OLDHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

CORE STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL POLICIES

DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

ISSUES AND OPTIONS

NOVEMBER 2007
The Council will arrange for this document to be made available in alternative formats including large print, electronically, and community languages if requested, and if appropriate. Please ring 0161 770 4151, 4163 or 4139 for further information.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Appropriate Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>AAP</td>
<td>Area Action Plan</td>
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<td>BSF</td>
<td>Building Schools for the Future</td>
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<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>Development Control</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCSF</td>
<td>Department for Children, Schools and Families</td>
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<td>DfT</td>
<td>Department for Transport</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPD</td>
<td>Development Plan Document</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMFM</td>
<td>Greater Manchester Forecasting Model</td>
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<td>HMR</td>
<td>Housing Market Renewal</td>
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<tr>
<td>HRA</td>
<td>Habitats Regulations Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAA</td>
<td>Local Area Agreement</td>
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<td>LIFT</td>
<td>Local Improvement Finance Trust</td>
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<td>LDD</td>
<td>Local Development Document</td>
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<tr>
<td>LDF</td>
<td>Local Development Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>LDS</td>
<td>Local Development Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>LRFD</td>
<td>Land Reserved for Future Development</td>
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<td>LTP</td>
<td>Local Transport Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPS</td>
<td>Minerals Policy Statement</td>
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<td>MWMS</td>
<td>Municipal Waste Management Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDC</td>
<td>New Deal for Communities</td>
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<td>NWDA</td>
<td>Northwest Regional Development Agency</td>
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<td>NWGS</td>
<td>Northern Way Growth Strategy</td>
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<td>NWRA</td>
<td>North West Regional Assembly</td>
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<td>OPOL</td>
<td>Other Protected Open Land</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPG</td>
<td>Planning Policy Guidance note</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPS</td>
<td>Planning Policy Statement</td>
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<tr>
<td>RSS</td>
<td>Regional Spatial Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>Sustainability Appraisal</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCI</td>
<td>Statement of Community Involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>Supplementary Planning Document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSSI</td>
<td>Site of Special Scientific Interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>UDP</td>
<td>Unitary Development Plan</td>
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1 INTRODUCTION

What is the Local Development Framework?

1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a new spatial planning system called a Local Development Framework (LDF). It will direct the future development pattern of the Borough, and will eventually replace the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), which is the Borough’s current land use plan.

1.2 The LDF, along with the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West, forms part of the Borough’s Development Plan. Development Plans guide and control the use of land.

1.3 The LDF will be a folder of different spatial planning documents called Development Plan Documents (DPD) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD). DPDs are subject to independent examination and form part of the Development Plan. SPDs are not subject to independent examination and are not part of the Development Plan, but they are material planning considerations in the determination of planning applications.

What is Spatial Planning?

1.4 Spatial planning “goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they can function. That will include policies which can impact on land use, for example by influencing the demands on, or needs for, development, but which are not capable of being delivered solely or mainly through the granting or refusal of planning permission and which may be implemented by other means”.\(^1\)

1.5 This is further defined as “the practice of place-shaping and delivery at the local and regional levels that aims to:

- Enable a vision for the future of regions and places that is based on evidence, local distinctiveness and community derived objectives.
- Translate this vision into a set of policies, priorities, programmes and land allocations together with the public sector resources to deliver them.
- Create a framework for private investment and regeneration that promotes economic, environmental and social well being for the area.
- Coordinate and deliver the public sector components of this vision with other agencies and processes”.\(^2\)

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\(^1\) Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development. ODPM. February 2005.
1.6 Spatial planning is about place-shaping, and represents a move away from the traditional thematic approach to land-use planning that underpinned the UDP.

What is the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document?

1.7 The Core Strategy will be the primary DPD. It will set out a long-term spatial vision and strategic objectives for the Borough. It will also contain a spatial strategy, core policies and a monitoring and implementation framework. The Core Strategy will set the strategic direction for the LDF up to 2025/26. It can only identify broad locations/strategic sites, not detailed site boundaries. Sites will be dealt with separately in the Sites Allocations DPD and on the Proposals Map. Each of these will follow on after the Core Strategy. References in this document to ‘broad locations’ or ‘strategic sites’ refer to general areas, not to specific site boundaries. **The Development Control Policies DPD will set out generic policies that will manage development in the Borough.** Here in Oldham, the Core Strategy and the Development Control Policies DPD will be prepared as a single document. (From this point on the DPD is referred to simply as ‘the Core Strategy’.)

Key Stages and Timetable

1.8 There are a number of key steps to be undertaken in preparing the Core Strategy. These include issues and options, preferred options, submission document and independent examination.

1.9 This document, called **Issues and Options**, is the first formal stage. It describes the key challenges facing the Borough and the possible choices that are available to address these. It sets out broad issues that the Core Strategy will have to consider and presents alternative spatial options to help shape the future development pattern of the Borough. However, in preparing this document, it is recognised that a great deal of thinking about the Borough’s future direction, role and prospects has already been undertaken in recent years by the Council, key partners, the community and stakeholders, and therefore this document has great regard to this earlier work.

1.10 Ultimately, a Planning Inspector will undertake an independent examination to test the soundness of the Core Strategy and will make binding recommendations that the Council will have to accept before it adopts the Core Strategy.
1.11 The key stages and anticipated timetable are shown in the flowchart:

- Issues and Options stage – autumn 2007
- Preferred Options stage – spring 2008
- Submission stage – autumn 2008
- Examination – spring 2009
- Adoption – winter 2009

1.12 The community and stakeholders will have the opportunity to be involved during each of these stages.

1.13 It is important to note that the Government published a Planning White Paper in the spring that proposed changes to the LDF system. Consultation was held during the summer on the proposed changes. Therefore, this timetable and the key stages may be subject to future changes.

**How does the Local Development Framework relate to the Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement?**

1.14 The Oldham Partnership has prepared the Borough’s Community Strategy. This sets out the vision and strategy for improving the quality of life of people living and working in the Borough. The Local Area Agreement brings together a wide range of funding streams to deliver the vision and strategy effectively. The LDF will be the ‘spatial expression’ of the community’s aspirations, as outlined in the Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement. It will result from active engagement with the community and stakeholders to prepare policies, allocations and designations that reflect its aspirations.

**Core Strategy Issues Survey**

1.15 An informal Issues Survey was undertaken during March-April 2007. A copy of the findings is available on the Council’s website. The Issues Survey has helped to inform the preparation of the Issues and Options document.

**Evidence base**

1.16 The new LDF system requires that the Core Strategy is based upon the findings of credible and robust evidence. The Council has already identified the need for a number of separate topic or theme based research studies to be commissioned. Details of these are listed in the Local Development Scheme, but some of the key pieces of evidence
will include an employment land review, housing market assessments, retail study, and an open space, sport and recreation study. The evidence will need to be completed in time to inform the Core Strategy that is submitted for Examination.

Structure of the Issues and Options document

1.17 The Issues and Options document summarises the plans, strategies, programmes and policies at national, regional, sub-regional and local levels that will influence the LDF. It outlines the Borough’s spatial characteristics. This is followed by a summary of the issues and challenges facing the Borough. A draft Vision for the LDF is proposed. Draft strategic objectives that set the overall principles for the LDF follow. A series of alternative spatial options for achieving the future spatial direction of the Borough are presented for consideration. A series of policies that may be required to manage development in the Borough are then outlined.

1.18 The Issues and Options document uses the five LAA headings to outline the issues that the Core Strategy will have to address. An additional ‘environment’ heading has also been included for those LDF matters that do not naturally fall within the other LAA headings. It needs to be recognised however that a number of issues that the LDF has to address are cross-cutting and may not always neatly sit within the individual LAA blocks. Specific references are also made, in certain instances, to the Community Strategy.

Assessing the Effects of the Core Strategy

1.19 The Issues and Options document has been subject to three separate assessments. These assessments, which are available as separate documents alongside the Issues and Options document, are:
   i. Sustainability Appraisal – an ongoing process which tests the environmental, economic and social effects of the emerging Core Strategy to ensure that it is consistent with the concept of sustainable development;
   ii Habitats Regulations Assessment – assesses the potential impacts of the emerging Core Strategy on the European protected sites in the Borough;
   iii Equalities Impact Assessment – analyses the extent of the impact of the emerging Core Strategy upon the equalities categories (gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, religious belief and transgendered and transsexual people).

Community and Stakeholder Involvement

1.20 The community and stakeholders have a positive contribution to make in shaping the future of the Borough. The Council’s aspiration, as stated in the Statement of Community Involvement, is to “enable, empower and encourage all residents and other stakeholders of
Oldham Metropolitan Borough to actively participate in the planning to improve their Borough.

1.21 The aim of the Issues and Options document is to involve the community and stakeholders – ranging from councillors, individuals, community and interest groups, public sector agencies and statutory bodies, through to private sector companies, developers and agents – in the preparation of the LDF from an early stage, to help shape the future strategic direction of the Borough.

1.22 To prompt your thoughts a series of questions follow each section of the document. The key question to consider at this stage in preparing the Core Strategy is `what kind of Borough do you want in the future?`

1.23 Your comments are needed, as they will help in preparing the next stages of the Core Strategy.
2 HOW TO COMMENT

2.1 You may comment on the `Issues and Options` stage report and any of the supporting documents during the six-week public consultation period. Please send your comments to the Council by 5.00pm on 14 December 2007 by post or email or fax. (See below for details.)

Address: Strategic Planning & Information, Regeneration Directorate, Oldham MBC, Oldham Business Centre, Cromwell Street, Oldham OL1 1WR.

Email: spi@oldham.gov.uk

Fax: 0161 770 5172

2.2 Please note that any comments made cannot be treated as confidential.

2.3 If you would like further help about the Issues and Options document please contact the Strategic Planning and Information section on the following telephone numbers: 0161 770 4151 / 4139 / 4163.

2.4 All documents connected with the Local Development Framework can be viewed on the Council’s web site at www.oldham.gov.uk.
3 CONTEXT

3.1 The LDF will address the Borough’s future development needs, including housing, employment, open space, and so on. **Land within the Borough is not an unlimited resource and competing demands have to be balanced in terms of environmental, social and economic effects.** The LDF has to take account of a wide range of issues that can sometimes be in conflict. However, it will do so in ways that contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development and inclusive communities.

3.2 **The LDF will reflect a range of forces at work that will give physical expression to a transformed and regenerated Borough over the next 15-20 years.** These will include on-going regeneration activities, including the Oldham/Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder programme and the Hatherson and Fitton Hill New Deal for Communities programme. Other programmes and initiatives will also improve the economic, health and educational prospects of the Borough. These include Metrolink extension proposals, the Oldham Town Centre masterplans, the masterplans for Chadderton, Royton and Shaw District Centres, the proposals for high-quality, high-technology development at the Hollinwood Business District, the emerging ideas for the Chadderton Urban Technology Park, the new Health Centres that are being built or proposed, the expansion of the University Centre Oldham and the Building Schools for the Future programme for the Borough’s secondary schools.

3.3 **The future strategic direction of the Borough is based round ‘transformational’ regeneration. The key to this is recognising that economic performance and the demand for housing are intertwined.** Also the wider regional and sub-regional context, including the Manchester City Region, will have critical influences on the future shape of the Borough, particularly in terms of housing, the economy and the environment.

3.4 **The LDF does not operate in isolation.** There are a number of important plans, policies, programmes and strategies at the national, regional and local levels that influence the LDF. A full review of relevant documents has been undertaken as part of the sustainability appraisal of the Issues and Options, and is available as a separate document. A summary of the main influences on the LDF is detailed below.

**National**

3.5 At the national level there are statements on planning policy called Planning Policy Statements (PPS) or Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPG). Appendix 1 provides a list of these.
Regional

3.6 The Northern Way Growth Strategy (NWGS) outlines how the three northern regions need to improve productivity and output levels in order to make a significant contribution to closing the gap between the North and London/South East England. The North West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) provides a regional context for local policies. Section 4 provides more details about the RSS, which is currently being reviewed. The RSS now includes the Regional Transport Strategy. A Regional Housing Strategy was prepared in 2005 by the North West Regional Assembly (NWRA). The Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) produced a Regional Economic Strategy in 2006.

Sub-regional

3.7 At the Greater Manchester sub-regional level there are a range of policy and planning documents that are important in setting the LDF within a wider context. The Manchester City Region Spatial Strategy was prepared to inform the recent review of RSS. It outlines a vision, key strategic objectives and a spatial framework that focuses on the key issues in so far as these are appropriately addressed at the sub-regional level. The 15-year Greater Manchester Integrated Transport Strategy, along with the five-year Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan and its sub-strategies, such as the Greater Manchester Accessibility Strategy, sets out a co-ordinated Greater Manchester approach to transport. A joint waste DPD is also being prepared. Work is also being undertaken on housing matters, the economy and the environment.

3.8 The ten local authorities have adopted the Greater Manchester Forecasting Model (GMFM) as the economic, population and household forecasting toolkit for the sub-region. The GMFM provides an indicative scenario for the future shape of the sub-region over the next 15-20 years. It demonstrates that the Manchester City Region needs to accelerate its growth levels in order to maximise its economic potential and so make a significant contribution to the NWGS.

3.9 Manchester Enterprises, Greater Manchester’s economic development agency, has used the GMFM to help produce its action plan, the City Region Development Programme. This identifies the measures needed at the sub-regional level to take forward the NWGS.

Boroughwide

3.10 At the Borough level the key documents are Oldham Beyond and its follow-up local area masterplans, the Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement. Additionally, there are a range of other important documents including the Economy and Enterprise Strategy, the Housing Strategy and the Tourism Development Strategy. There are also important regeneration programmes such as the
Oldham/Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Initiative (HMR) and the Hathershaw and Fitton Hill New Deal for Communities (NDC), and education initiatives such as Building Schools for the Future.

Oldham Beyond and Masterplans

3.11 The Oldham Partnership and the NWDA commissioned the ‘Oldham Beyond’ visioning exercise during 2003/2004. Oldham Beyond sets the vision for transforming the Borough over the next twenty years.

3.12 Its vision is of “a confident place, at ease with itself and celebrating in its diverse communities and landscapes – from the tight-knit terraced communities to the wild moors and valley villages to the east. A Borough that is proud of its industrial past but which has reinvented its economy by making the most of the creativity and drive of its young people. The world will see the Borough as a place transformed and people will be attracted to live and work in the Borough by the quality of life that it offers and by its reputation for tolerance and diversity”.

3.13 The Council has commissioned a series of Oldham Beyond follow-up masterplans. These provide more detailed information for specific areas within the Borough including for Mumps and the New West End in Oldham Town Centre, the Hollinwood Business District, the District Centres in Shaw, Royton and Chadderton, and the Chadderton Urban Technology Park. A masterplan for the Hathershaw and Fitton Hill New Deal for Communities area has been prepared. Masterplans have also been prepared for the HMR intervention areas in Derker and Werneth/Freehold.

Community Strategy

3.14 Prepared in 2005, Oldham’s Community Strategy, ‘Planning for Sustainable Communities 2005-2020’, has at its centre a vision of “Oldham – a place where everyone is proud to belong”. It identifies ten key themes including community cohesion, a strong and vibrant economy, health and well being for all, safe and strong communities, well educated and highly skilled people, children and young people, an improved and valued environment, a place of culture, decent homes for all, and a thriving voluntary, community and faith sector.

Oldham Beyond Implementation Plan

3.15 The Council is preparing an Oldham Beyond Implementation Plan for the period 2008-2013. Its purpose is to enable the effective co-ordination of the physical, economic and social regeneration expected in the next five years. It will provide a longer contextual timeframe for other key plans, including the LDF. The Plan will recognise the Borough’s contribution to regional regeneration and development policies.
Local Area Agreement

3.16 The Local Area Agreement (LAA) links funding streams of central Government, the Council and key partners to a set of agreed outcomes based on national and local priorities over the period to 2009. Its objective is “increasing life opportunities for all”. The LAA is based around five headings, or blocks, titled `safer and stronger communities`, `housing`, `economic development and enterprise`, `healthier communities and older people` and `children and young people`. It will be the delivery mechanism for the Community Strategy. The LAA was `refreshed` for 2007/08. It will be updated to reflect national changes in the role and purpose of LAAs from 2008. Oldham Partnership has been working with central Government as part of the feasibility testing to help shape the new model LAAs. The Government is also working on the concept of Multi Area Agreements which are increasingly being seen as a mechanism to work across and within sub-regions. The Partnership is involved with this work.

The Borough’s Economy

3.17 A key objective of the Borough’s regeneration activities is to turn round the local economy by promoting and securing the development of knowledge based and innovative technology and industry, to provide quality jobs for local people. The Council and its key partners recognise that this involves creating and fostering an environment that supports new and existing businesses. It also involves improving the skills and education levels of the Borough’s children and young people. The provision of quality employment land will be an important part of this transformation. The Council has already identified the Hollinwood area, with its good transport links including access to the motorway, as a strategic location for the future development of high quality and technology businesses. A masterplan for the Hollinwood Business District has been approved. There are also proposals to create an Urban Technology Park in Chadderton.

Housing Regeneration

3.18 The Oldham/Rochdale HMR Pathfinder was established in 2003. This is a long-term programme that seeks to invest substantial resources into transforming local housing markets. Its overall aim is “to deliver transformation in the housing markets in our area that will create sustainable communities and lead to greater community cohesion”. Across the two Boroughs 12,300 dwellings will be built and 8,600 dwellings will be cleared, with the majority of the clearance in Oldham. During the period 2004-2019, 3,700 additional dwellings across the HMR area will be provided. Werneth/Freehold and Derker are in the first phase of the programme and work is now underway to transform these areas.
3.19 Housing Market Renewal and the New Deal for Communities programme are working together to regenerate Hathershaw and Fitton Hill, to the south of Oldham Town Centre. This provides an opportunity to improve the choice and quality of homes, and to develop new community and retail facilities. The `Borough Mill triangle` also provides a key development opportunity, combining a mix of modern office and retail uses with new homes.

3.20 Proposals are being established to improve areas of Alt and Sholver in Oldham. These will seek to redevelop the residential area to provide high quality homes to meet the needs and aspirations of the local community.

3.21 There are also plans for the regeneration of Crossley, Clarkwell and Primrose Bank estates as part of the Government’s Private Finance Initiative. These areas suffer from poorly designed housing and have an over supply of flats and maisonettes, so a better choice of different types of housing is needed in line with modern principles of good design.

Building Schools for the Future

3.22 Building Schools for the Future (BSF) is a new approach to capital investment in school buildings and facilities. It is intended to provide all secondary schools with 21st century learning environments over the next 10-15 years. Proposals may involve replacing, rebuilding or renovating schools and will have important spatial implications for the future use of land in the Borough. The Council is actively looking at a series of potential sites under the BSF programme.

Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres

3.23 Oldham Town Centre is at the heart of the Borough. It acts as a focal point for local communities. Along with the seven District Centres – Chadderton, Failsworth, Huddersfield Road (“Hill Stores”), Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill – the Town Centre contributes to the economic, social and environmental fabric of the Borough. Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres function as the hub for local communities by providing a focus for a range of services and activities close to people’s homes. These include shopping, social and civic functions and other community services. They have strong local identities and are highly accessible to local people. The Council and key partners have prepared a series of masterplans for Oldham Town Centre and some of the District Centres to influence and direct their future prosperity.
Cross Border Relationships and Influences

3.24 It is important that the LDF has regard to cross boundary relationships and influences. It has to be aware of the spatial implications of proposals in neighbouring authorities and how these may affect the Borough or impact on its spatial plans. Indeed, this is one of the tests against which the Core Strategy will be assessed. At the Greater Manchester level work is being undertaken on such matters as waste management, minerals resources, housing and strategic floodrisk. Additionally, the Council is working on a joint basis with neighbouring authorities, particularly Rochdale, on such matters as HMR and local economies. This joint working will help ensure that the LDF is fully informed by wider Manchester City Region spatial matters.

3.25 The Borough adjoins two other planning regions, the East Midlands and Yorkshire & the Humber. Part of the Saddleworth area falls under the planning responsibility of Oldham MBC, whilst the other part falls under the responsibility of the Peak District National Park Planning Authority. A key challenge for the LDF therefore will be to ensure that the policy frameworks for Oldham MBC and the Peak Park, in so far as they relate to Saddleworth, are generally coherent and consistent with each other. This will be particularly important in strategically important locations such as the Robert Fletchers area of Greenfield. The Council and the Peak Park are working together to ensure planning issues affecting Saddleworth are fully reflected in each other’s LDF.
4 REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY

4.1 Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) is part of the Borough’s Development Plan alongside the LDF. It sets out higher-level planning policy and covers certain matters, such as the number of new houses to be built in the Borough, that the LDF has no discretion over. **Matters dealt with in RSS cannot be consulted upon through the LDF processes.**

4.2 RSS was adopted in March 2003. However, it is currently under review. The NWRA, which prepares the RSS, submitted a revised draft RSS for independent scrutiny in January 2006. The Examination-in-Public was held from October 2006 to February 2007. The Panel’s Report was published in May 2007. The Panel recommended that the draft RSS review continue to adoption, but that an early review of key parts is undertaken as soon as possible. The Government is expected to publish its decisions on whether or not to accept the Panel’s recommendations in autumn 2007. Final adoption of the revised RSS is scheduled for March 2008.

4.3 Details of the RSS can be accessed via the NWRA’s website at [www.nwra.gov.uk](http://www.nwra.gov.uk).

4.4 The guidance on preparing LDFs requires weight to be given to emerging RSS. Therefore, this Issues and Options document takes account of the draft RSS and the Panel’s recommendations.

4.5 The draft RSS vision for the Manchester City Region states: “**By 2025 it will be a world class city region at the heart of a thriving North.**

- One of Europe’s premier city regions, at the forefront of the knowledge economy, and with outstanding commercial, cultural and creative activities;
- World class, successfully competing internationally for investment, jobs and visitors;
- An area where all people have the opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, the investment in and development of their city;
- An area known for, and distinguished by, the quality of life enjoyed by its residents; and
- An area with Gross Value Added levels to match those of London and the South East.”

4.6 The key matters that the RSS outlines for the Borough are summarised below.

i. 5,200 additional dwellings are needed over the period to at least 2021, at an annual average of 289 new dwellings per year over and above those properties that will be replaced as a result of HMR clearance.

ii. 80% of new dwellings to be built on previously developed land (‘brownfield’ land).
iii. The density of new residential development should not normally be less than 30 dwellings per hectare (dpha) net, and that in urban areas it should be at least 40 dpha net, with higher densities in locations that are within walking distance of good public transport services.

iv. Across the Greater Manchester sub-region an extra 774 hectares of employment land for the period 2005-2021 is required.

v. Key Service Centres (third tier centres after the Regional Centres and Towns) need to be identified.

vi. Local Centres in urban areas and Local Service Centres in rural areas need to be identified.

vii. Beyond the built up area part of the Borough’s open land is designated as Green Belt. This is protected by national planning guidance (PPG2) that seeks to maintain the permanence of the Green Belt boundary and to retain its openness by protecting it from inappropriate development. RSS also seeks to protect the Green Belt and states that any substantial change to the Green Belt in the region should be investigated by a strategic study. In the case of Greater Manchester, it advises that there is no need to undertake such a study before 2011. Local minor boundary changes may be permitted in discussion with the NWRA. Minor changes to Green Belt boundaries and the need to identify Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt will be considered as part of the Sites Allocation DPD that will be prepared separately to the Core Strategy.

viii. RSS identifies maximum parking standards for various land-uses. The standards are not a straight jacket and are to be used as a reference point to enable districts to apply their own interpretation to suit local needs (that is, through the LDF). Local authorities therefore have the flexibility to introduce tighter, area specific, car parking standards where they so wish. A more restrictive tier of parking standards for town centre locations and areas of good public transport accessibility has been avoided to allow Districts such flexibility.

ix. No parking standards are included for residential development. Local authorities should, however, define areas for which maximum parking standards for residential developments are appropriate to result in an average of 1.5 off-street spaces per dwelling, inclusive of garage spaces, throughout the area and over the lifetime of the LDF.

x. RSS sets out renewable energy targets. It also recommends the regional policy should be more positive in order to better meet targets and reflect national guidance, PPS22. In particular, it calls for opportunities, subject to criteria, to be sought to identify proposals and schemes for renewable energy. It also recommends that stringent requirements for minimising impact on landscape and townscape would not be appropriate if these preclude the supply of certain types of renewable energy.
other than in most exceptional circumstances, for example within nationally recognised designations.

Map showing the Borough in its sub-regional setting

Source: Property of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
5  SPATIAL PORTRAIT

Table 1: Key characteristics of the Borough

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<tr>
<td>Area (1)</td>
<td>11,166 Hectares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Belt (1)</td>
<td>6,255 Hectares</td>
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<td>Protected Areas of Nature Conservation (2)</td>
<td>546 Hectares</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Protected Open Land (3)</td>
<td>331 Hectares</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land Reserved for Future Development (3)</td>
<td>40 Hectares</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Population (4)</td>
<td>217,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male : Female (4)</td>
<td>48% : 52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black and Minority Ethnic (4)</td>
<td>14% (North West - 6%; England - 9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young People (5-19 years) (4)</td>
<td>21% (North West - 20%; England - 19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Household Dwellings (4)</td>
<td>91,435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupied Household Dwellings (4)</td>
<td>87,824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average House Prices (5)</td>
<td>£105,157 (North West - £137,803; England - £192,274)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Households with No Car or Van (4)</td>
<td>34.37% (North West – 30.21%; England – 26.84%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of offences per 1,000 population (6)</td>
<td>109.4 (England &amp; Wales – 103.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Weekly Wages (7)</td>
<td>£405 – Oldham (North West - £422; UK - £450)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of those of working age economically active (7)</td>
<td>76.4% (North West – 76.5%; GB – 78.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment (8)</td>
<td>3.2% - Oldham (Greater Manchester - 2.9%; North West - 2.8%; UK - 2.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Expectancy in Years (9)</td>
<td>Men - 73.1; Women - 78.6 (England: Men - 75.6; Women - 80.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Excludes that part of the Borough within the Peak District National Park.
(2) Includes Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Sites of Biological Importance, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Local Nature Reserves.
(6) Home Office, 2005/06.
(9) Oldham Partnership.

5.1 Oldham Metropolitan Borough covers approximately 55 square miles and is home to around 217,000 people living in approximately 90,000 households. The Borough’s population is younger than the national average, and has a greater proportion from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups compared with regionally. Projections show a picture of strong household growth over the coming years due to newly forming households within the BME community, inward migration and the
5.2 The Borough’s economy is under-performing; with Gross Value Added per head for Greater Manchester North 21% lower than the regional level and 31% lower than the national level. Oldham Metropolitan Borough is the 43rd most deprived local authority area in the country. Pockets of deprivation are particularly concentrated around the inner Oldham area. Unemployment is above the Greater Manchester, regional and national averages, and is rising fastest amongst the north Manchester local authorities. 18.9% of the Borough’s working age population has no qualifications compared with 17% in the North West and 14.3% in Great Britain. Approximately 18.8% of Oldham’s employees are employed in manufacturing compared with 12.7% regionally and 11.1% nationally. Average gross weekly wages of a full time worker in Oldham are below North West and United Kingdom levels. There are over 8,000 companies in the Borough. The Borough has a large number of small-medium sized enterprises, but it also benefits from representation of international companies with registered offices in the Borough. The overall stock of VAT registered businesses has been slowly rising since 1995; in 2005 the figure was 4,800. Business formation is low. The rate of new VAT registrations (28.2) was below the North West (31.8) and England (38.2) in 2005. Sixteen of the Borough’s twenty wards have been designated as Assisted Areas whereby firms may be eligible for regional aid. Tourism is a major contributor to the local economy and was worth over £263 million in 2005 and employs approximately 3,000 people. The Borough has a limited supply of employment land, with only 37 hectares of quality employment sites currently available. Take up of business and industrial land during 1999-2006 averaged just under 8 hectares per year.

5.3 Part of the Borough falls within the Oldham/Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder (HMR) that aims to secure transformational change in the housing market. House price inflation in 2005 in Oldham was 13.6%. The average house price for Oldham as a whole is increased by the inclusion of Saddleworth. Social housing stock decreased by 606 from 2004 to 2006, mainly as a result of regeneration activity. The vacancy rate (the proportion of all household spaces that are empty) has fallen from 3.9% in 2001 to 3.3% in 2006. Accommodation rented from the Council and Housing Associations is higher in the Borough (23% of all households at 2001) than the regional (20%) and national (19%) levels. A combination of house price inflation, changes in population and aspirations, a reduction in Council owned stock, an increasing buy-to-let market and poor quality private housing has significantly reduced the availability of affordable homes in the Borough.

5.4 Oldham Town Centre and the seven District Centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Huddersfield Road (‘Hill Stores’), Lees, Royton, Shaw and
Uppermill are the main focus for retailing, including independent shops. Smaller clusters of shops and neighbourhood shops also provide a role in meeting local retailing needs. Out-of-centre retail parks form a significant part of the Borough’s retail offer, including at Elk Mill. Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres function as the hub for local communities providing a focus for a range of social, civic and community services and activities close to people’s homes, in addition to their shopping role. The majority of the Borough’s population live in proximity to existing key services.  

5.5 The Borough has good transport connectivity with its road and motorway network links, including the A62, A627(M), A663, A671, A669, A635 and easy access to the M60 and M62. These transport links offer locational advantages for the Borough with opportunities for accessing two major centres of importance, Manchester and Leeds, and also Manchester airport. The rail network in Oldham provides connections to West Yorkshire and Manchester and beyond. There are proposals to extend Metrolink to Hollinwood and up through Oldham Town Centre and on to Shaw. Car ownership in the Borough is below the national and regional averages. Oldham Town Centre has seen the construction of its new bus station. Quality Bus Corridors have been identified at Manchester-Oldham-Saddleworth and Rochdale-Oldham-Ashton-Hyde.

5.6 The Borough is, in many ways, an area of physical contrasts. Pennine moorland dominates the eastern side of the Borough, part of which falls within the Peak District National Park. It consists of a large area of countryside with a settlement pattern of densely settled river valleys, dispersed farmsteads and open moorland, notably Saddleworth Moor. To the west, most of the Borough has an urban character reflecting its proximity to Manchester. The Borough adjoins two separate regions, East Midlands and Yorkshire & Humber.

5.7 Over half of the Borough is open land that provides an attractive setting to built up areas and is an important natural resource supporting agricultural, tourism and recreational activities. Parts of this open land have been safeguarded for future development for a number of years. At April 2006 there was 131 hectares of vacant and derelict land and buildings across the Borough. At 3%, woodland cover is well below the national and regional average. River valleys and waterways, including the Huddersfield Narrow and Rochdale canals, provide habitats and corridors for wildlife as well as opportunities for recreation, tourism and regeneration. There are 36 Conservation Areas totalling 251 hectares, 533 Listed Buildings, three Historic Parks or Gardens, and three registered Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the Borough. There are over 100 mills, which are an important legacy from the

3 Measured as being within 30 minutes public transport time of doctors surgery, hospital, primary school, secondary school, employment area and major retail centres (Oldham Town Centre/District Centre).
Borough’s industrial past and are a key characteristic of the local landscape.

5.8 There are a range of nature conservation sites, from international through to local importance, where protected species thrive, including five Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 35 Sites of Biological Importance, one Special Protection Area and two Special Areas of Conservation. The South Pennine Moors, part of which falls within the LDF boundary, has the highest degree of international importance for birds and habitats as a designated Special Protection Area and a Special Area of Conservation, as well as being a SSSI. There is one Local Nature Reserve at Glodwick Lows. These sites account for 546 hectares of the Borough’s land. There are seven open spaces in the Borough that have Green Flag status including Alexandra Park, Brownhills Centre Nature Garden, Chadderton Hall Park, Coalshaw Green Park, Foxdenton Park, High Crompton Park and Stoneleigh Park.

5.9 High Moor quarry at Scouthead is an active and important source of primary minerals, including sandstone and gritstone. The Borough needs to reduce, reuse and recycle more of its waste. At 2005/2006, the Borough recycled or composted 13.83% of its municipal solid waste - the lowest proportion across Greater Manchester.

5.10 The number of pupils achieving 5 or more A-C* grades at GCSE including Maths and English has improved to 35% in 2006 but is still below the national average. University Centre Oldham gained university status as a higher education institution in 2005. The Oldham College and the Sixth Form College provide post-16 education in the Borough.

5.11 Part of the western side of the Borough has been designated as an Air Quality Management Area, which is an area where air pollution is likely to exceed national objectives particularly due to road traffic. Life expectancy in the Borough for both men and women is below the average in England, and within the Borough this varies by as much as five years for men and almost seven years for women across different areas. 16% of primary school age children locally are obese. Crime levels in Oldham generally compare well to Greater Manchester but poorly to the national average.

- Do you think this spatial portrait sufficiently summarises the Borough’s key characteristics?
6 \hspace{0.5cm} issuess and challenges

6.1 A raft of plans, policies, programmes and strategies have been reviewed in preparing the Issues and Options document and its sustainability appraisal. The Borough faces a series of issues and challenges in such areas as the housing market, the economy, education and skills, people and communities, the environment and transport, amongst others.

6.2 Some of the key challenges include the continued efficient use of land in the Borough, including the reuse of previously developed (‘brownfield’) land and conversion of buildings. There is also a need to ensure that new developments are built to a high quality design using sustainable construction, and that they are located in the most accessible locations in order to reduce the need to travel. The planning processes would benefit from greater involvement of the Community. There is a need to engage the Borough’s population in community cohesion activities. The Borough’s image needs to be transformed to its residents and those living outside the Borough.

Housing

6.3 Housing is one of the major issues facing the Borough. It is a key component to quality of life. Oldham’s private and social housing stock requires interventions to improve its quality. Good quality housing, choice and diversity in attractive, safe and cohesive neighbourhoods is required to satisfy peoples' needs and aspirations and the needs and demands of a modern, balanced housing market. This will encourage people to remain living within the Borough and also to attract new economically active residents and households. The need for affordable housing is also a key priority. There are targets for the number of empty dwellings that are returned to occupation.

6.4 The LAA vision for Housing is “meeting the needs in all neighbourhoods / communities to provide affordable and decent homes and give support to those who need it”. It is centred on five strategic outcomes: Council and Housing Association properties meet decency standard by 2010 and improve decency rates in the Private Sector; services to homeless households are improved with enhanced preventative work; to empower local people to have a greater voice and influence over local decision making and the delivery of services; a balanced housing market offering quality and choice to all; and a more cohesive and integrated community.

6.5 The LAA has been aligned very closely with HMR and the Pathfinder’s programme of investment designed to regenerate and improve priority housing areas, whilst continuing to address housing issues in the parts of the Borough that lie outside the HMR area.
6.6 Oldham’s Housing Strategy 2006-09, `Decent Homes, Decent Neighbourhoods`, sets out how the Council will meet the Borough’s housing needs and how it will continue to influence and contribute to the regeneration of Oldham and its communities. It identifies five priorities, including responding to local housing markets, improving housing quality and choice, meeting vulnerable people’s housing needs, investment to provide excellent retained housing and improved neighbourhoods, and achieving community cohesion and sustainable neighbourhoods.

6.7 There is a need to continue to make the best use of the existing building stock and further reduce vacancy rates. The Borough needs to identify enough land to meet the requirements for new dwellings as set out in RSS, and to replace those dwellings that have been cleared as a result of HMR. There is also a need to ensure that the minimum previously developed land (`brownfield land`) and density targets are met. It has to be recognised that windfall allowances have played an important role in our approach to housing over recent years.

6.8 The Council has to undertake strategic housing market and housing land availability assessments to estimate housing need and demand in terms of affordable and market housing, and to determine how the distribution of need and demand varies across the Borough. This needs to be undertaken within the Greater Manchester context. Research is currently underway to better understand the links with, and influences of, housing markets in Rochdale, Tameside and north Manchester on the Borough.

Improving the Choice and Quality of Housing

6.9 The 2005 Housing Market Assessment, commissioned by the Oldham/Rochdale HMR Pathfinder, shows a dysfunction within the housing market - a mismatch between the available housing and householder aspirations (for example, size, quality of housing and associated environment). A balanced profile of house sizes, types and tenures within the Borough is needed where supply meets demand. Particular issues to consider include, firstly, a clear latent requirement for larger housing within inner Oldham. Secondly, that population and household growth will create demand for additional housing provision in the Borough (including the HMR area). Thirdly, the high levels of expected household growth will be translated into demand for smaller (and more affordable) properties.

6.10 A number of issues have been identified with regards to private sector housing, in particular overcrowding (due to the unavailability of larger properties and the inability to afford property prices), the inadequate room sizes of many newly built houses, private landlords, and the adaptability and lifetime homes agenda.
• What type, size and mix of housing should the Core Strategy look to provide to ensure that development contributes to sustainable communities?
• Are some types of housing more important within particular areas?
• What about the delivery of high value housing?
• How can the Core Strategy influence and support the objectives for improving the quality of private sector housing?

Location of Housing

6.11 The Borough has to build 289 additional dwellings each year over and above those that will be replaced due to clearance over the next fifteen years. The location of new housing development is essential. Housing needs to be developed in suitable locations which offer a range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure in order to create sustainable communities. Currently, most (78% during 2005/06) new development is located within the main urban areas including Oldham, Chadderton, Failsworth, Hollinwood, Royton and Shaw, with the remainder in Saddleworth and Lees. The Core Strategy has to consider how other initiatives, such as HMR and BSF, will influence the location of new housing.

• Where, broadly, should the Core Strategy aim to focus new housing developments?
• Should it be focused on Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres that have good accessibility?
• Should it be distributed around the Borough?
• Should it be left to the market to choose the best locations?

Affordable Housing

6.12 Affordable housing is defined as including social rented and intermediate housing “provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market”. Intermediate affordable housing is defined as “housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market price or rents…”.

6.13 The 2004 Housing Needs Study identified a shortfall of affordable housing equating to 110 dwellings per annum, with a particular need for additional three or more bedroom properties. The study further recommended that 30% of all dwellings on new developments should be for affordable housing, of which 80% should be socially rented. This is further emphasised by the predicted 5-15% increase in demand for social rented housing from 2004 to 2019.

6.14 The study states that in areas which require additional affordable housing, policy should encourage its development; whereas in areas where there is a surplus of affordable housing policies attempting to stimulate demand may be more useful.

6.15 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment that is to be undertaken will provide up to date information on the level, type and tenure of affordable housing required across the Borough and will inform development of the Core Strategy.

6.16 A balance needs to be found between securing affordable housing but not at the expense of over-burdening the developer to such an extent that the development does not get built.

6.17 Where viable and practical, the Council should consider allocating and releasing sites within rural communities solely for affordable housing. This is called a `rural exceptions site` policy. Such a policy would enable small sites to be used, specifically for affordable housing within rural communities, which would not normally be used for housing perhaps because they are subject to policies of restraint. It could offer affordable housing in perpetuity and could address the needs of the rural community by accommodating households that are either current residents, or have an existing family or employment connection with the locality.

- Should the Core Strategy include a 30% affordable housing target?
- Should it include a different target? If so, what?
- If a target is included how can we ensure it does not deter developers from bringing forward new housing developments?
- Should the affordable housing policy allow flexibility when dealing with each site and not include a specific target?
- What types of affordable housing should we be providing?
- What proportion of social rented and intermediate housing should the Core Strategy provide for?
- Should the Core Strategy provide a different approach for affordable housing across the Borough that reflects the particular needs of local areas, in other words, Saddleworth, inner Oldham and so on, rather than a Borough-wide approach?
- What are the factors that would need to be addressed if a different approach was to be taken?
- Should the Core Strategy include a `rural exceptions site` policy for Saddleworth?
Residential Densities

6.18 An important part of meeting the Borough’s housing requirement will depend upon the efficient use of land. This can be achieved through developing appropriate housing density policy. Although the draft RSS proposes a minimum housing density policy, the Council does have discretion to adopt varying density standards if appropriate. If a different density policy was adopted the Council should have regard to the spatial vision and strategy for housing development, infrastructure capacity, accessibility, the area’s characteristics and design, amongst other matters.

6.19 Currently, the UDP contains a density range of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare (dph). This increases to 40dph in areas that have good accessibility to public transport and are within 400m of at least two basic services. It increases to 50dph in areas that have very good accessibility, are within 400m of at least two basic services and are within Oldham Town Centre and District Centres.

- Should the Core Strategy look at different residential density targets for different areas within the Borough?
- If so, what targets should apply to different areas?
- Is the Core Strategy an opportunity to give a more spatial expression to this policy matter, in other words to identify broad locations (such as Saddleworth/HMR priority areas) where particular consideration may be given to density?

Homelessness

6.20 The Council’s Homelessness Strategy has a number of objectives. One is improving access to, and the range of, temporary accommodation. Another is to ensure that sufficient and suitable permanent accommodation is available for all.

- Should the Core Strategy include a policy about homelessness?
- If so, what factors should be included within a policy (for example, location, proximity to public transport and services, and so on.)?

Gypsies and Travellers

6.21 The Council is required to assess housing needs for Gypsies and Travellers. It has to demonstrate how Gypsies and Travellers’ accommodation needs will be met as part of the Borough’s wider housing strategies. Studies at both the regional and Greater Manchester levels are currently underway looking at the needs and demands of Gypsies and Travellers and their findings will inform the development of the Core Strategy.
• Should the Core Strategy identify a broad location for a Gypsies and Travellers site?
• Should the Core Strategy only list the factors that will be used to identify location(s) for Gypsies and Travellers?
• If so, what factors should be included in a policy?

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE

6.22 Attracting inward investments and promoting business growth are important for Oldham’s future economic prospects. It also needs to create an environment that will encourage entrepreneurship, and knowledge based and innovative technology and industry. Consideration has to be given to the Borough’s employment land needs, including the amount and its location. The Borough needs an adequate and mixed portfolio of employment sites and quality modern floor space for businesses to start, to grow and to locate. Creative industries, particularly within Oldham Town Centre, have the potential to be a key economic driver. The Borough’s retailing offer needs to be improved. The need to continue attracting visitors and ensure that more visitors stay overnight is important for the Borough’s tourism economy.

6.23 Reducing poverty and inequality is an important issue. Traditionally, the Borough has had a low wage, low skills base workforce. Ideally, in sustainability terms, employment sites should be located in areas that are accessible by all on public transport. Access by public transport to jobs at some of the key employment opportunities across the Manchester City Region, for example Kingsway in Rochdale and Ashton Moss in Tameside, is recognised as an issue that needs to be tackled for the Borough’s residents.

6.24 The LAA vision for Economic Development and Enterprise is “improving employment opportunities for local people, addressing skill attainment and creating an environment to encourage entrepreneurship and investment”. It is centred on four strategic outcomes: improving enterprise, innovation and business growth; improving the skills and employability of the Borough’s residents; reducing poverty and inequalities; and attracting investment to create quality modern floor space and new jobs.

6.25 The Economy and Enterprise Strategy vision is that “by 2017 Oldham will be thriving – playing a new and dynamic role in the economic growth of a world-class Manchester City region”. Its core theme is to reposition the Oldham economy by expanding the existing business base, increasing entrepreneurial activity and, through innovation, creating an economy based upon higher value key sectors. An improved skills base that ensures residents are able to meet the future
demands of employers underpins this strategy, so increasing the employment rate.

6.26 Manchester City Region is recognised as the largest and best performing economic engine powering the Northern regions. The regional economic vision seeks to build a sustainable and internationally competitive economy based on knowledge and advanced technology. The need for economic regeneration that addresses a number of challenges, including working with businesses, raising innovation and competitiveness, improving skills levels and the image and profile of the Borough is recognised. The Economy and Enterprise Strategy seeks to address the challenges facing the local economy and seeks to improve enterprise and innovation within the Borough.

**EMPLOYMENT LAND**

**Amount and Location of Employment Land**

6.27 National guidance requires the Council to review its employment land allocations to ensure there is sufficient land allocated and that these sites are still suitable for employment purposes. Developable land in the Borough is scarce. At 2006 there was 92 hectares of land allocated for business and industrial uses across the Borough. Of this, however, only 37 hectares are considered to be of a sufficient quality to be attractive for potential investors. At recent rates of development this represents less than a five-year supply of quality employment land. Recent distribution of industrial development has been skewed towards the western part of the Borough with its perceived locational advantages linked to the motorway network.

6.28 Increasingly, there are pressures for employment sites to be developed for other uses, including housing or community uses, as a result of initiatives such as HMR and BSF. If employment land is developed for other uses, and new sites are not made available, then Oldham has the potential to become a commuter town with its residents increasingly dependent upon sites elsewhere across the Manchester City Region for work. There are a number of sub-regional strategic sites located in neighbouring Boroughs such as Kingsway in Rochdale, Ashton Moss in Tameside and Central Park in Manchester, although it recognised that access by public transport to these sites is still an issue that needs to be addressed for the Borough’s workforce.

- How much land should the Core Strategy allocate for employment uses?
- Where, broadly, should it be located?
- Should the Core Strategy rely upon the sub-regional strategic sites to help meet the Borough’s employment land needs?
Primary Employment Zones

6.29 Over the last two decades the approach to employment land has been largely driven by designating parts of the Borough as Primary Employment Zones (PEZs). These are available for commercial uses and are generally protected from non-employment uses. There are currently 32 PEZs of varying sizes and in various locations, from Hollinwood to Delph. Currently a wide range of uses are permitted within all PEZs. This includes offices, manufacturing, warehousing, hotels, car showrooms, gardens centres, and food and drink premises, amongst other uses. Given the on-going regeneration of the Borough, coupled with changes made to the PEZ policy through the UDP review which now permits housing in PEZs in certain circumstances, the future role and purpose of PEZs is an integral issue that has to be considered as part of this Core Strategy. It may be that the approach towards employment areas needs greater flexibility so as to allow for mixed-use development where it contributes to the renewal of existing buildings and infrastructure and better quality employment.

- Is there a continued need and role for Primary Employment Zones (PEZs) in the Core Strategy?
- Should the Core Strategy identify PEZs? If so, broadly where?
- Should the Core Strategy permit different types of uses within PEZs in different parts of the Borough?
- If so, in which areas, and what sort of uses should be permitted?

Strategic Locations and Sites

6.30 As mentioned earlier the need to encourage new high technology and innovative businesses is key to turning round the Borough’s economy. A series of strategic locations and sites are recognised as being key to achieving this. Hollinwood, with access to the M60 and good bus and rail links to Manchester City Centre, as well being a proposed Metrolink stop, is one of the strategic locations in the Borough. It has many locational advantages as a business environment that will attract high quality technology developments and commercial uses, and it will project a strong image for Oldham. The Hollinwood Business District masterplan has been approved by the Council. Broadway is also a strategic location for employment and economic development that benefits from good transport links. However, currently Hollinwood and Broadway are both designated as Primary Employment Zones which allows for a wide range of commercial uses. In Oldham Town Centre a masterplan for the New West End has been prepared. A masterplan for the Mumps area of Oldham Town Centre is also being prepared and will be finalised in the autumn. An urban technology park is proposed for Chadderton and work is underway on taking forward this proposal. The proposals for these areas will be key to transforming the Borough.
• Should the Core Strategy identify Hollinwood and Broadway as strategic locations where only high quality business uses will be permitted, in other words only offices and high technology and knowledge-based and innovative uses?
• Should the Core Strategy identify areas covered by the Oldham Town Centre masterplans as strategic locations for new development?
• Should the Core Strategy identify the proposed Chadderton urban technology park as a strategic location?

Entrepreneurship and Innovation

6.31 The need to encourage a more entrepreneurial approach to business and to increase innovation has been recognised as key to improving the performance of the Borough’s economy. The University Centre Oldham provides business-related higher education courses. These could create an opportunity to support start-up businesses from a pool of highly skilled and motivated people already in Oldham. To encourage this innovation and support economic growth, smaller start-up units, including managed workspaces, and incubators, may be necessary along with move-on spaces for companies to relocate elsewhere within the Borough once they have survived the initial start-up phase and are ready to expand.

• How can the Core Strategy encourage entrepreneurship and innovation?
• Should the Core Strategy seek to identify broad locations for start-up businesses and move-on units? If so, broadly where?

Retailing

6.32 The Borough’s retail hierarchy identifies Oldham Town Centre, where shops are focused within and around the existing central shopping core, and the seven District Centres at Chadderton, Failsworth, Huddersfield Road (“Hill Stores”), Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill. The Oldham market is a feature of the town’s shopping offer. Independent retailers also have a role to play in the shopping experience offered by Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres. There are no defined Local Centres. Small-scale shops currently serve the Saddleworth villages. Preference for retail and leisure developments within Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres is given over out-of-centre locations. Smaller local and neighbourhood centres play an important part in contributing towards sustainable communities and social inclusion. The Council seeks to maintain the vitality and viability of Oldham Town Centre, the District Centres and existing local shopping parades and groups of shops, and to protect local shopping facilities that provide for residents’ essential day-to-day
needs. Local needs shops serve local areas and help in meeting people’s day-to-day needs. These include small food stores, post offices, pharmacies, advice centres and other small-scale services of a local nature. Currently, new local needs shops are limited to a maximum size of 300 square metres gross floorspace.

- **How can the Core Strategy ensure that the vitality and viability of Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres is maintained and enhanced?**
- **Should the Core Strategy identify new District Centre(s)?**
- **Should the Core Strategy identify local and neighbourhood centres?**
- **If so, where?**
- **What should the threshold for local needs shops be?**
- **How can the Core Strategy support and encourage the independent retail sector?**

**Creative Industries**

6.33 Creative industries are defined as a set of industry sectors that either create and exploit intellectual property products or provide creative services (in other words offer their creativity - their generation of new ideas or concepts, or new associations between existing ideas or concepts - for hire to other businesses). They are seen as another way of improving enterprise and innovation within the Borough. The future creativity of local people has been highlighted as a potential key strength of the Borough and strategies have been developed to promote the creative industries in Oldham. It has now been confirmed that the BBC will be moving several major departments to the city of Salford, and this offers potential spin-off benefits for Oldham’s developing creative industries.

6.34 Non-commercial cultural facilities in Oldham Town Centre are being clustered in the Rhodes Bank Creative Quarter. This has already included the development of the Gallery and the Lifelong Learning Centre, completed in February 2002, which included three new gallery spaces with footbridges to existing galleries in the existing library building, and the Lifelong Learning Centre that opened in 2006.

6.35 Oldham Town Centre’s New West End, to the west of the main shopping area, includes a number of key sites such as the two colleges, health facilities and churches and also areas of under-used and vacant land. One of the key proposals of the New West End masterplan is the creation of a new Coliseum Theatre. The existing theatre plays a major role in Oldham Town Centre and has a good reputation. A new Coliseum would expand the theatre’s role in the community and would provide a base for creative businesses in Oldham through expanded facilities. In addition offices, retailing, restaurants, a hotel and residential development would be encouraged in the New West End.
• Should the Core Strategy identify the Creative Quarter in Oldham Town Centre as a focus for creative industries-led mixed-use developments?
• Should the Core Strategy identify the New West End as a strategic location in Oldham Town Centre and include a policy to support the masterplan?

Visitor Economy

6.36 The strategic aim of the Borough’s Tourism Development Strategy is “to maximise the economic, social and environmental benefits that tourism can bring to the residents and businesses within the Oldham Borough area, whilst ensuring that the industry develops in a sustainable way”.

6.37 The Borough’s visitor offer ranges from the moorland countryside of Saddleworth, river valleys, stone villages, the Huddersfield Narrow and Rochdale canals, and nightlife and shopping in Oldham Town Centre. Cultural activities also form part of the visitor offer, including the Coliseum theatre in Oldham Town Centre. Tourism is widely defined and comprises the activities of people travelling to and staying outside their usual environment for leisure, business and other purposes, and refers to both over-night visitors and same-day visitors. It is a significant contributor to the local economy, both in terms of income generated and jobs created. However, of the tourists who visited the Borough in 2005 less than 5% stayed overnight. The Tourism Development Strategy recognises the need for improved quality hotels and conference facilities in the Borough. This has been highlighted as a key issue if the visitor economy is to further develop so ensuring that visitors have opportunities to stay overnight and thus spend more money locally.

• How can the Core Strategy best maximise the benefits that tourism and culture bring to the Borough’s economy?
• Should the Core Strategy identify specific areas for tourism development, or should it include a policy approach that generally encourages and supports tourism?
• If so, what factors should be included in a policy?

Economic Well Being

6.38 For those in work low pay is a significant feature of the Oldham economy, raising concerns about the quality of jobs and skills levels. Social exclusion, poverty and inequality are important to turning round the Borough. Access to employment is important for getting people
into work, and accessibility is one of the shared priorities for transport agreed between national and local government.

- How can the Core Strategy ensure that the economic well being of the Borough’s population is improved?
- Should it include a specific policy?
- If so, what factors should be included in a policy?

**TRANSPORT**

6.39 An efficient transport system is important to help people to travel and participate fully in society, to transport goods, to support regeneration and to attract investment to the Borough. A key challenge is to integrate land use planning and development with the transport system so that people can travel safely and conveniently, and goods can be distributed efficiently. This involves having an integrated, multi-modal transport network.

6.40 The Core Strategy has to integrate with the aims and proposals of the Greater Manchester Integrated Transport Strategy, the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan (LTP) and its sub-strategies such as the Greater Manchester Accessibility Strategy. The LTP is focused around shared priorities for transport as agreed between national and local government, which are accessibility, safety, congestion and air quality. The LTP seeks to accommodate the economic growth which is forecast for the region in the most sustainable way by focusing investment where it can have the greatest impact on peak period movements, key centres, schools and major employment sites and where it can aid regeneration. Key aims of the LTP include the enhancement of Metrolink, improved rail and bus travel, the development of corridor partnerships (which integrate planning and investment with regeneration, housing and other local strategies), encouragement of walking and cycling, traffic management improvements, and the continued development of travel plans.

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

6.42 It is important to ensure that new development is located in the most accessible locations, in other words those accessible by a choice of travel modes, including public transport, walking and cycling. This is to reduce the need for people to travel and for people to travel by single occupancy vehicles and hence contribute towards climate change reduction targets. It also links with the need to improve people’s healthy lifestyles by creating more opportunities for people to walk or cycle rather than use the car.

6.43 The Greater Manchester Accessibility Strategy sets out a vision and priorities for improving accessibility across the sub-region. Its Vision states, “We will work in partnership to provide efficient and effective access to opportunities that are important for a high quality of life”. It identifies that increasing social inclusion is the primary objective of the strategy, ensuring that everyone, especially the disadvantaged, are able to access key facilities including jobs, fresh food, healthcare and education.

6.44 The Council has also prepared a Cycling Strategy, a Rights of Way Improvement Plan and a draft Pedestrian Strategy, which again aim to encourage cycling and walking in the Borough through a series of infrastructure improvements.

6.45 New developments above a certain threshold should be required to develop a travel plan for the site, with the primary aim to be modal shift away from car use. All new school developments, including extensions, are also required to develop a travel plan. All schools (nationally) are required by Government to have a travel plan in place by 2010, and these have to reach the minimum criteria set by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) before they are approved. The location and development of schools that are part of the BSF programme should be of great importance in order to make sustainable transport as attractive an option as possible and the site accessible. Travel plans for new residential developments may also be required. As well as the above, travel plans may be required for smaller developments which will generate significant amounts of travel in, or near to, air quality management areas. They may also be required in other locations where there are local initiatives or targets set out in the LDF or LTP for the reduction of road traffic, or the promotion of public transport, walking and cycling. Also a travel plan may help address a particular local traffic problem associated with a proposed development which might otherwise be refused on local traffic grounds.

6.46 The above support and contribute towards the Department for Transport’s (DfT) Smarter Choices programme. Smarter Choices are techniques for influencing people’s travel behaviour towards more sustainable options such as encouraging school, workplace and
individualised travel planning. They also seek to improve public transport and marketing services such as travel awareness campaigns, setting up websites for car share schemes, supporting car clubs and encouraging teleworking.

- How can the Core Strategy promote and encourage accessibility, and ensure that new developments are located and designed in ways that encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport rather than travel by car?
- What factors should be included in an accessibility policy?
- What should the thresholds be for requiring new developments to have a travel plan?

**Metrolink**

6.47 The proposed extension of Metrolink through the Borough – from Hollinwood via Oldham Town Centre and on to Shaw - will make a vital contribution to regeneration in the Borough and will extend sustainable travel choices. Locations in and around the Metrolink and its stops will be attractive for new economic and residential developments. The conversion of the Manchester-Oldham-Rochdale rail line has been approved and funding is in place for this scheme. However, the on-street extension of Metrolink through Oldham Town Centre is dependent on funding being obtained through the Government’s Transport Innovation Fund (TIF). This is aimed at directing resources towards cutting congestion and providing a major boost to public transport provision across the region. A decision on the TIF bid is expected in January 2008 and Metrolink, in either configuration, could be running by 2011. Developments in the vicinity of the proposed Metrolink stop should demonstrate that the additional benefits of being on a major transport corridor are fully taken into account.

- Should the Core Strategy safeguard the areas around the proposed Metrolink stops as strategic locations for future development?

**Parking Standards**

6.48 The Council should set maximum parking standards that do not exceed the ceilings in RSS and define standards for additional land uses and areas where more restrictive standards should be applied. Local authorities across Greater Manchester should develop a co-ordinated approach to parking provision. Currently, the UDP standards are:

i. 2+ bedroom dwellings outside town and district centres – 1.5-3 parking spaces per dwelling

ii. 1 bedroom dwellings and dwellings in Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres – 1.25 parking spaces per dwelling

iii. Sheltered housing – 1 parking space per 3 dwellings
6.49 In setting parking standards the Council will take account of national and regional policies, whilst also recognising sustainability issues, community, stakeholder and commercial aspirations and local factors, including the setting and experience.

- Should the Core Strategy include different parking standards for different parts of the Borough? If so, what standards?
- Should the Core Strategy include parking standards that are specific to residential areas? If so, what standards?
- What factors should be included in a policy?

THE ENVIRONMENT

6.50 The Borough has a rich and varied built environment reflecting its historical and cultural heritage. It also has a varied natural heritage, green infrastructure and open spaces, but a relatively low level of woodland and tree cover.

6.51 There are instances of poor air quality in the Borough. To address this and to reduce impacts on the climate there is a need to encourage sustainable means of travel and for more developments to produce a proportion of their energy requirements from renewable sources. The Core Strategy will have to take account of any potential risks of flooding.

6.52 The Community Strategy vision for an Improved and Valued Environment is of a “Borough where people live in cleaner, greener and safer neighbourhoods and have access to a rich natural heritage of greenspace, woodlands and wider countryside that support a wealth of plant and animal life. A transportation system that reduces congestion and pollution and supports walking, cycling and use of public transport. An improved quality of life for all which meets the needs and aspirations of local people, whilst working to honour our national and international environmental obligations to conserve our precious natural resources”.

6.53 Key environmental aims identified in the Community Strategy include: the need to develop high quality living environments; the need to maintain and improve transport infrastructure and services to meet our economic and social needs; the need to conserve our natural resources; and to raise awareness and empower communities by providing information and opportunities for organisations and individuals to improve the environment of their neighbourhoods and the Borough.

6.54 Although the LAA does not contain a block relating directly to the environment, it acknowledges environmental sustainability as being an underpinning objective of Oldham Partnership’s work, and
environmental issues impinge on many of the areas covered by the blocks that are identified in the LAA.

NATURE AND LANDSCAPE

Safeguarded Land

6.55 The Council safeguards land lying between the urban area and the Green Belt to meet the Borough’s future development needs in order to maintain the protection of the Green Belt. The UDP designates parts of the Borough’s open countryside as ‘Land Reserved for Future Development’ (LRFD). At present there are 40 hectares of LRFD identified in the UDP, which represents less than 1% of the Borough’s overall land supply. The Core Strategy needs to consider whether the time has arrived to release all, or some of, this safeguarded land to meet the Borough’s development needs. Alternatively, it needs to consider whether the LRFD should continue to be safeguarded beyond the period of this Core Strategy to meet the Borough’s longer-term development needs. The Core Strategy also has to consider whether alternative or additional areas should be identified as safeguarded land.

- Should the Core Strategy continue to safeguard Land Reserved for Future Development (LRFD)?
- Should all or some existing LRFD be released for economic and/or housing development? If so, where?
- Should the Core Strategy safeguard other parts of the Borough as LRFD? If so, where?

Protected Open Land

6.56 In addition to Green Belt land, the Council has, in the UDP, sought to protect areas of open land in the Borough, which, while not serving the purposes of Green Belt, provide locally important open areas. These are currently called ‘Other Protected Open Land’ (OPOL). At present there are 331 hectares of OPOL. The Core Strategy has to consider the role of these areas and whether they should be retained as protected open land, or whether some should be released to meet the Borough’s development needs. The Core Strategy also has to consider whether alternative or additional areas should be identified as protected open land.

- Should the Core Strategy continue to protect OPOL?
- Should the Core Strategy release some OPOL for economic and/or housing development needs?
- If so, where, and for what uses?
Urban and Rural Fringes

6.57 The Borough’s agricultural land is still used, to a varying degree, for food production, mainly sheep farming and some beef and dairy farming. In some parts of the Borough there are problems of neglect that are characteristic of the urban fringe. Rural diversification schemes are likely to become increasingly important in both urban fringe and more rural areas, to generate sufficient income for land owners. These could include tourism, leisure uses, biomass, education, and forestry-related businesses. A key challenge is for the Core Strategy to support a healthy and sustainable rural economy whilst protecting against development which adversely affects the character of rural areas.

- How can the Core Strategy influence activities on the urban/rural fringe?
- Should it be seeking to encourage or restrict certain types of developments?
- If so, what sorts?
- What factors should be included in a policy?

Biodiversity

6.58 The Borough contains a range of nature conservation sites of local, national and international importance, sites where protected species thrive and sites of geological importance. There are two European designated sites that fall partly within the Borough, namely the Rochdale Canal which is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and South Pennine Moors which is a SAC and a Special Protection Area (SPA). The Council has a statutory duty to assess all development that could significantly affect these European sites, through a process called ‘Appropriate Assessment’. This process seeks to ensure that the nature conservation value of these sites are not simply protected, but, wherever possible, are enhanced. Consultation with Natural England is required, from an early stage, on any proposals that could potentially affect the special interest of these sites. The Habitats Regulations Assessment, available alongside this report, provides more information on appropriate assessment, and on the two European sites.

Rochdale Canal SAC

6.59 The Rochdale Canal extends approximately 20 km from Littleborough to Failsworth, passing through urban and industrialised parts of Rochdale and Oldham and the intervening areas of agricultural land (mostly pasture). Floating water plantain (*Luronium natans*) is the
European protected species present on the Rochdale Canal, individual plants of which are afforded legal protection.

South Pennines Moors SAC

6.60 The South Pennine Moors SAC forms part of the Southern Pennines lying between Ilkley in the north and the Peak District National Park boundary in the south. The majority of the site is within West Yorkshire but it also covers areas of Lancashire, Greater Manchester and North Yorkshire.

6.61 The site is the largest area of unenclosed moorland within West Yorkshire and contains the most diverse and extensive examples of upland plant communities in the county. Extensive areas of blanket bog occur on the upland plateaux and are punctuated by species rich acidic flushes and mires. There are also wet and dry heaths and acid grasslands. Three habitat types which occur on the site are rare enough within Europe to be listed on Annex 1 of the EC habitats and Species Directive (92/43) EEC. These communities are typical of and represent the full range of upland vegetation classes found in the South Pennines. This mosaic of habitats supports a moorland breeding bird assemblage which, because of the range of species and number of breeding birds it contains, is of regional and national importance. The large numbers of breeding merlin *Falco columbarius*, golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria* and twite *Carduelis flavirostris* are of international importance.

South Pennines Moors SPA

6.62 The South Pennine Moors SPA includes the major moorland blocks of the South Pennines from Ilkley in the north to Leek and Matlock in the south. It covers extensive tracts of semi-natural moorland habitats including upland heath and blanket mire. The site is of European importance for several upland breeding bird species, including birds of prey and waders.

6.63 A combination of climate change, pollution, development pressures, the destruction of habitats, invasion by non-native species and changes in land management practices can all put the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity under pressure.

- How can the Core Strategy protect and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity of the Borough?
- Should the Core Strategy identify protected sites?
- What factors should be included in a policy?
Landscapes

6.64 The Borough contains a varied range of landscapes from high moorlands to wooded river valleys, urban parks and valley bottom settlements. These landscapes are important to quality of life and underpin the identity of the Borough. Local landscape quality can be affected by inappropriately designed development, such as that adjoining open land, and by insensitively located development, such as buildings and telecommunications equipment.

- How can the Core Strategy ensure that new development respects local landscape character?
- What factors should be included in a policy?

Woodlands

6.65 Woodland cover in the Borough is below the national and regional averages, at 3% coverage compared to 9% for England as a whole. It is recognised, however, that there are limited appropriate locations for additional planting; these being mainly on privately owned land. Much of the existing woodland suffers from problems of neglect, poor management and over maturity. The Council’s Woodland Strategy, adopted in 2002, has targets to increase the amount of woodland cover in the Borough from 3% to 5% by 2010, and to ensure that existing woodlands are well managed to ensure accessibility and sustainability. The Council is taking a pro-active approach to the sustainable management of its woodlands, and is working towards the UK Woodland Assurance Standard in compliance with the Forest Stewardship Council. This international standard indicates that the Council is managing its woodlands sustainably with respect to economic, social and environmental criteria. The Council is a partner in the Pennine Edge Forest initiative, a community forest initiative aiming to improve the environmental image and quality of life of the area.

- How can the Core Strategy ensure that new tree planting is encouraged in appropriate locations, and support the sustainable management of woodlands?
- What factors should be included in a policy?

Green Corridors

6.66 The Borough is fortunate to have many linear landscape features such as river valleys and canals which provide recreational opportunities, and habitats and corridors for wildlife. The Council is developing a ‘Green Space Strategy’ to co-ordinate the planning, design,
management and implementation of green space in the Borough. The Strategy supports the principle of establishing accessible green spaces and networks across the Borough. An issue for the Core Strategy is how to address this valuable resource.

- How can the Core Strategy ensure the protection and enhancement of green corridors across the Borough?
- What factors should be included in a policy?

**HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT**

6.67 The Borough is characterised by a rich and diverse heritage of historic buildings, townscapes and landscapes, including listed buildings and conservation areas, which are an important part of the Borough’s identity. The Borough’s industrial heritage is reflected by the large number of mills. Historic assets can also play a key role in the regeneration of the Borough. Economic and social changes can pose a challenge to this heritage and it is a key task of the Core Strategy to ensure that new development respects the historic environment.

- How can the Core Strategy conserve and enhance the Borough’s historic environment?
- Should the Core Strategy identify specific parts of the historic environment?
- If so, which parts?
- What factors should be included in a policy?

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

6.68 A fundamental principle of sustainable development is the need to conserve natural resources and improve their quality, particularly those that are finite and non-renewable.

**Climate Change and Energy Efficiency**

6.69 The consumption of fossil fuels has lead to problems on a global scale, contributing to global warming and climate change. The Government has set targets to produce 10% of UK’s electricity from renewable sources by 2010 and to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 60% by 2050 with real progress by 2020.

6.70 The importance of climate change has risen considerably up the public and political agenda over the last year. The recent Planning White Paper, which proposes further reforms of the LDF system, further outlines the role that the planning system has to play in tackling climate change.
6.71 The reduction of energy consumption involves a combination of factors including increased energy efficiency, sustainable transport and the generation of energy from renewable sources.

6.72 Oldham Metropolitan Borough was one of the first local authorities to require 10% of energy requirements to be provided on-site from renewable energy sources for large new developments. Locally, the issue of allowing new wind turbines to be developed in the Borough, particularly in Saddleworth, has proved controversial. The recent Denshaw windfarm proposal generated significant local opposition and attracted national attention.

6.73 A key issue for the Core Strategy is to consider how further contributions can be made to national targets whilst balancing this against the need to consider the protection of the local landscape and amenity, and the need to secure the sustainable economic regeneration of the Borough.

- How can the Core Strategy ensure the Borough plays its part in contributing to national targets on renewable energy production and emissions reduction?
- Should the Core Strategy be even more proactive than the current UDP in encouraging new renewable energy developments and schemes?
- Should the Core Strategy include a higher renewable energy target than the 10% in the current UDP?
- If so, what target?
- What factors should be included in a policy?

Water and Flooding

6.74 Water is a precious resource providing drinking water, recreational opportunities and habitat for animals and plants. Recent periods of drought have demonstrated the need for its conservation. Equally, flood risk is an increasingly important issue to consider in relation to new development and site allocations, as seen this summer. Although flooding is not a major problem in the Borough, there are areas that have localised flooding problems including parts of Saddleworth and Chadderton. Government guidance identifies that the Council should adopt a risk based and sequential approach to proposals for development in or affecting flood risk areas. The NWRA are undertaking a regional flood risk assessment. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is being carried out on behalf of the Council, in partnership with the other Greater Manchester local authorities, and will inform the preparation of the Core Strategy having regard to catchment-wide flooding issues.

- How can the Core Strategy protect water resources in the Borough?
How can the Core Strategy ensure that areas at risk of flooding are protected from inappropriate development?

What factors should be included in a policy?

WASTE MANAGEMENT AND MINERAL RESOURCES

6.75 The ten Greater Manchester local authorities are preparing a joint Waste plan (the `Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan Document`). This will set out in detail how the sub-region will manage its waste. The Core Strategy will set the strategic overview of waste management matters, with the detailed requirements set out in the joint DPD. The preparation of a joint minerals plan is also being explored by the Greater Manchester Geological Unit. The Unit has produced a report outlining options for taking forward this area of work that will be considered by the ten local authorities during the autumn.

6.76 There is a need to recognise the importance of sustainable waste management and ensure that all facilities are developed in line with the principles of the waste hierarchy using the descending options of waste reduction, reuse and recovery before disposal. Also there is a need to recognise the importance of the regional targets for waste and, through the joint DPD, identify and safeguard sites within appropriate locations for a range of waste management facilities, including disposal, to meet this need within acceptable environmental, economic and social parameters.

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

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

How can the Core Strategy ensure that waste is managed sustainably?
How can the Core Strategy ensure the prudent use and sustainable management of minerals?

SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES

6.79 Public space is often considered as relating to all those parts of the built and natural environment where the public has free access, whether in public or private ownership. It includes streets, squares, rights of way, parks and so on, but is generally regarded as excluding internal spaces (such as shopping centres) and the open countryside. Public spaces that are safe, well-maintained and attractive play an important role in creating pride in the places where we live which, in turn, is important to building community cohesion and successful communities.

6.80 The LAA vision for Safer and Stronger Communities is “to create sustainable neighbourhoods by supporting cohesive communities, tackling crime and improving the environment”. It is centred on seven strategic outcomes: to promote culture and cohesion; to have cleaner, greener and safer public spaces; to build respect in communities, to reduce crime, the harm caused by illegal drugs and to reassure the public, reducing the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour; to empower local people to have a greater voice and influence over local decision making and the delivery of services; reduce overall crime and narrow the gap between the worst wards/neighbourhoods and the district as a whole; improve the quality of the local environment by reducing the gap in aspects of liveability between the worst wards/neighbourhoods and the district as a whole; and to increase domestic fire safety and to reduce arson.

Community Cohesion

6.81 The Council’s priority is “regenerating the Borough in a way that achieves greater community cohesion”. 6

6.82 The Community Strategy’s vision for community cohesion is that “the Borough of Oldham will be a place in which people are well educated, with a thriving economy providing people with decent jobs; which has an attractive and healthy environment; where people are safe and live together peacefully, where everyone receives equality of treatment and people treat each other with respect; which welcomes visitors and where people are proud to say they belong”.

How can the Core Strategy contribute positively towards achieving community cohesion?

• Should community cohesion underpin and be reflected throughout the Core Strategy, or should there be a specific policy on community cohesion?
• If so, what factors should be included in a policy?

Design and the Built Environment

6.83 High quality design is a vital component of urban regeneration and, indeed, all new development. Design is about how places look and work; it is about aesthetics and functionality. Good design contributes to places that are attractive, safe, usable and adaptable. It can add to quality of life, contribute to civic pride and improve the Borough’s image, thereby attracting economic investment.

6.84 Good design is a key element in achieving sustainable development. It can, for example, contribute to providing a safer and more attractive public realm, contribute to high levels of accessibility for all ages, genders and abilities, contribute to urban greening and achieve high levels of environmental performance such as greater energy efficiency.

6.85 Planning can influence the design and use of public spaces, public realm and public art. Design focused policies and urban design guides can be used to ensure that streetscapes favour pedestrians over vehicles. They can help to create spaces that are safer for pedestrians and cyclists, for example by reducing vehicle speeds, ensuring that spaces are overlooked, by reducing blank walls in corner locations and providing good lighting. They can also help to reduce visual clutter through careful location of signs and street furniture and consideration of the overall impact, and can build maintenance needs into the design process.

6.86 Given the importance of good design and its role in sustainable development and regeneration, a key issue for the Core Strategy is to ensure that new development in the Borough is of a high design standard.

• How can the Core Strategy ensure that new developments are of a high design standard that contribute towards sustainable development?
• Should there be different design policies for different areas within the Borough?
• Would this ensure that development responds to local characteristics more effectively?
• What factors should be included in a policy?
Home Zones

6.87 The needs of pedestrians and cyclists need to be addressed in order to improve road safety. Home Zones are residential streets in which the road surface is shared between drivers of motor vehicles and other road users with the wider needs of residents, including people who walk and cycle, and children, in mind. The aim of them is to change the way that streets are used and to improve the quality of life for residents by making them places for people, and communities, not just for traffic. They can reduce traffic speeds and improve the safety of residential areas, and they can increase opportunities for children’s play and foster a sense of community. Although they are a relatively new idea in this country, Home Zones are being incorporated into regeneration schemes in the Borough, including at Norfolk Street and Devon Street in Werneth, and at St Mary’s in Oldham. Recent publications, including the Department for Transport’s ‘Manual for Streets’ and the Council’s recently adopted Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, offer further guidance on the ways to address public safety and connectivity.

• What role do you feel the Core Strategy has in relation to the design of residential streets?

Mixed-Uses

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

• Should the Core Strategy move away from the traditional land use zoning approach for new housing, new business, and so on, used in the UDP and instead should it be encouraging many more mixed-uses development sites to a much greater extent?
• If so, broadly where should it identify locations for mixed-uses?
• What types of uses?
• What factors should be included in a policy?

Oldham Town Centre and the Borough’s District Centres

6.89 Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres at Chadderton, Failsworth, Huddersfield Road (“Hill Stores”), Lees, Royton, Shaw and
Uppermill make significant contributions to the identity of the Borough. They are important parts of the local economy, and are a focus for social, civic and community activities. Masterplans have been drawn up for parts of Oldham Town Centre, including the New West End and the Mumps areas, and Royton and Shaw District Centres. A masterplan for Chadderton is being drawn up. The key objectives for Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres are to promote their vitality and viability by planning for new development and wide range of services including shopping, leisure and cultural activities.

- Should the Core Strategy ensure that the policies for Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres encourage a wide range of appropriate uses?
- How should the Core Strategy reflect the various masterplans?
- Should the Core Strategy identify strategic locations or sites within Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres for particular uses?
- If so, where, and for what?

Crime and Safety

6.90 Crime, and fear of crime, can undermine quality of life and community cohesion. Safety and security are essential to sustainable communities. Crime is one of the primary concerns of residents in Oldham. Crime levels, in general, have fallen over recent years, but the trend appears to have levelled off. In comparative terms, crime levels in Oldham generally compare well to Greater Manchester, but poorly to the national average. Perception of crime appears to contrast with recorded levels of crime.

6.91 Surveys have revealed that the primary concern of residents in Oldham is crime. Crimes that concern communities are focused upon disorder (for example noise, anti-social behaviour, drunkenness), and those that impact directly upon residents (domestic burglary, car crime, racist crime / incidents, drug misuse / dealing). Headline indicators show that levels of recorded crime decreased between 2003 and 2005 in Oldham. In addition, the number of crimes per 1,000 residents is lower for Oldham than for Greater Manchester. Within the Borough, the occurrence of crime varies between areas and hotspots for crime vary depending upon the nature of the crime.

6.92 The fear of crime is also an important issue. Fear of crime is a broad term that encompasses a wide range of reactions to the prospect of becoming a victim of crime. Such reactions can influence behaviour, including determining if someone will walk down a passageway, use a park, or even decide to move out of an area. Fear of crime, like crime itself, can have a direct impact on a person’s well being and also lead to exclusion.
6.93 Planning can contribute to reducing crime by influencing the location of activities. It can also influence the design and use of buildings, and of spaces around buildings. In Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres, for example, the planning system could be used to spread the evening economy, say to prevent a critical mass of bars and pubs being reached, or to concentrate the evening economy to enable easier management and integration with transport facilities. The mix of uses could also be controlled to reduce the potential of disorder and nuisance arising from clusters of pubs, nightclubs and takeaways. These actions cannot prevent a crime from being committed. They can, however, reduce the opportunity for a crime being committed, and they can also help reduce the fear of crime. Such planning policies would need to take account of, and complement, other regulatory systems and mechanisms aimed at reducing crime and disorder. In particular, care must be taken to ensure that policies complement rather than duplicate the control available through the Licensing Act 2003 (the four key objectives of which are prevention of crime and disorder; public safety; prevention of public nuisance; and protection of children from harm).

6.94 Planning for safer places involves the need to deal with competing objectives. A balance has to be achieved between the security and safety of one development, and the security and safety of the buildings and spaces around it. There is also a balance to be achieved between safety and security considerations, and other planning objectives. Siting a building close to the footpath and highway may well improve natural surveillance, for example. However, it could be out of keeping with buildings in the vicinity, or harm the character and appearance of a conservation area. The design of streets can also improve safety, and the perception of safety, in terms of both road accidents and personal safety.

- How can the Core Strategy improve the safety, security and attractiveness of residential areas and Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres?
- Should the Core Strategy aim to encourage a mix of activities within new developments at different times of the day to help to reduce crime and the fear of crime?
- Should the Core Strategy adopt a different approach to addressing the need to reduce crime and fear of crime in different areas within the Borough?
- What factors should be included in a policy?

Thriving Voluntary, Community and Faith sector

6.95 Oldham has a large and active voluntary and community sector made up of around 900 organisations. The sector employs around 2,800 people, deploys in the region of 8,000 volunteers, provides a vast array of services, and also facilitates community engagement and
empowerment. In order to perform these functions, the sector needs appropriate and accessible accommodation and facilities.

6.96 Community facilities include education facilities, facilities associated with social service provision, facilities associated with HM Prison Service, health and medical centres, hospitals, nursing homes, child care facilities including private nurseries, libraries and arts centres, community centres and halls, social clubs, religious buildings, and special needs housing involving communal living and/or supported accommodation. Such facilities can be viewed as a form of social infrastructure in that they help society function, providing locations for social interaction and community engagement. Social infrastructure can also be taken to include public spaces, open spaces and parks.

6.97 Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres are often seen as the most appropriate locations for community facilities that large numbers of people need to access. However, smaller facilities are more appropriately located closer to, or within, the communities that use them. This latter type of location can be problematic, though, as community facilities can have an adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residents.

- How can the Core Strategy best address the needs of the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector?
- Should it include a specific policy?
- What factors should be included in a policy?
- Should it identify specific sites?
- If so, broadly where?

HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE

6.98 Premature deaths and higher levels of infant mortality are strongly related to health inequalities. There is a need to increase the number of people in the Borough participating in moderate exercise on a regular basis. This is particularly the case in areas where life expectancy is lower and infant mortality is higher. New, modern health centres that are located where they can be easily accessed by public transport and walking are required. There is a need to protect and enhance the quality, range and accessibility of open spaces, sport and recreational facilities throughout the Borough and ensure that everyone has access to open space. Linked to this is recognition that increased physical activity levels are important to address high levels of obesity amongst children and young people. The reconfiguration of health services across the Borough, including the new Local Improvement Finance Trust (LIFT) health centres and facilities, will also have spatial and access implications that will have to be taken account of in the LDF.
The LAA vision for **Healthier Communities and Older People** is “creating more opportunities to enable citizens to lead healthy, active and longer lives”. It is centred on four strategic outcomes: improve health and reduce health inequalities; reduce premature mortality rates and reduce inequalities in premature mortality rates between wards/neighbourhoods with a particular focus on reducing the risk factors for heart disease, stroke and related diseases; integrated services to support independence and improved engagement of older people as active citizens; and improved outcomes for diabetes.

The LAA aims to improve the health of the Oldham population through improving lifestyle factors, addressing smoking, diet, sport and physical activity and alcohol and also addressing diabetes. The planning system cannot directly influence people’s choices. It can, however, ensure that there is sufficient land available for sport and physical activities and open space for people to have the opportunity to exercise. It can also ensure that new developments, such as sports centres, supermarkets, doctor surgeries and pharmacies are located in places where people can access them by public transport, making it easier to access healthy food, medical help and make healthy choices.

There is clear evidence about the positive impact of physical activity on health. A sedentary or less active lifestyle is one of the key causes of heart disease, obesity, diabetes and osteoporosis. It is important that everyone has access to places where they can take part in physical activity and relax. As well as providing physical exercise, it is beneficial to mental well-being, confidence and community cohesion. It also provides somewhere for social interaction, particularly for young people.

**Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation**

The availability of open spaces, sport and recreation facilities are essential for health and well-being. They also have a role to play in delivering many wider objectives including sustainable development, social inclusion and community cohesion. It is important that the provision of such facilities are carefully planned and managed and that they meet the needs of local people in a sustainable and affordable way.

Open spaces, sport and recreation facilities are defined as parks and non-domestic gardens, natural and semi-natural urban greenspaces, green corridors, outdoor sports facilities, amenity greenspace, purpose made recreation facilities for children and young people, allotments, community gardens and urban farms, indoor built facilities used for sports, and accessible countryside in urban fringe areas.

A local needs assessment and audit was completed during 2006, which flagged up issues of variability of open spaces, sport and recreation facilities across the Borough. The Core Strategy has to
ensure the recreational needs of the Borough are met. It also has to develop local standards of open space provision including quantitative, qualitative and accessibility standards.

6.105 The Council, through the UDP, has sought to secure on-site open space provision for certain residential developments to meet the Council’s standard of provision of 1.2 ha per 1000 persons. The Core Strategy has to consider whether these standards need to be revised. The current approach is proving rather inflexible in certain circumstances, particularly on sites within Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres where they are on a restricted footprint and within regeneration areas where there are approved masterplans which show open space is being considered in a coordinated manner.

- Should the Core Strategy be seeking to identify an open space hierarchy?
- If so, what?
- Should the Core Strategy review standards of open space provision?
- Should different open space standards apply to different parts of the Borough?
- Should the Core Strategy be seeking to secure on-site open space provision for new developments?
- If so, how much?
- Should a different approach be sought in Oldham Town Centre, the District Centres and regeneration areas? If so, what?

Health and Social Care Facilities

6.106 The LAA aims to provide improved integrated services. The Community Strategy also recognises the need to provide services that ensure equality of opportunity and equity of provision for all. It is recognised that one of the ways in which health and social care services need to be improved is through prioritising investment in health and social care facilities. In Oldham more than three quarters of GPs are currently practicing from premises that are more than 25 years old. Half of these premises are categorised as unacceptable. Reducing health inequalities in Oldham will include improving access to, and the quality of, Primary Care facilities through implementing the LIFT programme through Oldham Primary Care Trust. This has significant implications for the spatial planning of the Borough.

6.107 LIFT uses private sector investment to create integrated care centres bringing together a wide range of health services, along with smaller primary care centres, GP medical centres and other facilities. It aims to provide patients with modern integrated health services in high quality, fit for purpose primary care premises, particularly where existing facilities are not up to standard. It may provide the opportunity
to have some health services, currently provided within hospital, available in the local community where appropriate. They also allow integration with existing planned non-health regeneration initiatives, therefore, assisting in the overall regeneration of the Borough.

6.108 The programme aims to build new and/or improved health centres across the Borough where there is a need for investment in health services and premises. New health centres have been opened in Moorside, Glodwick and Failsworth, and one is currently under construction in Oldham Town Centre. There are plans to develop more health centres across the Borough.

- Should the Core Strategy identify strategic sites for new health centres?
- Should it include a policy to ensure that new health centres are located in accessible and sustainable locations?
- What factors should be included in a policy?

Local Environmental Quality

6.109 Residents of the Borough can expect to live in a safe, clean and healthy environment. Air pollution, contaminated land, noise, odour and light pollution are all issues that need to be addressed when considering new developments and the siting of sensitive developments in the Borough. Part of the Borough is designated as an Air Quality Management Area and there are strategies and targets for improving air quality.

- How can the Core Strategy address the balance between allowing new development and minimising its impacts on the environment and human health?
- What factors should be included in a policy?

Meeting vulnerable people’s housing needs

6.110 The Supported Accommodation Strategy recognised the need to remodel existing supported housing that does not meet modern standards and expectations, such as replacing less popular shared accommodation with self-contained flats. This recognises the importance of providing appropriate support to enable people to live independently to help them sustain their homes.

- How can the Core Strategy ensure that the right amount of supported accommodation is provided to meet current and future needs and demands?
Extra care housing

6.111 Consideration will need to be given to the location of extra care housing. Extra care housing provides additional support whilst enabling people to live as independently as possible. Developing such housing in locations which are served well by public transport, and close to other services such as post offices and shops, may assist older people to live independently.

• Should the Core Strategy seek to ensure that extra care housing and sheltered housing is located in areas within close proximity to other services, shops and public transport?

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

6.112 Learning and skills are important to economic growth and personal well being. It is important that the Borough’s young people and adults gain the necessary skills required by today’s employers. Promoting healthy lifestyles for the Borough’s children and young people is recognised as a way of improving overall levels of health. Encouraging increased sports and activity levels can make a positive contribution towards improved health.

6.113 The LAA vision for Children and Young People is “enabling children and young people to lead healthy, active lives and be highly skilled, educated and socially responsible”. It is centred on five strategic outcomes: the health of children and young people is improved; children and young people, particularly those most vulnerable, stay safe; children and young people excel through formal and informal education; young people play a positive role in the community; and young people achieve economic well being.

Education and Skills

6.114 At a regional level, a lack of basic skills and qualifications has been identified as a barrier to the growth of the regional economy. Oldham has one of the highest rates of working age population without qualifications within the Manchester City Region.

6.115 In recent years the number of people moving on to Higher Education in the Borough has been low. However, the range of opportunities to study locally has expanded with the opening, in 2005, of the University Centre Oldham (UCO), which gained university status as a higher education institution through its links with the University of Huddersfield. UCO has expanded the range and volume of Higher Education delivery in Oldham. It has an important role to play in increasing the skills levels of the local population. There are currently 1,000 students based in UCO, and by 2010 Oldham Beyond envisages...
that number being as high as 5,000 in a purpose built campus. This could potentially boost the Borough’s economy and status by bringing extra spending power, attracting active, confident citizens and driving urban regeneration.

6.116 Improved education and skills levels are important factors in enhancing the future economic prospects of the Borough. The LAA sets targets to improve the percentage of Key Stage 4 pupils achieving 5 A-C* grades at GCSE including English and Maths which stood at 35% in 2006. As mentioned earlier, the BSF programme will involve the replacing, rebuilding or renovating secondary schools across the Borough over the few next years. This programme will have important implications for the future direction of the Borough, particularly in land use terms.

- How can the Core Strategy improve education and skills levels?
- Should it ensure that the provision of land for new education facilities take priority over other uses?
- Should the Core Strategy include a specific policy for education and skills?
- What factors should be included in a policy?

**Play and Physical Exercise**

6.117 The LAA recognises the importance of children’s physical exercise generated during school time. Ensuring that sports facilities and open space are available is vital in helping children to take enough exercise. It also encourages them to continue sport and exercise as they grow older. Consideration should be given to supporting proposals to improve and develop new sports facilities and open space within school grounds where possible. Consultants are preparing a Play Strategy and Action Plan on behalf of the Council and key external partners. This should be finalised in the autumn.

6.118 The Playing Pitch Strategy recognises a need for the establishment of at least one mini soccer school in Saddleworth and Lees, West Oldham, Failsworth, Chadderton and Shaw and Royton. It recommends that additional grass pitches should be supported; each secondary school should have a cricket pitch; and that every primary school should have an adequate quality playground surface (regardless of size) for sports activities, with appropriate playground markings.

6.119 An efficient way of providing additional sports facilities within the Borough is through the shared use of facilities between different users. For example, a school football pitch or sports hall could be used by the community outside of school hours and throughout the day outside term time.
• How can the Core Strategy help to improve the health of the Borough’s children and young people?
• Should the Core Strategy seek to encourage the dual use of sports facilities and open spaces by different user groups where practical?
• What factors should be included in a policy?

Active Travel

6.120 Active travel is an important way of increasing physical activity and integrating exercise into children’s lifestyles. All schools (nationally) are required by Government to develop a school travel plan, by 2010, as part of the ‘Travelling to School Initiative’. This is a joint initiative of the DfT and DCSF. It covers a series of measures to reduce congestion and increase the use of sustainable modes of transport for pupils' travel to and from school. The Borough has developed a (draft) School Travel Plan Strategy which sets out how the target is to be achieved.

6.121 The Education & Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on all local authorities to promote sustainable travel. This includes the development of:
   i an assessment of the travel and transport needs of children, and young people within the authority’s area;
   ii an audit of the sustainable travel and transport infrastructure within the authority that may be used when travelling to and from, or between schools/institutions;
   iii a strategy to develop the sustainable travel and transport infrastructure within the authority so that the travel and transport needs of children and young people are better catered for; and
   iv the promotion of sustainable travel and transport modes on the journey to, from, and between schools and other institutions.

6.122 The Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy has been developed as part of the School Travel Plan Strategy (due to be adopted 2007). This will be reviewed annually to identify how the Council will achieve the other points and fulfil our duty to promote sustainable travel.

6.123 Partner organisations run programmes of work/accreditation that encourage active and sustainable travel such as `The National Healthy School Standard` and the Eco-schools programme.

• How can the Core Strategy promote the `active travel` agenda?

Young Person’s Housing

6.124 Young people’s housing options in the Borough are limited. Home ownership is out of reach for many. There has been a rise in young
single homelessness in recent years. This reflects the increased difficulty that many young people face in accessing any type of accommodation. Overall demand for Council and Housing Association properties is very high, but the supply fails to match demand.

- What type of housing do you feel would be most appropriate to meet the needs and aspirations of young people?
- How can this be best addressed within the Core Strategy?
- What factors should be included in a policy?
7 VISION

7.1 Our suggested Vision for the LDF takes account of the visions for Oldham Beyond, the Community Strategy and the LAA. It is:

"A Borough transformed to achieve greater community cohesion, economic growth and prosperity, and sustainable development, through regeneration activities and the rich diversity of its people and places.

A Borough of safer and stronger urban and rural communities - from Chadderton, Failsworth, Lees, Oldham, Royton and Shaw to the Saddleworth villages - where:

- its housing needs are met, including the need for affordable housing, and the Oldham/Rochdale Housing Market Renewal initiative has helped turn round the local housing market;
- its thriving innovation and knowledge-based economy, including the key strategic locations at Oldham Town Centre and Hollinwood, offers employment opportunities for local residents, as part of the wider Manchester City Region with its modern, integrated public transport system, including the Metrolink extension from Hollinwood through Oldham Town Centre and on to Shaw;
- its natural, built and historic environments are valued, from, amongst others, the Rochdale Canal to the Castleshaw Roman Fort;
- its residents lead healthy, active and longer lives and have access to key services and facilities, including the new Primary Care Trust health centres; and
- its children and young people are well educated and highly skilled, helped by the Boroughwide Building Schools for the Future programme of new and improved secondary schools and the expansion of the University Centre Oldham."

- Do you think this is the right Vision for the LDF?
- Do you have any comments or suggestions for improving it?
- Do you have an alternative Vision?
8 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

8.1 The Core Strategy has to identify a series of strategic objectives that will set the future direction for the LDF. Draft strategic objectives are outlined below:

Over-arching

SO1 To promote sustainable development and inclusive communities in the Borough by:
   i. ensuring the high quality design and sustainable construction of all new developments.
   ii. ensuring the effective and efficient use of land and buildings, and the prudent use and sustainable management of natural and man-made resources.
   iii. guiding development to the most accessible locations.
   iv. promoting Community cohesion.
   v. improving and promoting the Borough’s image to its residents and those living outside the Borough.
   vi. implementing the New West End and the Mumps masterplans for Oldham Town Centre.
   vii. implementing the masterplans for Royton, Shaw and Chadderton.
   viii. implementing the Hathershaw and Fitton Hill New Deal for Communities masterplan.

Housing

SO2 To ensure the Borough’s housing market is balanced and sustainable with a mix of house sizes, types and tenures that provide choice and diversity in successful and secure neighbourhoods by:
   i. integrating HMR and the Council’s housing objectives, policies and programmes.
   ii. providing sufficient housing to meet the needs and demands of the Borough’s urban and rural communities.
   iii. providing sufficient affordable housing to meet local needs.
   iv. making best use of the existing housing stock.
   v. implementing the emerging proposals for the redevelopment of Alt and Sholver.
   vi. implementing the Private Finance Initiative for the regeneration of Crossley, Clarkwell and Primrose Bank estates.

Economic Development and Enterprise

SO3 To promote economic growth and prosperity and the sustainable economic regeneration of the Borough by:
   i. providing a sufficient range of quality employment sites for existing businesses and inward investments.
   ii. encouraging the development of knowledge-based, innovative and creative industries.
implementing the Hollinwood Business District masterplan as an area for high quality, high technology and knowledge-based and innovative businesses.

iv. implementing the emerging proposals for an urban technology park in Chadderton.

v. protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of Oldham Town Centre and the Borough’s District Centres.

vi. promoting economic well being, reducing unemployment and social exclusion, particularly in the deprived areas of inner Oldham, and sustaining and enhancing existing employment.

vii. securing improvements to the public transport network and implementing the Metrolink extension proposals from Hollinwood through Oldham Town Centre and on to Shaw and beyond.

Environment

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

i. conserving and enhancing the Borough’s landscapes and townscapes, and its natural and built assets and heritage.

ii. protecting the diverse and environmentally sensitive open parts of the Borough, including Green Belt and nature conservation areas, such as the Rochdale Canal and the South Pennine Moors, from inappropriate development, whilst encouraging healthy, sustainable rural communities, including those in the Saddleworth villages and surrounding areas.

iii. minimising the impact of motorised traffic on the global climate and on local air quality.

iv. reducing the need to travel and encouraging walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

v. promoting and supporting carbon neutral developments and encouraging the generation of renewable energy.

vi. promoting sustainable waste management through the waste hierarchy, to minimise waste and its production, to increase reuse, recycling and recovery rates, and to manage waste as close to source as practicable.

vii. promoting the sustainable management of minerals through the prudent use, recycling, conservation and safeguarding of mineral resources.

Safer and Stronger Communities

SO5 To promote local environmental quality, community safety and crime prevention in the Borough by:

i. ensuring that developments are high quality and contribute to the provision of well-designed neighbourhoods and local areas, including Oldham Town Centre and the Borough’s District Centres.

ii. ensuring that public spaces are appropriate, attractive, clean, safe, and accessible to everyone.
Healthier Communities and Older People

SO6 To improve the health of the Borough’s population through:
   i. the provision of quality and accessible open space, sport and recreation facilities.
   ii. implementing the programme for the new LIFT health centres and facilities in accessible locations.

Children and Young People

SO7 To improve the life opportunities of the Borough’s children and young people by:
   i. increasing education and skills levels;
   ii. implementing the Building Schools for the Future programme across the Borough.
   iii. promoting the higher and further education proposals of University Centre Oldham, Oldham College and the Sixth Form College.
   iv. promoting children and young people’s participation and engagement in local and Borough-wide issues.

• Do you think these are the right Strategic Objectives for the LDF?
• Do you have any comments or suggestions for improving them?
• Do you have any alternative or additional Strategic Objectives?
9 ALTERNATIVE SPATIAL STRATEGIES

9.1 The above sections have outlined the Borough’s key characteristics, summarised the issues and challenges facing the Borough and presented a draft vision and strategic objectives. The Issues and Options stage of the Core Strategy preparation now requires that a series of genuine alternative spatial strategies, or options, that could set the strategic direction for the Borough’s future development be presented for consideration by the community and stakeholders.

9.2 Three alternative spatial strategies for the Core Strategy are presented below. Each alternative is considered realistic and deliverable. However, they clearly involve different spatial planning priorities and would require difficult decisions, sometimes even hard choices, to be made to deliver the Core Strategy.

9.3 There will be some over-arching themes that each of the alternative spatial strategies will have to fully address, including community cohesion, sustainable development, high quality design and sustainable construction, social inclusion and accessibility.

9.4 Continuing with the approach set out in the adopted UDP, essentially a no-change ‘business as usual’ scenario, is not an option for the Core Strategy. This is because there has been a wide range of newly published higher-level planning policy and guidance, for example the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, 2007 Planning White Paper, Planning Policy Statements and Regional Spatial Strategy, that needs to be reflected in an updated Development Plan.

Option A - Focused Regeneration

9.5 Under this alternative the spatial strategy would reflect changes in higher-level planning policy, such as Planning Policy Statements and Regional Spatial Strategy, and would focus new developments on regeneration areas, including Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres, at strategic locations such as Hollinwood and at major public transport nodes and along corridors such as Metrolink stops. Developments would be targeted on the most accessible and sustainable locations.

9.6 This alternative would involve maintaining existing Green Belt boundaries and retaining existing Land Reserved for Future Development and Other Protected Open Land designations. All other policy areas would be reviewed and there would be new approaches for housing, employment, retailing, open space and affordable housing, amongst others.

9.7 Under this option most development would be within regeneration areas, Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres, at strategic
locations and at major public transport corridors and nodes, such as the Metrolink route.

9.8 The regional targets for housing density and previously developed land would easily be achieved under this spatial strategy.

9.9 **Strengths**

i. Would be consistent with national and regional policies on ensuring the re-use of previously developed land and securing housing density target.

ii. Would enable the early updating of policies to reflect the latest national and regional planning policy requirements.

iii. Would focus development on locations that would benefit from regeneration and direct it to sites in the most accessible and sustainable locations, which will help to support and promote a sustainable transport system.

iv. Would help ensure prominent developments and create a ‘critical mass’ to help improve the image of the Borough and act as stimulus to ‘cascade’ regeneration benefits across the rest of the Borough.

v. Would prevent the existing built-up areas from merging and encroaching on the countryside, and would protect other locally important areas of open space.

vi. Would support and enhance the vitality and viability of Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres.

9.10 **Weaknesses**

i. The LDF should take account of the needs and opportunities of the whole Borough, not just regeneration areas.

ii. If sites are limited or difficult to develop due to constraints (for example land contamination), then this may require public sector incentives to help bring forward development opportunities.

iii. If sites are limited then this may lead to pressures to displace lower value land uses (in other words small businesses, local shops, and so on) in favour of higher value uses (that is, housing), which may have sustainability implications.
Option A - Focused Regeneration

Legend
- Borough Boundary
- Built Up Areas
- Protected Land
- Key Routes & Travel Networks
- Focusing new developments in these areas
- Peak Park
- LDF Boundary

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Option B - Urban Concentration

9.11 Under this alternative the approach in the adopted UDP would form the starting point for the spatial strategy, although it would be updated as necessary to **reflect changes in new higher-level policy**, such as Planning Policy Statements and Regional Spatial Strategy.

9.12 This alternative would involve maintaining existing Green Belt boundaries and retaining existing Land Reserved for Future Development and Other Protected Open Land designations. All other policy areas would be reviewed and there would be new approaches for housing, employment, retailing, open space and affordable housing, amongst others.

9.13 Under this option **most development would be within the existing built up areas of the Borough**, which includes the Saddleworth villages.

9.14 The regional targets for housing density and previously developed land would be achieved under this spatial strategy.

9.15 **Strengths**
   i. Would be consistent with national and regional policies on ensuring the re-use of previously developed land and securing housing density target.
   ii. Would enable the early updating of those policies that require it.
   iii. Would prevent the existing built-up areas from merging and encroaching on the countryside, and would protect other locally important areas of open space.
   iv. Would ensure development was dispersed across the Borough meaning that all areas benefit rather than it being targeted at particular areas only.
   v. Would support and enhance the vitality and viability of Oldham Town Centre, the District Centres and local neighbourhood centres.

9.16 **Weaknesses**
   i. Dispersal of development across the Borough may `spread the jam too thinly` and risks not creating a `critical mass` of regeneration activities.
   ii. If development opportunities are limited or sites difficult to develop due to site constraints (for example land contamination), this could lead to pressures to build houses on existing employment and commercial sites (displacing small businesses, local shops, and so on, in favour of higher value uses, in other words housing), which may have sustainability implications.
Option B - Urban Concentration

**Legend**
- Borough Boundary
- Built Up Areas
- Protected Land
- Key Routes & Travel Networks
- Concentrating new developments in these areas, where appropriate
- Peak Park
- LDF Boundary

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Option C – Urban Concentration including Planned Expansion

9.17 Under this alternative the spatial strategy would build upon the above alternative strategy B and reflect changes in higher-level planning policy, such as Planning Policy Statements and Regional Spatial Strategy, but would also see the targeted expansions of the existing built up areas to release land for new developments to assist the continuing transformation of the Borough.

9.18 This alternative would involve maintaining existing Green Belt boundaries, but all or some of the Land Reserved for Future Development sites (LRFD), and/or some of the Other Protected Open Land (OPOL), would be released for economic development or housing over the LDF plan period. However, there is a limited amount of land currently designated as LRFD; only 40 hectares which represents less than 1% of the Borough’s total land area. In addition, whilst there are 331 hectares of OPOL, much of this will not be suitable for development. All other policy areas would be reviewed and there would be new approaches for housing, employment, retailing, open space, affordable housing, among others.

9.19 Under this option most development would still be within the built up areas but with a sizable amount on the newly released land.

9.20 The regional targets for housing density and previously developed land may be more difficult to achieve under this spatial strategy due to developments taking place on LRFD and/or OPOL sites which tend to be greenfield land.

9.21 Strengths

i. Would enable the early updating of policies to reflect the latest national and regional planning policy requirements.

ii. The release of greenfield sites would encourage developers to invest in the Borough.

iii. Would protect existing Green Belt boundary.

iv. Provides new sites to meet development needs, but provides the Council with a degree of control over the release of sites in a consistent manner. Doesn’t allow developers to ‘cherry pick’ the sites they want.

9.22 Weaknesses

i. May lead to pressures for existing Green Belt to be re-designated as safeguarded land to meet the Borough’s longer-term development needs.

ii. Would require additional infrastructure for the released LRFD and/or OPOL sites.

iii. May have implications for achieving the HMR objectives and regeneration of the Borough unless undertaken in a balanced manner.
iv. May make the development of inclusive communities more difficult.
• What do you think about these alternative spatial strategies?
• Which one do you feel is mostly likely to achieve the sustainable regeneration of the Borough?
• Should some parts of the different strategies be taken to form a combined spatial strategy?
• If so, which parts?
• Or is there a different spatial strategy that you would suggest instead of these alternatives?

9.23 It should be noted that if any other spatial strategies are suggested as a result of the public consultation at the Issues and Options stage, they would have to be subject to sustainability appraisal to test their environmental, economic and social effects.
10 CORE POLICIES

10.1 Whichever alternative spatial strategy is chosen as the option for delivering the Core Strategy, it will have to be supported by a limited number of core policies. The core policies will translate the spatial strategy into action. However, at this Issues and Options stage in preparing the Core Strategy it is only necessary to identify the broad types of core policies needed, not the precise form of wording of the policies. Table 2 provides a summary of the core policies that may be required for each of the alternative spatial strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective links</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reason for including the policy / What the policy may cover</th>
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</table>
| SO1                       | CP1       | Sustainability / Sustainable Development and Locations | • To provide spatial framework for ensuring that developments contribute to sustainability objectives, the effective and efficient use of land and buildings, the prudent use and sustainable management of man-made and natural resources, ensuring the accessible location of new developments, to reduce the need to travel and to promote sustainable transport choices including walking, cycling and use of public transport.  
  • To provide spatial framework for Green Belt, nature conservation and other protected land designations.  
  • To provide spatial framework for community cohesion and building inclusive and sustainable communities. |
<p>| SO1                       | CP2       | Urban Design and Sustainable Construction | • To provide framework for the design and sustainable construction of new developments in the Borough. |
| SO1                       | CP3       | Infrastructure | • To provide a framework for infrastructure requirements for implementing the LDF, including planning obligations and developer contributions. |</p>
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| SO2                      | CP4       | Housing | • To address the Borough’s housing needs, supply and land requirements.  
                             • To integrate HMR and the Council’s housing objectives, policies and programmes.  
                             • To ensure there is quality, choice, diversity and innovation in the Borough’s housing market. |
| SO3                      | CP5       | Employment Land | • To address the Borough’s employment land requirements.  
                           • To address high technology uses, industrial and commercial uses, and office developments in the Borough.  
                           • To address the approach towards Primary Employment Zones. *(This would only be required if PEZs continue to be designated in the Core Strategy.)* |
| SO3                      | CP6       | Local Economy | • To provide spatial framework for promoting sustainable economic regeneration and improving economic prospects and performance of the Borough.  
                             • To provide spatial framework for the Borough’s strategic locations.  
                             • To provide spatial framework for Knowledge-based Industries and Creative Industries.  
                             • To provide spatial framework for the Borough’s visitor economy. |
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| SO3                      | CP7       | Oldham Town Centre, the District Centres and local and neighbourhood centres | • To identify the Borough’s retail hierarchy and any local thresholds for new retail developments.  
• To provide framework for taking forward the proposals of the various masterplans for Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres, including identifying strategic locations and sites.  
• To provide framework for other suitable uses in Oldham Town Centre and the District Centres, including retail, leisure, tourism, cultural, residential, commercial and so on, that contribute towards building sustainable communities. |
| SO4                      | CP8       | Transport | • To address the Borough’s strategic and local transport networks and infrastructure requirements, including Metrolink proposals and the spatial implications of the Greater Manchester Integrated Transport Strategy, the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan and other transport strategies including the Greater Manchester Accessibility Strategy.  
• To address the transport implications and requirements of new developments.  
• To address the Borough’s parking standards and requirements.  
• To outline the approach towards accessibility and sustainable transport choices. |
<p>| SO4                      | CP9       | Natural and Built Environments | • To provide a framework for the Borough’s natural and built environments including conservation, landscape character, townscapes, and historical, archaeological and cultural assets and heritage, and green infrastructure. |</p>
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<th>Reason for including the policy / What the policy may cover</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SO4</td>
<td>CP10</td>
<td>Habitats Regulations / Appropriate Assessment</td>
<td>• To provide a framework for the requirements of the European Habitats Directive in so far as it affects the Borough’s two protected nature conservation sites (Rochdale Canal and South Pennine Moors).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO4</td>
<td>CP11</td>
<td>Climate Change and Renewable Energy</td>
<td>• To provide framework for the Borough’s approach towards limiting the effects of climate change and promoting renewable energy, including on-site renewables.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| SO4                      | CP12      | Floodrisk | • To provide framework for the findings of the Greater Manchester Strategic Floodrisk Assessment.  
• To provide details of the approach taken for developments in areas at risk of flooding. |
| SO4                      | CP13      | Waste | • To promote sustainable waste management.  
• To provide strategic spatial framework for the Greater Manchester Joint Waste DPD. |
| SO4                      | CP14      | Minerals | • To promote sustainable management and the prudent use of mineral resources.  
• To provide strategic spatial framework for mineral resources. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective links</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reason for including the policy / What the policy may cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SO5</td>
<td>CP15</td>
<td>Safer and Stronger Communities</td>
<td>• To provide framework for the spatial implications of the Borough’s quality of life, including local environmental quality, amenity issues, community safety and crime prevention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO6</td>
<td>CP16</td>
<td>Healthy Communities and Older People</td>
<td>• To provide framework for the spatial implications of improving the health of the Borough’s population, including new open space standards, and the plans and proposals of the health sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO7</td>
<td>CP17</td>
<td>Education and Skills</td>
<td>• To provide spatial framework for the plans and proposals of the education and skills sectors, including schools, University Centre Oldham, Oldham College and the Sixth Form College.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.2 It should be noted, however, that this is an indicative list only and it may be amended as the Core Strategy progresses through its preparation stages.

- Do you think these are the right topic areas for the Core Strategy’s core policies?
- Do you think there are other topic areas that should be included within the core policies? If so, what?
11 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL POLICIES

11.1 Whichever alternative spatial strategy is chosen as the option for delivering the Core Strategy, it will also have to be supported by a limited number of policies to manage and control development. The development control policies will provide more details to translate the spatial strategy and core policies into action. However, at this Issues and Options stage in preparing the Core Strategy it is only necessary to identify the broad types of development control policies needed, not the precise form of wording. Table 3 provides a summary of the development control policies that may be required.

Table 3: Development Control policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective links</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reason for including the policy / What the policy may cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SO1</td>
<td>DC1</td>
<td>Design and Sustainable Construction of New Developments</td>
<td>• To provide details of the requirements to ensure high quality design and sustainable construction and usage of new developments, that was not already covered by the core policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO1</td>
<td>DC2</td>
<td>Planning Obligations / Developer Contributions</td>
<td>• To provide details about the mechanisms, types of developments and levels of contributions that will be required from developers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO2</td>
<td>DC3</td>
<td>Housing Density</td>
<td>• To provide details of different densities in different parts of the Borough. (This policy would only be required if a more localised approach was considered necessary and appropriate, above and beyond any requirements set out in RSS and the core policy.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO2</td>
<td>DC4</td>
<td>Affordable Housing</td>
<td>• To provide details of different levels, types and tenures of affordable housing required in different parts of the Borough. (This policy would only be required if a more localised approach was considered necessary and appropriate, above and beyond any requirements set out in RSS and the core policy.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Objective links</td>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reason for including the policy / What the policy may cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO2</td>
<td>DC5</td>
<td>Housing Mix</td>
<td>To provide details of housing mix requirements in different parts of the Borough. <em>(This policy would only be required if a more localised approach was considered necessary and appropriate, above and beyond any requirements set out in RSS and the core policy.)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO3</td>
<td>DC6</td>
<td>Strategic Locations</td>
<td>To provide specific details for the strategic sites in the Borough, for example Oldham Town Centre, Hollinwood Business District, Chadderton Urban Technology Park and so on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO3</td>
<td>DC7</td>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>To provide specific details relating to the local economy that was not covered by the core policy, that is, new developments on existing employment sites and areas, changes of use and so on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO3</td>
<td>DC8</td>
<td>Protecting the Vitality and Viability of Oldham Town Centre, the District Centres and local and neighbourhood centres</td>
<td>To provide details of the types of new development that would be acceptable within the centres. To provide details about the night-time economy in Oldham Town Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO3</td>
<td>DC9</td>
<td>Highways and Transport</td>
<td>To take forward any specific road and rail network proposals, including Metrolink.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO3</td>
<td>DC10</td>
<td>Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices</td>
<td>To promote accessibility and sustainable transport choices arising from new developments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO3</td>
<td>DC11</td>
<td>Transport Assessments and Travel Plans</td>
<td>To include details about transport assessments and travel plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO4</td>
<td>DC12</td>
<td>Protecting Landscape and Natural Resources</td>
<td>To protect landscape character. To ensure the prudent use and sustainable management of natural resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Objective links</td>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reason for including the policy / What the policy may cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO4</td>
<td>DC13</td>
<td>Protecting Nature Conservation</td>
<td>• To protect habitats, species and geological sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO4</td>
<td>DC14</td>
<td>Conservation of the Historic Environment</td>
<td>• To provide details about conserving and enhancing the Borough’s historic environment, including conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, and parks and gardens of historic interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO5</td>
<td>DC15</td>
<td>Protecting Local Environmental Quality</td>
<td>• To provide protection for local environmental quality issues, including residential amenity, visual impact, air quality, traffic and road safety, crime, and so on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO6</td>
<td>DC16</td>
<td>Healthy Lifestyles</td>
<td>• To provide specific details relating to the health dimension of the Core Strategy that was not covered by the core policy itself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO6</td>
<td>DC17</td>
<td>Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Provision</td>
<td>• To provide details about the requirement for open space, and so on, as part of new developments, including local standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO7</td>
<td>DC18</td>
<td>Education and Skills</td>
<td>• To provide specific details relating to the education and skills dimension of the Core Strategy that was not covered by the core policy itself.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.2 It should be noted, however, that this is an indicative list only and it may be amended as the Core Strategy progresses through its preparation stages.

- Do you think these are the right topic areas for the Core Strategy’s development control policies?
- Do you think there are other topic areas that should be included within the development control policies? If so, what?
12 MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

Annual Monitoring Report

12.1 The Council has to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) each December that provides details about the previous financial year. The AMR is the main mechanism for assessing the LDF’s performance and effects. It also assesses the extent to which policies, currently the UDP policies but ultimately the LDF’s, are being implemented and identifies the significant effects of implementing the Borough’s planning policies.

12.2 Government has set a series of national core indicators that have to be monitored. The Council has also established a series of local indicators. Existing national and local indicators have been monitored in the AMR 2004/05 and 2005/06, and will be monitored again during 2006/07. The NWRA also has a series of regional monitoring requirements that require information.

12.3 As part of the preparation work for the Core Strategy, the Council will identify a series of additional local indicators that will be monitored as part of the AMR. The list of additional local indicators will be finalised once the Government has published its proposed set of national indicators as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review during autumn 2007. The national list will include indicators that will be monitored by the Oldham Partnership. As part of our monitoring arrangements, we will seek to work closely with the Partnership so that the monitoring of the LDF, LAA and the Community Strategy are connected and integrated, as far as possible, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and repetition.

Implementation and Delivery

12.4 The Council has to set out a housing implementation strategy that describes the approach to managing delivery of the housing and previously developed land targets and trajectories. This is expected to include:
   i. Scenario and contingency planning in the event that housing delivery does not occur at the expected rate.
   ii. A risk assessment, identifying constraints to delivery and management strategies to address the risks.
   iii. Approach to engaging with householders and other key stakeholders.
   iv. Approach to regular monitoring and review.

12.5 The Council are required to set out the circumstances in which action will be needed to ensure performance is in line with the housing and previously developed trajectories. The Council should indicate what ranges of housing delivery of previously developed land performance are acceptable and the management actions that will be put in place where the threshold is triggered.
12.6 The Council will also monitor the delivery of non-housing development to assess the effectiveness of policies within the LDF.

12.7 Progress against the Implementation and Delivery Strategy will be monitored through the AMR.

Infrastructure

12.8 Implementation of the Core Strategy is dependent upon the infrastructure investment decisions of a wide range of public sector bodies and private sector companies. Statutory undertakers, including those responsible for providing water, sewerage facilities, gas, electricity, telecommunications and roads, are consulted at all formal consultation stages during the preparation of the LDF. As part of the Issues and Options consultation statutory bodies such as the Highways Agency, United Utilities, and so on, will be consulted to get their views on the likely implications of the three alternative spatial strategies. They will also be engaged with individually, where appropriate and necessary, when information relating to specific locations is required at the further key stages in the preparation of the LDF.

12.9 During the informal Issues Survey the statutory undertakers were contacted and have provided details about some of the key plans and activities that may affect the LDF.

12.10 Engaging with the statutory undertakers will ensure two-way benefits for all involved in the future development of the Borough. It will ensure that the statutory undertakers’ investment plans and programmes inform the LDF and equally that their plans are informed by the LDF’s proposals.

Developer Contributions

12.11 New developments, such as new homes, may result in the need for new or expanded community facilities. Increasingly, developers are asked to contribute not only to physical infrastructure that is required as a consequence of their development (such as roads, drainage, and so on), but also to the social infrastructure needed (such as teaching or community facilities, and so on). Developer contributions are typically sought by means of a planning obligation. In the Borough, developer contributions have generally been sought in order to provide affordable housing, open space or transport improvements. It is important to note though that developer contributions can affect the viability of proposals, particularly when the demands made on developers have increased over recent years. The scope of developer contributions also seems likely to change, with the Government currently consulting on proposals to scale back planning obligations, and introduce a planning gain supplement.
• How can the Core Strategy ensure that the maximum benefits are secured from developer contributions for new developments?
• Should it include a policy for securing developer contributions?
• What factors should be included in a policy?
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accessibility – The ability of people to move around an area and to reach places and facilities.

Air Quality Management Area – An area where air pollution is likely to exceed National Air Quality Objectives under the Environment Act 1995, particularly due to road traffic.

Biodiversity – The variability among living organisms from all sources including, among other things, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part. This includes diversity within species, between species and ecosystems.

Community Strategy – This sets out a vision, strategic objectives and targets for the long-term future of the Borough.

Core Strategy - A Development Plan Document that sets out a long-term spatial vision and strategic objectives for the Borough. It also contains a spatial strategy, core policies and a monitoring and implementation framework.

Development Control Policies – These are criteria based policies that are required to ensure that all development taking place within the Borough meets the spatial vision and objectives set out in the core strategy.

Development Plan – The Development Plan for the Borough consists of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West, saved policies in the Oldham Unitary Development Plan, and/or Development Plan Documents that replace the saved policies.

Development Plan Document (DPD) - A spatial planning document that is subject to Independent Examination and forms part of the Development Plan. They can include Core Strategy, Site Specific Allocations of Land and Area Action Plans.

Geodiversity - the natural range of geological features (rocks, minerals, fossils, structures), geomorphological features (landforms and processes) and soil features that make up the landscape.

Green Infrastructure – The physical environment within and between our cities, towns and villages. It is a network of open spaces, waterways, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, street trees and open countryside that brings many social, economic and environmental benefits to local people and communities.

Local Area Agreement (LAA) - A Local Area Agreement is a three year agreement that sets out the priorities for a local area agreed between central government, represented by the Government Office, and a local area,
represented by the local authority and Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and other key partners at a local level.

**Local Development Document (LDD)** – The generic term given to all constituent documents of the Local Development Framework.

**Local Development Framework (LDF)** – A folder of Local Development Documents, some of which form part of the Development Plan for the Borough.

**Multi Area Agreement (MAA)** – The Local Government White Paper 2006 introduced the concept of Multi Area Agreements that cross existing administrative boundaries.

**Open Space** - Comprises predominantly urban green space that is normally vegetated, and civic (or public) space that is predominantly hard-surfaced, which may be publicly accessible or private spaces.

**Peak District National Park** – As a designation was founded in 1951. The Peak District National Park Authority oversees the planning function of the Park. The statutory purposes of the Authority (as defined by the Environment Act 1995) are:
- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park;
- to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park by the public.

The National Park also has valued characteristics which include quiet enjoyment; wilderness and remoteness; landscape, wildlife and plants; clean earth, air and water; it's cultural heritage or history, archaeology, customs and literary associations; other features which make up its special quality

**Planning Obligation** - An agreement made between the Council and another party that concerns a particular aspect of, or is associated with, a development. It is usually made in connection with the granting of planning permission through Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

**Proposals Map** – A map with an Ordnance Survey base that illustrates the policies and proposals of a Development Plan Document.

**Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)** – This sets out the region’s policies in relation to the development and use of land and forms part of the Development Plan for the Borough. The North West Regional Assembly prepares the RSS.

**Sites of Biological Importance (SBI's)** - areas recognised by the Council as being of particular interest by reason of any flora, fauna, geological or landscape features which require protection and preservation.

**Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's)** - areas recognised by Natural England as being of special interest by reason of their flora, fauna, geological
or landscape features and which have statutory protection to preserve these features.

**Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** – This sets out the standards that the Council will achieve in terms of engaging communities in the preparation of the Local Development Framework and development control decisions. It is subject to Independent Examination.

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** – A Supplementary Planning Document provides additional information in respect of policies contained in the Development Plan Documents. It is not subject to independent examination and does not form part of the Development Plan, although it can be a material consideration when determining planning applications.

**Sustainable development** - Defined by the Bruntland Commission (1987) as “Development which meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to achieve their own needs and aspirations”.

**Unitary Development Plan (UDP)** – The UDP is part of the Borough’s land use plan. In Oldham the UDP was adopted in 2006. It will be replaced by the Local Development Framework.

**Vitality and Viability** - This expression is used in relation to the ability of Oldham Town Centre and the Borough’s District Centres to retain and develop a wide range of attractions and amenities including shops, offer an attractive environment, provide good accessibility to and within the Centre, and attract continuing investment in the development of new, or refurbishment of existing, buildings.
APPENDIX 1: List of National Planning Policy Statements or Guidance Notes

- Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
- Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts
- Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing
- Planning Policy Guidance 4: Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms
- Planning Policy Guidance 5: Simplified Planning Zones
- Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres
- Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
- Planning Policy Guidance 8: Telecommunications
- Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
- Planning Policy Statement 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management
- Planning Policy Statement 11: Regional Spatial Strategies
- Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks
- Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport
- Planning Policy Guidance 14: Development on Unstable Land
- Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment
- Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and planning
- Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation
- Planning Policy Guidance 18: Enforcing planning control
- Planning Policy Guidance 19: Outdoor Advertisement Control
- Planning Policy Guidance 20: Coastal planning
- Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy
- Planning Policy Statement 23: Planning and Pollution Control
- Planning Policy Guidance 24: Planning and Noise
- Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Floodrisk
APPENDIX 2: TESTS OF SOUNDNESS

Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks sets out the tests against which an independent Planning Inspector will assess the “soundness” of the Core Strategy. The assumption will be that the Core Strategy is “sound”, unless it is shown to be otherwise as a result of evidence considered at the Examination. The Core Strategy will be “sound” if it meets the following tests:

Procedural

(i) it has been prepared in accordance with the Local Development Scheme;

(ii) it has been prepared in compliance with the Statement of Community Involvement;

(iii) the plan and its policies have been subjected to a Sustainability Appraisal;

Conformity

(iv) it is a spatial plan which is consistent with national planning policy and in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy, and it has properly had regard to any other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to the area or adjoining areas;

(v) it has had regard to the Borough’s Community Strategy;

Coherence, Consistency and Effectiveness

(vi) the strategies/policies/allocations in the plan are coherent and consistent within and between Development Plan Documents prepared by the Council and neighbouring Councils, where cross boundary issues are relevant;

(vii) the strategies/policies/allocations represent the most appropriate in all the circumstances, having considered the relevant alternatives, and they are founded on a robust and credible evidence base;

(viii) there are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring; and

(ix) the plan is reasonably flexible to enable it to deal with changing circumstances.