council's ability to achieve this target. One of the ways in which we can make a positive difference is through effective parking provision for all vehicle types in new developments. We want to encourage more walking, wheeling and cycling for shorter journeys, and for longer journeys encourage more sustainable options such as using public transport wherever possible. The level of parking provision in new developments can have a key influence on the choice of travel mode.

17.24 Providing sufficient parking for all types of vehicles will be necessary so that parked vehicles do not dominate the street scene or prevent access for pedestrians, cyclists and buses.

17.25 Certain development will require the production of a Travel Plan (in line with Policy T5) which must include measures to significantly reduce the use of private car travel to and from the development.

17.26 When determining the public transport accessibility of a site, Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels (GMAL) [153] should be used as explained in Policy H1.

17.27 The quality of parking provision is as important as the quantity and it should be attractive and practical to use. Pedestrian routes need to be direct, safe, level, and should emphasise pedestrian priority. Cars should not be able to overhang footpaths or cycle paths and pedestrians should be able to cross entrances to car parks safely.

17.28 Accessible parking spaces should be located as close as possible to the main entrance to the facilities served by the parking. The route between the spaces and the main entrance should be well maintained with no obstructions to access. Accessible spaces should be larger than regular parking spaces to provide extra room for wheelchair users and people with mobility and other impairments to get in and out of a vehicle.

17.29 Providing secure cycle parking at people's homes and other locations is critical to increasing the rates of cycling. Internal cycle storage is preferable for security reasons and to avoid impacting on the street scene. Where internal storage is not possible, external cycle stores should be secure and weatherproof. In relation to non-residential development if staff are using a different entrance, their cycle parking needs to be well related to their entrance. Safe, secure, and accessible cycle parking for long term and short-term visitors is needed, and cycle storage should be provided in an obvious, overlooked and well-lit location and be supported by clear signage.

17.30 The location of electric vehicle charging spaces has a strong influence on how often and how easily they are used by residents, businesses and visitors, therefore careful consideration should be given to the location and design of these spaces. In addition, they should also be positioned to avoid negatively impacting on walking, wheeling and cycling.

17.31 Certain uses will be frequently serviced by larger vehicles including Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs). Where this is the case, parking, loading and standing areas should be provided. Consultation with the Council at an early stage on all applications that would involve the use of HGVs and other large commercial vehicles is recommended.

17.32 Pedestrians should be able to move around parking areas safely and easily. The design of parking areas will need to consider likely pedestrian desire lines, both in respect of pedestrians arriving from outside the site and walking towards the entrances, and in respect of people arriving in cars, and the movements they will make between where they will park and the entrances to the development. This should be an early consideration in determining the overall layout of the site, and the layout of the spaces.

[153] Or any future measures of accessibility that become available and are relevant to assessing the accessibility of development.

Policy T4 – Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

New development shall make provision for electric vehicle charging infrastructure, using dedicated charge points specifically designed for charging all types of electric vehicle, in accordance with the following standards (unless superseded by higher standards in the Building Regulations):

1) **For dwellings with off-street parking, at least one dedicated charge point per dwelling.**
2) **For non-residential developments, 10% of spaces shall accommodate a dedicated charge point. In addition to this, a further 20% of spaces shall accommodate appropriate ducting infrastructure to facilitate future provision. A reduced requirement will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the specific characteristics of the development would result in lower levels of demand for electric vehicle charging.**

These standards will be applied to the total scale of car parking provision that is proposed in the development in line with Policy T3. Additional car parking spaces should not be provided in order to meet these electric vehicle charging points.

Shared active charging points should be located so that they can be accessed by the maximum number of parking spaces possible at the development.

Electric vehicle charging infrastructure within new development shall meet the minimum technical specification list published by the Office for Low Emission Vehicles.

Exceptions

There may be limited circumstances where, due to the exceptionally high cost of securing the necessary additional electrical capacity to a site, it is not feasible to make provision for electric vehicle charging infrastructure in accordance with criteria 1 to 2 above. Where this is the case, the applicant will be expected to demonstrate that the costs associated with the installation of charge-points would compromise development viability and shall instead incorporate appropriate ducting infrastructure to facilitate future provision.

Reasoned Justification

18.34 The transport network is one of the biggest contributors to carbon emissions and this means measures must be taken locally and nationally to reduce vehicle carbon emissions or enable travel by zero emission modes.

18.35 Creating a carbon neutral city region by 2038 is part of the vision outlined in the Greater Manchester Five-Year Environment Plan. It is acknowledged in the plan that to meet Greater Manchester's ambition of reaching carbon neutrality by 2038, there is a need for a fundamental shift in attitudes towards car journeys, alongside a major shift to sustainable transport modes, as both are essential to reduce the number and use of fossil fuel vehicles. Delivering a major shift to electric vehicles is seen as key to help make that shift from high carbon transport modes to more sustainable modes

and supporting the transition to electric mobility is cited as one of the plans objectives.

18.36 New development can make an important contribution to enabling the use of electric vehicles. Whilst it is acknowledged that there is potential for significant advances in low emission technologies, electric vehicles are a key part of this, and it is therefore considered important that this Local Plan supports the development of the electric vehicle infrastructure network.

18.37 Ensuring that residential properties with garages and drives incorporate a charging point will help to facilitate home charging, and the additional cost of providing this infrastructure is considered to be minimal. Non-residential development can also have a significant role to play, for example by providing dedicated charging points for a proportion of parking spaces to support workplace and visitor charging.

18.38 Whilst the historic environment should not be a barrier to the installation of charge points, in the limited circumstances that making provision for electric vehicle charging infrastructure would be considered to cause unacceptable harm to a heritage asset, the requirements detailed in criteria 1) to 2) in the above policy will not apply.

Policy T5 – Vison-led Transport Statements, Transport Assessments and Travel Plans in New Development

Proposals for developments that are likely to generate significant travel demands should be designed in a way that maximises the opportunity for walking, wheeling and cycling, and public transport trips.

Vision-led Transport Statements, Transport Assessments and Travel Plans will be required on a case-by-case basis when a proposed development would generate significant amounts of movement.

Factors that will be taken into consideration when determining whether an application needs to be accompanied by a Transport Statement, Transport Assessment and Travel Plan include:

1. **the scale and type of the proposed development and its potential for additional trip generation;**
2. **the public transport accessibility of the site;**
3. **the cumulative impacts of multiple developments within a particular area, including known committed future developments; and**
4. **any known transport issues in the surrounding area – such as peak time congestion.**

Transport Statements, Transport Assessments and Travel Plans will be required, where applicable, to:

5. **outline how the development will support access by active travel and public transport.**
6. **commit to the implementation of measures and initiatives to facilitate and encourage active travel and public transport use.**
7. **set out how the design and use of the site will not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety for all users.**

8. **consider how trips generated by the development can be adequately served by the local and Strategic Road Network to ensure that the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would not be severe; and**
9. **identify where there are any significant impacts of development and ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are identified and in place before the development is occupied as agreed with the Council.**

The information provided in relation to the above would be expected to be proportionate to the scale and nature of development proposed.

Where applications will affect the Strategic Road Network, applicants should provide confirmation from National Highways that the scope and detail of the Transport Statement and Travel Plan is sufficient for the purposes of assessing the application within the statutory timescales.

Any developments that are required to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment will need to consider air quality impacts on Holcroft Moss, within the Manchester Mosses Special Area of Conservation in accordance with Policy JP-C8 of PfE[154].

Reasoned Justification

17.38 Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements are all ways of assessing and mitigating the negative transport impacts of development to promote sustainable development.

17.39 In line with NPPF all developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a vision-led transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed and monitored.

17.40 In setting out a vision-led transport strategy for new development, applicants should reinforce the transport vision for the site, explain what the proposals are seeking to achieve in terms of walking, wheeling and cycling and then test a set of scenarios to determine the optimum design and transport infrastructure to realise this vision.

17.41 Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements should be:

- proportionate to the size and scope of the proposed development;
- established at the earliest possible stage of a development proposal;
- be tailored to particular local circumstances; and
- be brought forward in collaboration with the local planning authority/transport authority, transport operators, rail network operators, National Highways where there may be implications for the SRN and any other relevant bodies.

17.42 When determining the public transport accessibility of a site, Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels (GMAL) should be used as explained in Policy H1.

17.43 As set out in PfE, in order to assess the cumulative impacts of growth, developers will need to consider committed development. In consultation with the local highways'

[154] [154] This document can be found at: https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-housing/strategic-planning/places-for-everyone/joint-supplementary-planning-documents/holcroft-moss-planning-obligations-spd/

authority, developers should agree the committed developments and allocations that should be considered in the assessment.

17.44 In relation to applications that affect the SRN, applicants should set out how DfT Circular 01/2022 The Strategic Road Network and the delivery of sustainable development[155] ('the Circular') has been reviewed and considered. The Circular explains in paragraph 15 that transport planning is moving away from predicting future demand to provide capacity ('predict and provide') to planning that sets an outcome communities want to achieve and provides the transport solutions to deliver those outcomes. It goes on to say in paragraph 44 that Travel Plans are an effective means of incentivising the use of sustainable modes of transport and that where they are required development promoters must put forward clear targets and commitments to minimise the traffic impact of development and maximise the accessibility of and within sites by walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and shared travel.

17.45 PPG Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements[156] and 'the Circular' includes further details and advice on what Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements should contain.

17.46 Further information regarding the consideration of air quality impacts on Holcroft Moss, within the Manchester Mosses SAC can be found in PfE Policy JP-C8 and the Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations Joint SPD.

Monitoring

17.47 The main Local Plan indicators that will be used to monitor this chapter are:

- Per capita emission estimates, industry, domestic and transport sectors
- Number of pedestrian or cycling casualties per year
- Number of travel plans secured as a condition of planning permission
- Number of days in Greater Manchester where air pollution was moderate or higher

17.48 The main PfE indicators that will be used to help monitor this chapter are:

- Exceedance of the legal level of NO2 (as an Annual Mean) in local AQMA and Clean Air Plan Monitoring
- Percentage of daily trips made by active travel, public transport, car and other (monitoring subject to further analysis of data collection methods – TRADS monitor undertaken by TfGM)
- Percentage of new housing (net) within 800m of good public transport accessibility and percentage of new employment floorspace within 800m of good public transport accessibility *definition of good public transport accessibility to be agreed with TfGM
- Number of EV charging points (% change can be monitored year to year or over longer time series)

[155] This document can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-road-network-and-the-delivery-of-sustainable-development/strategic-road-network-and-the-delivery-of-sustainable-development
[156] This document can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-plans-transport-assessments-and-statements

18 Communities

Open Space, Sport and Recreation

18.1 Open space is an important part of the borough's green infrastructure network. It has a key role to play in the protection of the environment, enhancing the biodiversity of the borough and mitigating against climate change. Access to quality open space is essential to the health and well-being of communities, enabling increased physical activity, opportunities for social interaction and inclusion and contributing to improved mental health.

18.2 Open spaces, include allotments and community gardens, amenity greenspaces, churchyards and cemeteries, green corridors, natural and semi-natural greenspace, outdoor sports facilities, parks and gardens and play spaces[157].

Policy CO1 – The Protection of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision

The Council will protect existing open space, sport and recreation provision, in the borough.

The loss of open spaces[158] through development (in whole or part) will only be acceptable in the following circumstances:

1. **The development is for alternative open space, sport or recreation provision, where the need for a change in typology can be clearly demonstrated based on local evidence[159]; or**

2. **Based on local evidence, the Council consider that the open space is surplus to local needs and the land is not required to meet deficiencies in other open space typologies within the appropriate accessible standard distance to the development site[160]; or**

3. **A small-scale loss of part of the open space is required to enable development on adjacent land which would not prejudice the overall open space function of the site.**

With the exception of circumstance 2 above, the loss of open space resulting from proposed development should be replaced by at least equivalent or improved open space (having regard to the open space standards) either onsite in a different part of the proposed development, or offsite in a suitable location which should be determined by the identified deficiencies and accessibility standard. All replacement provision should be provided in line with the requirements for new or improved open space provision set out in Policy CO2.

[157] Also known as open space typologies.
[158] Including strategic open spaces which will be identified on the Policies Map, and all other open spaces as identified in the Open Space Study (2022), or any subsequent update.
[159] Oldham's Open Space Study (2022) and Playing Pitch Strategy (2025), or any subsequent updates.
[160] As identified by the accessibility standard and measured from the centre of the proposed development site and/or the site which would be lost.

Playing fields, pitches and outdoor sports provision

All playing fields, playing pitches and outdoor sports provision will be protected in line with this policy, national planning policy and other relevant policy and guidance.

The proposed loss (in whole or part) of a playing field, playing pitch or outdoor sports provision will be considered on a site-by-site basis, having regard to Oldham's Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (2025) (PPOSS)[161]. In line with circumstance 2 above, consideration should also be given to whether the site could be used for an alternative sport in need of provision and/or facilities.

Where appropriate, any loss of provision should be replaced by at least equivalent or improved provision in another location, as agreed by the Council, and relevant sporting bodies.

Reasoned Justification

18.3 Open space generally refers to several types of spaces which are available to the public, from formal sports pitches to allotments and community gardens to open areas within developments.

18.4 Oldham's open spaces are identified on the Policies Map[162] and the Green Infrastructure Network Opportunity Maps[163]. Open spaces make up a significant part of Oldham's Green Infrastructure Network and can contribute to providing Biodiversity Net Gain, on appropriate sites.

18.5 As such, it is important to ensure that open spaces are protected from development. The policy sets out that the loss, or part-development, of open spaces will only be considered acceptable in specific circumstances and, where appropriate, any lost provision should be replaced in line with Policy CO2. The Council will consider whether a particular development would comply with the circumstances listed above on a case-by-case basis and based on the information provided as part of the application. The Council's Open Space Study (2022) and PPOSS (2025) provide key evidence of local needs and will be considered when assessing whether the loss of a site is acceptable.

18.6 Specifically, any loss of a playing field, pitch or outdoor sport provision is required to be in accordance with national planning policy and other relevant policy and guidance, such as Sport England Guidance[164]. The PPOSS provides evidence of needs and opportunities on a site-by-site basis. Any proposed loss will be considered against the evidence set out within the PPOSS and should not compromise the delivery of actions within the PPOSS Action Plan or worsen existing and future deficiencies of sports provision.

[161] Oldham's Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (2025) (PPOSS), or any subsequent update.
[162] The open spaces have been identified by the Open Space Study (2022). These will be updated as part of future updates to the Open Space Study, or other available evidence.
[163] Oldham's Green Infrastructure Network Opportunity Maps: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2183/oldham_green_infrastructure_strategy
[164] Sport England's Playing Fields Policy, available at: https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/planning-sport/playing-fields-policy

18.7 It should also be considered whether the site which is proposed to be lost could be used to alleviate provision deficiencies in other areas in the borough, and for other sports that could realistically be played on the site, other than what the site was last used for.

18.8 Where appropriate, any lost provision of playing fields, pitches or outdoor sports provision should be replaced by at least equivalent or improved provision in another location, as agreed by the Council, and other relevant sporting bodies. The PPOSS should be used to inform where replacement provision should be located. In delivering replacement provision, the Council can support discussions with local clubs, sporting governing bodies and Sport England, where required.

Policy CO2 – New and Improved Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision

The Council will support the enhancement of existing, and the creation of new, open space, sport and recreation provision in the borough.

Residential developments of 10 homes and above will be required to provide sufficient public open space, sport or recreation provision onsite. Where it is not possible to provide onsite, a financial contribution towards new or enhanced existing offsite public open space, sport or recreation provision will be sought.

Onsite provision or contributions to offsite new/ replacement provision and enhanced existing provision, should be determined by local open space needs and deficiencies and accessibility to existing provision, as set out in local evidence[165].

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) with 10 or more occupants, will be required to contribute to offsite new or enhanced open space, sport and recreation provision to meet the needs of the residents.

Proposals for built sports facilities and formal sports provision will be supported where they are in accordance with other Local Plan policies, national planning policy and other relevant policy and guidance.

Oldham's Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy and Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator[166] should be used, where appropriate, to inform where and what type of new or enhanced playing pitch and outdoor sports provision is provided, based on identified deficiencies/ need.

Open space provided onsite should:

1. **be appropriately located within the development proposed and accessible to all users, including those with mobility impairments[167];**

2. **deliver multi-functional benefits, where appropriate;**

[165] As identified in the Open Space Study (2022) and the Playing Pitch Strategy (2025), or subsequent updates.
[166] See Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator for further information: https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport/playing-pitch-calculator
[167] Active design guidance can inform the creation of inclusive and sustainable open space, sport and recreation provision: https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/active-design

3. **be of a high-quality design, in line with Policy D1; and**

4. **be well connected to the existing green infrastructure network having regard to the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy.**

Where appropriate, contributions to new or improved open space provision will be secured through planning obligations or conditions, as necessary, in line with Policy IN2.

Open Space Standards

Open Space Standards (Table CO1) have been developed to ensure that open space provision is of a high quality and contributes towards meeting local needs. New or improved provision should seek to achieve the standards set out below.

Site-by-site needs and opportunities for outdoor sports provision are identified within the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy[168]. This should be used when considering the development of new or improved outdoor sports provision, to ensure provision contributes to meeting local needs.

Table CO1: Current Open Space Standards[169]

Type of Open Space	Quantity Standard (the number of hectares required per 1,000 population)	Quality Standard	Accessibility Standard
Allotments and Community Gardens	No standard	At least 70%	No standard
Amenity Greenspace	0.46	At least 70%	720 metres
Cemeteries and Churchyards	No standard	At least 70%	No standard
Civic Spaces	No standard	At least 70%	No standard
Green Corridors	No standard	At least 70%	No standard
Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace	1.95	At least 70%	Natural and Semi-Natural - 720 metres Strategic Natural and Semi-Natural over 20ha - 7.85km
Parks and Gardens	0.40	At least 70%	Local Parks and Gardens - 720 metres Strategic Parks and Gardens of 15ha and above - 7.85km
Provision for Children and Young People	0.25	At least 70%	480 metres

[168] Namely the Playing Pitch Strategy Action Plan (2025, or subsequent updates), which sets out needs on a site-by-site basis.
[169] Open Space Standards will be kept under review and updated, if necessary, through relevant evidence.

Value Standard

In addition to Table CO1, a value standard has also been introduced to ensure that the borough's open spaces are meaningful and beneficial to the local community.

Proposals for new open spaces are required to demonstrate (through a value audit) that they meet the following value standards:

1. **Destination or flagship sites should achieve a high value score (60-100%)**
2. **All other open space sites should achieve a medium value score (40-59%)**

Further guidance on the value standard and how value should be audited is provided below and in the Open Space Study (2022).

Reasoned Justification

New Open Spaces

18.9 It is important that new development does not place undue pressure on existing open space provision in the borough and ensures that all residents have access to high quality open space close to where they live. This supports sustainable development.

18.10 As such, major residential development is required to provide sufficient public open space, sport or recreation provision. It is also considered appropriate to seek developer contributions towards open space provision as part of the development of HMOs which have 10 or more occupants because the additional number of residents could impact on existing open space provision, in a similar way to major residential development.

18.11 New onsite open spaces provided as part of development should seek to improve open space deficiencies in the area in which the site is located. For example, where a development site is not currently accessible to a particular typology of open space (as identified by the Open Space Accessibility Maps[170]) the new space should seek to include provision of the deficient typology. Where a site is accessible to all forms of open space, the development should seek to provide appropriate onsite open space which is in line with the Open Space Standards.

18.12 Where it is not possible to provide adequate onsite open space, a financial contribution towards the creation of new or the improvement of existing offsite provision should be provided. The location and typology of which should be identified in line with the deficiencies (in terms of accessibility, quantity, quality and value) within the ward, or close to the development site, as identified in the Open Space Study[171].

18.13 A developer contributions calculator has been developed, as part of the Open Space Study which will guide the Council in determining appropriate open space contributions towards offsite provision. Costings included within this calculator will be updated over the lifetime of the plan as required.

[170] The Open Space Accessibility Buffers are also available to view interactively at: https://map.oldham.gov.uk/map?name=Green%20Infrastructure

[171] Appendix F identifies the open space deficiencies by ward. This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2184/open_space_study_documents_2022.

Playing Pitches and Outdoor Sports Provision

18.14 Where appropriate, for new residential developments (of 10 homes and above), Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator may be used to estimate the demand that may be generated for the use of playing pitches by the new population of the development. The calculator is based on the deficiencies and needs identified in Oldham's PPOSS and is intended to inform what provision should be included onsite as part of new development.

18.15 New outdoor sports provision should be provided onsite, however contributions towards new or enhanced provision offsite will also be permitted, as agreed by the Council.

18.16 Offsite contributions towards new or enhanced playing pitch and outdoor sports provision should be informed by Oldham's PPOSS to ensure provision contributes to meeting local needs.

18.17 Proposals for new outdoor sports facilities and formal sports provision should also consider Sport England guidance[172].

Open Space Standards

18.18 New and enhanced open space provision should be provided in line with the identified Open Space Standards (Table CO1) which have been devised as part of the Councils Open Space Study (2022).

18.19 Open Space provision in the borough has been assessed against the Standards of Quantity, Quality, Accessibility and Value, to identify deficiencies in provision. The Study assessed the current (at 2021) and predicted future (at 2037) levels of open space provision and population-based demand against these standards to identify current deficiencies and where they are expected to arise over the plan period, and therefore where new or improved open spaces will be most needed. The Open Space Study identifies the open space deficiencies by ward.

18.20 The requirements for outdoor sports provision are not included within Table CO1, as these are considered on a site-by-site basis as set out above.

18.21 The Standards are explained in turn below.

Accessibility

18.22 The accessibility standard is a measure of distance which reflects the accessibility needs of potential users of that type of open space provision. In general, smaller, local types of open spaces such as Children's Play Areas, Amenity Greenspaces, smaller Natural and Semi-Natural spaces and Outdoor Sports Pitches (playing fields etc) should be accessible within a short 10-to-15-minute walk time.

18.23 Larger spaces, such as Golf Courses, large scale strategic Natural and Semi-Natural spaces (such as Oldham Edge and Strinsedale Country Park) and large-scale strategic Parks and Gardens (such as Alexandra Park and Tandle Hill) are often considered to be 'destination locations' that might be visited for the day or an extended period and should be accessible within a 20-minute drive.

18.24 Due to the characteristics of the type of provision, accessibility standards have not been set for Allotments and Community Gardens, Cemeteries and Churchyards, Civic

[172] This guidance can be found at: https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/planning-sport

Spaces and Green Corridors. The Council will continue to ensure that any new spaces provided within these typologies are sustainably located where appropriate.

18.25 Open Space Accessibility buffers are available to view online[173].

Quantity

18.26 Quantity is a measure of how much open space is available against a measure of population (the number of hectares required per 1,000 population). The quantity standard has been determined based on the premise of protecting existing open space as much as possible and securing new open space, where appropriate, ensuring that new residential development does not adversely impact upon existing open space provision.

18.27 Due to the characteristics of the type of provision, quantity standards have not been set for Cemeteries and Churchyards, Civic Spaces and Green Corridors. The Council will continue to ensure this type of provision is protected and enhanced where appropriate[174].

Quality

18.28 Quality is a measure of how the site performs against specific criteria, based on the Green Flag Award criteria[175], including indicators related to 'welcoming place', 'healthy, safe and secure' and 'well maintained and clean'. The borough's open space sites were scored in quality bandings of 'excellent – 90% to 100%', 'very good – 80% to 89%', 'good – 70% to 79%', 'fair – 50% to 69%' and 'poor 0% to 49%'. The Open Space Study (2022) recommended that a standard of 70% should be introduced to ensure that the borough's open spaces aim for at least a good standard to provide a positive benefit to the local community and the environment.

18.29 Quality is closely linked to value and together the standards can be a useful guide for investment, for example some high value sites may be poor quality and as such contributions could be spent improving these spaces to enhance and support community use.

Value

18.30 Open space value is a measure of functionality and usage by communities. As part of the Open Space Study (2022), sites were assessed against several 'value criteria' including, context, historical/ heritage, contribution to local amenity, sense of place, recreation, play, ecological and biodiversity. The Study scored sites as 'high (60-100%)', 'medium (40-59%)' and 'low (0-39%)' based on the value criteria. The Study recommended that a value standard of high value be applied for destination or flagship sites and a standard of medium value be applied for all other open space sites. The Council will advise in terms of identifying flagship sites - examples include Alexandra Park, and Waterhead Park.

18.31 Where new open spaces are proposed, the provider must demonstrate through a 'value audit' that the proposed provision meets the relevant value standard set out within the policy. The audit should be proportionate to the size and typology of provision that is

[173] See Green Infrastructure Network and Opportunity Map and Open Space Study documents https://map.oldham.gov.uk/map?name=Green%20Infrastructure and https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2184/open_space_study_documents_2022

[174] Cemeteries, churchyards and green corridors also form a significant part of the borough's green infrastructure network which are protected under Policy N3.

[175] Open Space Study (main document) (2022), Chapter 3, Table 2.

proposed and be completed by a competent person, reflecting the criteria and scoring set out within the Open Space Study[176].

18.32 In most cases, financial contributions towards existing offsite open space should go towards those spaces assessed with either a low or medium value score and a low or fair quality score. In some instances, to improve provision, it may be appropriate for contributions to go towards sites which are high quality but low value, or vice versa.

18.33 Adding value to open space is important as it enables them to provide multi-functional benefits, maximising the positive impacts of open space for communities. Providers can add value to open spaces in various ways, including, for example, adding street furniture, planting, improving signage and accessibility, and promoting spaces for events or sports use, to promote or improve their contextual, heritage, local amenity, sense of place, recreation, play and ecological value.

Policy CO3 - Community Facilities

The Council will support development proposals for new and improved community facilities where:

1. **Any unacceptable impacts on neighbouring uses, the local environment, highway safety and traffic generation can be mitigated; and**
2. **They are accessible by public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling.**

Development proposals relating to new residential care homes and nursing homes, non-residential education and training facilities, and health facilities will be assessed against policies H4, CO4 and CO6 respectively.

The loss of sites and premises used for community facilities will only be supported where:

a. **It is proved the existing use has insufficient demand to support it or is no longer needed; or**

b. **The loss is part of a wider proposal to improve service provision in the locality; or**

c. **It is demonstrated that existing facilities nearby can adequately serve identified needs, in an equally accessible manner.**

The views of the local community, including existing users, and relevant Parish Councils will be important to establish the significance of, and demand for, individual facilities and to develop solutions to enable their retention.

Reasoned Justification

18.34 The purpose of this policy is to allow for new community facilities and services in sustainable locations and to prevent the premature loss of important local facilities where their continued use is considered to remain a reasonable prospect.

[176] Open Space Study (main document), (2022), Chapter 3, pages 24-26.

18.35 Community facilities within the borough provide for the health and wellbeing, social, educational, spiritual, recreational and leisure and cultural needs of the community. Some serve a local community (e.g., post office), while others serve a wider area. These facilities and services help create supportive communities by meeting day to day needs of residents and businesses, such as:

- Public halls, (including community and youth centres)
- Post Offices
- Non-residential education and training facilities
- Children's nurseries and creches
- Childcare centres
- Doctors surgeries, dentists, health centres and clinics, chemists and hospitals
- Residential care homes and nursing homes
- Village shops
- Village pubs
- Places of worship and church halls
- Museums, libraries and art galleries
- Performance spaces

18.36 New and enhanced community services and facilities will be supported where they are well related to the communities they serve and cause no adverse impacts upon neighbouring uses. Facilities should be easily accessible by public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling.

18.37 Oldham Council is committed to place-based integration where public services work collaboratively to provide timely and effective support to our residents and communities. Through this policy and the Local Plan the establishment of Family Hubs across Oldham as a network of integrated health and community resources will be supported. These hubs will enable and support people in the local community to live independently and to access support at the earliest opportunity as part of the Oldham prevention framework to improve health and well-being and reduce escalation of demand within the public sector.

18.38 The Council will seek to minimise the loss of land and buildings that are being used as community facilities. A loss of a community facility will only be supported where it meets one of the criteria a to c above and proposals for the redevelopment of a community facility will therefore be carefully assessed, particularly where there is no alternative provision planned. The approach taken within the policy recognises that there will be instances where facilities and services are no longer needed, in their entirety or in their current form, and that the impact of their loss has been considered as part of a wider strategy.

18.39 The Localism Act 2011[177] allows local groups within a community (including Parish Councils) the right to identify and protect facilities that are important to them from immediate disposal. Communities can nominate a building or an area of land to be

[177] This Act can be found at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted

listed as an 'Asset of Community Value'. An asset can be privately or publicly owned and can vary from local shops and pubs, through to parks, open space areas and community centres.

18.40 Once listed, the process allows community organisations the opportunity to bid to buy listed assets under the 'Community Right to Bid' process. However, there is no obligation for owners to sell their asset to a community organisation and there is no control over who takes ownership.

18.41 The impact of a development proposal on a registered Asset of Community Value is a material planning consideration.

Policy CO4 - Education and Skills

Development proposals for early years, schools and post-16 facilities shall be supported where they are:

1. **located within the community it is intended to serve and will be accessible by public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling;**

2. **located, designed and managed to minimise the impacts of associated traffic and car parking on the surrounding area, including the safe provision of drop-offs and pick-ups to avoid congestion; and**

3. **providing high-quality indoor and outdoor facilities suitable for the intended number, and age range, of students.**

Where opportunities arise through new built development and change of use, the shared use of facilities by the local community will be encouraged through planning conditions or planning obligations as appropriate and where such usage can be accommodated without compromising the quality and accessibility for new and/or existing users.

Land and buildings in educational use will be protected. Proposals that result in the net loss of educational facilities will be considered in accordance with Policy CO3: Community Facilities.

The Council will work with the local education authority to identify suitable sites for educational use where a need has been identified.

Reasoned Justification

18.42 National policy requires local planning authorities to take a proactive, positive, and collaborative approach to ensure that there is a sufficient choice of school places available to meet the needs of existing and new communities.

18.43 The Council is committed to ensuring that all young people get the education they deserve and that there is a good school within reach of every child in the borough. This requires an assessment in collaboration with education partners of the current capacity of schools and their ability to cater for new growth together with determining where and how the additional capacity to support new growth should be provided.

18.44 Access to adequate, affordable, and high-quality childcare (pre-school and school-age) can play a key role in children's development. Where it enables increased parental employment rates of low-income households, it may also help to reduce income inequalities. Childcare facilities should be safe, accessible for all, and provide both indoor and outdoor learning opportunities.

18.45 Enabling the shared use of facilities within schools can be an important and valuable resource for the local community, where this does not compromise the day to day use of the land or buildings. Through for example, allowing the use of playing fields, gym halls and classrooms by the local community during after-school hours.

18.46 The Council will support improvements to the education and skills of the borough's population by working with a range of education partners, including the University Campus Oldham, Oldham College and Oldham Sixth-Form College and with developer contributions to facilitate the development of new and improved education facilities.

Policy CO5 - Securing Educational Places through New Residential Development

Where a residential development of 10 dwellings or more would create or exacerbate a shortfall in the number of local school places, the Council will seek to secure new and/or improved education facilities. This is to address the unmet need, proportionate to the number of people aged 0-19, that the development is likely to accommodate.

Such provision will typically involve making a financial contribution towards the expansion of an existing education facility in agreement with the local education authority.

Where it is not practicable or desirable to meet the unmet demand through expanding capacity on-site provision may be required and the Council will negotiate with developers to secure the setting aside of land to accommodate the additional education provision.

For each relevant type of education provision, the scale of any financial contribution will be calculated using the following formula:

Pupil yield factor x Cost per pupil place = Financial contribution

Reasoned Justification

18.47 The Council has a statutory duty under the Education Act 1996 to ensure that there are sufficient school places available within the borough to meet the educational needs of the population.

18.48 Whilst the Government provides funding to local authorities for the provision of new school places, the funding is reduced to take account of developer contributions to avoid double funding of school places. DfE therefore, expects local authorities to seek developer contributions towards school places that are created to meet the need arising from housing development.

18.49 It is important that the impacts of new residential development are addressed including:

- The education needs arising from a new development, based on an up-to-date pupil yield factor;
- The capacity of the existing schools that would serve the development; and
- The extent to which developer contributions are required and the degree of certainty that these will be secured at the appropriate time.

18.50 The Council will seek to secure new and/or improved education facilities and provision through S106 developer contributions where the existing provision is unable to accommodate the additional demands arising from a new residential development.

18.51 Where it is demonstrated that the number of pupils generated by a development is greater than the number of school places available, the Council may require a contribution to fund the provision of the additional school places.

18.52 Financial contributions will be calculated based upon expected pupil yields resulting from the proposed development and identified costs per school place to accommodate expansion of provision. Expected pupil yield will be identified in accordance with the Department for Education's (DfE) guidance on estimating pupil yield from housing development[178] and be informed by local evidence. At present, one dwelling, proposed as part of a new residential development, will yield 0.46 of a primary school place and 0.29 of a secondary school place.

18.53 Costs per school place will be identified using the DfE's most recently published local authority school places scorecards[179].

18.54 In addition to primary and secondary school places, developer contributions will be sought for early years, post-16 and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) places, recognising the duty placed on the local authority to secure sufficient education and training provision for young people with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan up to the age of 25. Costs associated with providing places in special schools and alternative provision are likely to be higher than those for mainstream school places and the DfE's Securing Developer Contributions for Education[180] guidance provides further advice on this matter.

18.55 Engagement with the local education authority early on, as part of pre-application discussions, will be important to ensure that the education demands generated by the development proposed are appropriately met.

[178] Estimating pupil yield from housing development, August 2023; Department for Education - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64d0f71be5491a00134b5940/Estimating_Pupil_Yield_from_Housing_Development.pdf

[179] The DfE's most recently published local authority school places scorecards are available at https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/local-authority-school-places-scorecards/2024

[180] This document can be found at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64d0f70d7a5708001314485f/Securing_Developer_Contributions_for_Education.pdf

Policy CO6 - New Development and Health

Proposals for new health facilities will be supported where they are:

1. **located in areas of identified need, as evidenced by the GM Integrated Care Partnership – Oldham Locality and relevant NHS strategies;**
2. **co-located with other community services where appropriate, to support integrated care delivery.**

Improvements in the quality and accessibility of health and social care facilities will be supported.

The loss of a healthcare facility will only be supported where it has been formally declared surplus to the operational healthcare requirements of the NHS or identified as surplus as part of a published estates strategy or service transformation plan.

<u>Health Impact Assessments</u>

In line with PfE Policy JP-P6 a Health Impact Assessment will be required for all developments screened for an Environmental Impact Assessment, and other proposals which, due to their location, nature or proximity to sensitive receptors, are likely to have a notable impact on health and wellbeing.

The HIA should demonstrate how the development will impact on health and wellbeing through the consideration of the following, where relevant:

a) **housing standards and affordability;**
b) **access to healthcare services and other social infrastructure**
c) **access to open space and the natural environment;**
d) **air quality, noise and amenity;**
e) **accessibility and active travel;**
f) **crime reduction and community safety;**
g) **adaptation to climate change;**
h) **access to work and training; and**
i) **access to healthy food choices.**

Where a development is found to have significant negative impacts on health and wellbeing the Council may require applicants to provide for the mitigation of such impacts through the use of planning conditions and / or financial contributions secured via a planning obligation.

Development that would have an unacceptable impact on health or wellbeing will not be permitted.

<u>Residential development and providing for health facilities</u>

Where the demand resulting from a residential development (of 10 dwellings and above) will create or exacerbate a shortfall in health provision the Council will seek the provision of new or improved health facilities to address the unmet need generated by the development, as appropriate.

Developers should engage with the GM Integrated Care Partnership – Oldham Locality and Integrated Care Board at the earliest opportunity to determine the health care requirements associated with new development.

Reasoned Justification

18.56 Through creating Healthier Happier Lives, the Council aims to build a community where everyone has access to the care, support, and opportunities they need to live a good life. We are committed to tackling poverty, improving health and wellbeing, providing high-quality social care, and promoting lifelong education. Being resident focussed this also means providing support and care that is as close to, and connected with, homes and community as possible[181]. The health estate must be supported to develop and modernise, or be protected in line with integrated NHS strategies, and planning has a key role in helping to deliver these ambitions, through helping to secure quality and accessible health provision that meets the needs of our local communities.

18.57 It is important to ensure that the demands placed on health provision are met by new residential development as it comes forward and that a proportionate contribution is made towards funding the healthcare needs. The local planning authority will work with the GM Integrated Care Partnership – Oldham Locality and Integrated Care Board to ensure that the capacity of health facilities in Oldham increases in line with growing and changing needs. New or improved health facilities required to address unmet need generated by a new residential development of 10 dwellings and above will be secured through a Section 106 Planning Obligation in accordance with Policy IN2 Planning Obligations. Early dialogue with the GM Integrated Care Partnership – Oldham Locality and Integrated Care Board is essential to ensure that appropriate provision is provided.

18.58 Developers have the potential to positively influence health and well-being through maximising the health benefits of a proposal, minimising the potential harm, and reducing inequalities. Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is an objective assessment tool for identifying the health impacts of a proposed development and can be used to inform its design, thereby leading to a development that is sustainable and which positively contributes to the borough's health and wellbeing.

18.59 To ensure that new developments have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of new and existing residents, the Council will require a HIA for relevant development proposals.

18.60 The HIA should identify the health impacts of the proposed development having regard to the matters a) to i) listed above as relevant. In doing so the assessment should consider and identify the following:

a) the potential positive and negative impacts on health and wellbeing, both on end users and the local population;

[181] Oldham Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2030 can be found at: https://www.jsnaoldham.co.uk/cms-data/depot/profile-depot/HealthAndWellbeingStrategy_Approved210323.pdf

b) the impacts on different groups, taking into account that some groups will be more vulnerable to negative impacts, and identify those groups that will be most affected; and
c) actions to maximise positive impacts, and minimise and mitigate adverse impacts, on health and wellbeing, having regard to the most affected groups.

18.61 Applicants are advised to seek advice from the local planning authority before carrying out a HIA to ensure that the correct level of HIA is being prepared and that it is proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed.

Policy CO7 - Hot Food Takeaways and Fast-food Outlets

Within Oldham Town Centre planning permission for hot food takeaways and fast-food outlets may be permitted provided it is demonstrated it would not result in an unacceptable concentration of uses.

Outside of Oldham Town Centre planning permission for hot food takeaways and fast-food outlets will not be granted where they are within 400m of:

1. **a primary or secondary school; or**
2. **places where children and young people congregate.**

Proposals for all hot food takeaways and fast-food outlets will be required to demonstrate that:

a) there would be no unacceptable impact on residential amenity;

b) there would be no adverse implications for traffic management, parking or highway safety;

c) the hours of operation are appropriate for its location and having regard to neighbouring uses;

d) appropriately designed and sited fume extraction systems and/or noise insulation are provided;

e) an appropriate location for commercial trade waste including recycling facilities has been identified;

f) litter will be contained within the curtilage of the premises, stored to avoid odour nuisance, be convenient for refuse collection and screened to protect visual amenity. Any litter bin provision should be retained in perpetuity; and

g) healthier food and drink options will be promoted and made available as a standard part of the menu.

Applications for hot food takeaways and fast-food outlets must be supported by a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) that is proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed and in line Policy CO6.

Reasoned Justification

18.56 National planning guidance states that local planning authorities should refuse applications for hot food takeaways and fast-food outlets under certain criteria linked to distance to schools and / or where there is evidence that such uses have adverse impacts on local health, pollution or anti-social behaviour.

18.57 There is a growing body of evidence on the association between exposure to fast food outlets and obesity. There are also concerns about the effect fast food consumption is having on children's diets and eating behaviours, with health problems such as obesity starting to develop at primary school age and behaviour that's established early in life following through to adulthood.

18.58 In Oldham 38.6% of year 6 aged children are overweight or obese. This is higher than the England rate of 35.8% (2032/24). For adults, the latest figures highlight that 71.3% of adults in Oldham are classified as overweight or obese. This is higher than the England average of 64.5% (2023/24).

18.59 The density of fast-food outlets in Oldham is also above that in England. With there being 124.4 per 100,000 population as opposed to 96.5 across England (2017).

18.60 High levels of deprivation in Oldham coincide with a high prevalence of unhealthy weight and high numbers of fast-food outlets, as all tend to be within the inner Oldham wards. The latest Joint Service Needs Assessment shows that 35% of areas in Oldham are amongst the 10% most deprived areas in England (this is 7 out of 20 wards). This mirrors the position nationally, where increased access to fast food outlets in the most deprived areas has been shown to adversely impact unhealthy weight and health inequalities.

18.61 The policy applies a 400m walking distance from a primary or secondary school and from places where children and young people congregate.

18.62 For the purposes of this policy, places where children and young people congregate include the following:

- Parks
- Leisure facilities such as cinemas, climbing walls, sports centres
- Out of centre retail parks such as Elk Mill and Alexandra Retail Park
- Sixth forms and colleges
- Libraries;
- Community, children's and youth centres
- Places of worship

18.63 This list will be kept under review throughout the lifetime of the Plan and will be updated as appropriate.

18.64 Seeking to limit the proliferation of hot food takeaways, having regard to such issues as the proximity to locations where children and young people congregate; evidence indicating high levels of obesity and health inequalities; the over-concentration of certain uses within a specified area; and other issues such as odours and noise impact, refuse and litter will both help to maintain and support the economic vitality and viability of Oldham Town Centre and the borough's other centres.

18.65 See Policy CO6 for further details regarding what is required as part of a HIA and how to ensure the assessment is proportionate to the scale and nature to development proposed.

Monitoring

18.66 The main Local Plan indicators that will be used to monitor this chapter are:

- Number of planning applications that result in the gain or loss of identified on-site open space
- Number of S106 Planning Obligations for new or enhanced open space provision
- Life Expectancy
- Proportion of physically active adults
- Childhood obesity rates
- State funded primary and secondary school capacity and forecasts
- Number of planning applications approved for education related facilities
- The number of new hot food takeaways approved within 400 metres of a primary or secondary school, or places where children and young people congregate

18.67 The main PfE indicators that will be used to help monitor this chapter are:

- Number of hectares of green infrastructure (metric will consider publicly accessible GI where information is available)
- Numbers of school places
- Consideration of 'headroom' statistics where available.
- Percentage of working age population with Higher Level (4+) qualification(s) and percentage of working age population with sub-Level 2 qualification.

19 Protecting Our Local Environment

19.1 Quality of life is affected by the local environment. Addressing amenity and tackling pollution will have impacts on health and wellbeing and the environment. The purpose of these policies is to maintain, protect and enhance living and working conditions that will maintain a high standard of amenity for all users and occupiers.

Policy LE1 – Ensuring a High Standard of Amenity in New Development

All developments will be expected to provide and maintain a high standard of protection from noise pollution and vibration for all users and occupiers, including both future occupants and users of the proposed development as well as existing occupants and users of neighbouring land and buildings. This should be achieved and maintained without preventing, or unreasonably restricting, the continued operation of established authorised neighbouring uses and activities.

Proposals will be required to demonstrate, at planning application stage, that where applicable the following matters have been adequately addressed in relation to both the construction and operational life of the development:

1. **noise and vibration (particularly with regards to noise-sensitive uses), including internal and external levels, timing, duration and character; and**

2. **traffic movements to, from and within, the site including car parking and arrangements for deliveries.**

The Council will not support proposals where new residents and occupiers would be likely to raise complaints about neighbouring existing uses. Where new developments could be affected by an existing operation or business in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') is required to provide suitable mitigation to be agreed with the Council.

Depending on the scale and nature of the development proposed, a detailed assessment to be agreed with the Council may be required to address criteria 1 and 2 above.

Reasoned Justification

19.2 A key role of the planning system is to ensure that new development does not have an adverse impact on the amenity[182] of existing properties and that adequate levels of amenity will be enjoyed by future occupiers of the proposed development.

19.3 All development (including minor developments and extensions) can cause a disturbance to nearby residents or users of neighbouring land and buildings resulting in the quality of their amenity being impacted. However, the continuance of established existing businesses should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them

[182]For the purposes of this policy, 'amenity' is defined as those desirable features of a place that ought to be protected in the public interest.

because of the introduction of new and incompatible land uses. Such matters are an important planning consideration in relation to amenity.

19.4 Noise generating development should, wherever possible, be located away from noise-sensitive development (e.g., housing). Conversely noise-sensitive development will not be supported in the vicinity of established noise-generating uses unless appropriate measures are taken to ensure that the noise does not adversely affect levels of amenity. Considerations will include the internal and external levels, timing, duration, and character of noise.

19.5 Where noise-sensitive uses are proposed close to an existing noise source, or when noise-generating uses are proposed, the Council will require noise impact assessments and/or vibration surveys to accompany a planning application. The remit and methodology should be agreed in advance with the Council and should be undertaken in accordance with the most relevant national guidance and industry codes of practice.

19.6 Traffic and parking provision can have a significant impact on the amenity of occupiers and users in relation to vehicle movements to and from the destination. The resulting disturbance from the noise and vibration of passing vehicles can have a significant impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties – especially if it involves Heavy Goods Vehicles.

19.7 Light pollution is also an important consideration and is addressed by Policy OL5.

Policy LE2 - Ground Conditions and Contaminated Land

Development proposals for sensitive end uses will be permitted on contaminated land, or land which may have been subject to previous industrial activity or affected by landfill gas or land instability, where appropriate measures can be taken to remediate and/or satisfactorily mitigate the risk of contamination and/or existing ground conditions.

Planning applications for proposals on land that is potentially unstable or contaminated shall be accompanied by an appropriate Coal Mining Risk Assessment, land stability or slope stability risk assessment or Contaminated Land Assessment carried out by a qualified professional showing:

1. **the nature and extent of contamination or instability issues and the potential effects this may have on the development and its future users; and**

2. **the measures needed to allow the development to go ahead safely considering the potential end users.**

Where remedial measures are required to allow the development to go ahead safely, these will be secured by a condition of planning permission.

Reasoned Justification

19.8 Activities associated with industrial/commercial and agricultural processes can result in adverse ground conditions which can pose a risk to development, future site users and the environment. Oldham has a rich industrial heritage and previous

manufacturing, engineering and industrial processes have resulted in the potential for contaminated land across the borough. Typical causes of land contamination include industrial or commercial usage, mining, and landfilling. Contamination can also occur naturally due to certain types of minerals being present in rocks and soils.

19.9 Where contamination is known or suspected, applicants should ensure that any potential issues are identified and discussed with the Council as early as possible in the development process. Development proposals will be expected to seek sustainable solutions to the remediation of contaminated land.

19.10 To ensure that a sufficient and proportionate level of information is provided, a Contaminated Land Assessment will need to be submitted with all new development proposals where contamination is suspected or known on the site (or adjacent land) and/or where the proposed development for a sensitive end use would be particularly vulnerable to the presence of contamination. This may include residential schemes, care homes, holiday lets, allotments.

19.11 A Coal Mining Risk Assessment will need to be submitted with all new development proposals where the site lies within an area that is known to be at risk of historical mine workings.

19.12 Land stability or slope stability risk assessment will also be required where land is potentially unstable.

19.13 Remediation will need to remove unacceptable risks and make the site suitable for its new use. As a minimum, after carrying out the development and commencement of the new use, the land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under the Environmental Protection Act (1990).[183]

Policy LE3 - Air Quality

The Council will seek to improve air quality within the borough and contribute towards the achievement of national air quality objectives and Greater Manchester's Clean Air Plan.

Development will be supported in line with PfE policies that does not:

1. **Impede the achievement of any air quality objective(s), particularly in locations declared as Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs);**

2. **Introduce a significant new source of any air pollutant, including odour, fumes, smoke, dust and other sources; and**

3. **Increase exposure to poor air quality, particularly where vulnerable people are located (such as health care facilities, care homes or schools).**

Air Quality Assessments will be required to support planning applications for the following:

4. **Residential development of over 100 dwellings**

5. **Development involving more than 10,000m^2 of floorspace**

[183] This Act can be found at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/43/contents

6. **Developments which introduce new exposure into an area of existing poor air quality (e.g., an AQMA)**

Depending on the scale and nature of the development proposed, Air Quality Assessments may be required to support other applications including industrial processes where there are direct emissions to the air, as well as proposals with significant vehicle movements and significant changes to highways infrastructure.

Development that is likely to produce an odour, should demonstrate that there is no negative impact on residential amenity by providing an Odour Impact Assessment.

Reasoned Justification

19.14 Air pollution can arise from many sources and activities, including traffic and transport, industrial processes, commercial premises, energy generation, agriculture, waste storage treatment and construction sites. Increasing temperatures can heighten the impact of air pollutants, and so climate change further raises the importance of addressing air quality issues.

19.15 This policy relates to air pollution from all potential sources in any potential form and includes dust, fumes, and odour.

19.16 Good practice for air quality should be applied to all developments. Development should be designed to minimise public exposure to pollution sources for example by locating habitable rooms away from busy roads, or directing combustion generated pollutants through well sited vents.

19.17 In accordance with Policy T5, where development generates significant additional traffic, the provision of a detailed Travel Plan will be required, which sets out measures to encourage sustainable means of transport such as subsidised or free-ticketing, improved links to bus stops, improved infrastructure and layouts to improve accessibility and safety. The provision of a Travel Plan should include measures to help reduce the impact of transport related emissions which are likely to have an impact on air quality (such as the provision of cycle parking and changing facilities).

19.18 Some developments may require an Air Quality Assessment where there is the risk of an adverse air quality effect, either from a new development causing an air quality impact or creating exposure to high concentrations of pollutants for new residents. Where the need for an Air Quality Assessment is triggered, it should show the likely changes in air quality or exposure to air pollutants as a result of the proposed development, including a review of monitoring data. Where monitoring is not currently undertaken, it may be requested to inform the application or to confirm the effects. The purpose of the assessment will be to determine the predicted impact of a development on local air quality, public health and/or the local environment, to help determine the appropriate level of mitigation from a development.

19.19 Planning applications which are required to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment will need to consider air quality impacts on Holcroft Moss, within the Manchester Mosses SAC in accordance with PfE Policy JP-C8.

19.20 It is recommended that developers contact the Council's Environmental Health team to confirm whether an Air Quality Assessment is likely to be needed in support of a future planning application. Air Quality Assessments will need to be proportionate to the

nature and scale of development proposed and the potential impacts (considering existing air quality conditions), and because of this are likely to be location specific.

19.21 Where proposals have the potential to release significant odours or where a sensitive use is being proposed close to a wastewater treatment works or other sources of odour, applicants will be required to provide an Odour Impact Assessment. The Assessment must be carried out in consultation with the relevant statutory undertaker to confirm that there are no adverse amenity impacts on future occupiers or that the adverse impacts can be appropriately mitigated.

19.22 Odour can arise from activities such as wastewater treatment works, intensive livestock farming and some industrial processes. An Odour Impact Assessment will be required to accompany any proposal that would introduce new sources of odour close to sensitive receptors, or the development of sensitive uses close to existing sources of odour. The Odour Impact Assessment will be required to be undertaken by a suitably qualified person in accordance with good practice guidance and consultation with the relevant statutory undertaker.

Monitoring

19.23 The main Local Plan indicators that will be used to monitor this chapter are:

- Number of planning applications with conditions attached relating to contaminated land
- Number of days in Greater Manchester where air pollution was moderate or higher
- Per capita emission estimates, industry, domestic and transport sectors
- Annual mean nitrogen dioxide

19.24 The main PfE indicator that will be used to help monitor this chapter are:

- Exceedance of the legal level of NO2 (as an Annual Mean) in local AQMA and Clean Air Plan Monitoring

20 Infrastructure and Delivery in Oldham

Digital Infrastructure

20.1 To facilitate residents demand to access services digitally, Oldham Council is implementing a digital strategy, so that where possible and there is resident demand, end-to-end digital services are available. Much of the strategy focuses on what the Council can do to improve its digital presence. However, for the digital infrastructure to be a success, there is a need for Oldham's digital fibre infrastructure to be strengthened so that homes and businesses can access digital connections that reflect current and future demand.

Planning Obligations

20.2 Planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) are a mechanism that may be used to make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms, that would not be otherwise. They should only be used where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts through a planning condition.

20.3 A planning obligation must only be sought where they meet the test set out in national planning guidance, which is that it is:

a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;

b) directly related to the development; and

c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

20.4 Common uses of planning obligations across Oldham are to secure affordable housing, and provide for open space, sport and recreation provision and infrastructure such as school places. A planning obligation can be used to:

1. restrict the development or use of the land in a specified way;
2. require specified operations or activities to be carried out in, on, under or over the land;
3. require the land to be used in a specified way; or
4. require a sum or sums to be paid to the authority on a specified date or dates or periodically.

20.5 The planning obligation is a formal document, a deed, which states that it is an obligation for planning purposes, identifies the relevant land, the person entering the obligation and their interest and the relevant local authority that would enforce the obligation. The obligation can be a unitary obligation or multi-party agreement. If the planning obligation is not complied with, it is enforceable against the person that entered into the obligation and any subsequent owner of the land against which it was made.

Policy IN1 Digital Infrastructure and Telecommunications

The Council will support the provision of infrastructure that extends and improves digital connectivity across the borough, particularly where it provides access to 5G and gigabit-capable full fibre technology.

Where new telecommunication sites are proposed, including those for prior approval, proposals will be considered in accordance with the relevant Government guidance.

New masts or telecommunications equipment will be permitted where:

1. **it has been demonstrated that there are no reasonable opportunities for sharing a site, mast or facility with existing telecommunications infrastructure in the area before new sites are considered;**

2. **the siting, height and design of the equipment will not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area in which it is located, including the significance and setting of historic assets;**

3. **any building-mounted installations would be located and designed to minimise the appearance on the host building;**

4. **it can be demonstrated that the equipment will not cause any interference with other electrical equipment or detrimental impact on air traffic safety;**

5. **the development does not impact on the movement of pedestrians or cyclists or highway safety; and**

6. **provision is made for the removal of the structures and reinstatement of the site as soon as reasonably practicable after it is no longer required for telecommunication purposes.**

All new residential and employment developments should enable Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) broadband infrastructure. Where it is demonstrated that FTTP is not viable, proposals should ensure that new development is broadband ready through the installation of appropriate ducting and equipment. Where no broadband provision is included, developers will be required to demonstrate through consultation with broadband providers that such connections are not deliverable or viable.

Reasoned Justification

20.6 The purpose of this policy is to improve digital connectivity across the borough. The Council is committed to securing high-quality communication infrastructure that is essential for growing

20.7 a sustainable economy and for social wellbeing. Access to high quality digital infrastructure supports productivity and new business opportunities. It can also facilitate social inclusion, enable home working, diversify the rural economy, enhance educational and social opportunities, as well as improve access to a wide range of services that are increasingly provided online. It can also help to mitigate air quality

impacts by reducing the need to travel. As technology advances the demand for new telecommunications infrastructure will continue to grow.

20.8 Part 16 of the General Permitted Development Order (1995)[184] (as amended) allows telecommunications operators to install and replace certain types of telecommunications equipment without the need for planning permission provided certain criteria are met.

20.9 Some smaller scale masts fall within 'permitted development' but require the 'Prior Approval' of the local planning authority. In these instances, the Council can exercise control over the siting and appearance of telecommunications equipment in the interests of protecting amenity. Appearance of a mast includes its materials, colour and design, and consideration of siting will involve its impact on the ecological value of the site, the wider landscape and its proximity to buildings and housing and the availability of alternative infrastructure in the area. The criteria in the policy will be applied in these cases and for those more significant radio and telecommunications infrastructure that do not constitute permitted development.

20.10 Maximising the use of existing infrastructure and facilities will be prioritised. It is essential that the proliferation of new telecommunications structures is controlled, their visual impact appropriately mitigated, and opportunities for the rationalisation or screening of equipment already installed on existing masts, buildings and associated street cabinets provided.

20.11 Planning applications must be accompanied by detailed supplementary information which provides the technical justification for the proposed development, details of any consultation undertaken, the proposed structure and measures to minimise its visual impact.

20.12 The provision of gigabit-capable connectivity to new build developments is a crucial element of meeting the Government's ambitious broadband targets. These are fibre-based networks and certain advanced wireless networks capable of delivering reliable high speeds. The Government has therefore secured commitments from network operators, outlining their commitment to work with housing developers on providing gigabit-capable connections to all new build developments across the UK. These commitments alongside the amendments to the Building Regulations 2010 to require all new build developments to have gigabit broadband will ensure that 99% of all new homes will be able to be built with gigabit-capable broadband.

20.13 It is important that new developments must be 'future-proofed' with appropriate digital infrastructure that will meet existing and future communication needs. New sites (residential and non-residential) should be provided with in-built broadband infrastructure to enable the delivery of high-speed broadband services. It is essential that the Council works with developers to make sure that the appropriate digital infrastructure is incorporated, including 5G networks (or future technologies as they become available).

[184] This can be found at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/596/schedule/2/part/16/made

Policy IN2 – Planning Obligations

Where developments would increase the need or demand for infrastructure, services and facilities, beyond the capacity of existing provision, new provision and/or contributions towards enhancing existing provision will be required.

Planning obligations will also be sought to secure the ongoing maintenance and management of provision where necessary.

Where a site is in multiple ownership it will be ensured that all developers make a proportionate contribution to any planning obligations required, to enable the delivery of the whole site, as well as those obligations specific to their individual development parcel.

In some circumstances, it may be more appropriate for planning obligations to go towards new or enhanced provision off-site. For large-scale development or strategic sites subject to phasing it may also be appropriate to pool S106 monies raised from planning obligations, to contribute towards a piece of infrastructure or project that will support delivery of the whole site and its comprehensive development. The Council will work with developers to facilitate the delivery of provision as appropriate.

Developers are encouraged to enter into early discussions with the Council to discuss planning obligations and requirements.

Further information and detailed guidance in respect of planning obligations and policy requirements can be found in individual policies throughout the Plan.

Viability

In some cases, a site-specific viability assessment may be submitted where the need for such is evidenced by a change in circumstance which could not have been evident in the whole plan Viability Assessment, in line with NPPF and PPG.

Where the site-specific viability assessment provides evidence to demonstrate that it is not financially viable to provide the level of planning obligations proposed, reduced planning obligations will only be permitted where:

1. **the value of the planning obligations has been maximised having regard to likely viability;**

2. **a clawback mechanism has been incorporated into the legal agreement where appropriate, to ensure that additional mitigation is provided if final development viability is better than anticipated in the initial viability assessment; and**

3. **the benefits of the development outweigh the lack of full mitigation for its impacts, having regard to other material considerations.**

The viability assessment of any such application will be independently verified by the Council, at the expense of the applicant.

Reasoned Justification

20.14 New development should make a positive contribution to local communities and should not place unnecessary pressure on existing services, facilities, infrastructure and open spaces. As such, new development will be expected to contribute to new, and/or enhance existing, provision of services and facilities to ensure sustainable development.

20.15 Further information and detailed guidance in respect of planning obligations and policy requirements can be found in individual policies throughout the Plan.

20.16 In some cases, such as in terms of delivering affordable housing, it may be more appropriate to secure provision through planning conditions rather than planning obligations. This is set out in the relevant policy where appropriate.

Viability

20.17 A whole plan Viability Assessment has been carried out as part preparing the Publication Plan. The assessment has tested local plan policy requirements alongside anticipated development costs, to ensure that the local and national planning policy requirements are realistic, both individually and cumulatively, and accordingly do not undermine the delivery of the Local Plan.

20.18 It will be the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate whether circumstances justify the need for a site-specific viability assessment at the application stage.

20.19 Any such site-specific viability assessment should be proportionate, comply with national planning policy and guidance and should refer to the methodology and approach set out within the whole plan Viability Assessment. All assessments should be made publicly available as part of the planning application process, ensuring transparency in line with national planning policy.

20.20 The price paid for land is not a relevant justification for failing to accord with relevant policy requirements in the Local Plan. Landowners and site purchasers should consider this when agreeing land transactions.

20.21 The weight to be given to any such site-specific viability assessment is a matter for the Council as the decision maker on a case-by-case basis, having regard to all the circumstances in the case, including whether the plan and the underpinning evidence remains up to date and if there has been a change in circumstances since the adoption of the plan.

20.22 Following the outcomes of the individual site-specific viability assessment, if the Council is satisfied that there are overriding viability issues which prevent full compliance with policy requirements, it may be necessary to forgo a particular policy requirement to deliver another. Decisions in this respect will be made based on the evidence of local needs and priorities set out within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

20.23 Where development is permitted which does not fully comply with policy requirements on the grounds of viability a clawback mechanism will be incorporated into the legal agreement to enable the review of viability over the course of development, or after planning permission is granted, and to ensure that additional mitigation is secured where viability has been improved. This will ensure the fullest possible compliance with the Local Plan is secured.

Policy IN3 - Delivering Social Value and Inclusion

All development shall be located, designed, constructed and operated in such a way as to maximise its social value.

All planning applications for major developments shall be supported by a Social Value Strategy.

A condition will be included on all relevant planning permissions to ensure the preparation and implementation of a Social Value Strategy, to be approved by the Council. This will include a requirement for compliance with the relevant parts of the strategy to be confirmed prior to the commencement and occupation of the development as appropriate.

The Social Value Strategy shall identify how the development will support and deliver social value and inclusion throughout its lifetime. Where relevant this shall include consideration of how the proposed development will:

1. **Help to reduce inequalities in Oldham and their adverse impacts on residents**
2. **Support local residents and vulnerable groups to participate in society**
3. **Create inclusive places through its design in accordance with Policy D1**
4. **Promote opportunities for good mental and physical health and wellbeing**
5. **Promote economic inclusion, through (but not exclusively) the following:**

    a) **Ensuring that access arrangements cater for all needs, including maximising opportunities for walking, wheeling and cycling;**

    b) **Promoting on-site employment opportunities to Oldham residents;**

    c) **Providing training opportunities for Oldham residents;**

    d) **Utilising local supply chains; and**

    e) **Signing up to Greater Manchester's Good Employment Charter**

Further guidance on delivering social value may be developed through a supplementary planning document (SPD).

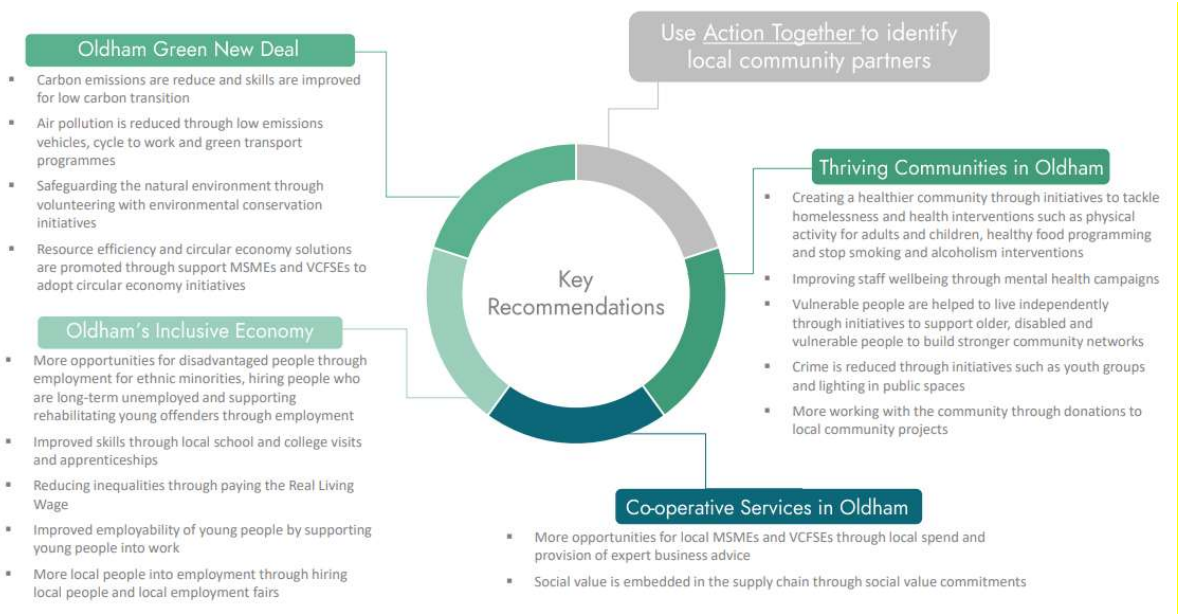
Reasoned Justification

20.24 The Oldham Partnership's ambitions for Oldham are set out within the Oldham Plan 2024-30. The Plan identify three priorities – A Great Place to Live, Healthier Happier Lives, and Green and Growing. These reflect the Partnership's shared ambitions for Oldham, which are for vibrant, safe neighbourhoods where people are proud to live;

opportunities for healthier, more fulfilled lives; and a sustainable, thriving economy. At the heart of this is the creation of a borough where residents feel a deep sense of belonging and ownership, where they can celebrate the unique identity and heritage of Oldham. Ensuring new major development coming forward has regard to social value through the completion and implementation of their Social Value Strategy is a key part of how, through planning, we can help to support and deliver these ambitions and priorities.

20.25 A Local Needs Analysis[185] was carried out by the Social Value Portal on behalf of the Council in 2022 with the aim to provide guidance for stakeholder, suppliers, developers, contractors and others working in Oldham to develop robust social value strategies and inform procurement. The recommendations coming out of the 2022 local needs analysis as shown below at Figure IN1 illustrate the importance of social value and the role that planning can play in achieving it.

Figure IN1: Recommendations from the Local Needs Analysis



20.26 A key aspect of delivering social value through planning is economic inclusion and ensuring that residents share in the benefits of future development and economic growth. In Oldham, unemployment currently stands at 7.0% (June 2025). This is the highest claimant rate in GM and higher than that for England (4.3%). In 2024 the average household income in Oldham was £30,414, as opposed to England's average of £37,861, and in 2022/23 42.2% of children lived in relative low-income families, which is more than double the national figure of 19.8%. Furthermore, 22.7% of areas (7 wards) in Oldham are among the 10% most deprived areas in England (2019). This above average unemployment rate, low incomes and high levels of deprivation across parts of the borough highlight the importance of taking every opportunity to improve economic inclusion for the borough's residents, including the promotion of social value. Through for example helping Oldham residents into employment and/or training, new development can help to tackle deprivation by raising people out of poverty and reducing inequalities, whilst benefiting directly in terms of improved access to a larger, healthier and more highly skilled labour supply.

[185] This document can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200195/business/1901/procurement

20.27 As a Co-operative borough we also want to build a fair and prosperous local economy where everyone does their bit and everybody benefits. We believe that fair employment is central to our ambitions for Oldham and will help to create thriving business with proud and committed staff. As part of demonstrating economic inclusion in the Social Value Strategy applicants are also encouraged to be part of and sign up to Greater Manchester's Good Employment Charter[186], a voluntary membership and assessment scheme that aims to raise employment standards across GM, for all organisations of any size, sector or geography.

20.28 Further guidance on what to include within a social value strategy and the type of measures that could be used to assist developers in identifying how development can maximise its social value may be published to support Policy IN3.

Monitoring

20.29 The main Local Plan indicators that will be used to monitor this chapter are:

- Infrastructure Funding Statement: Total amount of money received secured through s106; Total amount of s106 receipts collected before the reported year but which have not been allocated; and Total amount of s106 expenditure for the reported year (including transferring it to another person to spend)

20.30 The main PfE indicators that will be used to help monitor this chapter are:

- Links provided to each Districts Infrastructure Funding Statement / Annual section 106 monitoring report
- Number of premises with full fibre connectivity

[186] More information on this can be found at: https://www.gmgoodemploymentcharter.co.uk/

21 Monitoring

21.1 This chapter sets out a framework for the monitoring of policies contained within the Local Plan.

Policy M1 – Monitoring Framework

This monitoring framework will enable the Council to assess the implementation and effectiveness of the policies contained within the Local Plan. Monitoring of the plan is essential to ensure that it delivers its vision and objectives, and to identify where policy intervention or review may be required.

An Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) will be published annually. The AMR will:

1. **report on progress made against the Local Development Scheme (LDS);**
2. **assess housing delivery including net additional dwellings and affordable housing;**
3. **monitor the implementation of Local Plan policies;**
4. **provide updates on neighbourhood planning activity across the borough;**
5. **report on planning obligations (Section 106) receipts and expenditure; and**
6. **detail actions under the Duty to Co-operate.**

Each policy in the Local Plan will be monitored using specific indicators as set out in the policy's linkages box found at the end of each chapter and listed in Table M1 below.

Where monitoring identifies underperformance or unintended outcomes:

a) **Further guidance on the relevant policy matter may be produced.**
b) **Policy revisions and an early review of the Local Plan may be triggered.**
c) **Engagement with stakeholders may be undertaken to address delivery barriers.**

Further guidance on the relevant policy matter may be produced through the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents.

Reasoned Justification

21.2 National planning guidance states that 'Local planning authorities must publish information at least annually that shows progress with local plan preparation, reports any activity relating to the duty to cooperate, any information collected which relates to

indicators in the plan, and any policies which are not being implemented'. A key component of the monitoring framework will therefore be the annual preparation and publication of the authorities Monitoring Report.

21.3 Aswell as reporting on the progress against the Council's LDS, assessing housing delivery, updating on preparation of neighbourhood plans across the borough and providing information on planning obligation secured, this framework will monitor the implementation of Local Plan policies. At the end of each chapter the Council has identified local indicators that will be monitored to ensure effective implementation of the plan. These indicators will be monitored to identify when a future review may be required and are set out in Table M1 below.

21.4 As part of the Integrated Assessment (IA) of the Local Plan several proposed IA Objectives have been identified along with corresponding indicators. More information on the methodology used to identify these can be found in the Integrated Assessment of the Local Plan Review: Scoping Report Update 3. These are also identified in Table M1 below.

Table M1: Local Plan Monitoring Indicators

Indicator	Source	IA Objective
Single data list 160-00 Proportion of local sites where positive conservation management is being or has been implemented	Oldham Council	IA1
Change in areas of biodiversity designations (i.e. SBI updates)	Natural England and GMEU	IA1
Percentage of sites designated for nature in active management for nature conservation	Oldham Council / GMCA	IA1
Percentage of tree canopy cover	Oldham Council / GMCA	IA1, IA9, IA13
Number of planning applications that result in the gain or loss of identified on-site open space	Oldham Council	IA2, IA8
Number of S106 Planning Obligations for new or enhanced open space provision	Oldham Council	IA2, IA7, IA8
Number of major developments refused on landscape grounds	Oldham Council	IA3
Number of heritage assets on the National Heritage List for England	Historic England	IA4
Number of listed buildings and number of buildings in conservation areas lost through new development proposals	Oldham Council	IA4
Number and type of developments permitted on non-designated Mills	Oldham Council	IA4

Indicator	Source	IA Objective
Number of approved applications for strategic developments with a masterplan or framework and design code	Oldham Council	IA5
Number and type of developments permitted in the Green Belt	Oldham Council	IA6, IA11
Number and type of developments permitted in Local Green Spaces	Oldham Council	IA3, IA6
Infrastructure Funding Statement: Total amount of money received secured through s106; Total amount of s106 receipts collected before the reported year but which have not been allocated; and Total amount of s106 expenditure for the reported year (including transferring it to another person to spend)	Oldham Council	IA7
Life Expectancy	Oldham JSNA	IA8
Proportion of physically active adults	Oldham JSNA	IA8
Childhood obesity rates	Oldham JSNA	IA8
The number of new hot food takeaways approved within 400 metres of a primary or secondary school, or places where children and young people congregate	Oldham Council	IA8, IA15
Number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on water quality grounds	Oldham Council	IA10
Number of new developments agreed with the Council incorporating Natural Flood Management (NFM)	Oldham Council	IA1, IA7, IA9, IA10, IA13
Number of planning applications with conditions attached relating to contaminated land	Oldham Council	IA11
Percentage of households living in fuel poverty	Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy	IA12
Number of days in Greater Manchester where air pollution was moderate or higher	Oldham Council	IA14, IA15
Annual mean nitrogen dioxide	Oldham Council	IA14, IA15
Per capita emission estimates, industry, domestic and transport sectors	Department of Energy Security & Net Zero	IA14, IA15, IA16, IA17

Indicator	Source	IA Objective
Number of pedestrian or cycling casualties per year	Reported Road Casualties, Great Britain	IA15
Number of travel plans secured as a condition of planning permission	Oldham Council	IA16
Total amount of additional floorspace (office, industry and warehousing) by type square metres (sqm) gross	Oldham Council	IA18, IA19
Total amount of employment floorspace (office, industry and warehousing) developed on previously developed land by type (sqm gross)	Oldham Council	IA6, IA18, IA19
Employment land available by type (ha)	Oldham Council	IA18, IA19
Total amount of employment land (office, industry and warehousing) developed by type hectares (ha) gross	Oldham Council	IA18, IA19
Number of planning applications granted in Oldham Town Centre and the borough's other centres, for main town centre uses	Oldham Council	IA20
Number of homes completed within the borough's centres	Oldham Council	IA20
Number of day visits and staying visits to Oldham borough	Marketing Manchester	IA21
The percentage of areas in Oldham among the 10% most deprived areas in England	IMD	IA8, IA18, IA19
Unemployment rate	Oldham Council	IA18, IA19
Youth unemployment rate	Oldham Council	IA18, IA19
State funded primary and secondary school capacity and forecasts	Department for Education	IA7, IA22
Number of planning applications approved for education related facilities	Oldham Council	IA7, IA22
Plan period and housing targets; Net additional dwellings - in previous years; Net additional dwellings - for the reporting year; Net additional dwellings - in future years; and Managed delivery target	Oldham Council	IA23
New and converted dwellings – on previously developed land	Oldham Council	IA6, IA11, IA23

Indicator	Source	IA Objective
Number of planning applications approved achieving the minimum density requirements as appropriate	Oldham Council	IA6, IA23
Total housing completions by size and type on major sites	Oldham Council	IA23, IA25
Number of completions for new-building affordable housing by tenure, type and size	Oldham Council	IA23, IA25
Total number of planning applications approved for specialist housing provision	Oldham Council	IA23
Number of planning applications approved for Homes in Multiple Occupation	Oldham Council	IA23
Number of vacant properties	Oldham Council	IA6
Net additional pitches (Gypsy and Traveller)	Oldham Council	IA23, IA25
Number / percentage of new homes approved that achieve Greater Manchester Accessibility Level (GMAL) 4 or above	Oldham Council	IA17

21.5 In addition to the above Local Plan indicators a number of indicators are also monitored by GMCA to monitor Places for Everyone, The Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan Document and the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan Document. These indicators are also useful for monitoring the Local Plan. For completeness, those indicators are listed in Appendix 13.

22 Glossary

Accessible, Accessibility – The terms 'accessible' and 'accessibility', as used in this document in relation to transport and other services, refer to the proximity of services and to the ability of all sectors of the community to use those services.

Affordable Housing - National Planning Policy Annex 2 defines affordable housing as housing that meets one of the following definitions:

a. Social Rent - the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent; the landlord is a registered provider; and it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision

b. Other affordable housing for rent – including Affordable Rent; Build-to-Rent or Affordable Private Rent. Rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy or is at least 20% below local market rent;

c. Discounted Market Sales Housing – housing sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value; and

d. Other affordable routes to home ownership – including shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low-cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent).

Air Quality Management Areas – An area which has failed to meet national air quality guidelines.

Amenity - Desirable features of a place that ought to be protected in the public interest.

Ancient Woodland - An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

Biodiversity – Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth, including us. It is the animals, plants and all the other lifeforms which interact and depend on each other to survive in every corner of the globe – from the driest deserts to the deepest oceans.

Biodiversity Net Gain – An approach to new development that aims to leave nature in a measurably better state than it was found.

Care Leaver - Defined by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 as someone aged 16 or 17 who has been looked after by a local authority for a prescribed period, or periods amounting in all to a prescribed period, which began after they reached a prescribed age and ended after he reached the age of 16.

Climate Change - Climate change is caused by accumulating greenhouse gases in our atmosphere, resulting in large-scale, long-term shifts in our planet's weather patterns and an increase in the average temperature often referred to as 'global warming'.

Community facilities – includes uses such public halls, (including community and youth centres), Post Offices, non-residential education and training facilities, children's nurseries and creches, childcare centres, doctors surgeries, dentists, health centres and clinics, chemists and hospitals, residential care homes and nursing homes, village shops, village

pubs, places of worship and church halls, museums, libraries and art galleries and performance space

Community Right to Build Order - An Order made by the local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that grants planning permission for a site-specific development proposal or classes of development.

Comparison Retailing - The provision of items not purchased on a frequent basis, such as clothing, footwear and household goods.

Conservation Areas - Areas designated by the local planning authority which are considered of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Contaminated Land - Defined in The Environment Protection Act Part IIA, Section 78A(2) as 'any land which appears to the local authority in whose area it is situated to be in such a condition, by reason of substances in, on or under the land, that: significant harm is being caused or there is a significant possibility of such harm being caused, or; pollution of controlled waters is being, or is likely to be, caused.'

Convenience Retailing - The provision of everyday essential items, such as food, drinks and newspapers.

Deliverable – National planning policy says to be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. In particular:

a) sites which do not involve major development and have planning permission, and all sites with detailed planning permission, should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that homes will not be delivered within five years (for example because they are no longer viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans).

b) where a site has outline planning permission for major development, has been allocated in a development plan, has a grant of permission in principle, or is identified on a brownfield register, it should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years.

Derelict Land - Land damaged by industrial or other development that cannot be put to beneficial use without prior treatment.

Design concepts and terms –

- Character - relates to the distinct and recognisable features and qualities of an area, neighbourhood, or place. It includes the architectural style, historic significance, and visual and functional attributes that make a place unique.
- Form - relates to the shape, size, and overall design of buildings and developments. It encompasses the architectural style, massing, and overall aesthetic qualities of structures.
- Inclusive design - aims to create environments that are welcoming, accessible, and usable by everyone, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. It's a crucial aspect of creating an equitable and socially inclusive built environment, and it helps ensure that public spaces and facilities are designed to be enjoyed and utilized by a diverse range of people.

- Layout - the way in which buildings, open spaces, roads, and other elements are arranged within a development or site. It includes the organization and distribution of various components in a coordinated and efficient manner.
- Ongoing maintenance - the regular care, repair, and management required to keep buildings, infrastructure, and public spaces in good working order. It ensures that the built environment remains safe, attractive, and functional over time.
- Orientation - the positioning of buildings or structures in relation to the sun, wind, and surrounding context. It involves the direction in which a building faces and how it interacts with its environment.
- Outside space - areas of land that are not enclosed within a building but are instead open to the external environment. Outside space can include a variety of open areas, such as gardens, courtyards, public parks, plazas, playgrounds, and other outdoor spaces. These spaces play a significant role in urban and rural planning and development, as they contribute to the quality of life, environmental sustainability, and overall well-being of communities.
- Quality - in the context of planning, refers to the standard of design, construction, and materials used in a development. It assesses the overall excellence of the design and how well the development meets established design and sustainability criteria.
- Usability - the degree to which a building, infrastructure, or space can be easily and efficiently used for its intended purposes. It assesses how well a development or facility meets the needs of its users.

Design Code - A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.

Designated heritage asset - A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

Employment Land - Land allocated in Development Plans for business, industrial and storage/distribution uses.

Flood Risk Assessment - An assessment of the risk of flooding from all flooding mechanisms, the identification of flood mitigation measures and should provide advice on actions to be taken before and during a flood.

Geodiversity - The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.

Green Belt - Areas of land where development is particularly tightly controlled. The purposes of Green Belt are to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; to prevent neighbouring towns from merging; to safeguard the countryside from encroachment; to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and to aid urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Greenfield Land - Land which has not been previously developed. It can include land which used to have built development on it but where little development remains; land where the development on it is limited by a planning condition which requires the land to be restored to its original pre-development condition when it's useful life ends (i.e. a quarry); and land where development has been used for forestry or agriculture and that development is no longer needed for that purpose.

Green Infrastructure – A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other

natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.

Heritage asset - A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Historic Environment - All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) - A ward-level index made up from six indicators (income; employment; health deprivation and disability; education; skills and training; housing; and geographical access to services). IMD can help to identify areas for regeneration.

Infrastructure - Services necessary to serve development, such as roads and footpaths, electricity, water, sewerage.

Irreplaceable habitat - Habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen.

Landscape Character Assessments - Landscape character assessment (LCA) is the process of identifying and describing variation in character of the landscape. LCA documents identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive by mapping and describing character types and areas. They also show how the landscape is perceived, experienced and valued by people.

Local Green Space - Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities.

Local Housing Need - The number of homes identified as being needed for a local authority determined by national planning policy and guidance.

Local Nature Reserves - Nature reserves are managed areas of land that protect wildlife, habitats and natural features. They support scientific research and can provide educational and recreational opportunities.

Main town centre uses - defined in national planning policy as retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

Major Development - For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m2 or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Nature Conservation - The practice of protecting Earth's natural resources such as air, water, soil, plants, and wildlife—and managing ecosystems to ensure their health, diversity, and survival for current and future generations, preventing depletion and habitat loss through responsible management and restoration.

Nature Recovery Network - A growing national network of wildlife-rich places, stretching from our cities to countryside, mountains to coast. It is supported by green and blue spaces that buffer and connect these wildlife-rich sites.

Open Space – All open space of public value which can offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity. There are several typologies of open space, including: allotments and community gardens, amenity greenspace, cemeteries and churchyards, civic spaces, green corridors, natural and semi-natural greenspace, outdoor sports facilities, parks and gardens and provision for children and young people. Outdoor sports facilities can include or constitute playing fields/ pitches, as well as other types of outdoor pitches.

Original building – defined in national planning policy defines as “A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was originally built.”

Peak District National Park – As a designation was founded in 1951. The Peak District National Park Authority oversees the planning function of the Park. The statutory purposes of the Authority (as defined by the Environment Act 1995) are:

- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park;
- to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park by the public.

Planning Obligation – An agreement made between the council and another party that concerns a particular aspect of, or is associated with, a development. It is usually made in connection with the granting of planning permission through Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Playing Field - The whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Policies Map – A map with an Ordnance Survey base that illustrates the policies and proposals of a Development Plan Document.

Previously Developed Land (often referred to as brownfield land) - Land which has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure and any fixed surface infrastructure associated with it, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed). It also includes land comprising large areas of fixed surface infrastructure such as large areas of hardstanding which have been lawfully developed. Previously developed land excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.

Housing provision that is suitable for older people - set out in Planning Practice Guidance and includes Age-restricted general market housing, Extra Care Housing, Sheltered Housing/ Assisted Living and Nursing and Care Homes.

Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites (RIGS) - non-statutory sites selected to protect the most important places for geology, geomorphology and soils, complementing the network of legally protected Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). RIGS are selected for their scientific, educational, historical and aesthetic features.

Renewable and low-carbon energy - Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

Self-build and Custom-build Housing - Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purpose of applying the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), is contained in section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act.

Significance (for heritage policy) - the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Sites of Biological Importance (SBI's) – Areas designated by local authorities due to significant local wildlife, habitats and species.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) – Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Special Areas of Conservation - Is the land designated under Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora.

Special Protection Areas - A Special Protection Area (SPA) is the land classified under Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds.

Strategic environmental assessment - A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) - An assessment of land availability which identifies a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for housing development uses over the plan period. The assessment is an important source of evidence to inform plan-making and decision-taking, and the identification of a 5-year supply of housing land. These assessments are required by national planning policy.

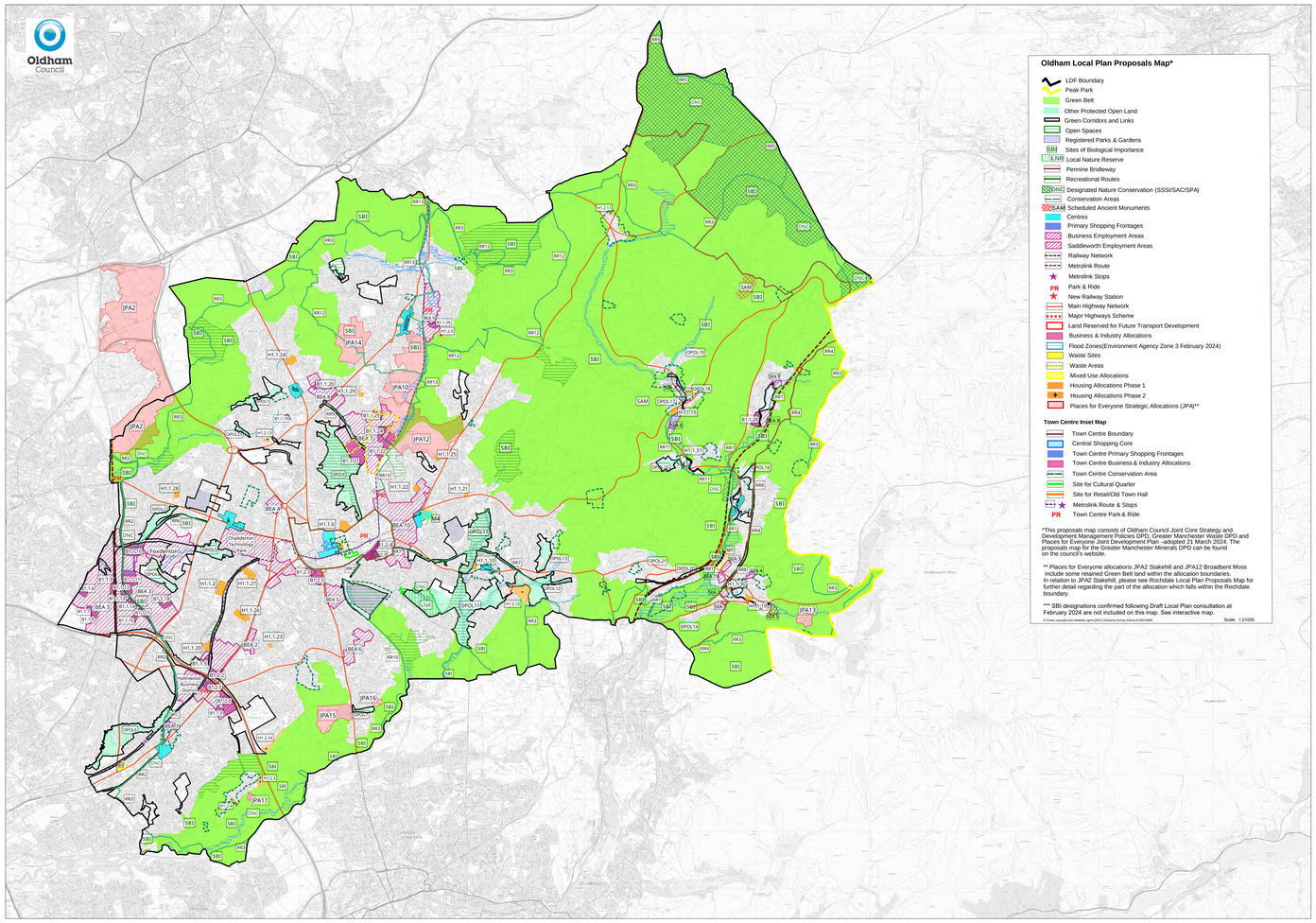
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – Documents which add further detail to the policies in the development plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

Sui generis - Describes land or building uses that don't fit into standard use classes, requiring specific planning permission for changes because they have unique impacts.

Sustainable development – Defined by the Bruntland Commission (1987) as “Development which meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to achieve their own needs and aspirations".

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) - A sustainable drainage system controls surface water run off close to where it falls, combining a mixture of built and nature-based techniques to mimic natural drainage as closely as possible, and accounting for the predicted impacts of climate change. The type of system that would be appropriate will vary from small scale interventions such as permeable paving and soakaways that can be used in very small developments to larger integrated schemes in major developments.

Travel Plan - A Travel Plan is a document that lays out the strategy for managing travel to and from a site and improving accessibility, particularly by sustainable modes, to reduce the impact of a site on the surrounding road network and to manage the use of local car parking capacity.


Oldham Council
Oldham Local Plan Proposals Map*
LDF Boundary
Peak Park
Green Belt
Other Protected Open Land
Green Corridors and Links
Open Spaces
Registered Parks & Gardens
SBI Sites of Biological Importance
LNR Local Nature Reserve
Pennine Bridleway
Recreational Routes
DNC Designated Nature Conservation (SSSI/SAC/SPA)
Conservation Areas
SAM Scheduled Ancient Monuments
Centres
Primary Shopping Frontages
Business Employment Areas
Saddleworth Employment Areas
Railway Network
Metrolink Route
Metrolink Stops
PR Park & Ride
New Railway Station
Main Highway Network
Major Highways Scheme
Land Reserved for Future Transport Development
Business & Industry Allocations
Flood Zones(Environment Agency Zone 3 February 2024)
Waste Sites
Waste Areas
Mixed Use Allocations
Housing Allocations Phase 1
Housing Allocations Phase 2
Places for Everyone Strategic Allocations (JPA)**
Town Centre Inset Map
Town Centre Boundary
Central Shopping Core
Town Centre Primary Shopping Frontages
Town Centre Business & Industry Allocations
Town Centre Conservation Area
Site for Cultural Quarter
Site for Retail/Old Town Hall
Metrolink Route & Stops
PR Town Centre Park & Ride
*This proposals map consists of Oldham Council Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD, Greater Manchester Waste DPD and Greater Manchester Joint Development Plan –adopted 21 March 2024. The proposals map for the Greater Manchester Minerals DPD can be found on the council's website.
** Places for Everyone allocations JPA2 Stakehill and JPA12 Broadbent Moss include some retained Green Belt land within the allocation boundaries. In relation to JPA2 Stakehill, please see Rochdale Local Plan Proposals Map for further detail regarding the part of the allocation which falls within the Rochdale boundary.
*** SBI designations confirmed following Draft Local Plan consultation at February 2024 are not included on this map. See interactive map.
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Scale: 1:21000

Uppermill Trail 10p

Uppermill – the largest village and administrative centre of Saddleworth, the site of the manorial corn mill here originally gave the village its name. Woollen and then cotton mills followed with the arrival of the canal and turnpike roads in the 19th century.

1. **Saddleworth Linear** – is formed along the route of the former railway named the 'Loop Line' which ran from Stalybridge to Diggle and was mainly used for goods trains. Opening in 1885 the line closed on 3 October 1966 and is now part of the Pennine Bridleway National Trail.

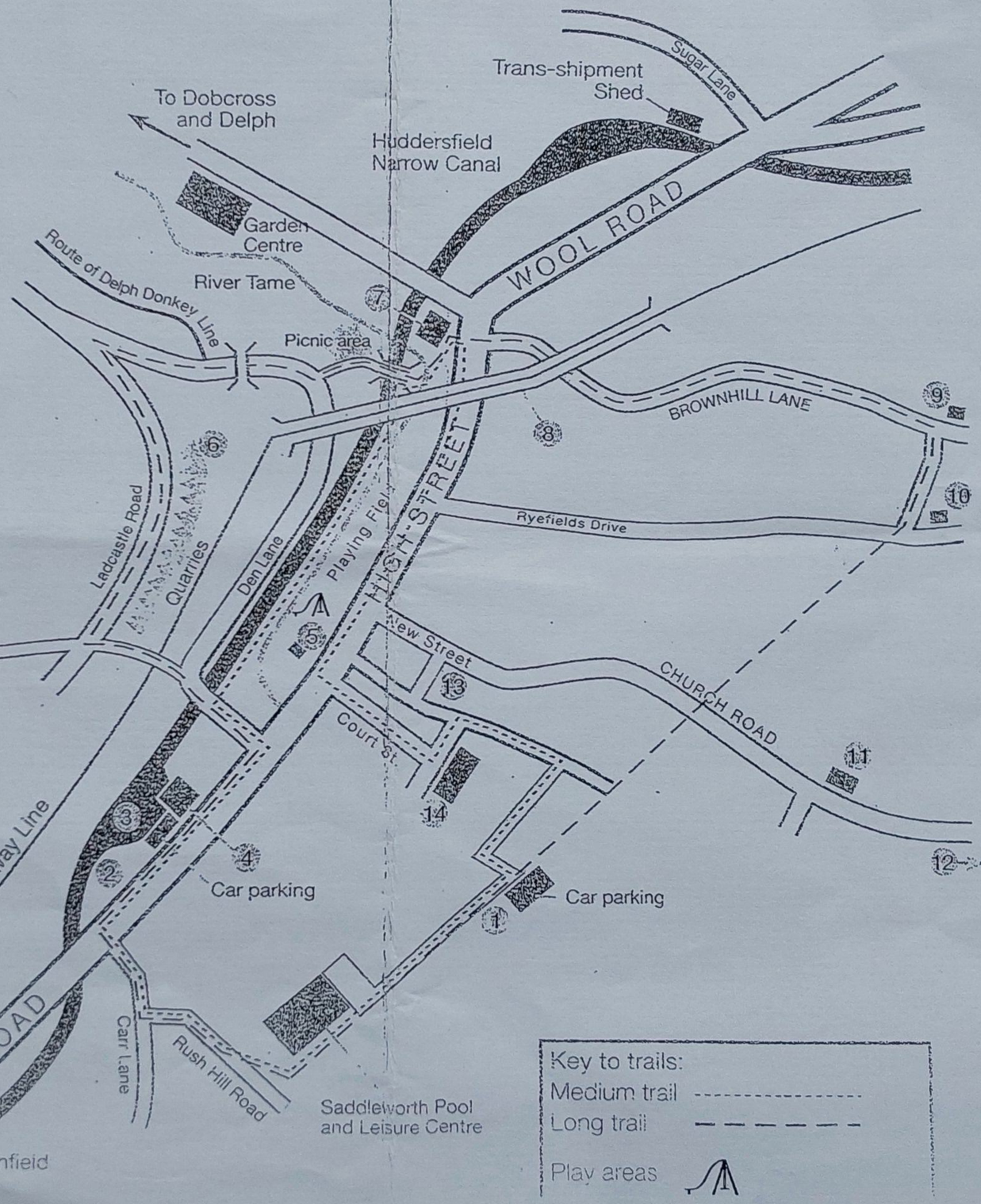
2. **Ammon Wrigley Statue** – commemorates the life of this local poet, writer, artist and historian who recorded all aspects of life in the area. He always worked in local mills and though he achieved fame in his lifetime shunned it, always preferring a quiet moorland life and the odd pint.

3. **Huddersfield Narrow Canal** – Started in 1794 it took 17 years to build due to difficulty in constructing the 3¼ mile long Standedge Tunnel. The canal was abandoned in 1944. The restoration of the canal started in the 1970s and it eventually re-opened for navigation in 2001. There had been a proposal in Uppermill in the 1960s to culvert the canal and turn it into a bypass.

4. **Saddleworth Museum and Art Gallery** – houses both visiting and permanent exhibitions, including fascinating displays of the history, landscape and inhabitants of Saddleworth. The Art Gallery showcases the best local and regional contemporary art.

5. **St Chad's House and Gardens** – which now serves as Uppermill Library and the park, were originally owned by the Shaw family occupying the site from the early 18th century. The farm was rebuilt in 1798 and in the 1840s the front rebuilt by George Shaw who was a local architect who incorporated various follies. The site was renamed St Chad's a name it still retains.

6. **Ladcastle Quarries** – dominate the west side of the village and now appear as a natural feature, tons of stone were excavated for local buildings and roads from the turn of the 19th century until closing in the 1930s. Ladcastle Road, which runs alongside the quarry, offers amazing views of Uppermill and the surrounding countryside.



7. **Brownhill Countryside Centre** – Bu 1916 as stables and a transport dep Saddleworth Urban District Council. O on 5 July 1982 as a Visitor Centre pr information, advice and changing exhil There is also a shop, toilets, picnic ar award winning nature garden (access all abilities) with a small woodland, m and pond with dipping platform.

8. **Saddleworth Viaduct** – bridges the as part of the Huddersfield and Manc Railway which opened in 1849. Ther 23 arches, one of which is a 'skew' a built at an angle as it crosses the Hudd Narrow Canal.

9. **Butterhouse** – An example of a wea cottage. As broadcloth weaving exp in the late 18th century, the house h additional storey added to accommc more looms.

10. **Ryefields House** – built in 1825 by Bradbury, this was a woollen merch house. It formerly had a work room top floor, the front was rebuilt in the and Ryefields Drive added in early 1

11. **St. Chad's Old School** – located on Road was built in 1862 but had a sh Its position was found to be unsuitat a new school built on Lee Street. Th building survives as private residenc

12. **Saddleworth Church** – reached by cli Church Road, has stood on this site 1215 but has undergone various rebu works, the last in major one in 1833. the stone posts of the village stocks Church yard.

13. **Willowbank** – now flats converted i from Dam Head Mill built in the 1850s site of an earlier mill of 1780. The mil is supplied with water from springs a away as Diggle.

14. **Saddleworth Civic Hall** – serves as offices of the Saddleworth Parish C and a venue for local events. It was o opened as the Uppermill Mechanics I in 1861 serving to help the educatio social needs of local people.

paying "brass," with no hurry but "a strid to-day un another to morn." I know how pleasant it is to come down that old track from Wharmton at sunset. To drop down past those motherly old houses at Moorgate into the village street. To sit and talk in the twilight with a friend over a tankard in an old inn kitchen. No one knows what immortality is, no one knows that it even exists, but if it does, I would spend mine going down the old roads into Uppermill for ever, meeting the same old cronies, in the same quiet homely rooms for ever. I would quote eternally Le Gallienne's lines :—

"From tavern to tavern, youth passes along,
With an armful of friends and a heartful of song."

I have substituted "friends" for "girls," because the girls of Uppermill do not go into taverns, but the friends I am thinking of do and they stay as long as the law allows them.



SHAW.

If you could go back down the o
to the time when the first green
tion in Saddleworth began to gro
homesteads, I make sure that
Shaws all down the way. You
first of all clearing away peat, b
stone and making hedges roun
Coming nearer our own day, you
in all places doing all manner of w
would find weaving good broad
handlooms. A fair number you wo
eggs under broody hens, cleaning o
shippons, and weighing 20 score pig
Other Shaws you would meet with
names upon wills, upon Church ro
articles of agreement relating to tra
cock-fighting. Some very grave di
you would find sitting austerely in
pews, but wherever you found th
acting in an official capacity or otherwi
note that they were doing their day's w
and well. Having taken a fairly co
view of the Shaws, you would come
evitable conclusion, that they were an
decent old breed. How old I canno
maybe they were in Saddleworth befo
north-east wind blew over the top o

NETWORK RAIL

CLOSURE OF LEVEL CROSSING
MOORGATE STREET, UPPERMILL, OLDHAM

GG104 SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT

SEPTEMBER 2025



the journey is the reward

Report title:	**Network Rail Closure of Level Crossing Moorgate Street, Uppermill, Oldham GG104 Safety Risk Assessment**
Date:	**September 2025**
Document reference and revision:	**NRMOORGATE.2**
Prepared by:	**Steven Overton – Mayer Brown Ltd**
Approved by:	**Sean Wotherspoon – Mayer Brown Ltd**
On behalf of:	**Network Rail**
Status:	**FINAL**

Mayer Brown Limited, Lion House, Oriental Road, Woking, Surrey GU22 8AR
Telephone 01483 750508 Fax 01483 750437 wokingoffice@mayerbrown.co.uk www.mayerbrown.co.uk

Network Rail

Closure of Level Crossing

Moorgate Street, Uppermill, Oldham

GG104 Safety Risk Assessment

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Appendices

Appendix A: Table D.1 - Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment Matrix

1 Safety Risk Assessment Planning

Background

1.1 Mayer Brown have been appointed by Network Rail to carry out a Safety Risk Assessment (SRA) related to the proposed extinguishment of a Rail Level Crossing (MVL3 13m 26c Moorgate Halt) and Public Footpath No. 209SADD at Uppermill, Oldham and the resultant diversion of pedestrian movements.

1.2 This report should be read in conjunction with Mayer Brown's Highways Statement, dated July 2025, which details the proposed extinguishment and subsequent re-routing of pedestrians and also makes recommendations for potential highway improvements to form the mitigations referred to later in this report.

1.3 The re-routing of pedestrians onto the public highway is classed as a modification to the highway network and thus could be considered to be an Activity that has a "direct" influence on safety risk.

1.4 This SRA is concerned only with the re-routing of pedestrians onto the highway network and the potential effect on road user safety in the vicinity.

1.5 Note that the SRA process as defined in GG104 relates to the National Strategic Road Network and therefore refers to National Highways as the Overseeing Organisation and references the impact on the Motorway and Trunk Road Network. Where those terms are used in the reference material (tables) within this report, the Overseeing Organisation should be interpreted as Oldham Council, and the infrastructure affected should be interpreted as the Adopted Public Highway.

Define the Question

1.6 The question this SRA seeks to answer is whether the Activity of "re-routing pedestrians from the public footpath onto the adopted highway network is detrimental, in road safety terms, to the existing situation".

2 Categorisation of Activity Type

2.1 The categorisation has been assessed in line with Table E/2.7 Categorisation of activity type, as set out in GG 104 as follows:

Feature	**Selection criteria**	
	Type	Indicator
Extent of prior experience of activity. The degree of knowledge available from undertaking the activity previously or the degree to which knowledge is available from the activity being undertaken by other industries or organisations.	A	Activities for which there is significant experience within National Highways. Previous safety studies and data are available, and some activity features are codified in a standard or formal procedure.
	B	Activities for which there is limited experience within National Highways but there is transferable experience and previous safety studies and data are available elsewhere in the UK or internationally. Activities for which there is limited experience in National Highways but there is experience and previous safety studies and data are available elsewhere in the UK or internationally, including in different industries, which is deemed sufficiently similar to the activity in question to be deemed relevant. Activities for which there is experience within National Highways but that experience and previous safety studies and data that are available are in a different application of the activity and some adaptation will be required. There might also be local and site specific issues to take into account that can affect the relevance of the available experience.
	C	Activities for which there is no previous applicable experience from either National Highways or other industries.

Categorisation of Activity: **Type A**

Reason: There is ample knowledge and experience within the industry of this type of Activity.

Statutory and formal processes and procedures (including standards and legislation). Consideration of the applicability of current standards, formal processes or procedures, guidance and legislation.	A	The activity is substantially or entirely within the scope of existing standards, guidance, formal processes or procedures and applicable legislation. The activity requires minimal or no safety related departures from standard or safety related changes to formal processes or procedures (including any legislation). The nature and type of a departure is the most important element in determining the categorisation and so a single safety departure may change this.
	B	The activity is largely within the scope of existing standards, guidance, formal processes or procedures. There can be some safety related departures from standards needed and/or safety related changes to formal processes or procedures. The activity can need minor changes to existing legislation. Whilst the number of safety departures from standards, formal processes or procedures can affect the categorisation, the most important element in determining this is the nature and type of the departures.
	C	Activities that are not within the scope of existing standards, formal processes or procedures and require new ones to be developed. Activities for which significant departures from standards, formal processes or procedures are required. Activities which require significant changes to existing legislation or new legislation to be written. Whilst the number of safety departures from standards, formal processes or procedures can affect the categorisation, the most important element in determining this is the nature and type of the departures. For example, a large number of safety departures that can be addressed straightforwardly will have less impact on feature type than a single safety departure that cannot and requires a detailed risk assessment to support it.

Categorisation of Activity: **Type A**

Reason: There are no departures from standard required relating to the Activity.

Impact on the organisation. The effect that the activity will have on current National Highways processes, procedures, structure, roles and responsibilities, competencies, policies and strategy, in addition to contractual and workforce arrangements.	A	The activity has no impact on National Highways. The activity has a minor impact on any of these for a finite period of time. Length of time National Highways is affected by decision to undertake the activity is short term.
	B	The activity can lead to permanent minor changes to any of these. These minor changes can introduce new roles and responsibilities, policies, contractual and workforce arrangements. The activity can require a change to organisational arrangements. Length of time National Highways is affected by decision to undertake the activity is medium term.
	C	The activity has significant impact on any of these. The activity can change core safety roles and responsibilities. Length of time National Highways is affected by decision to undertake the activity is long term.
Activity scale. Consideration of the size and/or scale of the activity, including geographically and range of possible impacts. Does or can the activity have an impact on the motorway and all-purpose trunk roads, either directly or indirectly.	A	The impact of the activity is limited in nature or scale.
	B	The impact of the activity is significant in nature or scale.
	C	The impact of the activity is wide ranging across the network, and/or significantly impacts infrastructure, interventions or workforce.
Technical. Measure of technical and/or technological novelty and/or innovation the activity involves	A	An activity where any processes, techniques, methodologies and/or technologies involved are currently in widespread use, available for reference, and re-examination is unlikely to be needed.
	B	There can be some experience of the processes, techniques, methodologies and/or technologies, available for reference. The experience can be from use in either another application, or by another road authority, supplier, industry or perhaps from overseas in which case some additional work can be required to adapt them and/or to demonstrate that safety can be assured for the intended application.
	C	Activities that use new processes, techniques, methodologies and/or technologies for which there is no previous experience in the UK or elsewhere.

Categorisation of Activity: **Type A**

The re-routing of pedestrians will have no impact on Local Authority processes, procedures, structure, roles and responsibilities.

Categorisation of Activity: **Type A**

The re-routing of pedestrians is considered a minor, localised alteration that is limited in scale and impact on the highway network.

Categorisation of Activity: **Type A**

The re-routing of pedestrians is covered by relevant design standards.

Stakeholder impact and interest. The quantity and/or impact of stakeholders, and their interest in terms of safety risk and resulting ability to influence or/impact on the activity. The degree to which the safety issues, as perceived, are capable of being understood and fully addressed.	A	Activities for which the quantity and/or impact of stakeholders, and their interest in terms of safety risk and resulting ability to influence or impact the activity is low.
	B	Activities that have only a single or a few stakeholders but their impact, in terms of their attitude towards, or ability to influence, and/or interest in the successful achievement of the activities aim in terms of safety risk can be significant. Alternatively it will represent an activity that has several stakeholders but the amount, or type, of safety issues involved are limited.
	C	Activities for which there are a large number of stakeholders and their impact in terms of their attitude towards, or ability to influence safety can be significant. Stakeholders with a strong interest in the potential safety impact of the activity on themselves. Activities where there are conflicting needs arising from different stakeholders or stakeholder groups.

Categorisation of Activity: **Type A**

Reason: The activity has a low number of stakeholders.

2.2 poverall category type for the activity is determined as set out in Table E/2.8.1 of GG 104, as follows:

Feature classifications	Type	Comments
All type A	A	Where all activity features are categorised as type A then the entire activity is type A.
All type B	B	Where all activity features are categorised as type B then the entire activity is type B.
All type C	C	Where all activity features are categorised as type C then the entire activity is type C.
Three or more features categorised as Type A	A	Where three or more features are categorised as type A but the remaining features are categorised as a combination of type B and C, the activity is categorised as type A but the features categorised as B or C require a greater rigour of analysis, assessment and evaluation.
Three or more features categorised as Type B	B	Where three or more features are categorised as type B but the remaining features are categorised as a combination of type A and C, the activity is categorised as type B but the features categorised as C require a greater rigour of analysis, assessment and evaluation.
Three or more features categorised as Type C	C	Where three or more features are categorised as type C then the entire activity is of type C.
Equal distribution of categories across features (no majority)	A/B/-C	Where the categorisation of activity features results in an equal distribution between two or more category types the decision on the overall activity categorisation is governed by the importance of each feature relative to the activity. If this results in a decision to select the overall activity categorisation as the lower category type, the features that were identified with the higher category type require a greater rigour of analysis, assessment and evaluation, as well as governance.

2.3 With reference to Table E/2.8.1 in GG104, the re-routing of pedestrians (referred to for the purposes of the SRA as the “Activity”) is considered a Category **Type A** activity, as there are no elements of the proposal that fall outside the scope of normal Highway Authority works; does not require special legislation or design standards; has minor impact on the Highway Authority as an organisation; is limited in scale of works; does not require special technologies and there is a very low impact to stakeholders.

3 Identification of Affected Populations

3.1 Populations on the motorway and all-purpose trunk roads shall be classified as shown in Table E/1.4 of GG 104, below:

Population	Classification
People directly employed by National Highways either permanently e.g. traffic officers, or periodically e.g. those undertaking site visits; and people in a contractual relationship with National Highways, including our national vehicle recovery contract operatives, all workers engaged in traffic management activities and incident support services, and any other activities such as persons carrying out survey and inspection work.	Workers
All road users, including but not limited to the emergency services, equestrians, cyclists and pedestrians, as well as those others who are at work but are not in a contractual relationship with National Highways such as privately contracted vehicle recovery and vehicle repair providers.	Users
'Other parties' includes any person or persons who could be affected by the National Highways motorway and all-purpose trunk roads, but who are neither using it, nor working on it e.g. living or working adjacent to the motorway and all-purpose trunk roads, or using other transport networks that intersect with the motorway and all-purpose trunk roads.	Other parties

3.2 Populations that could be affected by the Activity are ‘Users’ of the highway network (i.e. motorised, and non-motorised users).

4 Safety Risk Assessment Scope

4.1 The scope of the Activity is re-routing of pedestrians onto the Adopted Public Highway.

4.2 This assessment is to analyse the risk to the identified populations affected by the scheme proposals.

4.3 Road users (motorised and non-motorised) travelling on the roads onto which pedestrians are being re-routed could be affected by the Activity.

4.4 Other parties are unlikely to be affected.

5 Safety Baseline & Safety Objective

Safety Baseline

5.1 The safety baseline is the current number of collisions recorded in the last five years in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Activity.

5.2 A review of the Transport For Greater Manchester online Interactive Map shows no recorded collisions in the last 5 years along the length of highway onto which pedestrians will be diverted as a result of the proposed Activity.

5.3 There are 2 no. collisions shown on High Street, between Moorgate and Bridge Street (1 serious, 1 slight) but this length of highway is not proposed to be traversed by pedestrians diverted by the activity, as at this point they are proposed to be traversing the off-highway towpath alongside the canal.

Safety Objective

5.4 The safety objective is to understand the risk to road users on the A670 High Street due to the proposed increase in pedestrian movements resulting from closure of the level crossing and public footpath, and to limit new subsequent risks to road users.

5.5 Potential hazards are assessed against GG104 Table E/C.1 (Likelihood x Severity = Risk), with resulting Matrix included in **Appendix A** to this report. A summary of the hazards is set out below.

Hazards relating to the adopted highway:

5.5.1. Narrow footway alongside A670, adjacent the entry to the Public Footpath used by the alternative route.

Hazards off adopted highway but to be considered due to their inclusion on the proposed alternative route:

5.5.2. Condition of the stone steps between Public Footpath and Ladcastle Road.

5.5.3. Condition of surface of Public Footpath on Alternative Route.

6 Conclusions

6.1 From the Risk Assessment Matrix included as Appendix A, the following conclusions can be reached.

6.2 The activity of re-routing additional pedestrians onto the A670 does require additional control measures to mitigate an increased risk level, as a result of the assumed additional pedestrian movements.

6.3 It is assumed that there are currently very few pedestrian movements at the location of the narrow footway on west side of the A670 and that the level of footway occupancy will increase relatively significantly as a result of the closure of the level crossing and public footpath.

6.4 Widening of the narrow A670 footway would reduce the risk level to a value below the existing risk level, however, the assessment confirms that the current risk to pedestrian users walking along the narrow footway and the risk value without any additional mitigations being implemented is no higher than '3' for both likelihood and severity. Table D1 confirms '3' is defined within the probability of 'very unlikely' and 'highly improbable'

6.5 Moving the location of the change in speed limit on the A670 will retain the risk level at existing levels.

6.6 Combining both mitigation measures (widening of footway and moving speed change in speed limit) would result in the greatest reduction in risk.

6.7 It is imperative that improvements to the stone steps and the surface of the public footpath onto which pedestrians are to be diverted are carried out, given the current level of risk calculated for these features.

7 Signatories

7.1 Decision Maker / Assessor:



Steven Overton – Principal Consultant (Design)

26th September 2025

7.2 Checked by:



Sean Wotherspoon - Director

29th September 2025

Appendix A: Table D.1 - Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment Matrix

Table D.1 Risk value, likelihood and severity of outcomes that may be assigned to qualitative data for the purposes of assessment

Likelihood (L) x Severity (S) = Risk value (R)		Severity (S)				
		Minor harm; Minor damage or loss no injury	**Moderate harm; Slight injury or illness, moderate damage or loss**	**Serious harm; Serious injury or ill-ness, substantial damage or loss**	**Major harm; Fatal injury, major damage or loss**	**Extreme harm; Multiple fatalities, extreme loss or damage**
Likelihood (L)	Very unlikely; Highly improbable, not known to occur	1	2	3	4	5
	Unlikely; Less than 1 per 10 years	2	4	6	8	10
	May happen; Once every 5-10 years	3	6	9	12	15
	Likely; Once every 1-4 years	4	8	12	16	20
	Almost certain; Once a year or more	5	10	15	20	25

Risk Value (R)	**Required action**
Low (1-9)	Ensure assumed control measures are maintained and reviewed as necessary.
Medium (10-19)	Additional control measures needed to reduce risk rating to a level which is equivalent to a test of ”reasonably required” for the population concerned.
High (20-25)	Activity not permitted. Hazard to be avoided or risk to be reduced to tolerable.

		Activity / Decision	Closure of level crossing and Public Footpath resulting in re-routing of pedestrian movements onto the Public Highway				**Date:** 26th September 2025								
		Decision Maker / Assessor	Steven Overton, Principal Consultant, Mayer Brown Ltd	Existing Situation			Proposed Situation without Mitigation				Proposed Situation with Mitigation				
Ref:	**Hazard / Risk Description**	**Populations Affected**	**Consequences**	**L**	**S**	**R**	**L**	**S**	**R**	**Response / Control Measure**	**L**	**S**	**R**	**Details of Assumptions**	**Monitoring Requirements**
5.5.1(a)	Narrow footway alongside A670, adjacent the entry to the Public Footpath used by the alternative route.	Road Users (motor vehicles and Pedestrians	Potential point of collision between motor vehicles and pedestrians.	2	3	6	3	3	9	Widening of the A670 footway to a minimum of 1200mm, providing a betterment and adequate width for users to safely navigate the route. Recommendation 2 in the Highways Statement.	1	3	3	The most recent collision data shows no collisions in this location, and it is assumed that there are very few pedestrians using the existing narrow footway given that it only provides access to a small number of residential properties before the footway terminates. The majority of pedestrians heading north-east / south-west on the A670 will use the footway on the east side of the A670, rather than the narrow footway on the west side. We therefore assume that a collision is currently unlikely, less than once per 10 years. We assume that if a pedestrian were to be in collision with a vehicle, then serious harm would be caused. With the additional pedestrians re-routed onto this section of footway we consider that the likelihood of a collision would increase, with the severity remaining the same. Introduction of a wider footway would reduce the likelihood of a collision between pedestrians and motor vehicles below that of the existing situation. The severity of such a collision would remain the same.	The local highway authority should monitor collision data post re-routing of pedestrians to assess whether there is any increase in risk to the safety of road users and / or maintenance personnel.
5.5.1(b)	Narrow footway alongside A670, adjacent the entry to the Public Footpath used by the alternative route (same hazard as above, different response / control measure).	As above	As above	2	3	6	3	3	9	Relocation of the change in speed limit on the A670. Recommendation 5 in the Highways Statement.	3	2	6	Assumptions as 5.5.1(a) above. With the additional pedestrians re-routed onto this section of footway we consider that the likelihood of a collision would increase, with the severity remaining the same. Relocation of the change in speed limit from 30mph to 20mph to a point west of the junction of the public footpath and the A670 may not reduce the likelihood of collision but, should a collision occur, the severity should be reduced due to the reduced speed of the vehicles involved. It is assumed that the type of risk would change, but with no increase in overall risk.	The local highway authority should monitor collision data post re-routing of pedestrians to assess whether there is any increase in risk to the safety of road users and / or maintenance personnel.

5.5.2	Condition of the stone steps between Public Footpath and Ladcastle Road.	Public Footpath Users (non-motorised)	Slip, trip, fall hazard	5	3	15	5	3	15	The steep rough stone steps be replaced with concrete steps and handrails with compliant treads and risers. Recommendation 4 in the Highways Statement.	2	2	4	The current condition of the stone steps is considered impassable by all but the most agile of pedestrians, and not at all by dismounted cyclists carrying their bicycles. Anyone attempting to walk this route is putting themselves at risk of a serious harm. Replacement of the steps with a suitable flight of concrete steps is considered critical to making the public footpath suitable as a recommended diversion route. Suitable steps with a handrail would considerably reduce the likelihood of an incident. The severity of a fall on suitable steps would also reduce, presuming the tread length is extended suitably.	Network Rail to monitor usage of the upgraded steps. This location is off the public highway and not the responsibility of the highway authority.
5.5.3	Condition of surface of Public Footpath on Alternative Route.	Public Footpath Users (non-motorised)	Slip, trip, fall hazard	5	2	10	5	2	10	The quality of the public footpath surface be improved including regrading of the path between the railway underbridge and the stone steps, with a crushed gravel with fines, to introduce an enhanced walking surface, allowing for drainage in wet weather.	1	1	1	The current condition of the public footpath is considered almost impassable by pedestrians, and not at all by dismounted cyclists carrying their bicycles. Anyone attempting to walk this route is putting themselves at risk of a serious harm. Resurfacing of the route with suitable materials is considered critical to making the public footpath suitable as a recommended diversion route. A suitable, pedestrian friendly surface would almost eliminate the possibility of an incident, and reduce the severity to negligible levels.	Network Rail to monitor usage of the upgraded footway. This location is off the public highway and not the responsibility of the highway authority.



mayer brown

NETWORK RAIL

CLOSURE OF LEVEL CROSSING OFF MOORGATE STREET / DARK LANE UPPERMILL, OLDHAM

HIGHWAYS STATEMENT

JUNE 2025



the journey is the reward

Report title:	**Closure of Level Crossing, Off Moorgate Street / Dark Lane, Uppermill, Oldham** **Highways Statement**
Date:	**June 2025**
Project:	**NRMOORGATE.2**
Prepared by:	**Steven Overton - Mayer Brown Ltd**
Approved by:	**Sean Wotherspoon - Mayer Brown Ltd**
On behalf of:	**Network Rail**
Status:	**FINAL**

Mayer Brown Limited, Lion House, Oriental Road, Woking, Surrey GU22 8AR
Telephone 01483 750508 Fax 01483 750437 wokingoffice@mayerbrown.co.uk www.mayerbrown.co.uk

Network Rail

Closure of Level Crossing

Off Moorgate Street / Dark Lane, Uppermill, Oldham

Highways Statement

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1 Introduction

1.1 Mayer Brown Ltd have been appointed by Network Rail to consider Highways matters related to the proposed extinguishment of a Rail Level Crossing (MVL3 13m 26c Moorgate Halt) and Public Footpath No. 209SADD at Uppermill, Oldham (for location, refer to Appendix A to this report).

1.2 The Public Footpath proposed to be extinguished is circa 200m in length and is shown in Appendix B to this report.

1.3 The proposed alternative pedestrian route is circa 600m in length and is shown in Appendix C to this report.

1.4 This report is not a Road Safety Audit, nor a safety Risk Assessment, but will consider the implications of the proposed extinguishment for all users of the public highway and public footpaths in terms of practicality, usability and safety.

1.5 The decision to extinguish the Rail Crossing is one made by Network Rail and their justification for this is provided elsewhere. Mayer Brown accept Network Rails expert opinion and will consider only the implications for the public of the Crossing and the Footpath being closed and becoming unavailable as a route.

1.6 This report will consider transfer of risk from Network Rail to the Highway Authority, with the findings based on professional opinion.

1.7 This report will recommend potential mitigation for the proposed transfer of pedestrians from the Public Footpath proposed to be extinguished, to the Adopted Public Highway.

1.8 A site visit was made on the morning of Friday 25th April 2025, between the hours of 10:45 and 12:30. The weather was warm and dry, and the ground was dry throughout the area of interest.

1.9 Attending the visit were:

- Project Team Leader - Steven Overton (FIHE), Principal Consultant at Mayer Brown Ltd and a competent Highway Design Engineer and Road Safety Auditor
- Project Team Member - James Stockdale (BEng), Principal Consultant at Mayer Brown Ltd and a competent Highway Drainage Engineer

2 Existing Public Footpath Route

2.1 Public Footpath 209SADD, proposed to be extinguished (refer to Appendix B), runs from the corner of Moorgate Street / Den Lane at its Eastern extent (Point A on the plan), generally Southwest-bound, across the Level Crossing, and along Dark Lane until the junction with Ladcastle Road at its Western extent (Point B on the plan).



Photo 2.1a – Eastern extent of Public Footpath to be extinguished (Moorgate Street / Den Lane)



Photo 2.1b – Western extent of Public Footpath to be extinguished (Ladcastle Road)

2.2 At the Eastern extent of the Public Footpath route (Point A), Moorgate Street links to Uppermill High Street, which is the main arterial road through the town centre and is the main “destination” for pedestrians in the local area.

2.3 The Western extent of the Public Footpath to be extinguished terminates at the junction of Dark Lane and Ladcastle Road. At this point there is a continuation of a Public Footpath route on the West side of Ladcastle Road.



Photo 2.3 – Continuation of Public Footpath (West side of Ladcastle Road)

2.4 The nature of the route of the Public Footpath becomes more rural the further West you travel, with limited destinations aside from a golf course, several isolated residential properties and links to further rural-type Footpaths.

2.5 The existing route has a variety of surfacing types and textures, and there are very steep gradients required to be navigated. Between the start and end of the route, there is an approximate 37m change in level, with 29m of this height difference coming between the Level Crossing and the junction with Ladcastle Road, resulting in a gradient of more than 1:5.

2.6 The majority of the surfacing is un-made ground in the form of compacted earth, with multiple obstacles such as random cobbles, rocks, fallen leaves, tree roots etc.

2.7 A fallen tree hinders the route at approximately the half-way point.



Photo 2.7a – Initial length of existing route (between Moorgate Street and Level Crossing)



Photo 2.7b – Level Crossing (looking West)



Photo 2.7c – Immediately West of Level Crossing (looking West)



Photo 2.7d – West of Level Crossing (looking West)



Photo 2.7e – Fallen Tree (looking East, back towards Level Crossing)



Photo 2.7f –Towards Westernmost end of route (looking West)



Photo 2.7g –Westernmost end of route (looking West at junction with Ladcastle Road)

3 Effects of the extinguishment of Level Crossing & Public Footpath

3.1 The closure of the Level Crossing and Public Footpath 209SADD will remove a reasonably direct route, circa 200m in length, between Uppermill Town Centre and Ladcastle Road.

3.2 Presuming the same “route start and end points”, the proposed alternative route (refer to Appendix C), would require a user to navigate an additional 400m (approximately) using a combination of Public Footways (adopted highway), Canal Towpaths and Public Footpaths (formal, but non-adopted routes).

4 Consideration of likely Pedestrian Movements

4.1 A Census was undertaken between 8th November 2024 and 3rd December 2024 (26 days) to count the number of people utilising the Level Crossing. Results of the Census are included in Appendix D and are summarised below.

4.2 In total, 647 people were observed to use the Level Crossing.

4.3 The vast majority (557) of those observed, were adult pedestrians.

4.4 62 children were recorded, of which 18 were accompanied and 44 were unaccompanied.

4.5 28 cyclists were recorded.

4.6 147 dogs were recorded, of which 139 were on a lead and 8 were not on a lead.

4.7 Although these numbers could be averaged to 25 people per day, the results did show that numbers were not evenly spread throughout the week and that recorded numbers were higher on weekends.

4.8 During our site visit, the only movement observed on any of the Public Footpath lengths was one cyclist.

4.9 Given the nature of the existing route (setting, gradients, surface texture etc) we consider that the route is primarily used by local Dog Walkers, Ramblers and the occasional skilled “mountain-bike-type” cyclist.

4.10 There is a note at the bottom of the Census data that advises of 9 instances of “misuse” during the Census period. The authors of this report do not know for sure what this refers to, but assume that the note relates to safety matters which may strengthen Network Rail’s case for closing the Level Crossing.

5 Proposed Alternative Pedestrian Route

5.1 The proposed alternative route commences at Moorgate Street, heading East for approximately 40m before users turn onto the towpath adjacent the Huddersfield / Rochdale Canal. The North/Southbound towpath is accessible via either steps or an easily accessible ramped section.



Photo 5.1 – View of access to / from Towpath to / from Moorgate Street (looking North)

5.2 The towpath is smooth, level and easily navigable by all pedestrian users, including those with mobility impairments and cyclists. The towpath section of the proposed alternative route is circa 200m in length, until it's junction with the A670 – Main Street.





Photo 5.2a – View of Towpath (looking South to junction with A670)

Photo 5.2b – View of junction with Towpath and A670 (looking North)

5.3 Users then navigate approximately 60m along a wide adopted footway adjacent the A670 (west side).



Photo 5.3 – View of footway alongside A670 (looking South)

5.4 As the proposed alternative route reaches its junction with the next section of Public Footpath, the footway narrows significantly. Although this section could be navigated without issue by pedestrians walking in single-file, it could be considered relatively unsafe for unaccompanied small children and would not be passable by a cyclist or a mobility impaired user.





Photo 5.4 – View of footway pinch-point (looking North)

Photo 5.5 – View of footway pinch-point (looking South)

5.5 The proposed alternative route then heads into what first appears to be a private residence but is clearly signposted as a Public Footpath. This section of the route is initially surfaced with bituminous materials, before reaching two small steps and heading onto an un-made pathway as users start an uphill climb.



Photo 5.5a – Public Footpath sign (looking South)



Photo 5.5b – Start of Public Footpath (looking West)

5.6 The proposed alternative route follows the un-made pathway to a crossing of the railway lines by way of a stone tunnel. The tunnel is adequately wide and the surface beneath the tunnel is of bituminous construction and in fair condition. This section of the route is easily navigable.





Photo 5.6a – Approach to tunnel under railway lines (looking West)

Photo 5.6a – Beneath the railway lines (looking East)

5.7 West of the tunnel, the bituminous surfacing terminates and the remainder of the route between this point and Ladcastle Road is unmade ground and is very hard to navigate, even for an able-bodied person with specialist hiking footwear. A drainage gulley is noted at the bottom of the un-made ground, before the bituminous material begins. Although this gulley should catch a relatively fair amount of surface water coming down the hill, it is considered unlikely that it would deal with any significant rainfall event and we would expect the tunnel and ground downstream of the tunnel to suffer from over-ground flow of water should the gulley be “overwhelmed” or bypassed.





Photo 5.7a&b – Gulley at extent of un-made ground (looking West ,then East)

Note: Natural detritus (leaves etc) in abundance, which will reduce the effectiveness of this drainage feature unless regularly maintained.

5.8 The majority of the remainder of the Public Footpath section of the proposed alternative route is steep, un-made ground, with frequent hazards (leaves, rocks, tree roots etc). The path varies in width, becoming increasingly difficult to navigate the further West (uphill) you navigate.




Photo 5.8a&b – Various sections of Public Footpath (looking West, uphill)




Photo 5.8c&d – Various sections of Public Footpath (looking West, uphill)



Photo 5.8e – Section of Public Footpath (looking West, uphill)



Photo 5.8f – Section of Public Footpath (looking West, uphill)



Photo 5.8g – Section of Public Footpath (looking West, uphill)

5.9 Approaching the Western extent of the Public Footpath, users must navigate an extremely steep, rocky incline (estimate 1:2 or steeper), before a set of stone steps that are very steep and are in a state of disrepair. This part of the route was extremely difficult to pass for an able-bodied person with appropriate footwear.





Photo 5.9a – Start of Public Footpath (looking East, downhill, from Ladcastle Road)

Photo 5.9b – Rough stone steps (looking West, uphill, towards Ladcastle Road)





Photo 5.9c&d – Rough stone steps (looking West, uphill, towards Ladcastle Road)

5.10 In summary of the section of proposed alternative route that follows the Public Footpath, similar to the existing route, there are substantial changes in height. The section of proposed alternative route between the railway lines (bridge / tunnel) and Ladcastle Road has a level change of circa 37m, over a distance of little more than a 100m, this results in an average gradient in excess of 1:3.

5.11 At the top of the stone steps, users must navigate along Ladcastle Road for a distance of around 110m, to reach the end of the proposed route (Point B on existing and proposed plans in the appendices).

5.12 Ladcastle Road is an adopted rural road with bituminous carriageway surfacing which is in good condition. The road varies in width and in places it

is not possible for two vehicles to pass one another without slowing their speed significantly or by using passing places.

5.13 There are no footways on Ladcastle Road, however, forward visibility is good and during the site visit vehicle speeds were observed to be relatively low, with no feeling of discomfort when sharing the surface with vehicles.



Photo 5.13a – Access from Ladcastle Road to Public Footpath (at flag-type sign on right)

Note – Ladcastle Road (Northbound) is to the left, with access to a private residence in the centre.



Photo 5.13b – Ladcastle Road



Photo 5.13c – Ladcastle Road



Photo 5.13d – Ladcastle Road

6 Summary and Recommendations

6.1 As a result of the proposed closure of the existing Level Crossing and Public Footpath, users wishing to get between points A and B (Eastern and Western ends of the existing route) will be required to divert onto the proposed alternative route.

6.2 The proposed alternative route is approximately 400m longer than the existing route proposed to be closed.

6.3 The majority of the existing route is relatively steep, unlit, and the ground is uneven and littered with obstacles.

6.4 The proposed route varies in its quality, due to the different types of surfaces to be navigated. The majority of the length of the route is smooth and accessible (Moorgate Road, Canal Towpath, A670, Ladcastle Road) but the Public Footpath section is steeper than the existing route, also unlit, has even more obstacles, not least the stone steps at the Ladcastle Road end.

6.5 Based on the Census information and on-site observations, it is considered that users of the existing route mostly consist of able-bodied, physically fit pedestrians of all ages. Many of these would be local people, walking their dogs or exercising. Many others would be Ramblers, following recognised walking routes and with appropriate footwear for the conditions. It is accepted by these users that they are using a Public Foot**path** which typically does not have the same level of surface "finish" than an adopted Foot**way**.

6.6 Any cyclists using the existing route do so at their own discretion and it is considered that they would have a certain level of fitness (uphill) and skill (downhill) to navigate the surface and obstacles that are currently observed.

6.7 It is not considered that mobility impaired people would be using the existing route, and nor would they expect to, given the gradients and nature of the surfacing on the route. Neither would we expect pushchairs / buggy's to be navigating the existing route.

6.8 Our recommendations, below, are made on the basis that any users of the existing route should be able to transfer onto the proposed alternative route, and with the exception of having to travel a greater distance, would not be excessively adversely affected by the closure of the Level Crossing and Public Footpath.

6.9 Recommendation 1 – Closure of Level Crossing and Public Footpath

Ensure that adequate provision is made to deter pedestrians from attempting to cross at the location of the former Level Crossing. Ie. Suitable barrier measures are installed at either end of the Public Footpath to deter users from following the route to the Railway Tracks and attempting to find a way across, following the previously available direct route.

A combination of suitable walls, fencing, signage, destruction of the existing walkways should be implemented as necessary to properly remove the route and prevent it from being navigated.

6.10 Recommendation 2 – Footway Pinch-Point on A670



The footway narrowing alongside the A670, adjacent the entry to the Public Footpath used by the alternative route, is a potential hazard for users, particularly unaccompanied children, due to the potential for pedestrians to come close to moving vehicles on a relatively major road.

Ideally, the footway in this area should be widened to a minimum of 1200mm.

Due to a combination of the existing road width, horizontal alignment and location of drainage gulleys, the A670 does not lend itself easily to provision of a wider footway. Any potential improvement may need agreement from the adjacent, third-party landowner, to facilitate widening to the rear of the footway by way of rebuilding their boundary wall further back into their property.

It is accepted that the wall appears to be constructed of natural stone, which may be costly to replace or re-use, and that the land to the private residence

is higher than the highway land and will increase the retention required should the wall move back.

It is also accepted that there would be a requirement for a change to the limits of adopted highway should the footway be widened.

Finally, therefore, it is accepted that third-party land cannot and should not be relied upon to be available and this recommendation is an “ideal” improvement that may not be deliverable in terms of negotiation and / or cost.

6.11 Recommendation 3 – Surface of Public Footpath on Alternative Route

The majority of the Public Footpath to the West of the Railway Bridge / Tunnel presents at steep gradients and is of a poor-quality surface.

Hazards are evident with almost every step, in the form of tree roots, rocks, un-even ground.

It would be our recommendation that a re-grading of the surfacing between the Railway Tunnel and the Stone Steps (Western end of route) be carried out, to remove above-ground obstructions and present as smooth a surface as possible for users of the route.

An ideal, money-no-object scenario would have a bituminous surface, or similar machined finish, cross-falling to one side with a drainage facility along the edge, be that a soakaway trench, or a drainage channel leading to the existing gulley at the bottom of the run, West of the Railway Tunnel.

A more reasonable request may be to provide a relatively constant grade of surface, with rocks and substantial above-ground obstacles removed, and a loose gravel surface treatment applied to prevent the surface becoming boggy in wetter weather, however, due to the steep gradients evident here, and the amount of surface water that may run down the Footpath, it cannot be guaranteed how long such a loose surface would remain in serviceable condition. Consideration also should be given to the amount of detritus (leaves etc) that is evident in this location and that this natural waste will continue to fall, regardless of the chosen surface finish.

6.12 Recommendation 4 – Stone Steps between Public Footpath and Ladcastle Road.

The existing stone steps on the proposed alternative route are very steep, have short “treads” and are in a state of disrepair. Several of the stones are broken and there are some treads that move when a foot is placed on them.

This whole section of steps would benefit from reconfiguration, with a longer flight of steps installed, with smaller “risers” and wider “treads”, making the entire route more accessible and safer to navigate.

The wider the treads and lower the risers, the more accessible this route would be for cyclists wishing to divert from the route to be closed.

This recommendation is very important should the proposed alternative route be brought into service.

6.13 Recommendation 5 – Location of change in Speed Limit on A670

Refer to Appendix E. There exists a change in speed limit between 20mph and 30mph on the A670, to the east of the entry to the Public Footpath used by the alternative route.

If this speed limit change could be moved somewhere to the west of the entry to the Public Footpath used by the alternative route, the 20mph zone would encompass the entirety of the diversion route and may provide a safety benefit.

7 Summary

7.1 Whether or not the existing Level Crossing is safe is not a matter for Mayer Brown as Highway Consultants to decide. Network Rail have carried out their own assessment and determined that they wish to permanently close the crossing, and subsequently, the associated Public Footpath. Mayer Brown assume then, that the risk to pedestrians using the crossing is considered to be unacceptable to Network Rail and that they have significant concerns that there is the potential for a risk to life.

7.2 There is an alternative route available, which is longer than the existing route by around 400m, but which is, for the most part, accessible.

7.3 There are recommendations for improvements outlined in Section 6 of this report, and listed below in order of importance valued in terms of safety:

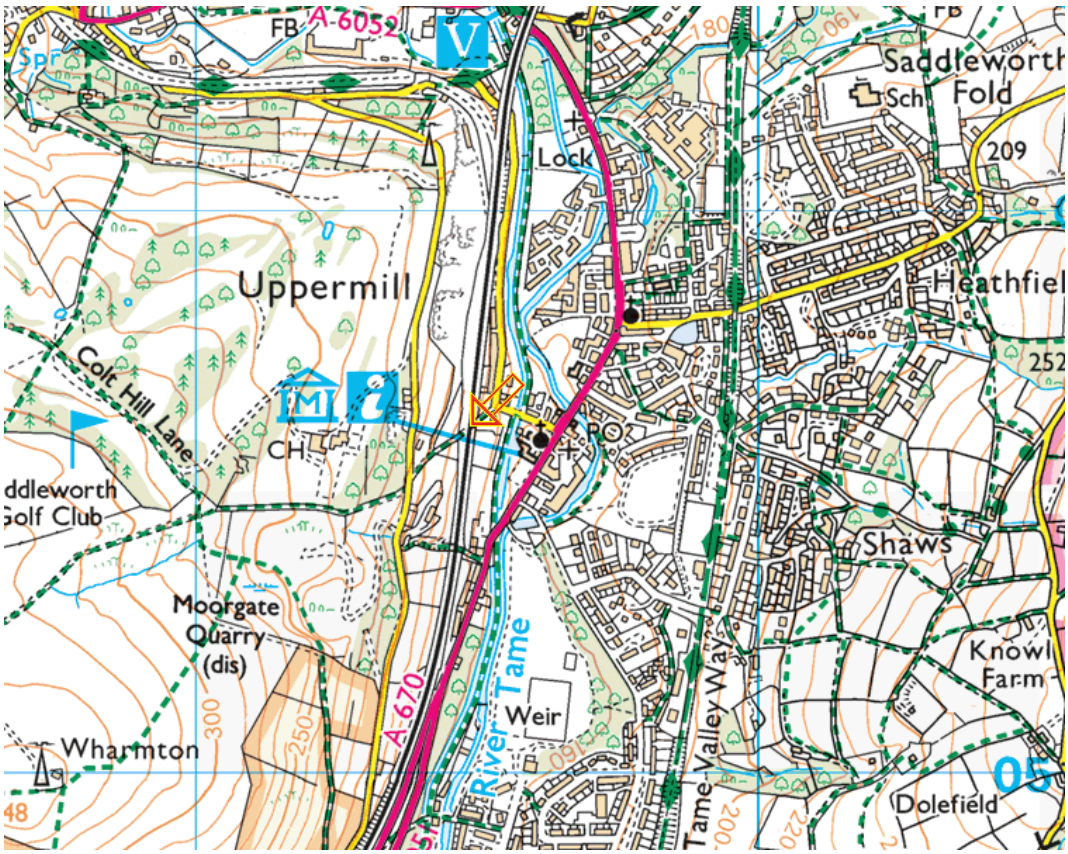
1. Security of the Closed Route (Recommendation 1)
2. Replacement of Stone Steps on Public Footpath (Recommendation 4)
3. Regrading of Public Footpath (Recommendation 3)
4. Amendment of Speed Limit Change Location (Recommendation 5)
5. Widening of Footway Adjacent A670 (Recommendation 2)

7.4 Providing that some form of the three most important recommendations, above, are implemented, the existing route will be suitably closed off and the proposed route will be accessible by all users that currently use the existing route.

7.5 The fourth recommendation may provide a safety benefit, particularly if recommendation 5 cannot be implemented.

7.6 The fifth recommendation, above, would be a nice-to-have, but it is accepted that delivery of the alteration could prove problematic, dependant on the willingness of third parties to be involved.

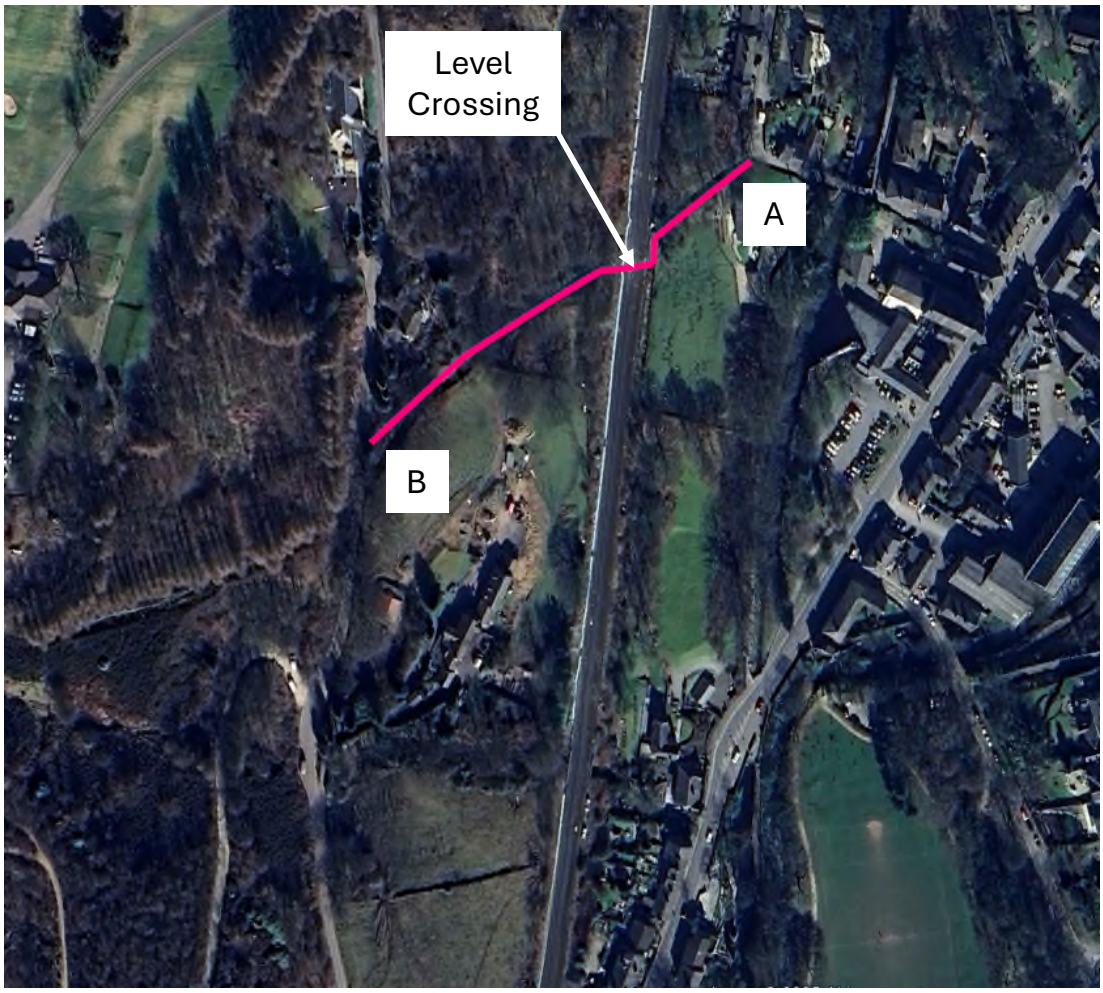
APPENDIX A: Location Plan


A-6052
Saddleworth
Fold
Sch
Lock
209
Uppermill
Heathfiel
Colt Hill Lane
CH
PO
ddleworth
Golf Club
Shaws
Moorgate
Quarry
(dis)
Knowl
Farm
River Tame
Weir
A-670
Tame Valley Way
Wharmton
Dolefield


Uppermill
White Brook
Library
Museum
Tourist Info
Wickens
Clough
Shaws
Golburn

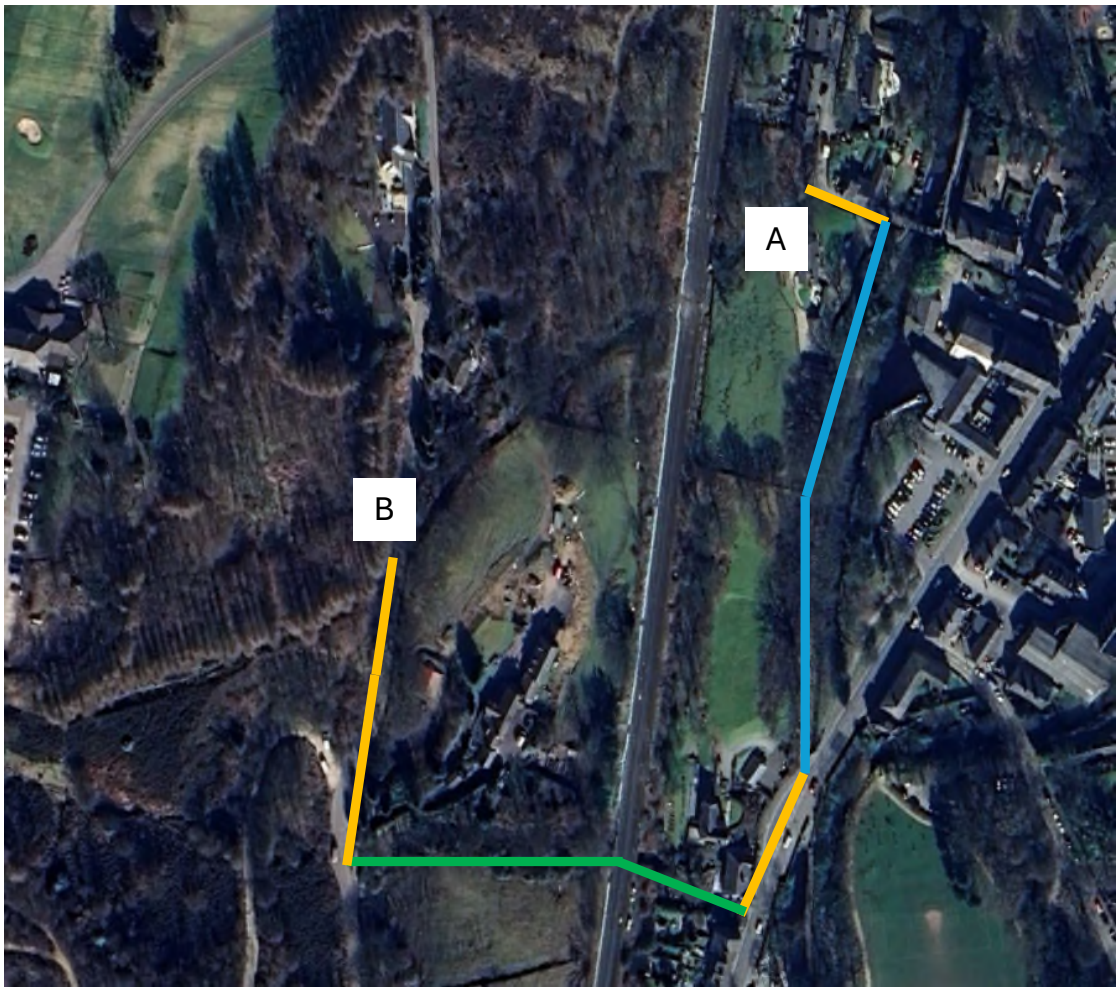

Level
Crossing
Path

APPENDIX B: Existing Public Footpath to be Extinguished



Route of Existing Public Footpath To Be Extinguished (209SADD)

APPENDIX C: Proposed Alternative Pedestrian Route



Proposed Alternative Pedestrian Route

Public Highway (Footway)

Canal Towpath

Public Footpath (244SADD)

APPENDIX D: Census Data

Moorgate Halt - Footpath Crossing with Wicket Gates
08 11 2024 - 03 12 2024

Category	Count
Adult Pedestrians	557
Accompanied Child	18
Unaccompanied Child	44
Cyclists	28
Dog (on Lead)	139
Dog (Not on Lead)	8

Users between 23:59 - 06:00	0

Total Predestrians	**647**

Date	No. of Users Per Day
08/11/2024	4
09/11/2024	70
10/11/2024	35
11/11/2024	23
12/11/2024	27
13/11/2024	26
14/11/2024	19
15/11/2024	22
16/11/2024	32
17/11/2024	23
18/11/2024	16
19/11/2024	24
20/11/2024	26
21/11/2024	19
22/11/2024	31
23/11/2024	13
24/11/2024	39
25/11/2024	24
26/11/2024	9
27/11/2024	18
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01/12/2024	31
02/12/2024	15
03/12/2024	8

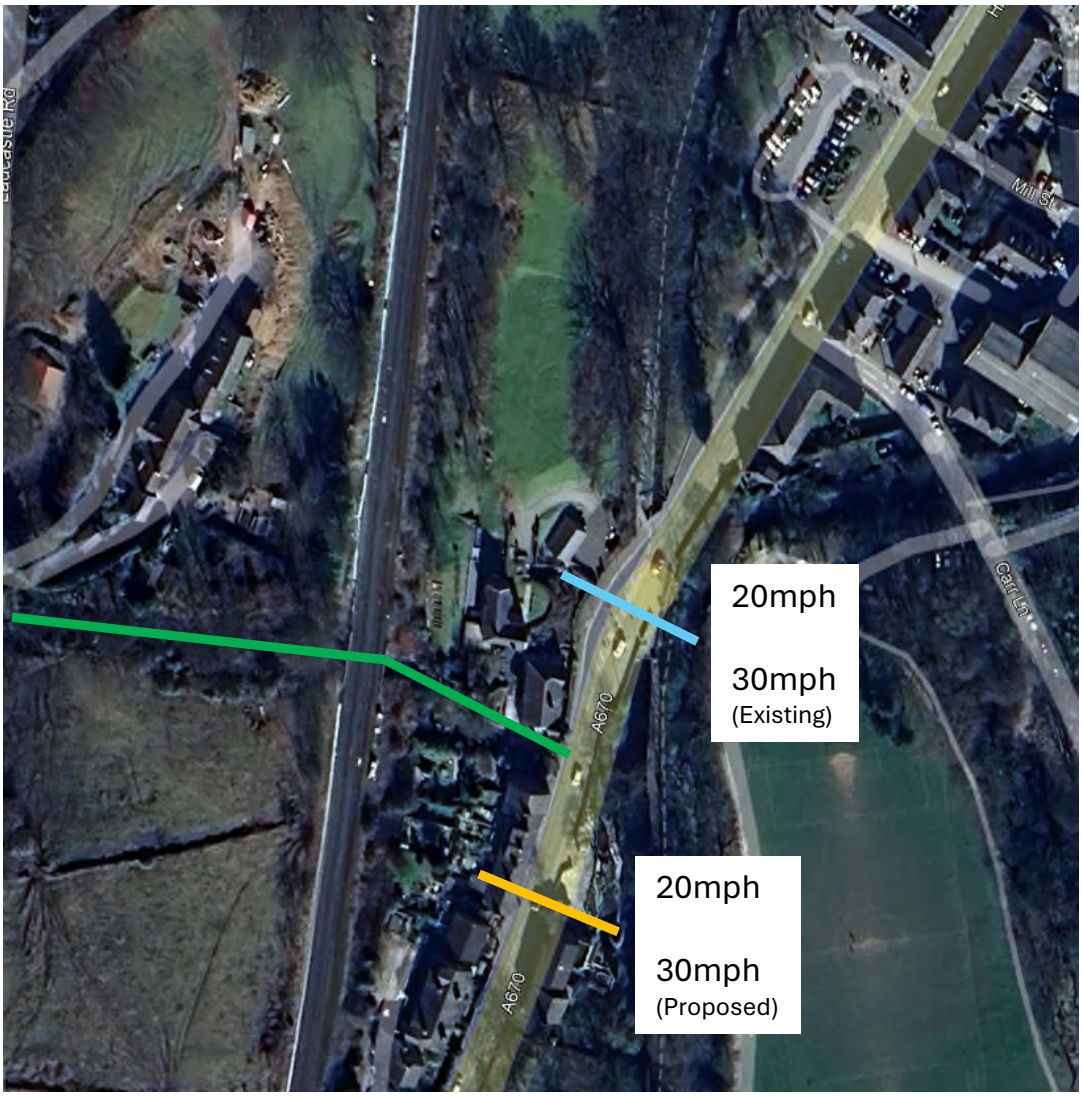
Comments

647 pedestrian users traversed the crossing during the census. Of this figure

Misuse

There were 9 instances of misuse captured with both adult and

APPENDIX E: Speed Limits



Details of Speed Limit Changes

- Location of Existing Speed Limit Change
- Approximate Location of Proposed Speed Limit Change
- Public Footpath (244SADD)

