

**Oldham**

**Local**

**Development**

**Framework**

**Development Plan Document -  
Joint Core Strategy and  
Development Management Policies -  
Environment Statement**

**Adopted 9 November 2011**



**Oldham**  
Council

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Oldham Council submitted the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (referred to hereafter as the 'joint DPD') on 28 February 2011 to the Secretary of State.
- 1.2 Susan Holland MA Dip TP MRTPI was appointed as the Planning Inspector to undertake an independent examination into the joint DPD. A Pre-Hearing Meeting was held on 21 April 2011. At the meeting the Inspector explained and discussed procedural and administrative matters for the Examination Hearing.
- 1.3 The Hearings took place from 2 to 16 June 2011. There were eight sessions in total, covering a range of issues including the Sustainability Appraisal.
- 1.4 The Examination closed 30 August 2011. The Inspector's Report concludes and recommends the Joint DPD is sound, subject to the minor changes recommended in the Inspector's Report, all of which were put forward by the council and approved by the Inspector.
- 1.5 Oldham Council adopted the joint DPD on 9 November 2011. The joint DPD now forms part of the Oldham Local Development Framework (LDF).
- 1.6 The joint DPD covers the whole borough except that part that falls within the Peak District National Park.
- 1.7 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act Section 19 (5) requires a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) to be undertaken for new Development Plan Documents (DPDs). The purpose of a SA is to promote sustainable development through the integration of economic, social and environmental objectives when preparing a DPD.
- 1.8 The European Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC (and The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) requires the assessment of the impacts of the DPD on the environment.
- 1.9 The SA of the joint DPD has incorporated the requirements of the SEA Directive and Regulations. The SA follows the guidance set out in *Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents* (ODPM, 2005), which incorporates the SEA regulations.
- 1.10 *Planning Policy Statement 12 Local Spatial Planning* (PPS12) paragraph 4.43 explains the SA should perform a key role in providing a sound evidence base for the plan and form an integrated part of the plan preparation process. It should also inform the evaluation of alternatives. The SA should provide a powerful means of proving to decision makers, and the public, that the plan is the most appropriate given reasonable alternatives.
- 1.11 The SA report and non technical summary can be viewed on the council's website and at local libraries.

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**1.12** The Inspector's Report stated the "SA has been carried out, independently verified and is adequate".

**Post Adoption Statement**

**1.13** Upon adoption of the joint DPD, the SEA regulations require the council to prepare a statement which sets out:

- how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;
- how the environmental report has been taken into account;
- how opinions expressed in response to consultations have been taken into account;
- the reasons for choosing the plan as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives considered; and
- the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan.

**1.14** This SEA adoption statement considers each of these matters in turn.

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## **2 HOW ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS HAVE BEEN INTEGRATED INTO THE PLAN**

- 2.1** Environmental considerations have formed an integrated part of the plan preparation process. The findings of the SA reports have informed the joint DPD preparation.
- 2.2** The SA framework considers the environmental factors listed in the SEA Directive. This includes issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.
- 2.3** The stages of the SA of the joint DPD are set out in Table 1. This illustrates how the SA is incorporated into the DPD process.

**Table 1 Stages of DPD and SA preparation**

Sustainability Appraisal Stages	Sustainability Appraisal Tasks	Date completed
<b>DPD Stage 1: Pre-production – Evidence gathering</b>		
Stage A Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope.	A1: Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes, and sustainability objectives.	Scoping Report (April 2007) Scoping Report Update I (September 2007) Scoping Report Update II (March 2009) Scoping Report Update III (April 2010)
	A2: Collecting baseline information	Scoping Report (April 2007)
	A3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems	Scoping Report (April 2007)
	A4: Developing the SA framework	Scoping Report (April 2007). Sustainability objectives were amended in the Scoping Report Update I (September 2007)
	A5: Consulting on the scope of the SA	Consultation on the Scoping Report took place between 25 April and 30 May 2007. The three key statutory consultees – Natural England, Environment Agency and English Heritage were consulted as well as other stakeholders.

Sustainability Appraisal Stages	Sustainability Appraisal Tasks	Date completed
		<p>Issues and Options Scoping Report Update I (September 2007): consultation took place between 2 November 2007 and 14 December 2007.</p> <p>Preferred Options Scoping Report Update II (March 2009): consultation took place between 2 March and 17 April 2009.</p> <p>Refining Options Scoping Report Update III (April 2010): consultation took place between 7 May and 18 June 2010.</p>
<p><b>DPD Stage 2: Production</b></p> <p>Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects</p>	<p>B1: Testing the DPD objectives against the SA framework</p>	<p>Included in Issues and Options SA (November 2007). This identified five plan / SA objectives where there could be potential tension.</p> <p>Included in Preferred Options SA (March 2009). This identified five plan / SEA objectives where there could be potential tension.</p> <p>Included in Refining Options SA (April 2010). The Non Technical summary explains that at Refining Options the policies were fully drafted which addressed the potential areas of tension between plan objectives and SA objectives.</p> <p>Included in Proposed Submission SA (September 2010). No potential areas of tension were identified.</p>

Sustainability Appraisal Stages	Sustainability Appraisal Tasks	Date completed
	<p>B2: Developing the DPD options</p>	<p>Issues and Options DPD (November 2007) identified three spatial options. The SA (November 2007) appraised each of these options.</p> <p>Three alternative strategies (options) were suggested by respondents to the Issues and Options consultation. As none of the alternative strategies included an appraisal, the council undertook an appraisal using the SA framework based on information available. The results of this are shown in the SA report at Preferred Options.</p> <p>The Preferred Options DPD (March 2009) firmed up the preferred spatial strategy. The SA (March 2009) assessed the preferred way forward. It also appraised key sites and policy directions.</p> <p>At Refining Options the SA (April 2010) included an appraisal of the preferred way forward and policies.</p> <p>At Proposed Submission the SA (September 2010) included an appraisal of the preferred way forward and policies.</p>
	<p>B3: Predicting the effects of the DPD.            B4: Evaluating the effects of the DPD            B5: Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects.</p>	<p>Issues and Options SA (November 2007) appraised the three options, including predicting and evaluating the effects of the DPD. Mitigation measures were referred to where appropriate. This can be seen in Appendix 4 and summarised in sections 5 and 6 of the SA report (2007).</p>



Sustainability Appraisal Stages	Sustainability Appraisal Tasks	Date completed
		<p>In the Preferred Options SA (March 2009) the council included the appraisal of the three alternative spatial strategies suggested by respondents to the Issues and Options consultation. Details of this are included in Appendix 6. This included predicating and evaluating the effects of the alternative options.</p> <p>The Preferred Options SA also predicted and evaluated the effects of the preferred spatial strategy, key locations and policy directions. Mitigation measures were referred to where appropriate. Details of this are included in Appendix 4 and summarised in sections 5 and 6.</p> <p>At Refining Options the SA (April 2010) included an appraisal of the preferred way forward and policies. This included predicting and evaluating the effects of the DPD and referring to mitigation measures where appropriate. Details are included in Appendix 4 and summarised in sections 5 and 6.</p> <p>At Proposed Submission the SA (September 2010) included an appraisal of the preferred way forward and policies. This included predicting and evaluating the effects of the DPD and referring to mitigation measures where appropriate. Details are included in Appendix 4 and 5 and summarised in sections 5 and 6.</p> <p>The Scoping Report (April 2007) included proposed indicators to monitor the significant effects of implementing the plan. This can be seen in Appendix 5.</p>
	<p>B6: Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the DPDs</p>	

Sustainability Appraisal Stages	Sustainability Appraisal Tasks	Date completed
		<p>Scoping Report Update I (September 2007) included a list of amended proposed indicators to monitor the significant effects of implementing the plan. These can be found in section 3.</p> <p>The Preferred Options SA (March 2009) included amended proposed indicators to monitor the significant effects of implementing the plan. These can be found in section 7.7.</p> <p>The amended proposed indicators were also contained within the Scoping Report Update II (March 2009) section 2, and the Preferred Options report (March 2009) section 10.</p> <p>The Refining Options SA (April 2010) included amended proposed indicators to monitor the significant effects of implementing the plan. These can be found in section 7.</p> <p>The amended proposed indicators were also contained within the Scoping Report Update III (April 2010) section 2 and the Refining Options report (April 2010) Appendix 1.</p> <p>The Proposed Submission SA (September 2010) included final proposed indicators to monitor the significant effects of implementing the plan. These can be found in section 7.</p> <p>The final indicators were also contained within the Proposed Submission joint DPD (September 2010) Appendix 1.</p>

Sustainability Appraisal Stages	Sustainability Appraisal Tasks	Date completed
Stage C and D: Preparing and consulting on the Sustainability Appraisal Report and Preferred Options of the DPD	C1: Preparing the SA report; and D1: Public participation on the preferred options of the DPD and the SA report D2(i) Appraising significant changes	SA Reports and Non Technical summaries and the DPD were prepared and issued for consultation for each stage at: Issues and Options (November 2007) Preferred Options (March 2009) Refining Options (April 2010) Proposed Submission (September 2010). Any changes arising from each consultation was appraised as the joint DPD progressed. Following consultation at the publication stage on the proposed submission DPD and the SA only minor changes were proposed. These minor amendments did not alter the conclusions or recommendations of the SA.
<b>DPD Stage 3: Examination</b>		
Stage D	D2(ii): Appraising significant changes resulting from representations	Any changes arising from each consultation was appraised as the joint DPD progressed. Following consultation at the publication stage on the proposed submission DPD and the SA only minor changes were proposed. These minor amendments did not alter the conclusions or recommendations of the SA.

Sustainability Appraisal Stages	Sustainability Appraisal Tasks	Date completed
<b>DPD Stage 4: Adoption and Monitoring</b>		
Stage D	D3: Making decisions and providing information	<p>Following examination of the joint DPD, the Inspector's Report concluded the DPD was sound subject to the minor changes which she approved. The Inspector concluded that the SA has been carried out, independently verified and is adequate.</p> <p>The council at the Full Council meeting on 9 November approved the adoption of the Joint DPD and supporting documents including the incorporation of the minor changes listed in the Inspector's Report.</p> <p>The council has prepared this Environment Statement to provide information outlining how the findings of the full SA process have been taken into account and how sustainability considerations have been integrated into the joint DPD.</p>

**2.4** The Scoping Report (April 2007) looked at other plans, programmes and strategies that the joint DPD needed to take into account. The Scoping Report included baseline information that helped identify key issues and problems that the SA and joint DPD needed to address. The issues informed the SA objectives, which formed part of the SA framework. The SA objectives evolved over time and are shown below.

## **SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES:**

### **Economic**

EC1 To promote the sustainable regeneration of the borough.

EC2 To promote the borough's image.

EC3 To promote efficient patterns of movement in support of sustainable economic regeneration.

EC4 To promote the sustainable economic performance of the borough.

EC5 To promote sustainable economic growth and development.

EC6 To promote sustainable rural communities.

EC7 To promote sustainable tourism development.

EC8 To protect and enhance the vitality and viability of Oldham Town Centre and the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill.

EC9 To improve the economic well-being of the borough's population.

EC10 To promote the development of innovative and knowledge based industries.

### **Environmental**

ENV1 To ensure the effective and efficient use of all types of land and buildings in the most sustainable locations.

ENV2 To promote high quality design and sustainable construction.

ENV3 To reduce the need to travel.

ENV4 To promote sustainable transport choices.

ENV5 To protect and improve air quality.

ENV6 To conserve and enhance the borough's historical, archaeological and cultural heritage and its settings, and its landscape and townscape character.

ENV7 To protect and improve the borough's green infrastructure, biodiversity and geodiversity.

ENV8 To contribute to reducing the effects of climate change.

ENV9 To minimise energy use, promote energy efficiency and to encourage the use of energy from renewable resources.

ENV10 To manage waste sustainably, to minimise waste and its production, and increase reuse, recycling and recovery rates.

ENV11 To ensure the prudent use and sustainable management of man-made and natural resources, including minerals.

ENV12 To protect and improve the quality of land and soil.

ENV13 To protect and improve ground and surface water resources.

ENV14 To minimise the impact of, and mitigate against flooding.

## **Social**

SOC1 To promote community cohesion in the borough.

SOC2 To promote mixed, balanced and inclusive sustainable communities.

SOC3 To engage the Community in the planning process.

SOC4 To promote accessibility to key services.

SOC5 To protect and improve local environmental quality.

SOC6 To promote quality and accessible open space, sport and recreational facilities.

SOC7 To reduce crime, disorder and the fear of crime.

SOC8 To promote a healthy and balanced housing market for the borough.

SOC9 To meet the borough's affordable housing needs.

SOC10 To improve the health of the borough's population.

SOC11 To improve education and skills levels of the borough's population.

## **Habitats Regulations Assessment**

**2.5** A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the joint DPD was undertaken for the council by the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU). The following European designated sites were identified as having some potential to be affected by development proposed and planned for within Oldham:

- South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation
- South Pennine Moors Special Protection Area
- Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation

**2.6** The HRA results were incorporated into the SA and the joint DPD where appropriate as environmental considerations.

## 3 HOW THE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT HAS BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

3.1 The SA report has informed production of the joint DPD.

### ISSUES AND OPTIONS

3.2 A SA was carried out for the joint DPD 'Issues and Options' stage. The SA report and its non technical summary report were published in November 2007.

3.3 At Issues and Options stage the council asked people about three options:

Option A - Focused Regeneration – focused development on regeneration areas including Oldham Town Centre and HMR area. This option involved maintaining the Green Belt, Other Protected Open Land (OPOL) and Land Reserved for Future Development (LRFD).

Option B – Urban Concentration - spread the growth and development around the borough. This option involved maintaining the Green Belt, OPOL and LRFD.

Option C – Urban concentration including planned expansion– built on option B but also considered the potential release of OPOL and LRFD.

3.4 The Issues and Options stage was accompanied by maps which showed the status of land for each of the above options. Issues and Options discussed issues relating to safeguarded land and protected open land.

3.5 In arriving at these three options the council had regard to a number of national, regional and local guidance, policies and evidence. Some of the key elements are summarised below. Some planning matters, such as promoting public transport accessibility and developments that are of high quality design, are taken as read and are not summarised below.

- a. Green Belt - All three options maintained the Green Belt boundaries in the 2006 UDP, a position which has remained unchanged throughout all our LDF consultations. This position is supported by the RSS policy and the vast majority of the public responses received throughout consultations.
- b. OPOL and LRFD releases - The UDP says that non-Green Belt protected land will be the first locations to be considered if and when we need to identify new development opportunities. Through the LDF consultations the council wanted to test opinion on whether or not the time had arrived for releasing some or all of these sites in this plan period. Our thinking on these sites reflected the emerging findings from our Employment Land Review which showed that we needed to consider some potential releases if we were to improve our local economy by providing a portfolio of employment sites that were fit for the 21st century. At the 'Issues and Options' stage we took the opportunity to ask the generic question

rather than being site specific (following that consultation we took the opportunity at `Preferred Options` stage to refine details over the specific sites that could be released).

- c. Focusing growth on our `centres` versus spreading development around the borough - The issue with these approaches was whether we should adopt a `centres` first approach to all new developments or whether a stance that sought to locate developments across the built up areas - including `centres` but also other areas that are accessible to them - should be adopted.

**3.6** A summary of the assessment of the three options at Issues and Options stage is provided in Table 2.

**Table 2 Summary of assessment of the three spatial options at Issues and Options stage**

<p><b>Option A</b> <b>Focussed Regeneration</b></p>	<p><b>Economic Overview:</b> This option is generally positive in relation to economic objectives in the short, medium and long term. In the short term, in particular, it scores more highly than the other options in terms of promoting sustainable regeneration and promoting efficient patterns of movement. It also scores more highly than the other options in relation to protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres. Overall it scores slightly higher than Option B, reflecting the benefits arising from the `critical mass` of focussing development compared to spreading it more widely. Overall it scores slightly lower than Option C, however, reflecting the potential economic benefits of releasing greenfield land.</p> <p><b>Environmental Overview:</b> This option is the most positive option in relation to environmental objectives, particularly in relation to promoting sustainable transport choices, contributing to reducing the effects of climate change, minimising energy use, ensuring prudent use and management of man-made and natural resources and protecting and improving land and soil. This reflects that development would be focussed on the most accessible locations, and that regeneration funding could promote more sustainable forms of development. Overall it scores more highly than Option B where development is less focussed and may be in less accessible locations. It scores significantly higher than Option C which involves the development of greenfield sites.</p> <p><b>Social Overview:</b> This option is generally positive in relation to social objectives, particularly in relation to protecting and improving the local environment and reducing crime. Overall it scores more highly than Options B and C, particularly in the short term.</p>
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<b>Option B</b>  <b>Urban Concentration</b>	<b>Economic Overview:</b> This option is generally positive in relation to economic objectives particularly in the medium to long term. It is, however, weaker than the other options in relation to promoting the borough's image and, overall, it scores slightly lower than Options A and C. This reflects that development would be more 'thinly spread' across the borough without any additional greenfield land available for economic development.
	<b>Environmental Overview:</b> This option is generally positive in relation to environmental objectives. It scores higher than Option C which reflects that greenfield development is not involved. It does not, however, score as highly as Option A due to development being more spread across the borough and not necessarily being as accessible.
	<b>Social Overview:</b> This option is generally positive in relation to social objectives although it scores lower than Options A and C, particularly in relation to promoting a healthy housing market and meeting affordable housing needs. This reflects that development would be more 'thinly spread' across the borough without any additional greenfield land available for housing development.
<b>Option C</b>  <b>Urban concentration including planned expansion</b>	<b>Economic Overview:</b> This option is generally positive in relation to economic objectives. It scores more highly than Options A and B, particularly in relation to promoting economic growth. This reflects the potential economic benefits of releasing greenfield land.
	<b>Environmental Overview:</b> This option scores the lowest of the Options in relation to environmental objectives. It scores particularly low in relation to ensuring effective and efficient use of land and buildings, ensuring prudent use and management of man-made and natural resources, protecting and improving land and soil and protecting and improving water resources. This reflects that the option involves the development of greenfield land.
	<b>Social Overview:</b> This option is generally positive in relation to social objectives. It scores slightly higher than Option B, particularly in the short term in relation to promoting a healthy housing market and meeting affordable housing needs due to greenfield land being potentially available for housing development. It does not, however, score as highly as Option A where development is more focussed.

**3.7** Three alternatives were suggested by a handful of respondents at Issues and Options stage. These were:

- 'Targeted Regeneration' submitted on behalf of amongst others Saddleworth Parish Council and the Saddleworth and Lees Community Council;
- 'Transformation and Cohesion' submitted on behalf of the Oldham and Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder
- 'Regeneration and Sustainable Communities' Submitted on behalf of Purico, the development agency of Whiteoak and Hollowoak Limited, owners of the Robert Fletchers estate at Greenfield Saddleworth.

**3.8** None of the submitted alternative options included a SA. In the absence of this the council therefore undertook its own appraisal of these alternatives. Details of this appraisal are shown in Table 3 below. Although elements of the council's own options could be found in parts of the submitted alternatives, it was the council's view that none of the alternatives should be adopted as the council's preferred way forward for the LDF.

**Table 3 Summary of alternative options submitted at Issues and Options stage**

<p><b>Strategy 1 – Targeted Regeneration</b></p> <p>This strategy provided a reasonably clear indication of where development should be located. In carrying out the appraisal an assumption was made that the phrase “Developments would be targeted on places most easily reached by public transport” would include local town centres as these are most easily reached by public transport. In Saddleworth this was taken to include Uppermill, the centre of which is ‘good’ in terms of public transport accessibility, as defined in the adopted Unitary Development Plan. Greenfield is also ‘good’ in terms of public transport accessibility, in the vicinity of the railway station, and was therefore also assumed to be a location where development should potentially be targeted under this strategy.</p> <p>On this basis this alternative was positive in relation to economic objectives, particularly in relation to promoting sustainable regeneration of the borough, promoting the borough’s image, promoting efficient patterns of movement in support of sustainable economic regeneration and protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of town and district centres.</p> <p>It also scored positively in relation to some environmental objectives, namely the effective and efficient use of land and buildings, the promotion of sustainable transport choices and contributing to reducing the effects of climate change. However for the vast majority of environment objectives it was not possible to appraise the strategy on the basis of the information submitted.</p> <p>Similarly it was not possible to appraise this strategy in relation to most of the social objectives, on the basis of the information submitted. It was, however, positive in relation to promoting a healthy and balanced housing market.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 2 - Transformation and Cohesion Strategy</b></p>

The emphasis of this strategy is on housing and economy, however the strategy only referred to “economically aspirational households” and “quality rather than quantity” in relation economic development. This emphasis, together with a lack of detail, made it difficult to appraise this strategy in relation to the full range of objectives.

Also, the strategy contained the phrase “excellent public transport accessibility” which is not a recognised category of accessibility as defined in the adopted Unitary Development Plan. It was not, therefore, possible to properly appraise this strategy in relation to accessibility.

The strategy was positive in relation to some of the economic objectives, particularly the promotion of the borough’s image, however the lack of detail meant that it could not be appraised against some of the economic objectives.

In relation to environmental objectives the strategy was particularly positive in relation to the effective and efficient use of land and buildings, but the strategy could not be appraised in relation to the other environmental objectives.

Similarly it was not possible to appraise this strategy in relation to most of the social objectives, on the basis of the information submitted. It was, however, positive in relation to protecting and improving local environmental quality.

### **Strategy 3 - Regeneration & Sustainable Communities Strategy**

This strategy was less focused in terms of where development should be located. For example, it mentioned both rejuvenation of HMR areas and edge of settlement development. This resulted in some scores being potentially both positive and negative for certain objectives. For many objectives, it was not possible to appraise this strategy on the basis of the information provided. It also had a reduced emphasis on accessibility considerations which has sustainability implications.

It was not considered possible to appraise this strategy against most of the economic objectives due to its lack of focus. It did, however, score positively in relation to promoting the borough’s image. In relation to the environmental objectives, the strategy was considered to have potentially positive and negative impacts in relation to the effective and efficient use of land and buildings, promoting sustainable transport choices and contributing to reducing the effects of climate change. The strategy could not be appraised in relation to the other environmental objectives.

Due to lack of detail it was also not possible to appraise this strategy against social objectives.

## PREFERRED OPTIONS

- 3.9** A SA was carried out for the joint DPD 'Preferred Options' stage and published in March 2009, alongside a non technical summary. An update to the Scoping Report (Update II) was also published to include any new plans, policies or programmes that needed to be taken into account and amend any monitoring indicators.
- 3.10** The joint DPD Appendices explains that at Preferred Options Stage the council had firmed up its way forward for the LDF by focusing growth on sustainable and accessible locations in the built-up areas, including regeneration areas, combined with a limited release of safeguarded and protected land.
- 3.11** 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 impacts on global and local environments. The way forward, and the alternative options that the council consulted upon, were 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, regeneration area and investment programmes, the Metrolink proposals, the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement, for example – that the LDF aims to build upon.
- 3.12** The council has had regard to a number of factors in determining the way forward for the LDF. These include:
- i. national policies;
  - ii. Oldham's local aspirations for economic prosperity, health and wellbeing, and safe and strong communities as outlined in 'Oldham Beyond', the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement;
  - iii. Greater Manchester's ambitious plans for growth and development as set out in the Greater Manchester Strategy;
  - iv. local area masterplans and regeneration initiatives such as HMR and NDC;
  - v. education proposals for the borough such as the regional science centre;
  - vi. findings from the evidence base;
  - vii. the alternative options that were considered as part of the earlier stages;
  - viii. findings from the Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitats Regulations Assessment; and
  - ix. feedback from talking with people."
- 3.13** Taking all of the above into consideration it was the council's view was that the planning and development strategy that was best suited to delivering Oldham's aspirations for transformation and regeneration was not directly any of the options and submitted alternatives considered at Issues and Option stage but was a combination or 'hybrid' of the three options.
- 3.14** 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; 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 Kingsway, Ashton Moss and Central Park) offer to the borough's economy, whilst at the same time providing employment land for businesses locally.
- f. 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. 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 spatial elements of the transforming education agenda and the programme for new health and well-being centres and facilities.

**3.15** Table 4 sets out the Preferred Way Forward and the evidence to support the strategy as well as showing how the preferred way forward links to the original options consulted on. This shows that the preferred way forward is to maintain OPOL, except for Foxdenton (OPOL 3), and release LRFD 3 and 4 at Foxdenton. This approach linked to environmental protection, promoting regeneration and economic prosperity.

**Table 4 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 above
Maintain the Green Belt.  (This links to environmental protection and promoting regeneration.)	Consultation responses.	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 above
<p>Maintain all OPOL, except for Foxdenton.</p> <p>(This links to environmental protection, promoting regeneration and economic prosperity.)</p>	<p>Employment Land Review.</p> <p>Consultation responses.</p>	<p>Links mostly to options A and B, but Foxdenton also links to C.</p>
<p>Release the LRFD at Foxdenton, Warren Lane, Haven Lane, Lancaster Sports Club, but maintain the LRFD at Bullcote Lane.</p> <p>(This links to environmental protection, promoting regeneration and economic prosperity.)</p>	<p>Employment Land Review.</p> <p>Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.</p> <p>Consultation responses.</p>	<p>Links mostly to option C, but Bullcote Lane also links to A and B.</p>
<p>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:</p>		
<p>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).</p> <p>(This links to making Oldham an address of choice.)</p>	<p>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 &amp; Hollinwood (10%), Shaw, Royton &amp; Crompton (10%) and Saddleworth &amp; Lees (10%).</p>	<p>Links mostly to options A and B, but also C in respect of Foxdenton (which will have a small amount of ancillary residential development to facilitate bringing forward the infrastructure requirements of the employment site).</p>



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 above
	<p>Additional evidence includes:</p> <p>Strategic Housing Market Assessment.</p> <p>Consultation responses.</p>	
<p>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 the role of Manchester City Centre and our neighbouring district's key sites.</p> <p>(This links to economic prosperity.)</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Additional evidence includes:</p> <p>Oldham and Rochdale Economic and Skills Alliance (ORESAs) Prospectus.</p> <p>‘Oldham Beyond’.</p>	<p>Links mostly to options A and B, but also C in respect of Foxdenton</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>Local shopping will be focused on existing shopping parades and local neighbourhoods.</p>	<p>Oldham Retail and Leisure Study.</p> <p>‘Oldham Beyond’.</p>	<p>Links to options A (for major developments) and B (for local neighbourhoods).</p>

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 above
<p>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.</p> <p>(This links to economic prosperity and sustainable communities.)</p>		
<p>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.</p> <p>(This links to climate change and sustainable use of resources.)</p>	<p>Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. Employment Land Review.</p> <p>AGMA Energy Study.</p> <p>Oldham's Design Principles.</p>	<p>Links to options A and B.</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>(This links to climate change and accessibility.)</p>	<p>Local Transport Plan.</p> <p>Metrolink proposals.</p> <p>Oldham public transport accessibility profiles.</p>	<p>Links to options A and B, although Foxdenton is also accessible by public transport.</p>
<p>6) Ensure residential developments are accessible to a range of key services.</p>	<p>PPS3.</p> <p>Oldham's access to services map.</p>	<p>Links to options A and B.</p>



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 above
(This links to sustainable communities.)		
<p>7) Protect and enhance existing green infrastructure, and where appropriate providing new quality accessible open spaces, to promote health and well-being.</p> <p>(This links to environmental protection, sustainable use of resources, health and well-being and sustainable communities.)</p>	<p>AGMA Green Infrastructure Study.</p> <p>Oldham's PPG17 Local Needs Audit and Assessment.</p>	Links to all three options.
<p>8) Protect, conserve and enhance the borough's natural, built and historic environments.</p> <p>(This links to environmental protection and sustainable use of resources.)</p>	<p>PPS 5.</p> <p>Oldham's Landscape Character Assessment.</p> <p>Greater Manchester's Historic Landscape Characterisation Study.</p> <p>HMR Heritage Assessments.</p>	Links to all three options.
<p>9) Facilitate the land use dimensions of the borough's education plans (such as the regional science centre 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.</p>	<p>Primary Capital programme.</p> <p>University Campus Oldham.</p> <p>Oldham Sixth Form College.</p> <p>The Oldham College.</p> <p>Primary Care Trust.</p>	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 above
(This links to economic prosperity, Oldham as a university town, and health and well-being.)		

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

- i. address the climate change and sustainable development agenda.
- ii. promote economic diversification, growth and prosperity and sustainable economic regeneration.
- iii. support the transforming education agenda.
- iv. encourage sustainable and high quality design and construction.
- v. ensure a balanced and sustainable local housing market.
- vi. reduce the need to travel and promote public transport accessibility.
- vii. improve and value local natural, built and historic environments and our green infrastructure network.
- viii. secure safe and strong communities.
- ix. tackle the health and well-being agenda.

**3.17** Tables 5 - 7 provide a summary of the SA of the preferred way forward that forms part of the joint DPD. The council's preferred way forward is considered to be realistic, achievable and deliverable. It is also the most appropriate planning and development strategy for Oldham. In relation to the three alternatives the majority of housing will be in Oldham Town Centre and regeneration areas. This links to Option A and reflects the findings of the recent assessment of potential housing land that demonstrated these areas could accommodate the majority of the borough's housing potential. Employment development will be more dispersed around the borough due to its nature and location, particularly the location of existing employment areas and links to Option B. Small amounts of currently safeguarded land and locally protected land will be released under the preferred way forward which links to Option C.

**Table 5 Summary of sustainability appraisal findings - economic overview**

<p>The preferred way forward scores positively in relation to economic objectives in the short, medium and long term. It scores particularly positively in relation to:</p>
<p><b>Promoting the sustainable regeneration of the borough</b></p> <p>Focusing development in regeneration areas will stimulate sustainable regeneration activities in the shorter term. Spreading development wider in the borough will promote sustainable regeneration in the medium to longer term. Releasing land at Foxdenton for</p>

employment development (possibly facilitated by a small amount of housing), and Haven Lane and Warren Lane for housing development, and Lancaster Sports Club for sports facilities, will promote sustainable regeneration over the medium to longer term.

#### **Promoting the borough's image**

The preferred way forward will promote the borough's image, particularly through transformational regeneration activities. This will be more immediate in areas of focused regeneration such as HMR and NDC areas, but will also benefit other areas of the borough.

#### **Promoting the sustainable economic performance of the borough**

Focusing and spreading growth will promote the sustainable economic performance of the borough in the short, medium and longer term. Releasing land at Foxdenton, for employment development, will promote sustainable economic performance, particularly in the medium to longer term.

#### **Promoting sustainable economic growth and development**

Focusing and spreading employment development will ensure that developable land will be available to promote sustainable economic growth and development in the short, medium and longer term. It will also help to create local jobs. Releasing land at Foxdenton, for employment development, will make more land available for existing businesses, and encourage new inward investment.

#### **Protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of `centres`**

Permitting retail, housing and employment development in Oldham Town Centre and the borough's other `centres` will significantly contribute towards protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of the centres.

#### **Improving the economic well-being of the borough's population**

Focusing and spreading employment development will improve the economic wellbeing of the borough's population, by providing a spread of job opportunities. Releasing land at Foxdenton, for employment development, will provide more job opportunities, particularly in the medium to longer term.

#### **Promoting the development of innovative and knowledge based industries**

The preferred way forward focuses development on regeneration areas and strategic sites, such as Hollinwood Business District and Chadderton Technology Park, which particularly encourages innovative and knowledge-based industries. Releasing land at Foxdenton, for employment development, will provide more opportunities for the development of these industries, particularly in the medium to longer term.

**Table 6 Summary of sustainability appraisal findings - environmental overview**

<p>The preferred way forward scores positively in relation to environmental objectives in the short, medium and long term. It scores particularly positively in relation to:</p>
<p><b>Ensuring the effective and efficient use of all types of land and buildings in the most sustainable locations</b></p> <p>The preferred way forward will prioritise the use of brownfield land and buildings, and help achieve at least 80% of housing being on brownfield land. This will contribute to the effective and efficient use of land and buildings in the most sustainable locations, including the re-use of mills.</p>
<p><b>Promoting sustainable transport choices</b></p> <p>Focusing development at key transport points, and encouraging walking, cycling and the use of public transport will promote sustainable transport choices.</p>
<p><b>Contributing to reducing the effects of climate change</b></p> <p>The preferred way forward will contribute to reducing the effects of climate change by focusing development in sustainable and accessible locations, reducing the need to travel and promoting a shift to a low carbon economy. It will also address the zero carbon buildings agenda by encouraging high quality design and sustainable construction techniques. The protection and enhancement of green infrastructure will also help to mitigate the effects of climate change.</p>
<p><b>Minimising the impact of, and mitigating against flooding</b></p> <p>The preferred way forward will be guided by PPS25 and the findings of the SFRA. Mitigation measures against flooding will be put in place, as necessary, for new developments. The encouragement of sustainable drainage systems and the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure will also contribute towards meeting this objective.</p>

**Table 7 Summary of sustainability appraisal findings - social overview**

<p>The preferred way forward scores positively in relation to social objectives in the short, medium and long term. It scores particularly positively in relation to:</p>
<p><b>Promoting a healthy and balanced housing market for the borough</b></p> <p>The preferred way forward will contribute towards meeting this objective by providing sufficient land for at least 289 dwellings per annum on average over the LDF plan period. Although developable land is in limited supply, focusing housing development on Oldham Town Centre, regeneration areas, strategic sites and key transport points will promote a</p>

healthy and balanced housing market. The development of land at Haven Lane and Warren Lane, and Foxdenton, will promote a healthy and balanced housing market by making more land available for housing.

#### **Meeting the borough's affordable housing needs**

The delivery of a healthy and balanced housing market in line with the preferred way forward will help to meet the borough's affordable housing needs. This will be supported by a policy on securing affordable housing as part of new residential development.

#### **Improving the health of the borough's population**

The preferred way forward will help to improve health, for example by protecting and enhancing green infrastructure and open spaces, improving air quality, encouraging economic growth and prosperity, promoting walking and cycling and the programme for new health and well-being centres.

#### **Improving education and skills levels of the borough's population**

The preferred way forward will improve education and skills levels of the borough's population by promoting the transforming education agenda, the programme to improve primary schools and the expansion of higher and further education. This includes a new regional science centre in Oldham Town Centre which will comprise laboratories, exhibition areas and lecture theatres. The development of high quality employment opportunities, for example at Hollinwood Business District and Chadderton Technology Park will foster new skills.

**3.18** The SA at Preferred Options Stage demonstrated that the preferred strategy was more sustainable than the other options considered.

**3.19** The preferred way forward did not change after the Preferred Options stage.

### **REFINING OPTIONS**

**3.20** A SA was carried out for the joint DPD 'Refining Options' stage and published in May 2010, alongside a non technical summary. An update to the Scoping Report (Update III) was also published to include any new plans, policies or programmes that needed to be taken into account and amend any monitoring indicators.

**3.21** The Refining Options SA included an appraisal of the preferred way forward. This included further detail to assess objectives, particularly environmental objectives. For example, it fed in the Landscape Character Assessment, the Urban Historic Characterisation Study and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment findings.

### **PUBLICATION STAGE**

- 
- 3.22** A SA was carried out for the joint DPD 'Proposed Submission' stage and published in September 2010, alongside a non technical summary. The Final SA non technical summary explained where potential areas of tension were identified in previous SA Reports and how these had been addressed at Refining Options stage.
- 3.23** The Final SA sets out how the council arrived at the preferred way forward (spatial strategy), details of the SA undertaken on each option and alternative options put forward.
- 3.24** Section 6 of the SA report 'Impact of the Plan' sets out the conclusions from the SA. This states that: "*The sustainability appraisal process did not identify any negative social, environmental or economic effects for the preferred way forward. The option scored positively or significantly positively in relation to all the SA objectives.*"
- 3.25** The policies resulted in mainly positive social, environmental or economic effects.

## 4 HOW OPINIONS EXPRESSED HAVE BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

**4.1** The joint DPD was prepared in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended). It was also prepared in line with the council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). Details of consultation on the joint DPD can be seen in the Consultation Statement (September 2010) and the Consultation Statement Update (February 2011).

**4.2** The council published the Scoping Report for comments in April 2007. The three key statutory bodies were consulted – Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England – as well as the following bodies.

- Ripponden Parish Council
- Holme Valley Parish Council
- Saddleworth Parish Council
- Tintwistle Parish Council
- Shaw and Crompton Parish Council
- Mossley Town Council
- Calderdale MBC
- Rochdale MBC
- Derbyshire County Council
- Kirklees MBC
- High Peak Borough Council
- Manchester City Council
- Tameside MBC
- Peak District National Park Authority
- Wigan MBC
- Trafford MBC
- Bolton MBC
- Salford City Council
- Bury MBC
- Stockport MBC
- National Grid
- Highways Agency
- North West Regional Assembly (later renamed 4NW)
- North West Development Agency
- AGMA Policy Unit
- Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority
- Sport England
- United Utilities
- East Midlands Development Agency
- Network Rail
- Powergen Ltd

- Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority (Now called Primary Care Trust)
- Mobile Operators Association
- Yorkshire Forward
- OldhamTown Centre Partnership
- Home Builders Federation
- Greater Manchester Geological Unit
- National Farmers Union
- Forestry Commission
- Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority
- Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive
- British Waterways
- CABE
- Greater Manchester Ecology Unit
- Lancashire Wildlife Trust
- National Trust
- Police Architectural Liaison Officer
- Manchester Airport plc
- Housing Corporation
- Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit
- English Partnerships/Commission for New Towns
- Government Office North West
- Oldham Partnership

**4.3** Responses to this consultation were fed into Scoping Report Update I (September 2007). The council's response to these comments and how they were taken into account can also be found within Update I.

## **ISSUES SURVEY**

**4.4** The council consulted on an Issues Survey in March/April 2007 as a first step in engaging with the community and stakeholders in preparing the joint DPD. The Issues Survey asked for people's opinions around:

- Safer and Stronger Communities
- Housing
- Economy and Enterprise
- Children and Young People
- Healthier Communities and Older People
- Environment

**4.5** It also asked whether there are any strategies, plans, policies or programmes that needed to be taken into consideration.

**4.6** The results from the Issues Survey were fed into the Issues and Options stage and can be viewed in the 'Core Strategy Issues Survey: Analysis of Responses' (2007).



## ISSUES AND OPTIONS

**4.7** At Issues and Options stage the council asked people about three options:

Option A - Focused Regeneration

Option B – Urban Concentration

Option C – Urban Concentration including planned expansion

**4.8** In response to the Issues and Options consultation section 7 of the Issues and Options Public Schedule of Representations and Responses shows that around three quarters of respondents expressed a preference for one of the options. Of these:

- Around half preferred Option A
- Around a sixth preferred Option B
- Around a quarter preferred Option C

**4.9** A handful of respondents preferred Options A and B and one preferred a combination of A and C.

**4.10** In total eight comments were received on the Issues and Options SA Report. These can be seen in Appendix 8 of the Issues and Options Public Schedule of Representations and Responses along with how the council had regard to those comments.

## PREFERRED OPTIONS

**4.11** The Preferred Options Public Schedule of Representations and Responses summarises the comments received in relation to the preferred approach.

**4.12** Fifty seven comments were submitted about the spatial strategy. In total six comments were received on the Preferred Options SA Report, these can be seen on page 261 of the Preferred Options Public Schedule of Representations and Responses along with how the council had regard to those comments.

## REFINING OPTIONS

**4.13** The preferred way forward did not change after the Preferred Options stage. At Refining Options stage the council summarised the main issues and key challenges facing the borough and revised the vision to make it more descriptive of the different places within the borough. The report set out the final suite of policies including the supporting text. The policies in the `Refining Options` were separated into two parts: part one the Core Strategy which set out the way forward for the LDF, and part two the development management policies on how the key elements of the LDF will be implemented. It also set out details of how the LDF will be delivered and monitored.

**4.14** In total, 83 people and organisations responded to the Refining Options Stage. These comments can be viewed in the Refining Options Public Schedule of Representations and Responses. No respondents commented on the Refining Options SA.

## PUBLICATION

**4.15** At Publication Stage the council consulted on the Proposed Submission joint DPD before submitting it to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. The document, was largely based on the draft version consulted on in May / June 2010 called the `Refining Options` stage together with any changes that had arisen as a result of that consultation during the spring.

**4.16** In total 303 comments were received on the Publication stage. These comments can be viewed in the Proposed Submission Public Schedule. One comment was received on the SA, this was from Natural England who supported the Sustainability Appraisal and stated:

*“We are pleased to see that our comments on indicators made at the Preferred Options stage have been acted upon and that this has resulted in the inclusion of an indicator for landscape. We are also pleased to see an indicator for monitoring changes in areas of biodiversity importance and improved local biodiversity.”*

**4.17** The SA concludes that the sustainability process did not identify any negative social, environmental or economic effects for the preferred way forward. The policies resulted in mainly positive effects although some resulted in 'largely positive but some uncertainties' or 'unsure'.

## 5 THE REASON FOR CHOOSING THE PLAN OR PROGRAMME AS ADOPTED, IN LIGHT OF THE OTHER REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES DEALT WITH

### 5.1 ISSUES AND OPTIONS

- 5.2 A SA of the options was carried out on 10 September 2007 by officers in the Strategic Planning and Information Section for the Issues and Options stage. Table 8 summarises the outcome of the appraisal:

**Table 8 Summary of assessment of the three spatial options at Issues and Options stage**

<p><b>Option A</b></p> <p><b>Focussed Regeneration</b></p>	<p><b>Economic Overview:</b> This option is generally positive in relation to economic objectives in the short, medium and long term. In the short term, in particular, it scores more highly than the other options in terms of promoting sustainable regeneration and promoting efficient patterns of movement. It also scores more highly than the other options in relation to protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres. Overall it scores slightly higher than Option B, reflecting the benefits arising from the 'critical mass' of focussing development compared to spreading it more widely. Overall it scores slightly lower than Option C, however, reflecting the potential economic benefits of releasing greenfield land.</p> <p><b>Environmental Overview:</b> This option is the most positive option in relation to environmental objectives, particularly in relation to promoting sustainable transport choices, contributing to reducing the effects of climate change, minimising energy use, ensuring prudent use and management of man-made and natural resources and protecting and improving land and soil. This reflects that development would be focussed on the most accessible locations, and that regeneration funding could promote more sustainable forms of development. Overall it scores more highly than Option B where development is less focussed and may be in less accessible locations. It scores significantly higher than Option C which involves the development of greenfield sites.</p> <p><b>Social Overview:</b> This option is generally positive in relation to social objectives, particularly in relation to protecting and improving the local environment and reducing crime. Overall it scores more highly than Options B and C, particularly in the short term.</p>
<p><b>Option B</b></p> <p><b>Urban Concentration</b></p>	<p><b>Economic Overview:</b> This option is generally positive in relation to economic objectives particularly in the medium to long term. It is, however, weaker than the other options in</p>

	<p>relation to promoting the borough's image and, overall, it scores slightly lower than Options A and C. This reflects that development would be more 'thinly spread' across the borough without any additional greenfield land available for economic development.</p>
	<p><b>Environmental Overview:</b> This option is generally positive in relation to environmental objectives. It scores higher than Option C which reflects that greenfield development is not involved. It does not, however, score as highly as Option A due to development being more spread across the borough and not necessarily being as accessible.</p>
	<p><b>Social Overview:</b> This option is generally positive in relation to social objectives although it scores lower than Options A and C, particularly in relation to promoting a healthy housing market and meeting affordable housing needs. This reflects that development would be more 'thinly spread' across the borough without any additional greenfield land available for housing development.</p>
<p><b>Option C</b> <b>Urban concentration including planned expansion</b></p>	<p><b>Economic Overview:</b> This option is generally positive in relation to economic objectives. It scores more highly than Options A and B, particularly in relation to promoting economic growth. This reflects the potential economic benefits of releasing greenfield land.</p>
	<p><b>Environmental Overview:</b> This option scores the lowest of the Options in relation to environmental objectives. It scores particularly low in relation to ensuring effective and efficient use of land and buildings, ensuring prudent use and management of man-made and natural resources, protecting and improving land and soil and protecting and improving water resources. This reflects that the option involves the development of greenfield land.</p>
	<p><b>Social Overview:</b> This option is generally positive in relation to social objectives. It scores slightly higher than Option B, particularly in the short term in relation to promoting a healthy housing market and meeting affordable housing needs due to greenfield land being potentially available for housing development. It does not, however, score as highly as Option A where development is more focussed.</p>

**5.3** Of the 3 Options in the joint DPD, Foxdenton formed part of Option C – Urban Concentration Including Planned Expansion. Option C proposed the potential release of OPOL and LRFD and asked whether the joint DPD should release some OPOL and LRFD for economic and/or housing development needs and if so, where and for what uses?

- 5.4** In response to the Issues and Options consultation, section 7 of the Issues and Options Public Schedule of Representations and Responses shows that around:
- half preferred Option A- to maintain OPOL and LRFD
  - a sixth preferred Option B - to maintain OPOL and LRFD
  - a quarter preferred Option C – potential release of OPOL and LRFD
- 5.5** The maintenance of current OPOL and LRFD boundaries formed an element of both the most popular and the least popular options as expressed in the public consultation. The maintenance of OPOL was not a significant element in the preference for Option A over Option C as it also featured as a key element in the least popular Option B.
- 5.6** The three further alternative strategies that were suggested by respondents to the Issues and Options consultation were:
- ‘Targeted Regeneration’ – submitted on behalf of, amongst others, Saddleworth Parish Council and the Saddleworth and Lees Community Council.
- ‘Transformation and Cohesion’ – submitted on behalf of the Oldham and Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder.
- ‘Regeneration & Sustainable Communities’ – submitted on behalf of Purico, the development agent for Whiteoak and Hollowoak Limited, owners of the Robert Fletcher estate at Greenfield, Saddleworth.
- 5.7** None of the submitted alternative options included an SA assessing their environmental, economic or social effects. In the absence of this, the council has, therefore, undertaken its own appraisal of these submitted alternatives using its SA framework in order to inform the choice of preferred options.
- 5.8** The ‘Issues and Options’ report explained that the council would assess any submitted alternative. Table 9 detail the findings of the assessments of the submitted alternative options. Although elements of the council’s own options could be found in parts of the submitted alternatives, it is the council’s view that none of the submitted alternatives, in and of themselves, should be adopted as the preferred way forward for the LDF.

**Table 9 Summary of alternative options submitted at Issues and Options stage**

**Strategy 1 – Targeted Regeneration**

This strategy provided a reasonably clear indication of where development should be located. In carrying out the appraisal an assumption was made that the phrase

“Developments would be targeted on places most easily reached by public transport” would include local town centres as these are most easily reached by public transport. In Saddleworth this was taken to include Uppermill, the centre of which is ‘good’ in terms of public transport accessibility, as defined in the adopted Unitary Development Plan. Greenfield is also ‘good’ in terms of public transport accessibility, in the vicinity of the railway station, and was therefore also assumed to be a location where development should potentially be targeted under this strategy.

On this basis this alternative was positive in relation to economic objectives, particularly in relation to promoting sustainable regeneration of the borough, promoting the borough's image, promoting efficient patterns of movement in support of sustainable economic regeneration and protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of town and district centres.

It also scored positively in relation to some environmental objectives, namely the effective and efficient use of land and buildings, the promotion of sustainable transport choices and contributing to reducing the effects of climate change. However for the vast majority of environment objectives it was not possible to appraise the strategy on the basis of the information submitted.

Similarly it was not possible to appraise this strategy in relation to most of the social objectives, on the basis of the information submitted. It was, however, positive in relation to promoting a healthy and balanced housing market.

### **Strategy 2 - Transformation and Cohesion Strategy**

The emphasis of this strategy is on housing and economy, however the strategy only referred to "economically aspirational households" and "quality rather than quantity" in relation economic development. This emphasis, together with a lack of detail, made it difficult to appraise this strategy in relation to the full range of objectives.

Also, the strategy contained the phrase "excellent public transport accessibility" which is not a recognised category of accessibility as defined in the adopted Unitary Development Plan. It was not, therefore, possible to properly appraise this strategy in relation to accessibility.

The strategy was positive in relation to some of the economic objectives, particularly the promotion of the borough's image, however the lack of detail meant that it could not be appraised against some of the economic objectives.

In relation to environmental objectives the strategy was particularly positive in relation to the effective and efficient use of land and buildings, but the strategy could not be appraised in relation to the other environmental objectives.

Similarly it was not possible to appraise this strategy in relation to most of the social objectives, on the basis of the information submitted. It was, however, positive in relation to protecting and improving local environmental quality.

### **Strategy 3 - Regeneration & Sustainable Communities Strategy**

This strategy was less focused in terms of where development should be located. For example, it mentioned both rejuvenation of HMR areas and edge of settlement development. This resulted in some scores being potentially both positive and negative for certain objectives. For many objectives, it was not possible to appraise this strategy on the basis of the information provided. It also had a reduced emphasis on accessibility considerations which has sustainability implications.

It was not considered possible to appraise this strategy against most of the economic objectives due to its lack of focus. It did, however, score positively in relation to promoting the borough's image. In relation to the environmental objectives, the strategy was considered to have potentially positive and negative impacts in relation to the effective and efficient use of land and buildings, promoting sustainable transport choices and contributing to reducing the effects of climate change. The strategy could not be appraised in relation to the other environmental objectives. Due to lack of detail it was also not possible to appraise this strategy against social objectives.

## PREFERRED OPTIONS

- 5.9** The Preferred Options SA report explains that the council's view was that the strategy that was best suited to delivering Oldham's aspirations for transformation and regeneration was not directly any of the options and submitted alternatives considered at Issues and Options stage but was a combination or 'hybrid' of the three options.
- 5.10** The council's preferred spatial strategy is considered to be realistic, achievable and deliverable. It is also the most appropriate spatial strategy for Oldham.
- 5.11** In relation to the three options, the majority of new housing developments will be in Oldham Town Centre and regeneration areas. This links to Option A, and reflects the findings of the recent assessment of potential housing land that demonstrated these areas could accommodate the majority of the borough's housing potential. Employment land will be more dispersed around the borough due to its nature and location, particularly the location of existing employment areas as well as the proposed strategic sites, and links to alternative Option B.
- 5.12** Small amounts of currently safeguarded land, and possibly locally protected land at Foxdenton, will be released for employment uses and maybe some housing and sports under the preferred spatial strategy which links to Option C. The responses received at Issues and Options stage did not show a strong preference for rejecting any relaxation of OPOL boundaries.
- 5.13** Findings from the SA demonstrated that it was more sustainable than the other options considered. The tables below summarises the key findings from the appraisal of the preferred spatial strategy:

**Table 10 Summary of sustainability appraisal – Economic overview**

### **Economic Overview:**

The preferred spatial strategy scores positively in relation to economic objectives in the short, medium and long term. It scores particularly positively in relation to:

### **Promoting the sustainable regeneration of the borough**



Focusing development in regeneration areas will stimulate sustainable regeneration activities in the shorter term. Spreading development wider in the borough will promote sustainable regeneration in the medium to longer term. Releasing land at Foxdenton, for employment development (possibly facilitated by a small amount of housing), and Haven Lane and Warren Lane, for housing development, and Lancaster Sports Club for sports facilities will promote sustainable regeneration over the longer term.

### **Promoting the borough's image**

The preferred spatial strategy will promote the borough's image, particularly through transformational regeneration activities. This will be more immediate in areas of focused regeneration such as HMR and NDC areas, but will also benefit other areas of the borough.

### **Promoting the sustainable economic performance of the borough**

Focusing and spreading growth will promote the sustainable economic performance of the borough in the short, medium and longer term. Releasing land at Foxdenton, for employment development, will promote sustainable economic performance, particularly in the medium to longer term.

### **Promoting sustainable economic growth and development**

Focusing and spreading employment development will ensure that developable land will be available to promote sustainable economic growth and development in the short, medium and longer term. It will also help to create local jobs. Releasing land at Foxdenton, for employment development, will make more land available for existing businesses, and encourage new inward investment.

### **Protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of 'centres'**

Permitting retail, housing and employment development in Oldham Town Centre and the borough's other centres will significantly contribute towards protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of the town centres.

### **Improving the economic well-being of the borough's population**

Focusing and spreading employment development will improve the economic wellbeing of the borough's population, by providing a spread of job opportunities. Releasing land at Foxdenton, for employment development, will provide more job opportunities, particularly in the longer term.

### **Promoting the development of innovative and knowledge based industries**

The preferred spatial strategy focuses development on regeneration areas and strategic sites, such as Hollinwood Business District and Chadderton Technology Park, which particularly encourages innovative and knowledge-based industries. Releasing land at Foxdenton, for employment development, will provide more opportunities for the development of these industries, particularly in the longer term.



**Table 11 Summary of sustainability appraisal – Environmental overview**

**Environmental Overview:**

The preferred spatial strategy scores positively in relation to environmental objectives in the short, medium and long term. It scores particularly positively in relation to:

**Ensuring the effective and efficient use of all types of land and buildings in the most sustainable locations**

The preferred spatial strategy will prioritise the use of brownfield land and buildings, and help achieve the RSS target of at least 80% of housing being on brownfield land. This will contribute to the effective and efficient use of land and buildings in the most sustainable locations, including the re-use of mills.

**Promoting sustainable transport choices**

Focusing development at key transport points, and encouraging walking, cycling and the use of public transport will promote sustainable transport choices.

**Contributing to reducing the effects of climate change**

The preferred spatial strategy will contribute to reducing the effects of climate change by focusing development in sustainable and accessible locations, reducing the need to travel and promoting a shift to a low carbon economy. It will also address the zero carbon buildings agenda by encouraging high quality design and sustainable construction techniques. The protection and enhancement of green infrastructure will also help to mitigate the effects of climate change.

**Minimising the impact of, and mitigating against flooding**

The preferred spatial strategy will be guided by PPS25 and the findings of the SFRA.

Mitigation measures against flooding will be put in place, as necessary, for new developments. The encouragement of sustainable drainage systems and the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure will also contribute towards meeting this objective.

**Table 12 Summary of sustainability appraisal – Social overview**

**Social Overview:**

The Strategy scores positively in relation to social objectives in the short, medium and long term. It scores particularly positively in relation to:

**Promoting a healthy and balanced housing market for the borough**

The preferred spatial strategy will contribute towards meeting this objective by providing sufficient land to build at least 289 dwellings per annum as required by RSS. Although developable land is in limited supply, focusing housing development on Oldham Town

Centre, regeneration areas, strategic sites and key transport points will promote a healthy and balanced housing market. The development of land at Haven Land and Warren Lane, and possibly Foxdenton, will promote a healthy and balanced housing market by making more land available for housing.

#### **Meeting the borough's affordable housing needs**

The delivery of a healthy and balanced housing market in line with the preferred spatial strategy will help to meet the borough's affordable housing needs. This will be supported by a policy on securing affordable housing as part of new development.

#### **Improving the health of the borough's population**

The preferred spatial strategy will help to improve health, for example by protecting and enhancing green infrastructure and open spaces, improving air quality, encouraging economic growth and prosperity, promoting walking and cycling and the programme for new health and well-being centres.

#### **Improving education and skills levels of the borough's population**

The preferred spatial strategy will improve education and skills levels of the borough's population by promoting the Building Schools for the Future programme, the programme to improve primary schools and the expansion of higher and further education. The development of high quality employment opportunities, for example at Chadderton Technology Park and Hollinwood Business District will foster new skills.

**5.14** The policies within the joint DPD were developed over time and through consultation with various stakeholders.

## 6 THE MEASURES THAT ARE TO BE TAKEN TO MONITOR THE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN OR PROGRAMME

- 6.1** The significant environmental effects of the joint DPD will be monitored through the council's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The joint DPD Monitoring Framework is set out in Appendix 1 of the joint DPD and the indicators from the monitoring framework are shown in Table 13.

**Table 13 LDF Indicators**

1. Number of people who are engaged in the LDF consultation process.
2. Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years.
3. Total amount of additional employment floorspace by type.
4. Total amount of employment floorspace on previously developed land – by type.
5. Employment land available by type.
6. Employment land lost to other uses.
7. Land developed for business and industry.
8. New business registration rate.
9. Overall employment rate.
10. Total amount of floorspace for `centre` uses.
11. Housing trajectory: i) Plan period and housing targets. ii) Net additional dwellings in previous years; iii) Net additional dwellings for the reporting year; iv) Net additional dwellings in future years; and v) Managed delivery target.
12. Supply of ready to develop housing sites.
13. New and converted dwellings on previously developed land.
14. Development density in schemes of 5 dwellings or more.
15. i) Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) ii) Gross affordable housing completions.
16. Net additional Pitches (Gypsies and Travellers).
17. Dwellings cleared.
18. Reduction in vacancy rate.

19. Number of properties added to stock which have 3+ bedrooms in HMR area.
20. Housing Quality: Building for Life Assessments.
21. Major planning applications refused on poor design grounds.
22. i) Number and percentage of listed buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments on the English Heritage `Heritage at Risk Register`; ii) and number/extent of Conservation Areas and iii) number of listed buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas lost through new development proposals.
23. Access to services: i) Number of minor residential developments with access to at least two key services; ii) Number of major residential developments with access to at least three key services.
24. Extension of Greater Manchester's light rail network, `Metrolink`, to the borough.
25. Amount of completed large scale non-residential development within Use Classes A, B and D complying with car parking standards set out in the LDF.
26. Number and percentage of travel plans secured as a condition of planning permission for major planning applications.
27. Number of planning applications refused on landscape character grounds
28. i) Number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding and water quality grounds ii) and number of new developments, where agreed with the council, incorporating SUDs.
29. i) Number of sites remediated as a result of planning applications.
30. Number of days of air pollution.
31. Renewable Energy Generation installed (megawatts).
32. Production of primary land won aggregates by mineral planning authority.
33. Production of secondary and recycled aggregates by mineral planning authority.
34. Amount of municipal waste arising, and managed by management type by waste planning authority.
35. Capacity of new waste management facilities by waste planning authority.
36. Number and type of developments in the Green Belt.
37. Open space: i) extent of protected; and ii) percentage of quality and accessible open spaces meeting local standards.
38. i) Change in areas of biodiversity importance and ii) Improved local biodiversity.

39. Number and type of developments in: i) Other Protected Open Land and ii) Land Reserved for Future Development.
40. Number of health and well-being centres started and/or completed.
41. i) Adult participation in sport and ii) Children and young people's participation in high-quality PE and sport.
42. Healthy Life expectancy at 65.
43. Number of education related developments started and/or completed. (Examples: BSF, UCO, Sixth Form college, and Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths centre)
44. Per capita carbon dioxide emissions in the local authority area.
45. Improved street and environmental cleanliness:
- Litter
  - Detritus
  - Graffiti
  - fly-posting
46. Foxdenton developed as premium employment site.

- 6.2** Where appropriate the joint DPD outlines a number of mitigation methods to minimise the environmental effects of the joint DPD such as requiring habitats assessments, flood risk assessments, heritage assessments, transport assessments and travel plans.

#### Public Examination

- 6.3** The joint DPD was subject to independent public examination from February to August 2011. The SA was discussed during hearing session one. The Inspector found the joint DPD sound subject to some minor changes which the Inspector approved. The Inspector stated that *“None of these changes should materially alter the substance of the plan and it’s policies or undermine the sustainability appraisal; and participatory process undertaken”*.
- 6.4** The Inspector also stated that *“the Council has carried out its Sustainability Appraisal of the Joint DPD in accordance with the terms of the relevant European Directive”*.
- 6.5** The Inspector’s report concluded that:  
*“SA has been carried out, independently verified and is adequate”*.