Oldham and Rochdale

3. Diversity

Providing variety and choice

Why is diversity important?

It is important, because it provides choice and adds richness to the urban environment. Communities in Rochdale and Oldham are diverse and development has to respond to a large variety of cultural differences.

Diverse environments support social cohesion and understanding, whereby equal choices are offered to all parts of the community.

3. Diversity

3a Where possible and appropriate, development must incorporate a mix of uses that add richness and variety to the local area. It should:

- avoid the creation or continuation of large areas in a single use, unrelieved by the presence of other complementary uses or activities;
- encourage the provision of a range of facilities and services that are needed or can be used by the local community, workforce or visitors;
- encourage walking and minimise reliance on the car; and
- in higher density areas and local and town centres, provide a mix of uses within individual buildings.

Traditional example of successful mixed use: the corner shop

3b Development must consider and, where possible, provide for the needs for all sections of society and add richness to the social and cultural diversity of the local area. It should:

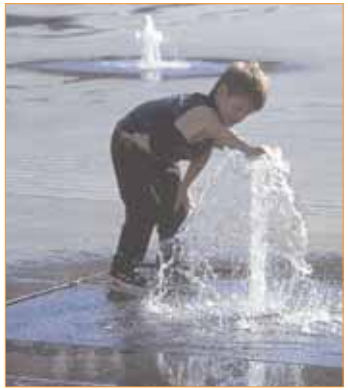
- support a range of tenures and housing types in residential and mixed use areas;
- support a range of cultural, spiritual and recreational activities that meet the needs of different groups in the local community;
- ensure that the design quality of buildings and facilities for all sections of society and types of user is of an equally high standard;
- ensure that the range of housing tenures and types and different community facilities are appropriately integrated and equitably distributed within the local area; and
- ensure that all types of housing and community facilities are designed to be accessible to those with some form of impairment or special needs.

The mix of flats and houses creates a varied street scene, as well as providing a diverse range of housing types

This mixed use development integrates residential development and a large supermarket

3c Development must support variety and choice in the public realm for all sections of the local community. It should:

- provide or sustain a network of routes, streets and paths that maximises choices for movement, particularly for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users;
- provide a range of open spaces to meet the needs of different sections of the local community for active and passive recreation, play and leisure; and
- design open spaces so that their layout and appearance reflects their intended function.









Development must support variety and choice in the public realm for all sections of the community. Developers should demonstrate how the streets and spaces proposed in their scheme meet the needs of the development's occupants and people in the surrounding area, where appropriate.

Oldham and Rochdale

4. Ease of movement

Ensuring that places are easy to get to and move through

Why is ease of movement important?

Whilst some places within the two Boroughs are well connected, many streets are dominated by traffic and are not good places to be, creating barriers to people moving around. Many new developments, especially those on larger sites, cut themselves off from the surrounding area.

People living and working in Rochdale and Oldham need to get easily from their home to the facilities they need for their day-to-day activities: their workplace, school, shops, place of worship, open space and so on. Without easy access, the range of activities is curtailed and people are not able to live full lives. Successful places tend to give priority to pedestrians, so that walking is easy and pleasant

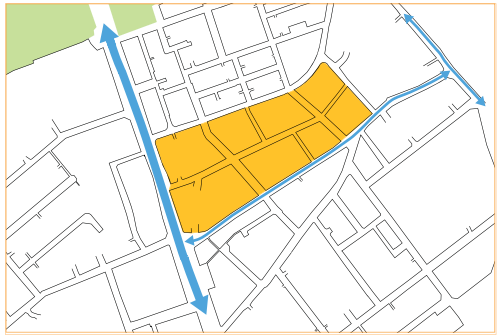
4. Ease of movement

4a Development must provide or reinforce a clear network of routes (roads, streets, paths and associated spaces) that provides easy access to an area, and the buildings and facilities within it. The movement network should:

- ensure that existing and proposed routes to and within an area are well connected to one another;
- provide direct and attractive links between destinations that follow natural desire lines and movement patterns;
- reflect the importance and significance of each route within an area in a hierarchy of roads, streets, paths and spaces that are all of appropriate width and design to fulfil their intended function;
- reflect an appropriate urban grain of street blocks that allows for the easy movement of people, particularly pedestrians, throughout the area (permeability) whilst avoiding 'rat runs' that encourage car drivers to take short cuts; and
- support a permeable network with clear signage to aid wayfinding.

This site has the potential to create new streets that connect the area together, providing people with convenient routes to the places they want to go to.

A cul-de-sac layout does not connect the site to the surrounding streets, so restricting access, especially for pedestrians and cyclists.



Connecting streets together creates an environment that is easy to move through.

Tress can provide positive separation between pedestrian and car movement

Major transport locations should be easily accessible by pedestrians

Secure cycle parking within centres encourages the use of bicycles

Homezones create pedestrian and child friendly environments that accommodate a wide range of social activities

4b Development must be located to support movement by means other than the car between facilities and the people who use them. It should:

- ensure that everyday facilities such as local or corner shops, primary schools and children's play areas are as conveniently and appropriately located as possible within their catchment areas and easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport;
- ensure that concentrations of land uses and activities and higher density developments are well served by public transport routes and /or public transport interchanges;
- ensure that homes are within 5 minutes walk (400 metres) of a bus stop or within 10 minutes walk (800 metres) of a rail station or public transport interchange; and
- design pedestrian and cycle routes to be more direct (ie shorter and quicker) and hence more attractive than routes for private cars.

4c Development must give priority to the needs of pedestrians, and encourage walking, cycling and public transport usage to reduce reliance on the car. It should:

- locate building entrances so that they are convenient for pedestrians and cyclists, rather than the drivers of private cars;
- ensure that there are footpaths and pavements of sufficient unobstructed width to provide the necessary pedestrian access and accommodate associated street furniture and landscape elements;
- ensure that there are appropriate safe and convenient pedestrian crossings over busy roads and streets that relate to pedestrian desire lines;
- provide waiting areas for public transport that are safe and out of the weather;
- consider and cater for the needs of cyclists by providing or supporting a network of safe cycle routes, lanes and crossings which do not impede safe pedestrian movement;
- make provision for secure cycle parking at key destinations such as local and town centres, places of employment, retail and leisure facilities, educational establishments, civic and community centres and public transport interchanges;
- integrate secure cycle parking within residential and other properties to meet the potential cycling needs of their occupants and visitors; and
- incorporate appropriate traffic calming and traffic management to reduce traffic speed. Where appropriate create car-free zones and / or shared surface environments such as home-zones where pedestrians have priority.

Good quality facilities, such as the new bus station at Middleton, encourage people to use public transport

Oldham and Rochdale

5. Legibility

Ensuring that places can be easily understood

Why is legibility important?

If you cannot easily understand where you are in a town or village, it means that:

- you cannot find your way around, as it is not obvious which street may lead to the shops and which may be a dead end
- the place does not have a clearly memorable character or identity: it is confusing or bland

Consultation with local people revealed that we all prefer legible, memorable places such as Dobcross or Littleborough, and dislike the disorientation of high rise estates or town centres encircled by ring roads.

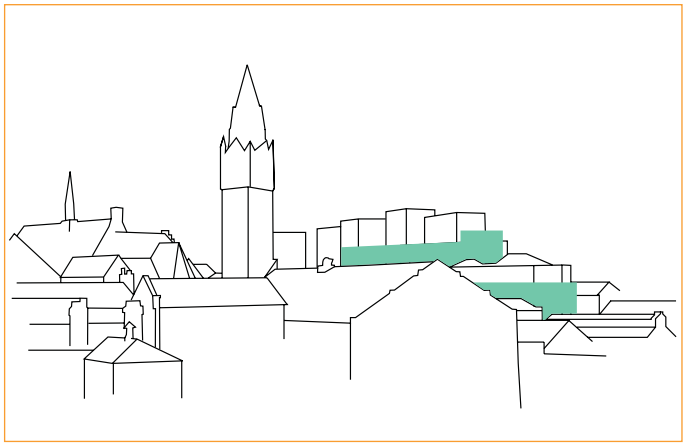
5. Legibility

5a Development – whether a single building on an existing street or a large development site – should contribute to a legible environment. That is, it should provide a clear hierarchy of routes, streets and spaces by:

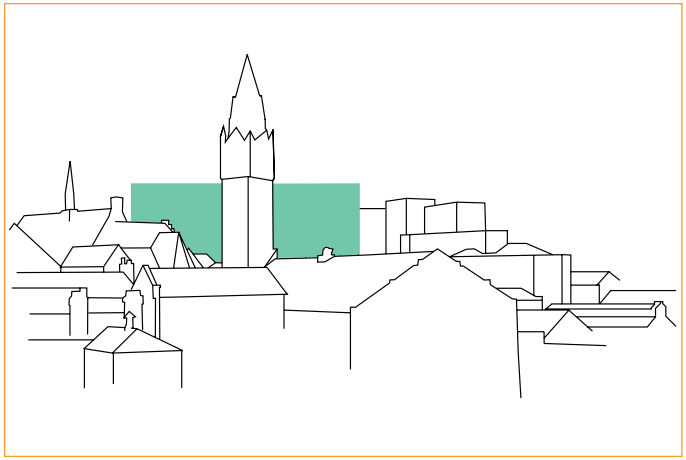
- designing streets and other urban spaces to have a clear identity;
- locating activity and mixes of uses along key transport corridors and nodes;
- relating building heights to the width of streets and spaces, so that their character and importance is reinforced;
- supporting a hierarchy of open spaces (such as parks and play spaces), and designing them so that their function and importance can be clearly understood; and
- ensuring that legible designs are primarily aimed at the pedestrian scale and speed of movement.

Wide roads are usually more important than narrows ones. However, the poor quality buildings fail to reinforce the importance of this street as a 'gateway' to the town.

Landmark buildings along streets help create a legible place



New development (in green) does not relate sensitively to the landmark building



New development more sensitively designed into overall townscape

5b Development must relate positively to the visual connections between it and its surroundings. It should where appropriate and possible:

- protect and enhance existing attractive views to the wider surroundings, memorable existing buildings and other locally distinctive existing landmarks;
- create new landmark buildings and spaces to emphasise the importance of a place such as a main centre of activity, a major civic or community function, a meeting of major routes or a major entry point to a different kind of area;
- relate building height and silhouette to the hierarchy of importance of routes, spaces and activities to reinforce the appearance of appropriate landmark elements within the skyline;
- incorporate memorable elements of public art at landmark locations; and
- reinforce visual connections along routes and between spaces and at landmark locations with appropriate landscaping, lighting and signage.

A new landmark space in Rochdale raises the image and identity of the town

5c Development must be designed so that intended functions of buildings and spaces are easily understood, and that the entrances to them are appropriately located and visible. It should:

- ensure that the function of buildings and spaces are recognisable whether purpose built or adapted (e.g. homes and apartments; retail, office and mixed-use buildings; parks and play areas);
- ensure that entrances to major facilities (such as rail or bus stations; retail or leisure areas or mixed-use complexes; civic, cultural and community buildings or centres; public parks and recreation areas) are welcoming, appropriately scaled and detailed and visible along or at the end of one or more major view corridors; and
- ensure that all properties and spaces have entrances where they can be clearly seen from the streets or space on which they are located.

Landmarks and focal points can be of varying character, a special structure, a corner building or a special building element

Oldham and Rochdale

6. Adaptability

Anticipating the need for change

Why is adaptability important?

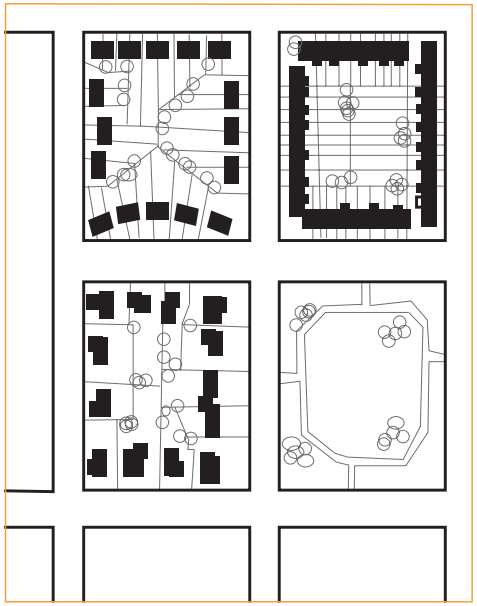
Some buildings in Oldham and Rochdale have stood the test of time, and have been used in a variety of ways over the years: terraced houses are one example. Others – such as high rise flats or large retail 'sheds' – have limited flexibility and a potentially short life.

It is important that buildings and spaces can respond to changes in technology, market conditions and living circumstances. This quality is known as 'adaptability' and enables buildings and spaces to have a long life, so creating a flexible and sustainable environment.

6. Adaptability

6a Development proposals and layouts for extensive areas must be capable of accommodating the changing and future needs of society and the activities it pursues. They should be designed to:

- ensure that the network of principal roads and primary infrastructure is designed to accommodate private vehicles, public transport, pedestrians and cyclists so that all modes are catered for;
- ensure that the layout of street blocks and development parcels could accommodate a range of different land uses and development densities;
- provide principal open spaces that can be used, with or without subsequent adaptation, for different recreational, leisure, cultural and social activities and events;
- allow for movement and visual connections to be made to adjoining areas in the event of their future redevelopment or development;
- safeguard the finite, non-renewable resources and assets in the area, such as historic buildings and landscapes, water bodies, and areas of special ecological and landscape value, from development pressures for the benefit of future generations; and
- allow for the future use of renewable energy (such as solar panels and wind turbines) where they are not already provided.



Design street blocks and development parcels so that their size allows them to accommodate a range of different land uses and development densities.

Traditional streets tend to be able to respond to changing patterns of us. Above: a former through street has been adapted to become more pedestrian dominated.

This street has been adapted to become a pedestrian-only link

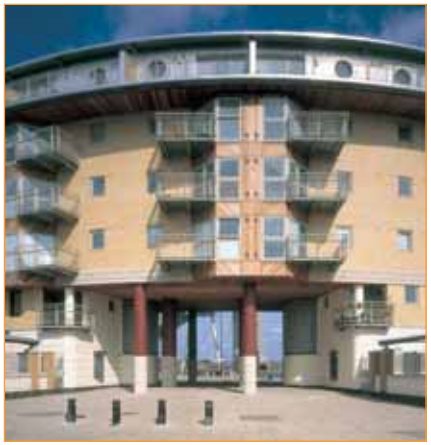
6b Development proposals for new buildings or the conversion of existing buildings must be designed to allow for their future adaptation to meet the changing needs of their occupants and of the local area. Opportunities should be taken to:

- allow for the future conversion of the ground floors of residential buildings occupying corner plots at key intersections of routes in residential areas for use as a corner shop or other community use;
- allow for the future change of use and/or sub-division of large, single occupant, non-residential buildings to accommodate alternative uses and multiple occupants;
- allow for the future amalgamation of small residential and/or business units to meet the needs of larger households or business occupants;
- enable residential buildings to be capable of being adapted to meet the changing accommodation and mobility needs of households as these change over time; and
- ensure that buildings are appropriately accessible and provide for the needs of those who have or may develop some form of impairment or disability.

The conversion and extension of this old warehouse provides small business units that can be combined to form larger offices as demand changes.

Industrial buildings can often be converted into new uses: here a former Jam Factory has been refurbished as apartments.

Designing the ground floor of flats to be either shops or residential gives flexibility



Higher floor-to-ceiling heights on the ground floor allow use as either residential, shops or offices

Oldham and Rochdale

7. Sustainability

Minimising the impact on our environment

Why is sustainability important?

Sustainability means simultaneously meeting environmental, economic and community needs without compromising needs of future generations. Where these three overlap is the area where all the main elements of quality of life come together to make 'liveable' places that have long-term durability. In raising the standard of development in Rochdale and Oldham, the aim is to create places of enduring quality that can provide for the needs of today's residents as well as for future generations. Sustainability is not an optional, bolt-on 'extra' to the other principles in this Guide – it is a thread that runs through them all.

7. Sustainability

7a Development proposals must be designed to reduce the demands they make on energy. Where feasible and appropriate they should:

- ensure that the layout and orientation of buildings benefits from passive solar gain for natural heating where this does not compromise other important urban design principles;
- consider district-heating schemes fuelled from sustainable sources;
- use natural ventilation to reduce requirements for mechanical air cooling;
- locate buildings where they are least exposed to the chilling effect of prevailing winds, using topography, other buildings and tree belts to provide shelter;
- use energy efficient street lighting that minimises light pollution;
- reduce the potential for overheating on south facing facades and the need for mechanical cooling (through appropriate window sizes or blinds, screens or planting to provide shading);
- provide for natural daylight and sunlight to illuminate the interior of buildings reducing the need for artificial lighting; and
- ensure that buildings are adequately insulated to minimise heat loss and energy wastage.

7b Where feasible and appropriate development proposals must be designed to provide 10% of their total predicted energy requirements on site from renewable resources. Such measures should not have an adverse impact on amenity or townscape character and quality and may include:

- solar panels on roofs or elevations for water or space heating;
- photovoltaic modules on south facing roofs or elevations for electricity generation;
- wind turbines on site or integrated within roof structures for electricity generation;
- mini or micro combined heat and power units on-site or within buildings fuelled by renewable materials such as coppice-wood or burnable waste; and
- using bore hole technology to provide cooling by re-cycling water from aquifers beneath buildings.

Developers in Oldham should refer to the Borough's Renewable Energy SPD.

Bed Zed, zero energy housing

7c Development proposals must be designed to incorporate measures for the conservation of water resources and, where relevant, flood prevention. They should:

- aim to minimise the consumption of potable water through measures such as collecting rain water and using it for toilet flushing and /or garden irrigation, installing low water usage toilets and appliances;
- ensure that as much surface water run-off from roofs and areas of hard standing can permeate into the ground rather than into main drains or watercourses, through incorporating areas of soft landscaping and the use of permeable surfaces in hard landscaped areas and car parks;
- incorporate sustainable urban drainage where feasible and appropriate, incorporating features such as green verges and swales, shallow ditches, balancing ponds, wetlands and areas of reed-beds to control the discharge of surface water and its quality; and
- ensure that water conservation measures form an integral and attractive component of the design of areas, buildings and associated spaces and landscape.

Green walls and roofs not only improve the environment but create attractive buildings to look at

7d Development proposals must make appropriate provision for the sustainable management and discharge of waste. Where feasible and appropriate they should:

- incorporate facilities for segregation, storage and collection of recyclable waste such as paper, glass, metal and bio-degradable material; and
- ensure that facilities such as recycling bins, refuse storage and collection areas and composters are integrated into the design of areas and buildings in an non intrusive and attractive manner.

Solar energy can be used for heating or hot water supplies

7e Development must make a positive contribution to the greening of the urban environment and supporting bio-diversity. Development proposals should:

- sensitively integrate existing open space and landscape into the proposed development;
- provide a network of new open spaces that support new planting in both soft and hard landscaped spaces;
- incorporate soft landscape elements including trees in the open spaces and areas serving or associated with buildings (e.g. gardens, courtyards, car parks);
- promote native plants and trees;
- incorporate where feasible and appropriate planting into built structures (e.g. green roofs, planting screens and trellises, balcony and terrace planters, window boxes);
- incorporate where appropriate nesting boxes and roosting structures for birds and bats into built structures or landscape elements, and
- introduce additional street trees to existing streets.