

**OLDHAM REPLACEMENT UNITARY
DEVELOPMENT PLAN – FIRST
DEPOSIT DRAFT**

**STATEMENT OF PRE-DEPOSIT PUBLIC
CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY**

SEPTEMBER 2001

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Appendices - for appendices 1 and 2, please see the paper version of this document.

Appendix 1 Issues Paper/Issues Summary Leaflet

Appendix 2 Press cuttings

Appendix 3 Report to Environment & Transport
Committee,

September 2000.

For further information please contact: Ms S Barker, Principal Planning Officer, Strategic Planning & Information, Oldham MBC.

Tel: 0161 911 4153 E-mail: ppr.sarah.barker@oldham.gov.uk

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Both the Government and the Council attach great importance to the role of public participation in development plan preparation.
- 1.2 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning (Development Plan) (England) Regulations 1999 set out the legislative requirements relating to public involvement in the plan review process. Planning Policy Guidance Note 12 (PPG12) further sets out the Government's advice on consultation, negotiation and public participation in the process.
- 1.3 PPG12 states that local people and other interested bodies should be encouraged to participate actively in the preparation of plans from the earliest stages so that they can be fully involved in decisions about the pattern of development in their area.
- 1.4 The Oldham Framework, the strategy of the Oldham Partnership, contains themes about creating confident communities and quality neighbourhoods and achieving a quality environment. Key elements in working towards these are encouraging active citizenship and public involvement in the development planning process.
- 1.5 The Development Plan Regulations do not specify *how* pre-deposit consultation should be undertaken. What they do require is that the local authority gives proper consideration to the representations made by consultees and prepares a statement setting out the following:
 - ?? Whom the local authority have consulted;
 - ?? The steps taken to publicise the Council's proposals; and
 - ?? How the local authority has provided an opportunity for interested parties to make representations.
- 1.6 This is the purpose of this document, which will be published alongside the deposit draft Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

2. ISSUES CONSULTATION

- 2.1 The main pre-deposit consultation carried out was in the form of issues based consultation at the very beginning of the plan review process. A joint meeting of the Council's Environmental Services and Policy Committees on 28th February 2000 approved both a public consultation strategy for the issues based consultation, and the wording of the documentation needed to support it.
- 2.2 The Issues Consultation was carried out principally through the widespread distribution of two documents: a 32 page Issues Paper and an eight page

Summary Leaflet, drawing out some of the key themes. Both documents were well produced, attractive and colourful, and available free of charge. Both contained instructions in minority languages, which offered translation to anyone requiring it. The Issues Paper also offered a large print version or audio tape for those with visual impairments. Copies of the Issues Paper contents page and the entire Summary Leaflet are reproduced in Appendix 1.

2.3 The approach taken in the Issues Paper was to set out, topic by topic, the current policy approach, drivers for policy change, such as revised national guidance, changing trends or problems experienced in implementing those policies, and key issues pertaining to that topic. Comments were invited upon either the key issues identified, or any other aspect of each topic, in order to feed into a reshaping of the Council's policy framework.

2.4 The eight week consultation period commenced on 20th March 2000 and ran until 12th May 2000. The deadline was not rigidly enforced and contributions continued to be received and considered throughout 2000 and early 2001. Technical details of the consultation carried out are as follows:

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?? The Issues Summary Leaflet was hand delivered to each household in the Borough and included a freepost reply slip.

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?? The full Issues Paper was sent free to Government Departments and Agencies, neighbouring and Greater Manchester Local Authorities, the utility companies, Parish Councils, community groups, voluntary organisations, businesses and business organisations, religious organisations, schools, landowners and agents, and local interest groups. Each of the 535 people or groups on the UDP mailing list received a copy. In addition, copies were handed out at meetings and upon request, such that the total number of copies distributed totalled approximately 1,400.

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?? The Issues Paper and Summary Leaflet were available for visitors to Planning Reception in the Civic Centre to take away with them.

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?? Supplies of the Issues Summary Leaflet, together with a publicity poster, were distributed to all libraries and public sports centres in the Borough.

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?? Press releases were prepared at the start of the consultation period and towards the end of the process (see cuttings at Appendix 2); a radio interview was also done by the chair of the Planning Committee (on Revolution Radio, a local independent station).

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?? Two discussion groups were held, one for the business sector (attendance 8) and one for the voluntary sector (attendance 6).

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?? A UDP workshop was held with the Oldham Youth Forum, OMBC Members, Saddleworth Parish Council and the Oldham Environment Forum.

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?? A UDP issues exhibition toured all libraries except three which were too small to accommodate it. At each library the exhibition was accompanied by a supply of Issues Summary Leaflets and was staffed for at least one full day, including the evening where library opening hours allowed.

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?? The UDP exhibition was also taken to the Spindles Shopping Centre (4 days including a Saturday, staffed full time 10.00am to 4.00pm), and two supermarkets (Tesco's Huddersfield Road and Sainsburys in the Town Centre, (both Saturdays and staffed full time). In total, the touring exhibition was on display for 45 days, on 17 of which it was staffed.

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?? A permanent UDP exhibition was displayed for seven weeks in the Civic Centre foyer.

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?? The existing UDP (text only) and the Issues Consultation documents were made available on the Council's web site, together with a dedicated e-mail line for submitting comments.

2.5 A concern arising from the responses received to the consultation was the geographical spread in the source of comments, which indicated that fewer people in inner Oldham had engaged with the process than those in outer areas. Consequently, several follow-up activities were undertaken during the Autumn of 2000 to encourage further community input.

2.6 First, the opportunity was taken to make a presentation about the UDP review to the newly established Area Committees of the Council within the areas in question. Meetings attended were: East Oldham Area Committee, West Oldham Area Committee, and Failsworth and Hollinwood Area Committee. Chadderton Area Committee was also attended, in response to a specific request.

2.7 In addition, a letter was sent to all community groups within the Inner Oldham area, inviting comments and offering to visit them in order to discuss planning issues. Two groups took up this offer and meetings were duly attended.

2.8 Since the main consultation effort during 2000, and as work on preparing the draft Plan has progressed during Spring 2001, informal consultations have also been carried out with the following key Government Departments and agencies:

?? Government Office for the North West;

?? English Heritage

?? English Nature.

3. PUBLIC RESPONSE TO THE ISSUES CONSULTATION

- 3.1 In total, 2,431 comments were made about issues for the UDP review, by 376 respondents. Included in this figure are written responses to the Issues Paper and Issues Summary Leaflet, and comments made to Planning Officers staffing the exhibitions (the latter only a very small number). 79% of the responses came from private individuals, 8% from commercial organisations and 7% from a combination of community or residents' groups, interest groups, religious groups and voluntary organisations.
- 3.2 Some key Government Departments and agencies commented, including Government Office for the North West, English Heritage, English Nature, the Highways Agency and the Ministry for Agriculture Fisheries and Food (now DEFRA).
- 3.3 In addition to comments submitted in response to the documents or exhibition, detailed notes were taken at the various workshops and discussion groups.
- 3.4 While the figures are relatively high (the target set for the consultation was to better the 900 comments received at the consultation stage of the now adopted UDP) it still only represents under 1% of the Borough's population. The responses received by September 2000 are summarised in the Committee report summary attached at Appendix 3.

4. PROCEDURES ON RECEIPT OF THE COMMENTS

- 4.1 On receipt, all responses were closely read by planning staff in the Strategic Planning and Information Section. Each respondent was assigned a reference number and their response was broken down into individual comments about specific policy areas, coded according to the topic. All the details were then entered onto the UDP database to facilitate analysis. All members of the Strategic Planning and Information Section have access to the database.
- 4.2 Those who had responded to the full Issues Paper received an acknowledgement, together with others who specifically requested it.
- 4.3 Once entered onto the database, comments could then be searched by respondent or topic. All policy authors were given a print out of the comments pertaining to their topic, in order to take them on board in policy development work.
- 4.4 Some of the responses received to the householder Issues Summary Leaflet related to non-planning matters. Where appropriate, these were forwarded to the relevant Council Department for action.

5. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL AS A MEANS OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- 5.1 An integral part of the process of reviewing the adopted UDP since June 2000 has been the sustainability appraisal. In brief, this involves the checking of the UDP strategy, policies and proposals against sustainability criteria, to ensure that the overall effect of the Plan will, on balance, be positive for the environment, communities and the economy. The details of this process, including participants and outcomes, are provided in a separate document, which is also available to the public. Its title is "Sustainability Appraisal of the Oldham Unitary Development Plan - Appraisal of the Replacement UDP First Deposit Draft, August 2001".
- 5.2 What is particularly significant is that the appraisal process has to date operated through a Working Group. The Working Group membership includes Council Members, business representatives, officers from key agencies and a representative of Oldham Environment Forum. Therefore, over the fifteen months since the group was established, the external interests represented have made a substantial and valuable contribution to the policy development process.

Appendices: 1 Issues Paper contents page and Issues Summary
 Leaflet
 2 Press cuttings
 3 September 2000 committee report

For appendices 1 and 2, please see the paper copy of this report. Thank you.

APPENDIX 3

REPORT TO ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORT COMMITTEE, 13TH
SEPTEMBER 2000.

ITEM NO:

OLDHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Report of: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF POLICY,
PERFORMANCE AND REGENERATION**

To: ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Date: 13TH SEPTEMBER 2000

**Title: RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON
ISSUES
FOR THE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
REVIEW**

INTRODUCTION

Between March and May 2000, the public were consulted on land use issues for the Oldham Unitary Development Plan (UDP) review. The purpose of this report is to summarise the main findings resulting from that consultation exercise.

SUMMARY

In total, 2,431 comments were made about issues for the UDP review by 376 people, comprising a mixture of private individuals and representatives of organisations, Government Departments and Agencies. The greatest number of responses from individuals came from the Saddleworth and Lees area and the smallest number from inner areas of Oldham. The single topic to attract the most comments was Housing.

Key findings include:

- ??of the comments received about household growth, 42% advocate restricting new housing provision to below projected growth rates and 16% want no new building, while 22% propose that housing provision should be at or above the projected household growth levels;
- ??of the comments received about where to identify additional housing land, 40% suggest that only brownfield development should be allowed and 30% that no Green Belt land should be released for housing;
- ??of the comments received about providing for employment development, 62% support the allocation of additional employment land and twice as many people think that we should not rely on neighbouring areas, such as Kingsway, for employment as think that we should;
- ??of the comments received on the Saddleworth Primary Employment Zones, 45% would prefer to see them used for mixed uses including some residential, while 27% would prefer to see them kept for employment uses;
- ??of the comments received about District Centres, 58% consider them to perform a valuable role and a further 8% wish to see various improvements to the Centres, and on the issue of out of town shopping, 55% of the comments oppose the provision of further out of town facilities as opposed to 6% in favour;
- ??on the issue of recreational open space, 54% of the comments received value it highly, a further 17% suggest that additional open spaces are needed and 24% comment on how improvements could lead to areas being more heavily used;
- ??of the comments received about renewable energy, 73% support it while 23% specifically oppose wind farms or the identification of sites for renewable energy developments; and
- ??on the question of habitat protection, 63% of the comments support habitat protection as a top priority, while 14% advocate an approach which would involve some loss of less valuable habitats where it resulted in other benefits.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The environmental implications will depend on how the UDP responds to the comments made, and this will be assessed through the sustainability appraisal process being carried out in parallel with UDP preparation.

Energy- none

Transport - none

Pollution - none

Consumption & Use of Resources - none

Natural Environment - none
Built Environment - none

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended:

- i) that Members agree that the responses received should be used to inform further work on the review of the UDP; and**
- ii) that appropriate publicity be given to the outcomes of the issues stage consultation.**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100D(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act.

Contact Officer: Sarah Barker

Telephone No. 0161 911 4153

Doc Ref: udp cons feedback