

Oldham

Local

Development

Framework

**'Refining Options'
Sustainability Appraisal Report
(Non-Technical Summary)**

Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies
Development Plan Document

April 2010



Oldham
Council

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Availability

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List of Abbreviations

The following is a list of abbreviations used in this document.

DPD – Development Plan Document

HMR – Housing Market Renewal

LDF – Local Development Framework

PPS – Planning Policy Statement

SEA – Strategic Environmental Assessment

Introduction

This non-technical summary provides key findings from a sustainability appraisal on the possible effects of the Refining Options stage of the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document.

How to comment

You may comment on the Sustainability Appraisal Report during the consultation period indicated on the public notice.

Please note that personal information provided as part of a representation cannot be treated as confidential as the council is obliged to make all representations available for public inspection. If you choose to make a representation you will be regarded by the council as having consented to that representation being made available for public inspection. All comments received will also be made available via the internet, along with the name of the person who submitted them. Your address will not generally be available via the internet if you submit your comments electronically through our Limehouse consultation portal. In addition, you should note that any documents, plans etc, you submit to accompany your comments may also be made available via the internet. If you are using the Limehouse consultation portal to supply supporting documents, please make sure you do not include email addresses, telephone numbers or signatures on the supporting document. If we receive supporting documents containing email addresses, telephone numbers or signatures, we will endeavour to remove them. If your postal address is shown on any accompanying documents provided, though, then this will also be accessible via the internet.

1 What is the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies document?

- 1.1 The purpose of the Core Strategy is to set out the long-term spatial vision and strategic objectives for the borough. It will also contain a spatial strategy, policies and a monitoring and implementation framework. The Development Management Policies DPD will set out policies that will manage development in the borough. Here in Oldham, the Core Strategy and the Development Management Policies DPD will be prepared as a single document called the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document. From this point on, it will be referred to simply as the joint DPD.
- 1.2 This report relates to the Refining Options stage of producing the joint DPD. At this stage the preferred way forward, policies and a monitoring and implementation framework are set out.

2 What is a Sustainability Appraisal?

- 2.1 As a result of the new planning system local authorities must carry out a sustainability appraisal alongside any DPD that is produced. The sustainability appraisal process also incorporates the requirements of the European Commission Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.
- 2.2 The aim of this process is to ensure that consideration is given to social, environmental and economic impacts of the joint DPD.

3 Stages in a Sustainability Appraisal

3.1 The following are the stages in the sustainability appraisal process carried out so far. Consultation on this Sustainability Appraisal Report, alongside the joint DPD, is part of Stage B of the process.

Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope

Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects

3.2 Sustainability appraisal is an integral part of developing the joint DPD which will be refined over time as a result of the sustainability appraisal process.

4 Stage A - Baseline and Scoping

- 4.1 Stage A of the sustainability appraisal process is undertaken before production of the joint DPD. It should be integrated with the evidence gathering for the joint DPD. This involves the following tasks:

Stage A – Baseline and Scoping

- 4.2 Stage A of the sustainability appraisal process is undertaken before production of the joint DPD. It should be integrated with the evidence gathering for the joint DPD. This involves the following tasks:

A1: Identification of other relevant policies, plans, programmes and sustainability objectives

- 4.3 The Scoping Report lists the relevant policies, plans and programmes identified at this stage from the international level to the local level. This can be viewed on the council's website, www.oldham.gov.uk, and at local libraries, Civic Centre Access Oldham and level 12 planning reception, and Oldham Business Centre.

A2: Collection of baseline data

- 4.4 This stage involves the collection of data that provides the basis for predicting and monitoring effects. It can help identify sustainability problems and alternative ways of dealing with them. The information collected should give information about the current and likely future state of the planning area. This will allow the joint DPD's likely effects to be adequately predicted.

A3: Identification of sustainability issues and problems

- 4.5 The following social, environmental and economic issues were identified after analysis of the higher plans and baseline data:

Social Progress which recognises the needs of everyone (Social issues)

- There is a need to engage the community in the planning process.
- Development needs to be located in the most accessible locations in order to ensure that key services are accessible to all, and in order to reduce the need to travel.
- There is need to engage the borough's population in community cohesion activities.
- In terms of the quality of the environment, surveys suggest that the majority of residents are satisfied with their neighbourhoods.
- 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: whereas crime levels have generally fallen, surveys suggest that only a minority believe that the level of crime has improved.
- There is a need to encourage high quality and affordable housing development to meet the needs and demands of the local community.
- There is a need to encourage a mix of house sizes, types and tenure that provides, quality, choice and diversity to meet the needs and demands of the local community.

- There is a need to ensure the appropriate replacement of cleared dwellings.
- There is a need to reduce vacancy rates.
- There is a need to increase the number of people in the borough participating in moderate exercise on a regular basis, particularly in areas where life expectancy is lower and infant mortality is higher.
- There is a need to provide new, modern, fit for purpose health centres that are located where they can be easily accessed by public transport and walking.
- There are high levels of obesity amongst children and young people.
- There is a need to increase levels of physical activity amongst children and young people.

Effective protection of the environment (Environmental issues)

- There is a need to use land efficiently in the borough.
- There are instances of poor air quality in the borough.
- There is a need to encourage sustainable means of travel.
- The borough has a rich and varied built environment reflecting its historical and cultural heritage.
- The borough has a rich and varied natural heritage, green infrastructure and open space, but has a relatively low level of woodland and tree cover.
- 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.
- There is a need to continue to make the best use of the existing building stock.
- There is a need to identify sufficient land to meet the requirements set out within Regional Spatial Strategy, and replace those dwellings that have been cleared as a result of Housing Market Renewal.
- At least 80% of new housing development to be on previously developed land.
- There is a need to continue to ensure efficient use of land.
- Windfall allowances play an important role in our current supply and approach to phasing. PPS3 however introduces new requirements regarding the provision of a 5 year supply of “deliverable” sites. Windfall allowances will only be acceptable under exceptional circumstances.

Prudent use of natural resources (Environmental issues)

- There is a need to encourage high quality design and sustainable construction.
- There is currently a dependency on fossil fuel use, with current limited capacity from renewable sources and a need for more developments to produce a proportion of their energy needs from renewable sources.
- There is a need to ensure that waste is managed as high as possible up the waste hierarchy using the descending options of waste reduction, reuse and recovery before disposal.
- There is a need to ensure that natural and existing resources, including minerals, are sustainably managed.
- There is a need to conserve ground and surface water resources and ensure that the implications of a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment are incorporated in development and spatial considerations.
- Employment development in the borough should continue to be located on brownfield sites if possible.

Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment (Economic issues)

- There is a need to transform the image of the borough to its people and the outside world.
- The borough needs an adequate and mixed portfolio of employment sites for businesses to start, grow and expand.
- There is a need for inward investment within the borough to ensure that industrial and commercial development continues to locate in Oldham.
- Unemployment levels are above the Greater Manchester and UK average.
- There is a need to support the development of higher education and skills to support the borough's economy.
- The borough needs to continue attracting visitors, and ensure that more visitors stay overnight.
- There is a need to encourage knowledge based and innovative, creative industries to locate in the borough.
- There is a need to encourage retail and leisure developments in the town and district centres.
- There is a need to improve the educational achievement of children and young people.
- There is a need to improve the economic well being of children and young people.

A4: Development of the sustainability appraisal framework

4.6 The following draft strategic plan objectives and sustainability objectives were identified:

Strategic plan objectives:

(note: these were revised following comments made at the earlier 'Issues and Options' and 'Preferred Options' stage)

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

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

- j. promoting the sustainable management of minerals through the prudent use, recycling, conservation and safeguarding of mineral resources. Developments will have regard to the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals DPD.
- k. promoting sustainable waste management through the waste hierarchy, to minimise waste and its production, to increase reuse, recycling and recovery rates, and to manage waste as close to source as practicable. Developments will have regard to the Greater Manchester Joint Waste DPD.

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

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

- a. integrating the Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder's and the council's housing objectives, policies, programmes, masterplans and initiatives.
- b. providing sufficient housing to meet the needs and demands of the borough's urban and rural communities, including affordable, low cost and high value market housing.
- c. achieving the right quantity of affordable housing to meet local needs and demands.
- d. making best use of, and continuing to raise the quality of, our new and existing housing stock.
- e. focusing new homes on regeneration areas (including Oldham Town Centre and the HMR area), areas within and accessible to the borough's centres (of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill) and rural settlements (such as the Saddleworth villages).
- f. ensuring over the lifetime of the LDF up to 2026 that approximately 60% of new homes are built in East and West Oldham, with approximately 10% of new homes built in Chadderton, and in Failsworth and Hollinwood, and in Royton, Shaw and Crompton, and in Saddleworth and Lees.
- g. ensuring over the lifetime of the LDF up to 2026 that at least 80% of new homes are built on previously developed land across the borough as a whole.

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

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

- a. addressing the worklessness agenda, tackling deprivation and creating skilled and accessible jobs for local residents.
- b. providing employment land which is fit for the 21st century for existing and new businesses.
- c. maximising the opportunities from being within close proximity of the regional centres and also the North West's strategic regional sites such as at Kingsway, Ashton Moss, Central Park and Manchester Piccadilly Basin/Oxford Road Area by ensuring that local residents can access these locations by public transport.
- d. encouraging and facilitating the development of new and emerging industries (such as high technology, knowledge based, innovative, environmental technologies and

- creative industries) in appropriate locations (such as Foxdenton, Hollinwood Business District and Chadderton Technology Park).
- e. Facilitating appropriate developments in Oldham Town Centre, the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill, and along transport corridors.
 - f. focusing employment areas on the Business and Employment Areas (BEA) and the Saddleworth Employment Areas (SEA).
 - g. supporting the borough's transforming education agenda to improve education and skills by:
 - i. facilitating improvements to the borough's schools through programmes such as Building Schools for the Future and the Primary Capital Programme.
 - ii. facilitating higher and further education proposals such as those of the University Campus Oldham, the Oldham College and the Sixth Form College including the development of the regional science centre in Oldham Town Centre.

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

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

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

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

SO5 To create safer and stronger inclusive communities by:

- a. promoting community cohesion.
- b. promoting the vitality and viability of Oldham Town Centre, including the night-time economy, and the borough's centres as the focal points for social, civic, leisure, cultural, commercial and retail activities.
- c. facilitating the Oldham Beyond and local area masterplans
- d. encouraging sustainable rural communities, including those in the Saddleworth villages and surrounding areas.
- e. promoting local environmental quality, community safety and crime prevention by ensuring developments are high quality and contribute to the provision of well designed and safe neighbourhoods and local areas.
- f. ensuring that public open spaces, including open and green spaces and civic spaces and public realm, are well-designed, safe and accessible.

- g. improving the health and well-being of the borough's population through the provision of quality and accessible open spaces, sport and recreation facilities.
- h. improving the health of the borough's population by facilitating programmes such as the new health and well-being centres and facilities in accessible locations.
- i. promoting the borough's image to its residents and those living outside the borough.

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

Sustainability objectives:

Economic

EC1 To promote the sustainable regeneration of the borough.

EC2 To promote the borough's image.

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

EC4 To promote the sustainable economic performance of the borough.

EC5 To promote sustainable economic growth and development.

EC6 To promote sustainable rural communities.

EC7 To promote sustainable tourism development.

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

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

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

(*note: this objective originally referred to town and district centres. It has been changed to reflect more up to date terminology.)

Environmental

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

ENV2 To promote high quality design and sustainable construction.

ENV3 To reduce the need to travel.

ENV4 To promote sustainable transport choices.

ENV5 To protect and improve air quality.

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

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

ENV8 To contribute to reducing the effects of climate change.

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

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

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

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

ENV13 To protect and improve ground and surface water resources.

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

Social

SOC1 To promote community cohesion in the borough.

SOC2 To promote mixed, balanced and inclusive sustainable communities.

SOC3 To engage the community in the planning process.

SOC4 To promote accessibility to key services.

SOC5 To protect and improve local environmental quality.

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

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

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

SOC9 To meet the borough's affordable housing needs.

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

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

A5: Consultation on the scope of the sustainability appraisal

4.7 The Scoping Report was subject to a five-week period of targeted consultation with key stakeholders between 25 April and 30 May 2007. The Scoping Report can be viewed on the council's website. It should be read alongside document 'Update 1', September 2007, which summarises the changes made as a result of this consultation and which was then consulted on at 'Issues and Options' stage between November

and December 2007. 'Update 2', January 2009, was consulted on at 'Preferred Options' stage during spring 2009 and 'Update 3', April 2010 has been prepared for this 'Refining Options' stage. These updates include changes in the interests of ensuring consideration of the most up to date relevant documents.

5 Stage B - Appraisal of Plan Options

5.1 It is important for the strategic objectives of the joint DPD to be in accordance with sustainability principles. The draft strategic objectives were, therefore, tested for compatibility with the sustainability objectives. The following were identified as areas where there could be potential tension at the Preferred Options stage.

Plan Objective	Sustainability Objective	Comments
SO2ii	ENV 9	An increase in housing development is likely to result in a demand for more energy.
SO2ii	ENV 10	An increase in housing development is likely to result in more waste being produced.
SO2ii	ENV 11	An increase in housing development is likely to result in increased demand for natural resources.
SO2ii	ENV 13	An increase in housing development is likely to result in an increase in water consumption.
SO4vi	SOC 8	An increase in housing development is likely to result in more waste being produced.

5.2 At this Refining Options stage, the policies have now been fully drafted. The policies have addressed the above potential areas of tension as explained below.

Potential tension identified at Preferred Options stage	Refining Options
An increase in housing development is likely to result in a demand for more energy.	The Energy policy recognises that growth must be achieved in a sustainable manner. Developments will follow the principles of the zero carbon hierarchy, which is based on energy efficiency, carbon compliance and allowable solutions.
An increase in housing development is likely to result in more waste being produced.	The Sustainable Use of Resources - Waste Management policy sets out how waste will be managed sustainably through the waste hierarchy, which is based on reduction, re-use, recycling/composting, recovery and final disposal.
An increase in housing development is likely to result in increased demand for natural resources.	The Climate Change and Sustainable Development policy will address this potential tension by ensuring the effective and efficient use of land and buildings; promote 'green' energy; protect and improve water resources; promote sustainable and high quality design and

Potential tension identified at Preferred Options stage	Refining Options
	<p>construction; and promote the prudent use and sustainable management of Oldham’s natural and man-made resources, including land, soil, minerals, waste, air and water. It also seeks to maintain the borough’s Green Belt, and protect locally designated ‘Other Protected Open Land’ and ‘Land Reserved for Future Development’ and ensure development respects Oldham’s natural, built and historic environments, Green Infrastructure, biodiversity, geodiversity and landscapes, and their settings.</p> <p>The Sustainable Use of Resources - Minerals policy addresses this issue by promoting the sustainable management of minerals through the prudent use, recycling, conservation and safeguarding of mineral resources.</p>
<p>An increase in housing development is likely to result in an increase in water consumption.</p>	<p>United Utilities have confirmed that there is enough water capacity to meet planned growth over the LDF period. The Water and Flooding policy also addresses this by ensuring that developments reduce the consumption of water and have high standards of water efficiency in new developments or incorporate water efficient technologies in existing buildings. Developments must conserve water resources and not adversely affect water quality or quantity. Developments must also ensure potential capacity issues in the water supply and sewerage treatment works are taken into account through liaising with United Utilities until a River Mersey Water Cycle Study is completed.</p>

5.3 The next stage was to test the sustainability of the alternative spatial strategies identified for the joint DPD. These were:

Option A – Focused Regeneration

Option B – Urban Concentration

Option C – Urban Concentration including Planned Expansion

5.4 A sustainability appraisal of the options was carried out on 10 September 2007 by officers in the LDF and Urban Design Team of the Economy, Place and Skills Directorate. The following table summarises the outcome of the appraisal:

Option A - Focused Regeneration

Sustainability Appraisal findings of Option A

Economic Overview: This option is generally positive in relation to economic objectives in the short, medium and long term. In the short term, in particular, it scores more highly than the other options in terms of promoting sustainable regeneration and promoting efficient patterns of movement. It also scores more highly than the other options in relation to protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of Oldham Town Centre and the borough's other centres. Overall it scores slightly higher than Option B, reflecting the benefits arising from the 'critical mass' of focussing development compared to spreading it more widely. Overall it scores slightly lower than Option C, however, reflecting the potential economic benefits of releasing greenfield land.

Environmental Overview: This option is the most positive option in relation to environmental objectives, particularly in relation to promoting sustainable transport choices, contributing to reducing the effects of climate change, minimising energy use, ensuring prudent use and management of man-made and natural resources and protecting and improving land and soil. This reflects that development would be focussed on the most accessible locations, and that regeneration funding could promote more sustainable forms of development. Overall it scores more highly than Option B where development is less focussed and may be in less accessible locations. It scores significantly higher than Option C which involves the development of greenfield sites.

Social Overview: This option is generally positive in relation to social objectives, particularly in relation to protecting and improving the local environment and reducing crime. Overall it scores more highly than Options B and C, particularly in the short term.

Option B - Urban Concentration

Sustainability Appraisal findings of Option B

Economic Overview: This option is generally positive in relation to economic objectives particularly in the medium to long term. It is, however, weaker than the other options in relation to promoting the borough's image and, overall, it scores slightly lower than Options A and C. This reflects that development would be more 'thinly spread' across the borough without any additional greenfield land available for economic development.

Environmental Overview: This option is generally positive in relation to environmental objectives. It scores higher than Option C which reflects that greenfield development is not involved. It does not, however, score as highly as Option A due to development being more spread across the borough and not necessarily being as accessible.

Social Overview: This option is generally positive in relation to social objectives although it scores lower than Options A and C, particularly in relation to promoting a healthy housing market and meeting affordable housing needs. This reflects that development would be more 'thinly spread' across the borough without any additional greenfield land available for housing development.

Option C – Urban Concentration including Planned Expansion

Sustainability Appraisal findings of Option C

Economic Overview: This option is generally positive in relation to economic objectives. It scores more highly than Options A and B, particularly in relation to promoting economic growth. This reflects the potential economic benefits of releasing greenfield land.

Environmental Overview: This option scores the lowest of the Options in relation to environmental objectives. It scores particularly low in relation to ensuring effective and efficient use of land and buildings, ensuring prudent use and management of man-made and natural resources, protecting and improving land and soil and protecting and improving water resources. This reflects that the option involves the development of greenfield land.

Social Overview: This option is generally positive in relation to social objectives. It scores slightly higher than Option B, particularly in the short term in relation to promoting a healthy housing market and meeting affordable housing needs due to greenfield land being potentially available for housing development. It does not, however, score as highly as Option A where development is more focussed.

5.5 Three further alternative strategies were suggested by respondents to the Issues and Options consultation. These were:

- **“Targeted Regeneration”** – submitted on behalf of, amongst others, Saddleworth Parish Council and the Saddleworth and Lees Community Council.
- **“Transformation and Cohesion”** – submitted on behalf of the Oldham and Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder.
- **“Regeneration & Sustainable Communities”** – submitted on behalf of Purico, the development agent for Whiteoak and Hollowoak Limited, owners of the Robert Fletcher estate at Greenfield, Saddleworth.

5.6 None of the submitted alternative strategies included a sustainability appraisal assessing their environmental, economic or social effects. In the absence of this, the council has, therefore, undertaken its own appraisal of these submitted alternative strategies using its sustainability appraisal framework in order to inform the choice of preferred options. The following table summarises the outcome of the appraisal:

Strategy 1 – Targeted Regeneration

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

On this basis this alternative was positive in relation to economic objectives, particularly in relation to promoting sustainable regeneration of the borough, promoting the borough’s image, promoting efficient patterns of movement in support of sustainable economic regeneration and protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of the borough’s centres. It also scored positively in relation to some environmental objectives, namely the effective and efficient use of land and buildings, the promotion of sustainable transport choices and

contributing to reducing the effects of climate change. However, for the vast majority of environment objectives it was not possible to appraise the strategy on the basis of the information submitted.

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

Strategy 2 - Transformation and Cohesion Strategy

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

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

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

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

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

Strategy 3 - Regeneration & Sustainable Communities Strategy

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

It was not considered possible to appraise this strategy against most of the economic objectives due to its lack of focus. It did, however, score positively in relation to promoting the borough’s image.

In relation to the environmental objectives, the strategy was considered to have potentially positive and negative impacts in relation to the effective and efficient use of land and buildings, promoting sustainable transport choices and contributing to reducing the effects of climate change. The strategy could not be appraised in relation to the other environmental objectives.

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

- 5.7** The council's view is that the way forward that is best suited to delivering Oldham's aspirations for regeneration is not directly any one of the alternatives considered at the `Issues and Options` stage. Instead, the preferred way forward is a combination, or hybrid, of the best parts of each of those alternatives
- 5.8** The council's preferred way forward is considered to be realistic, achievable and deliverable. It is also the most appropriate way forward for Oldham. In relation to the three alternatives, the majority of new housing developments will be in Oldham Town Centre and regeneration areas. This links to option A, and reflects the findings of the recent assessment of potential housing land that demonstrated these areas could accommodate the majority of the borough's housing potential. Employment land will be more dispersed around the borough due to its nature and location, particularly the location of existing employment areas and links to alternative option B. Small amounts of currently safeguarded land, and possibly locally protected land at Foxdenton, will be released for employment uses and maybe some housing and sports under the preferred way forward which links to option C.
- 5.9** Findings from the Sustainability Appraisal demonstrated that it was more sustainable than the other options considered. The table below summarises the key findings from the appraisal of the preferred way forward:

Economic Overview:

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

Promoting the sustainable regeneration of the borough

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

Promoting the borough's image

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

Promoting the sustainable economic performance of the borough

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

Economic Overview:

Promoting sustainable economic growth and development

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

Protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of the borough's centres

Permitting retail, housing and employment development in the borough's centres will significantly contribute towards protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of Oldham Town Centre and the borough's centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill.

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

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

Promoting the development of innovative and knowledge based industries

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

Environmental Overview:

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

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

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

Promoting sustainable transport choices

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

Contributing to reducing the effects of climate change

Environmental Overview:

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

Minimising the impact of, and mitigating against flooding

The preferred way forward is guided by PPS25 and the findings of the SFRA. Mitigation measures against flooding will be put in place, as necessary, for new developments. The encouragement of sustainable drainage systems and the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure will also contribute towards meeting this objective.

Social Overview:

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

Promoting a healthy and balanced housing market for the borough

The preferred way forward will contribute towards meeting this objective by providing sufficient land to build at least 289 dwellings per annum as required by RSS. Although developable land is in limited supply, focusing housing development on Oldham Town Centre, regeneration areas, employment areas and key transport points will promote a healthy and balanced housing market. The development of land at Haven Lane and Warren Lane, and Foxdenton, will promote a healthy and balanced housing market by making more land available for housing.

Meeting the borough's affordable housing needs

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

Improving the health of the borough's population

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

Improving education and skills levels of the borough's population

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

6 Monitoring

- 6.1** Monitoring has an increased importance in the new planning system. This is also reflected in the sustainability appraisal. Such monitoring can help to identify unforeseen adverse effects and enable appropriate remedial action to be taken.
- 6.2** Once the joint DPD is adopted, the council will include the indicators identified through this process in the Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report. This will ensure that the progress of the joint DPD can be monitored.

Glossary

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, policies and a monitoring and implementation framework.

Development Management 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 Metropolitan Borough Unitary Development Plan, and/or Development Plan Documents that replace the saved policies.

Development Plan Document - 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.

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