

Oldham

Local

Plan

**Local Plan Review: Issues and
Options Built Environment
Topic Paper**

July 2021



Oldham
Council

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** This Built Environment Topic Paper is one of a series that has been prepared as part of the process of evidence gathering to support the review and preparation of Oldham's Local Plan.
- 1.2** The full range of Topic Papers deal with the following:
- Housing
 - Economy and Employment
 - Our Centres (incorporating retail)
 - Communities (incorporating community facilities, health and well-being, education, open space, sport and recreation provision and infrastructure etc)
 - Open Land (incorporating Green Belt and Other Protected Open Land)
 - Natural Environment (incorporating landscape, nature conservation designations and wider Green Infrastructure)
 - Built Environment (incorporating design, heritage)
 - Transport
 - Climate Change, Energy and Flood Risk
- 1.3** The principal aim of the Topic Paper is to set out current key policies, plans and strategies relating to this topic area that will form the basis for the development of the Local Plan. The Topic Papers will present a profile of the borough and highlight key issues and opportunities that the Local Plan should seek to address. Helping to shape and influence the direction and focus of the Local Plan's planning policies, designations and site allocations.
- 1.4** The Topic Papers all have linkages with each other. The Built Environment Topic Paper has connections to all the above issues, particularly climate change, town centres, economy and employment.
- 1.5** It is intended that the Topic Papers will be 'living' documents that can be updated as we progress through the preparation of the Local Plan, carry out further consultation and complete additional evidence.

2 KEY POLICIES, PLANS AND STRATEGIES

National Planning Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG, 2019)

Historic Environment:

- 2.1** National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to quality of life. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. The strategy should take into account:
- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
 - The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
 - Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of place.
- 2.2** In terms of Conservation Areas NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest.
- 2.3** LPAs should have access to a historic environment record. This should contain up to date evidence about the historic environment and be used to:
- assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment; and
 - predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets, particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest, will be discovered in the future.
- 2.4** LPAs should make information available about the historic environment, gathered as part of policy making or development management publicly available.

Planning Practice Guidance (MHCLG, July 2019)

- 2.5** The planning practice guidance expands upon what is meant by the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.
- 2.6** Conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets as diverse as listed buildings in every day use and as yet undiscovered, undesignated buried remains of archaeological interest.
- 2.7** In the case of buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Ensuring such heritage assets remain used and valued is likely

to require sympathetic changes to be made from time to time. In the case of archaeological sites, many have no active use, and so for those kinds of sites, periodic changes may not be necessary.

- 2.8** Where changes are proposed, NPPF sets out a clear framework to ensure that heritage assets are conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner that is consistent with their significance and thereby achieving sustainable development.
- 2.9** Part of the public value of heritage assets is the contribution that they can make to understanding and interpreting our past. So where the complete or partial loss of a heritage asset is justified, the aim then is to capture and record the evidence of the asset's significance which is to be lost; interpret its contribution to the understanding of our past; and make that publicly available.
- 2.10** The Local Plan should set a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. This should identify specific opportunities within their area for the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets, including their setting. This could include, where appropriate, the delivery of development that will make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of, the heritage asset, or reflect and enhance local character and distinctiveness with particular regard given to the prevailing styles of design and use of materials in the local area.
- 2.11** This may require the development of specific policies, for example, in relation to use of buildings and design of new development and infrastructure. LPAs will need to consider the relationship and impact of other policies on the delivery of the strategy for conservation.
- 2.12** Plan-making bodies should make clear and up to date information on non-designated heritage assets accessible to the public to provide greater clarity and certainty for developers and decision-makers. It is important that all non-designated heritage assets are clearly identified as such. In this context, it can be helpful if Local Planning Authorities keep a local list of non-designated heritage assets, incorporating any such assets which are identified by neighbourhood planning bodies.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1 (Historic England, 2015)

- 2.13** This note intends to help implement the historic environment policy in NPPF and related guidance.
- 2.14** In terms of gathering evidence the note points out that it is not simply listing known sites but understanding the value (significance) to society of listed assets and potential sites. In particular;
- it may be necessary to consider heritage assets outside a local authority area if there are setting impacts;
 - consider assets not well recorded such as Historic Parks and Gardens;
 - evidence may help identify areas for designation as a Conservation Area or local listing;
 - assessing the likelihood of currently unidentified heritage assets will help future proof the plan.

- 2.15** The note outlines sources of evidence and highlights the importance of making this public.
- 2.16** NPPF requires a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. This requires a plan for maintenance and use of heritage assets and for the delivery of development including within their setting that will afford appropriate protection for the asset(s) that make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 2.17** Stand alone policies on heritage will not achieve this – policies for local housing, retail and transport may need to be tailored to achieve positive improvements in the historic environment.
- 2.18** The Local Plan should consider the inter-relationship between the historic environment and objectives to:
- Build a strong, competitive economy;
 - Ensure the vitality of town centres;
 - Support a prosperous rural economy;
 - Promote sustainable transport;
 - Deliver a wide choice of high quality homes;
 - Require good design;
 - Protect Green Belt land;
 - Meet the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change;
 - Conserve and enhancing the natural environment; and
 - Facilitate the sustainable use of minerals.
- 2.19** The note highlights the need to assess whether or not the Local Plan should identify any areas where certain types of development might need to be limited or would be inappropriate due to the impact that they might have upon the historic environment, for example tall buildings within identified view corridors.
- 2.20** The note outlines there may be the need for development management policies as well as strategic policies.
- 2.21** The note also outlines the importance of screening site allocations to avoid harming the significance of heritage assets and their settings and to inform the nature of allocations so development responds to local character. Other issues may need to be taken into account such as cross boundary issues and the need for Duty to Cooperate and the cumulative impact of incremental small scale change.

The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans (Historic England Advice Note 3, 2015)

- 2.22** This document offers advice for each of the key stages in the site allocation process consisting of 1) evidence gathering 2) site selection and 3) site allocation policies.

Stage 1: Evidence Gathering

- 2.23** This highlights that evidence gathering should begin before starting work on the plan to provide baseline information. The relevant Historic Environment Record (HER) and other evidence will help establish the baseline information. This will help identify heritage assets affected and the gaps in evidence where there may be a need to produce further

information to understand possible impacts of potential site allocations on the historic environment. It should relate to both designated and non-designated assets and be used to inform the Integrated Assessment.

2.24 Evidence could include:

- Characterisation work to understand the potential impact of site allocations on historic places, and inform assessments of an area's capacity to accommodate development.
- The updating of existing information, such as the production of a more detailed study on the significance of heritage assets, including assessment of their setting, an assessment to understand heritage impacts in greater detail or the identification of new heritage assets.
- Site specific studies, such as archaeological desk based assessment and fieldwork, may also be necessary to provide adequate information.

Stage 2: Site Selection

The site selection process needs to be detailed enough to:

- Support the inclusion of appropriate sites for development (including those which could enhance the historic environment), or;
- Justify the omission of a site where there is identified harm, and;
- Set out clear criteria for sites that are acceptable in principle, within which they can be appropriately developed in terms of impact on heritage assets, for example, its size, design, or density.

2.25 The advice outlines that understanding the impact on a heritage asset involves more than just identifying known heritage assets, it involves a holistic process which seeks to understand their significance and value. A focus on distance or visibility alone is not appropriate. Site allocations may include a heritage asset and may enhance it or tackle heritage at risk, conversely an allocation at significance distance away from the heritage asset may cause harm to its significance.

Stage 3: Site Allocation Policies

2.26 Site allocation policies should include clear references to the historic environment and specific heritage assets where appropriate. The amount of detail is dependent on the nature of the development proposed, and the size and complexity of the site. However the policies should include information on what is expected, where it will happen on the site and when development will come forward including phasing. Mitigation and enhancement measures identified as part of the site selection process and evidence gathering are best set out within the policy to ensure that these are implemented.

2.27 The advice note sets out detailed methodology for site selection which includes five steps:

- Step 1 Identify which heritage assets are affected by the potential site allocation;
- Step 2 Understand what contribution the site (in its current form) makes to the significance of the heritage asset(s);
- Step 3 Identify what impact the allocation might have on that significance;

- Step 4 Consider maximising enhancements and avoiding harm; and
- Step 5 Determine whether the proposed site allocation is appropriate in light of NPPF's tests of soundness.

Historic England's Industrial Heritage Strategy - Draft (Historic England, 2021)

2.28 The vision statement is England's industrial heritage is of major social, economic, environmental and cultural value. Historic England will engage and work with a wide range of partners (including volunteer groups and local communities) to ensure the wider public recognises, champions, and benefits from this internationally important legacy.

2.29 The Industrial Heritage Strategy has been divided into four themes and nine issues. The 'themes' align with the Strategy's scope and definition, and the headings are commonly used to help categorise the industrial heritage. The 'issues' relate to its protection, management, understanding, and public presentation and appreciation. There are inevitably links within and across many of the issues and themes, but they often each relate to a specific area of interest and relevance to a particular stakeholder group.

2.30 Issues:

- Protection
- Planning and Conservation
- Sustainable Reuse
- Charitable Trusts / Social Enterprises
- Industrial Sites preserved as Heritage attractions
- Industrial heritage at risk
- Knowledge and Skills
- Research
- Engagement, Participation and Promotion

2.31 Themes:

- Extractive Industries
- Processing and Manufacture
- Public Utilities and Telecommunications
- Transport

2.32 There are actions under each issues and theme.

National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG, 2019):

Design:

2.33 NPPF states that design is a key aspect of sustainable development and should contribute to positively making places better for people. It states that it is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.

- 2.34** Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities, so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.
- 2.35** To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, plans or supplementary planning documents should use visual tools such as design guides and codes. These provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design. However their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.
- 2.36** Local Plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that sets out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics. Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:
- Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
 - Establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable place to live, work and visit;
 - Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;
 - Respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preserving or discouraging appropriate innovation;
 - Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and
 - Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.
- 2.37** LPAs should consider using design codes where they could help deliver high quality outcomes. However design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription of detail and should concentrate in guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally.
- 2.38** Local Planning Authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. These include workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for Life. These are of most benefit if used as early as possible in the evolution of schemes, and are particularly important for significant projects such as large scale housing and mixed use developments. In assessing applications, Local Planning Authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels.

- 2.39** Planning policies should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative. The policies should promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.
- 2.40** NPPF highlights that visual appearance and architecture of individual buildings are very important, however securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Planning policies should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.
- 2.41** Regarding outdoor advertisements NPPF states that control over advertisements should be efficient, effective and simple in concept and operation. They should only be subject to control in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.
- 2.42** Design contributes towards healthy communities promoting community cohesion, for example through mixed use communities, active street frontages, safe and accessible environments containing clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space.

Planning Practice Guidance (MHCLG, 2019)

Design

- 2.43** Planning Practice states that good design is an integral part of sustainable development. Achieving good design is about creating places, buildings spaces that work well for everyone, look good, last well, and will adapt to the needs of future generations. Good design responds in a practical and creative way to the function and identify of a place. It puts land, water, drainage, energy, community, economic, infrastructure and other such resources to the best possible use.
- 2.44** The guidance states that good design should:
- ensure that development can deliver a wide range of planning objectives;
 - enhance the quality buildings and spaces, by considering amongst other things form and function; efficiency and effectiveness and their impact on well-being; and
 - address the need for different uses sympathetically.
- 2.45** These design policies will help in developing the vision for an area. They will assist in selecting sites and assessing their capacity for development. They will be useful in working up town centre strategies, and in developing sustainable transport solutions; all aimed at securing high quality design for places, buildings and spaces.
- 2.46** The guidance outlines the planning objectives that good design can help to achieve such as:
- local character (including landscape setting);
 - safe, connected and efficient streets;
 - a network of greenspaces (including parks) and public places;
 - crime prevention;
 - security measures;
 - access and inclusion;

- efficient use of natural resources; and
- cohesive and vibrant neighbourhoods.

2.47 The guidance gives further detail on each of the above.

2.48 Well-designed places are successful and valued. They exhibit qualities that benefit users and the wider area. Well-designed new or changing places should:

- be functional;
- support mixed uses and tenures;
- include successful public spaces;
- be adaptable and resilient;
- have a distinctive character;
- be attractive; and
- encourage ease of movement.

2.49 The guidance gives further detail on each of the above.

2.50 When considering buildings and the spaces between them the following should be considered:

- layout – the way in which buildings and spaces relate to each other;
- form – the shape of buildings;
- scale – the size of buildings;
- detailing – the important smaller elements of building and space; and
- materials – what a building is made from.

2.51 The guidance also expands on how design issues may differ for the type of development such as housing, town centre design and street design and transport corridors. For housing, for example consideration should be given to servicing, such as storage of bins and bikes. For town centres, movement between places and arrival points is particularly important, as is active frontages and access by all modes of transport.

The National Design Guide (MHCLG, October, 2019)

2.52 The 'National Design Guide: Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places' forms part of the revised suite of planning practice guidance (PPG) that is currently being issued by the MHCLG to support the NPPF.

2.53 It addresses the question of how we recognise well-designed places, by outlining and illustrating the government's priorities for them in the form of ten characteristics. These relate to: National Design Guide (NDG) from MHCLG which states that:

2.54 *Places affect us all – they are where we live, work and spend our leisure time. Well-designed places influence the quality of our experience as we spend time in them and move around them. We enjoy them, as occupants or users but also as passers-by and visitors. They can lift our spirits by making us feel at home, giving us a buzz of excitement or creating a sense of delight. They have been shown to affect our health and well-being, our feelings of safety, security, inclusion and belonging, and our sense of community cohesion.*

2.55 Furthermore, the NDG establishes 10 characteristics which work together to create an area's physical character, which in turn sustains the sense of community, these themes are:

- Context – enhances the surroundings;
- Identity – attractive and distinctive;
- Built Form – a coherent pattern of development;
- Movement – accessible and easy to move around;
- Nature – enhanced and optimised;
- Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive;
- Uses – mixed and integrated;
- Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable;
- Resources – efficient and resilient; and
- Lifespan – made to last.

2.56 The guide also illustrates how well-designed places can be achieved in practice using a range of good practice examples. Additionally, the guide states that it will be backed up by a new National Model Design Code, setting out detailed standards for key elements of successful design. The document adds that Local Planning Authorities will be expected to develop their own design codes or guides and stresses that paragraph 130 of the NPPF states clearly that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides.

National Model Design Code (MHCLG, February 2021)

2.57 The National Model Design Code (NMDC) and National Design Guide (NDG) form part of the planning practice guidance (PPG). The NMDC is effectively a how-to guide to creating a Design Code, setting out detailed standards for key elements of successful placemaking. The document adds that local planning authorities will be expected to develop their own design codes or guides and is accompanied by a proposed revision to para 130 of the NPPF which states clearly that permission should be refused for development that is “not well-designed” and which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards.

2.58 The NMDC also reinforces the guidance within the NDG around engagement with stakeholders, either through digital or traditional means. Digital methods have come on leaps and bounds in the current situation, with platforms like Commonplace and Participate being found to be useful for LPA's to utilise. Traditional methods such as charrettes or Enquiry by Design (a method created by The Princes Trust) will also be required in order to develop “provably popular” (as noted in the guidance) design codes.

2.59 Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission (Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission, December 2019)

2.60 The report proposes a planning and development framework which will:

- Ask for Beauty;
- Refuse Ugliness; and
- Promote Stewardship.

- 2.61** The report proposes a planning and development framework that develops beauty at three scales:
- Beautifully placed (sustainable settlement patterns, sitting in the landscape);
 - Beautiful places (streets, squares and parks, the "spirit of place"); and
 - Beautiful buildings (windows, materials, proportion, space).
- 2.62** The report then goes on to define eight priorities for reform, these being:
- 2.63 Planning:** create a predictable level playing field – Beautiful placemaking should be a legally required aim of the planning system, reflected in the NPPF, and Local Plans. Schemes should be turned down for being too ugly and such rejections should be publicised. The planning system needs to become more predictable, and more accessible to a wider range of firms, organisations and individuals to enable them to enter the development market. Planning rules should be enforced.
- 2.64 Communities:** bring the democracy forward – the Local Plan process should be more democratic, with local people strongly involved; plans should be more visual, and easy for the public to understand. Attractiveness should be a primary consideration.
- 2.65 Stewardship:** incentivise responsibility to the future – address the short-term profit focus of the development industry. Change the legal and tax systems to encourage long-term stewardship; introduce a 'stewardship kitemark' which can end tax disincentives to a long-term approach and possibly give access to longer term finance.
- 2.66 Regeneration:** end the scandal of 'left-behind' places. Ensure development contributes to places rather than decimates them. Government should go beyond investing in roads or shiny 'big box' infrastructure. In central government a member of the Cabinet should have responsibility for ensuring and coordinating standards in housing, nature and infrastructure. Each council should have a Chief Placemaker as a senior member of the officer team, and a cabinet member with responsibility for placemaking. VAT on new building and refurbishment should be aligned.
- 2.67 Neighbourhoods:** create places not just houses. Create mixed-use "real place" development with gentle density – (eg 5 stories) and streets, squares and blocks with clear backs and fronts. Permit intensification where there is public consent.
- 2.68 Nature:** re-green our towns and cities. Plant 2 million street trees within 5 years; a fruit tree for every home. The NPPF should place a greater focus on access to nature and green spaces. Green spaces, waterways and wildlife habitats should be seen as integral to the urban fabric
- 2.69 Education and skills:** promote a wider understanding of placemaking. Invest in the education of professionals and councillors. Crucial areas include placemaking, the history of architecture and design, popular preferences and (above all) the associations of urban form and design with well-being and health. Consider alternative pathways into architecture.
- 2.70 Management:** value planning, count happiness, procure properly. To make the planning system more efficient, introduce a more rules-based approach, move the democracy forward, have clearer form-based codes, and limits to the length of planning applications; digitise and automate. Moderate permitted development rights with quality standards. Change the corporate performance targets for Homes England, and the highways,

housing and planning teams in central government and councils - objective measures for well-being, public health, nature recovery and beauty (measured inter alia via popular support). Measure quality and outcomes as well as quantity.

Regional Context

Places for Everyone

2.71 Places for Everyone: A Joint Development Plan Document of Nine Greater Manchester Districts is being jointly prepared, following Stockport's decision to withdraw in late 2020. The nine local Greater Manchester districts agreed that to address strategic matters such as housing need and economic growth as well as issues such as flood risk and strategic infrastructure, it would be best to work on a joint development plan - Places for Everyone. Once Places for Everyone is adopted, all nine Local Plans will be required to be in general conformity with it. As the proposed Places for Everyone evolves, strategic policies can be reflected in draft Local Plans.

2.72 In relation to the built environment, the key aspects Places for Everyone will cover which affect Oldham are:

- culture and heritage; and
- design.

2.73 For the purposes of this topic paper information on draft policies is as proposed in the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) Publication Plan Draft for Approval October 2020.

2.74 **Policy GM-S 1** 'Sustainable Development' states development should aim to maximise its economic, social and environmental benefits simultaneously, minimise its adverse impacts, utilise sustainable construction techniques and actively seek opportunities to secure net gains across each of the different objectives.

2.75 **Policy GM-S 4** 'Resilience' outlines key measures to increase the capacity of its citizens, communities, businesses and infrastructure to survive, adapt and grow in the face of physical, social, economic and environmental challenges, including climate change. This includes design aspects, such as designing out opportunities for crime, anti social behaviour and terrorism; providing a reduction and respite from more extreme temperatures and winds associated with climate change and greater urbanisation.

2.76 **Policy GM-G 1** 'Valuing Important Landscapes' states development should reflect and respond to the special qualities and sensitivities of the key landscape characteristics of its location, including having regard to issues such as land use and field patterns and archaeology and cultural heritage.

2.77 **Policy GM-E 1** 'Sustainable Places' aims for Greater Manchester to become one of the most liveable city regions on the world, consisting of a series of beautiful, healthy and varied places, each having the following key attributes that all development, wherever appropriate, should be consistent with:

1. Distinctive, with a clear identity that responds to the natural environment, landscape features, historic environment and local history and culture; Enables a clear understanding of how the place has developed; and respects and acknowledges

the character and identify of the locality in terms of design, siting, size, scale and materials used.

2. Visually stimulating, creating interesting and imaginative environments which raise the human spirit through the use of green space, public art and quality design;
3. Socially inclusive - responding to the needs of all parts of society; enabling everyone to participate equally and independently; providing opportunities for social contact and support; and promoting a sense of community;
4. Resilient, capable of dealing with major environmental and economic events;
5. Adaptable, able to respond easily to varied and changing needs and technologies;
6. Durable, being built to last and using robust materials that reflect local character, weather well and are easily maintained;
7. Resource efficient with a low carbon footprint; efficient use of land; minimised use of new materials; and high levels of recycling;
8. Safe, including by designing out crime and terrorism, and reducing opportunities for anti-social behaviour;
9. Supported by critical infrastructure, such as energy, water, drainage and green spaces;
10. Functional and convenient, enabling people and uses to act efficiently with minimal effort, and responding to needs relating to servicing, recycling facilities, refuse collection and storage;
11. Incorporating accessibility design standards within all spaces with support for tackling inequality and poverty to form part of creating sustainable places;
12. Legible, being easy to understand and navigate, with the protection and enhancement of key views and new development well-integrated into the place;
13. Easy to move around for those of all mobility levels, particularly by walking and cycling, with enjoyable routes free from obstacles and disorientating stimuli, and with places to rest;
14. Well connected to other places, particularly by public transport and digital infrastructure enabling everyone to take advantage of the employment, cultural and leisure opportunities across Greater Manchester and beyond;
15. Comfortable and inviting, with indoor and outdoor environments offering a high level of amenity that minimises exposure to pollution; and addressing microclimate issues such as sunlight, indoor air quality, overheating, shade, wind and shelter;
16. Incorporating high quality and well managed Green Infrastructure and quality public realm; and
17. Well-served by local shops, services and amenities, including education and health facilities.

2.78 Policy GM-E 2 'Heritage' states that Greater Manchester will proactively manage and work with partners to positively conserve, sustain and enhance its historic environment and heritage assets and their settings. Opportunities will be pursued to aid the promotion, enjoyment, understanding and interpretation of heritage assets, as a means of maximising wider public benefits and reinforcing Greater Manchester's distinct identity and sense of place.

2.79 Local Plans will set out the key elements which contribute to the district's identity, character and distinctiveness and which should be the priority for safeguarding and enhancing in the future, and demonstrate a clear understanding of the historic

environment and the heritage values of sites, buildings or areas and their relationship with their surroundings. This knowledge should be used to inform the positive integration of Greater Manchester's heritage by:

1. Setting out a clear vision that recognises and embeds the role of heritage in place-making;
2. Utilising the heritage significance of a site or area in the planning and design process, providing opportunities for interpretation and local engagement;
3. Integrating the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, with creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to their significance and sense of place;
4. Delivering positive benefits that sustain and enhance the historic environment, as well as contributing to the economic viability, accessibility and environmental quality of a place, and to social wellbeing; and
5. Exploring opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that restoration of historic buildings offer.

2.80 Particular consideration will be given to ensure that the significance of key elements of the historic environment which contribute to Greater Manchester's distinctive identity and sense of place are protected from harm. These include historic town centres, places of worship, historic transport routes including the canal network, industrial buildings and structures including textile mills, farmsteads and other sites, buildings and areas of identified archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic value.

2.81 Where heritage assets have been identified as being at risk, Local Plans may identify specific opportunities for them to contribute to regeneration and place-making, and they should set out strategies for their repair and re-use.

2.82 Policy GM-E 3 'Cultural Facilities' states Greater Manchester will proactively develop and support cultural businesses and attractions in our cities and towns through a range of measures including:

1. Protecting existing heritage, cultural and community venues, facilities and uses;
2. Supporting the development of new cultural venues in town centres and places with good public transport connectivity;
3. Promoting new, or enhanced existing, locally-distinct clusters of cultural facilities, especially where they can provide an anchor for local regeneration and town centre renewal;
4. Identifying protecting and enhancing strategic clusters of cultural attractions;
5. Considering the use of vacant properties and land for pop-ups or meanwhile uses for cultural and creative activities during the day and at night-time to stimulate vibrancy and viability and promote diversity in town centres;
6. Maximising opportunities for redundant heritage assets and the role they can play in economic and social well-being;
7. Considering the designation of 'Creative Improvement Districts' where there is evidence that the designation will enhance the local economy and provide facilities and workspace for the creative industries; and
8. Supporting a mix of uses which derive mutual benefits from, and do not compromise, the creative industries and cultural facilities in the Creative Improvement District in line with the Agent of Change principle. If development

would potentially result in conflict between a cultural activity and another use, especially in terms of noise, then the development responsible for the change must secure the implementation of appropriate mitigation before it is completed.

Engines of Prosperity: new uses for old mills North West (Historic England, 2017)

- 2.83** Textile mills are fundamental to the history and culture of much of the North West. They can once again be powerhouses for growth in the 21st century. Evidence demonstrates their capacity to accommodate new and exciting uses, attracting investment in area-wide regeneration, creating jobs and accommodating the homes and businesses of the future. This report looks at examples of best practice in repurposing vacant and underused textile and mill buildings across the North West.
- 2.84** There is evidence that mill redevelopment projects need assistance to overcome market failures created by high abnormal costs and restrictions in the developer / funder sector.
- 2.85** There are 1082 mills in Lancashire (540) and Greater Manchester (542). Many are vacant and underused and therefore at risk of being lost. The Housing White Paper highlights the need to build more than 275,000 homes per year and repurposed mills can play an important role in delivering this target and help minimise the release of Green Belt land. Also creating additional commercial floorspace is at the heart of the Strategic Economic Plans for Greater Manchester and Lancashire and the 1,996,597sqm of vacant mill floorspace provides an excellent opportunity to meet this need.
- 2.86** If standard office floorspace densities were applied to the net vacant mill floorspace there is the potential to generate 133,000 new net additional jobs (equivalent to £6bn of GVA per annum) or 25,000 new homes.
- 2.87** Two mills in Oldham were looked at as having potential for repurposing. One was Brownhill Bridge Mill in Dobcross and the other is Hartford Works in Werneth. The report presents a description of site, ownership and intentions of the owner, structural condition, opportunities and constraints, and delivery strategy.
- 2.88** The report summarises the ingredients for successful mill reuse.
- 2.89** In relation to planning:
- There needs to be a recognition of the viability challenges facing owners;
 - There needs to be an application of Conservation Principles to identify relative heritage values within sites;
 - A flexible approach to adaption by all stakeholders needs to be applied;
 - There needs to be a proactive strategy to identify the historic mills that are at risk and develop reuse schemes;
 - There is a need to promote Heritage Investment Strategies and Mill Action Plans at a Local Authority (LA) level; and
 - There needs to be guidance and support for mill owners.
- 2.90** In relation to funding:
- There needs to be an establishment of mill investment programmes, coordinated at Combined Authority level. This would draw resources from Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Funding / Local Growth Fund, Historic England, European

Structural Fund and Investment Fund and Homes and Communities Agency (HCA);

- LA intervention through acquisition of assets, prudential borrowing, joint venture partnerships and direct funding and delivery;
- Maximisation of opportunities for HCA Homes Building Fund to be secured for mill re-purposing projects; and
- Tax increment financing to address financial deficits on priority assets.

2.91 In relation to a collaborative approach:

- There should be a creation of high quality spaces to stimulate wider regeneration;
- There needs to be recognition of long term investment potential of historic mills; and
- There needs to be an identification of long term opportunities in areas that align with regeneration strategies.

2.92 The next steps are to:

- Identify priority mills with repurpose potential at either LA or combined authority level;
- Produce investment strategies for the selected mills with all stakeholders; and
- Begin partnership working with owners, LA, Historic England, LEPs and HCA to secure delivery.

2.93 Finding new uses for Oldham's mills could be crucial to Oldham attracting new businesses in our key sectors and meeting our economic potential or providing new homes whilst minimising the release of the Green Belt.

Greater Manchester "Moving Strategy" (GM Moving, 2017)

2.94 The document sets out the overarching strategy for Greater Manchester. It sets out Greater Manchester's shared ambition to achieve a major increase in the number of people engaged in physical activity, in line with Sport England's strategy Towards an Active Nation. To achieve this Greater Manchester will adopt system-wide changes to address health inequalities and build the resilience of local communities. The Greater Manchester Moving Plan cements the ambitions of Sport England, GMCA and the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership, and sets out the approach Greater Manchester will take together, to bring about a population-level change in people's relationship with physical activity within Greater Manchester.

2.95 In relation to the impact on the built environment it notes that the design and layout of places across Greater Manchester play a vital role in how active people are. In the future, planners, urban designers, developers, transport planners, housing associations and health professionals will help to design and create environments which help people get more active, more often.

2.96 The Strategy sets out a number of Priority Actions which have an impact on the Built Environment, such as to:

- Ensure that the Spatial Framework for Greater Manchester supports and enables more active lives, healthier, more resilient places and communities through high quality spatial planning.

- Establish a 'Greater Manchester standard', informed by the ten principles of Active Design and other evidence/best practice, supporting Greater Manchester partners to work through the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and Local Plans.
- Ensure that master planning for all developments consider Active Design from the start.
- Support a wide-ranging workforce from planners to developers to understand and embed active design principles in their work, showcasing excellent practice, and demonstrating how places designed for active lives are also more appealing and commercially viable.

Local Context

Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (Oldham Council, 2011)

2.97 The current Local Plan - the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (the 'Joint DPD') was adopted in 2011.

2.98 Policy 20 'Design' sets out design principles that new development should meet:

- Local Character (including a character appraisal as appropriate)
- Safety and Inclusion
- Diversity
- Ease of Movement
- Legibility
- Adaptability
- Sustainability
- Designing for Future Maintenance
- Good Streets and Spaces
- Well Designed Buildings

2.99 The policy detail is contained in the Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which although was prepared to support the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), its content is still applicable.

2.100 Policy 24 'Historic Environment' states that the council will seek to protect, conserve and enhance the architectural features, structures, settings, historic character and significance of the borough's heritage assets and designations including:

- Listed buildings.
- Conservation areas.
- Registered parks and gardens (their historic character and setting).
- Scheduled ancient monuments (their archaeological value and interest).
- Significant archaeological remains.
- Locally significant buildings, structures, areas or landscapes of architectural or historic interest (including non-designated locally significant assets identified in the local lists compiled by the council).

2.101 The policy supports heritage-led regeneration, including the reuse of historic buildings such as mills, to achieve economic, community and regeneration objectives.

Oldham and Rochdale Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (Oldham & Rochdale Council's, 2007)

2.102 The Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been jointly prepared by Rochdale Council and Oldham Council to support the development plans and provide a basis for achieving high standards and good quality design throughout the borough. It expands on local planning policies and sets design principles for development.

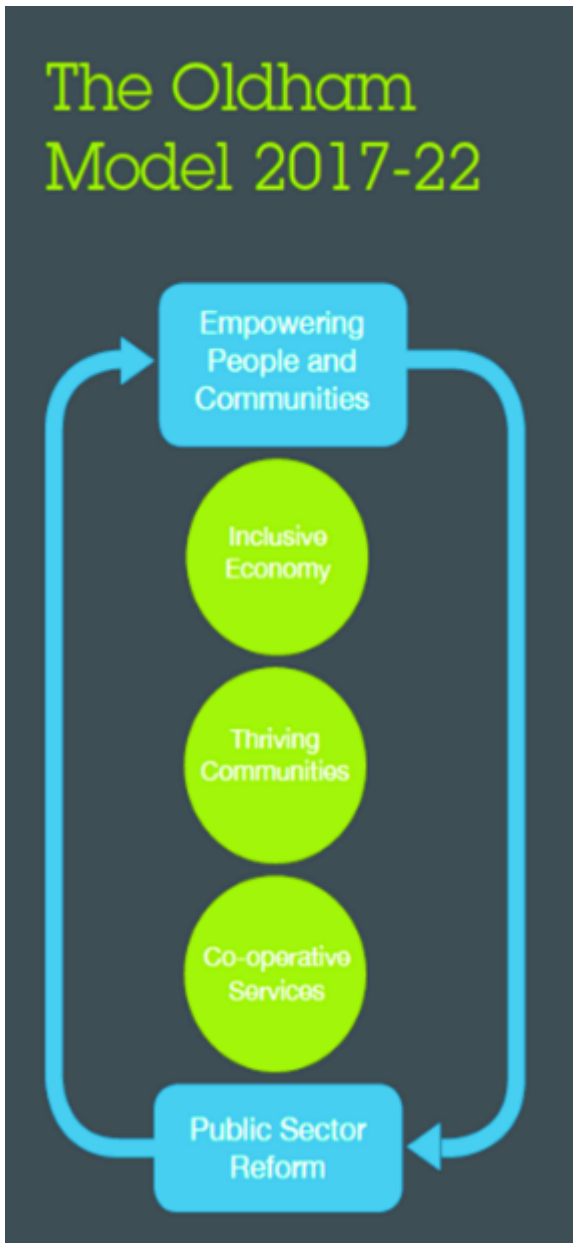
2.103 The Urban Design Principles set out within the Guide are:

- Character - Enhancing identity and sense of place. Development must respond to its context and contribute to a distinctive sense of place.
- Safety and inclusion - Ensuring places are safe, secure and welcoming for all. Development must positively contribute to making places accessible, safe and must minimise opportunities for crime and disorder.
- Diversity - Providing variety and choice. Development must incorporate a mix of uses, provide for the needs of all sections of society and add richness to the social and cultural diversity of the local area.
- Ease of movement - Ensuring places are easy to get to and move through. Development must provide clear networks of routes to an area, be located to support non-car travel between people and facilities and give priority to pedestrians and encourage a reduction in reliance on the car.
- Legibility - Ensuring places can be easily understood. Development should contribute to a clear, legible environment that has a clear hierarchy of routes, spaces and functions. It should also relate positively to the visual connections between it and its surroundings.
- Adaptability - Anticipating the need for change. Development proposals and layouts should be adaptable for the changing and future needs of society.
- Sustainability - Minimise the impact on our environment. Development proposals must incorporate measures for reducing energy demands, conserving water resources and flood prevention, make provision for sustainable management of waste and make a positive contribution to supporting bio-diversity and greenery.
- Designing for future maintenance - Designing buildings and spaces so that their quality can be effectively maintained over time.
- Good streets and spaces - Creating places with attractive outdoor spaces. Development must make a positive contribution to streets and public spaces in the wider townscape, foster social interaction and support an attractive pedestrian friendly environment.
- Well designed buildings - Constructing sustainable buildings appropriate to their function and context.

The Oldham Plan 2017-2022 (Oldham Council, 2017)

2.104 The Oldham ambition is to be a productive and cooperative place with healthy, aspirational and sustainable communities.

The Oldham Model 2017-22



2.105 The delivery model is based around three shifts to deliver this ambition:

1. Inclusive Economy
2. Co-operative Services
3. Thriving Communities

2.106 Under the Thriving Communities the vision is for people and communities to have the power to be healthy, happy and able to make positive choices. The built environment can have a direct influence on people's health and happiness through ensuring that

design incorporates principles such as sustainable movement, safety, designing out crime and ensuring buildings are adaptable and resilient to climate change. The built environment can also encourage the conservation and enjoyment of our historic environment which enriches people's quality of life.

The Corporate Plan (Oldham Council)

2.107 Oldham's current Corporate Plan expired in December 2020. Work to refresh Oldham's Corporate Plan was due to be completed by summer 2020, however, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic meant that this was no longer viable. Instead, we are in the process of developing our Covid-19 Recovery Strategy which will act as an interim Corporate Plan until at least 2022.

Covid-19 Recovery Strategy (Oldham Council)

2.108 As a Co-operative Council, Oldham is committed to tackling the impact of COVID-19, protecting our most vulnerable residents and communities. The steps we are taking to tackle the pandemic and the subsequent recovery planning, aim to support people, especially those groups who are often most impacted.

2.109 Building on the learning so far and the anticipated events to come, we are developing a comprehensive Recovery Strategy, which will help shape our approach and vision for Oldham over the next eighteen months. We do this whilst we continue to respond to an ongoing critical incident where we are focused each day on saving the lives of Oldham's residents.

2.110 Our objectives and approach to our Recovery Strategy are rooted in the Oldham Model, ensuring as we adapt to a changing world that we build Thriving Communities, an Inclusive Economy and work Co-operatively with each other.

Creating a Better Place (Oldham Council, January 2020)

2.111 Creating a Better Place focuses on building more homes for our residents, creating new jobs through town centre regeneration, and ensuring Oldham is a great place to visit with lots of family friendly and accessible places to go.

2.112 This approach has the potential to deliver around 2,500 new homes in the town centre designed for a range of different budgets and needs, 1,000 new jobs and 100 new opportunities for apprenticeships, and is in alignment with council priorities to be the greenest borough.

2.113 The report notes that quality of place is paramount to thriving communities. Quality design and attention to public realm are critical to Oldham's success as a place where people feel they belong, an exciting place where people can live, work and spend time.

2.114 Oldham hopes to create a better place by building quality homes, opportunities to grow local business and create jobs, by ensuring Oldham is the greenest borough and by embedding sustainability. The built environment links into all of these work streams.

3 EVIDENCE BASE

Regional

Greater Manchester Spatial Framework: Historic Environment Background Paper (GMCA, 2020)

- 3.1** The purpose of the paper is to explore the historic environment looking at related strategies and policies and the state of the historic environment to identify key issues that Places for Everyone (was GMSF) should address. Many of these issues may be relevant to the Local Plan review.
- 3.2** The range of heritage assets within Greater Manchester is varied and includes:
- Industrial: This mainly relates to the mills and chimneys of the textile industry, but other notable industrial related activities that have left their mark include coal and lime extraction, brewing, hat making, glassworks and chemical and locomotive manufacture.
 - Transport infrastructure: Continuing advances in transport and communication have been a key driver in the economic development of the city region, including historic roads and bridges (some of medieval origin), canals and railway infrastructure.
 - Places of social, political and cultural reform and improvements: sites relating to historical events, institutions and commercial enterprise;
 - Sports and leisure: public houses, swimming baths, billiard halls, cinemas and sports facilities.
 - Places of worship: Including churches, chapels and other buildings, serving all denominations;
 - Large hall residences and their associated open spaces;
 - Dwelling houses: Including workers housing, villa estates and suburban growth and model villages.
 - Significant archaeological sites: associated with Roman and medieval activities; and
 - Open spaces: Historic parks and gardens and those surrounding historic buildings, squares, markets and landscape infrastructure such as railing gates, walls and monuments.
 - Farmsteads and agricultural buildings.
 - Conservation areas: including town and city centres, extensive residential suburbs, industrial areas and cemeteries.
- 3.3** The paper gives an overview of the many economic, social and environmental benefits that heritage can bring. The paper notes the regeneration of Oldham Town Hall is a good example of historic environment led regeneration, which has helped in increasing a sense of pride and place locally, bolstering the Town Centre's family-friendly credentials, attracting more affluent customers into the Town Centre and laying the ground for an 'after-work' culture in the Town Centre and the revitalised evening economy. Previously, the vacant Old Town Hall discouraged people from venturing further down Yorkshire Street. The new development, which contains a cinema and restaurants, has helped rebrand the Town Centre and create 'civic pride' – as evidenced by comments on social media.

3.4 The regeneration of Oldham's Old Town Hall demonstrates how heritage regeneration projects can have a positive influence on economic prosperity. A recent study on the economic impact of the development highlighted that nearby businesses had experienced a notable uplift in trade, opening hours had extended, new complementary businesses had located nearby and that the project had influenced existing businesses to stay in the Town Centre and to invest in refurbishments within a year of the completion of the project.

3.5 The paper also provides a Oldham example of how the historic environment can contribute to learning and understanding noting the 'Cotton, Curry and Commerce' book and history project spanning three generations, made possible by the Lottery Heritage Fund. It is the culmination of a two-year Heritage Lottery Funded project celebrating the contribution made by the Oldham Asian Business Association (ABA) and Asian businesses to the economic life of Oldham. The project was the result of a partnership between the Oldham Asian Business Association and Oldham Local Studies and Archives supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Oldham Business Leaders Group (OBLG). The project aimed to collect memories, reminiscences and archives from the Asian business community in order to create a unique resource for the exploration of the history and development of Asian business in Oldham.

3.6 In terms of trends the paper highlights that in Greater Manchester:

- 85 out of the 3,892 listed buildings are on the at risk register (in Oldham there are 10 buildings on the at risk register). Whilst this accounts for a relatively low proportion of listed buildings overall (some 2%) it is to be noted that there is no data on the state of Grade II listed buildings / structures other than places of worship.
- 18 out of 245 conservation areas are at risk. In Oldham there is one conservation area at risk (Oldham Town Centre), with 20 being 'vulnerable' and 15 at low / no risk.
- In Oldham 9 conservation areas are in optimal condition, with 20 in fair condition and 7 in poor condition. Oldham Town Centre conservation area has deteriorated.
- Heritage at risk can result in socio-environmental degradation including crime, vandalism, fly tipping and the consequent decline in the significance and character of an area. There is a need across the city-region to protect heritage assets at risk and promote a reduction in the number of entries on the register by exploring opportunities for regeneration and the repair and occupation of heritage assets or appropriate management.
- The paper acknowledges that vacant and underused mills are at risk of being lost forever; re-purposing them for modern day use is an effective means of securing their long-term sustainability and reinforcing local identity. The re-use case studies illustrate that mills offer quality spaces that can attract commercial, residential and leisure occupiers, leading to successful business investment. Within Greater Manchester area, Oldham Council has taken the ownership of the future of the borough's historic mills by commissioning a Mill Strategy to help identify priority mills and actions plans for these historic assets.
- Public, civic and communal buildings include a wide variety of buildings associated with law and local government, as well as buildings designed for cultural uses and entertainment activities. Like many other heritage assets – designated or non-designated – many public, civic and communal buildings can be at risk of substantive change or loss.

- Public houses have closed in huge numbers across the country in recent decades, especially in urban and suburban areas. Following pub closures there has been a steady stream of conversions, with many historic features and fittings being lost in the process. In numerous other cases, pubs have simply been demolished, their grounds often providing ample space for residential blocks, supermarkets or nursing homes.
 - There are many issues and challenges facing historic parks and gardens. Their historic character and fabric can be easily harmed by issues such as new construction, changes in setting or views and poor maintenance.
 - A key component of our countryside is our rural heritage of traditional farm buildings, small villages, field boundaries, ancient monuments, woods and parkland. They underpin the beauty, diversity and ‘sense of place’, which attracts inward investment and tourism, and the active conservation of historic places creates skilled employment, often in areas where jobs are scarce. Yet our rural heritage is under great pressure. The changing economics of farming has caused the loss of many features such as hedgerows.
 - The paper acknowledges that non-designated assets are particularly vulnerable. LPAs are encouraged to identify specific heritage assets in their area through a local list.
- 3.7** In terms of economic viability the paper argues that some form of funding is required to meet the ‘conservation deficit’ either in the form of a grant or ‘enabling development.’ The Heritage Lottery Fund can be a source of grant funding and the designation of heritage assets, such as conservation area status, can be a focus for attracting and channelling grant aid. Schemes can be established to grant aid the repair and reinstatement of original features, through the Townscape Heritage Initiative and Heritage Action Zones funds, for example. There may also be scope for funding through other initiatives. Phase 1 funding for the Future High Street Fund (FHSF), which aims to help high streets adapt to and meet the challenging expectations of today’s retail sector, has been awarded to five locations within Greater Manchester, including Oldham.
- 3.8** The Greater Manchester Mayor’s Town Centre Challenge is also an opportunity. The initiative introduced in 2017 reinforces the trend to support town centres through regeneration and is being undertaken in the context of increasing concern about the future of town centres across the whole of the country. The new drive to regenerate town centres across Greater Manchester is a response to their decline and the need to plan positively with new homes and non-retail offers. The initiative aims to regenerate smaller town centres across the city-region, so that they are cost-effective locations for businesses, housing and leisure. The initiative will be supported by new Mayoral powers to establish Mayoral Development Corporations, the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) and Mayoral grants to kick-start developments. Since the announcement of the initiative to date, nine town centres across Greater Manchester have been nominated including Royton district centre.
- 3.9** Heritage Action Zones are another source of funding, which will allow local authorities to find new ways to champion and revive historic high streets.
- 3.10** In the absence of grant funding, ‘enabling development’ is another method of bridging the conservation deficit. Historic England defines enabling development as ‘development that would be unacceptable in planning terms but for the fact that it would bring public benefits sufficient to justify it being carried out, and which could not otherwise be

achieved.' While normally a last resort, it is an established and useful planning tool by which a community may be able to secure the long-term future of a place of heritage significance, and sometimes other public benefits, provided the balance of public advantage lies in doing so.

- 3.11** The paper identifies that there is the opportunity to address existing conservation areas, through ensuring that there is up-to-date information, which will help increase the understanding of the historic environment in Greater Manchester and highlight any trends and issues within these areas. It is recognised that there is a resource issue due to the lack of local authority conservation staff to deliver this, however, there is the opportunity to explore the potential to engage with the local community and amenity groups to undertake this work.
- 3.12** In terms of growth and design the paper states that growth must be balanced with the requirement to preserve cultural and heritage assets. Tall buildings must be designed sensitively. There is a need to ensure that transport infrastructure does not negatively affect the historic environment.
- 3.13** Climate change is one of the most pressing issues facing Greater Manchester, threatening the health and prosperity of the city-region. It is recognised that the building stock is probably the largest single user of energy and therefore can make a significant contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions. Taking into consideration the extent of the historic environment across Greater Manchester, improving the energy efficiency of existing buildings needs to be applied with particular care and sensitivity.
- 3.14** The heritage paper recommends that development of the GMSF (to be replaced with Places for Everyone):
- Ensure the framework sets out a positive strategy for conservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the historic environment;
 - Recognise the value of the historic environment in achieving a sustainable and resilient city-region.
 - Appreciate the distinctive character of Greater Manchester and how it can be a valuable source of prosperity, wellbeing and community cohesion.
 - Complement the conservation and enhancement of heritage with the promotion of high quality design.
 - Highlight heritage at risk
 - Ensure an up to date evidence base for the purposes of monitoring and review.

Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment (LUC, 2018)

- 3.15** The Greater Manchester Landscape Character Assessment has been prepared to support preparation of the GMSF (now Places for Everyone). The landscape evidence will help inform the overall strategy and future management and enhancement of the conurbation's natural capital, Green Infrastructure network and provision of a positive strategy for the future Green Belt.
- 3.16** The assessment has included an overview of archaeology and cultural heritage relevant to each landscape type which has helped informed the sensitivity rating. The assessment includes a summary of the landscape qualities and key features / attributes that would be sensitive to change (e.g as a result of development) and guidance and

opportunities for future development and landscape management / enhancement includes measures relating to the historic environment. In Oldham the following landscape types can be found:

- Incised Urban Fringe Valleys;
- Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (Dark Peak);
- Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (West/South Pennines);
- Pennine Foothills (Dark Peak);
- Pennine Foothills (West/South Pennine); and
- Urban Fringe Farmland.

Local

Greater Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation – Oldham District Report (Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service, Updated July 2010)

- 3.17** The Oldham District Report of the Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Study gives an overview of Oldham’s Historic Character. In the eastern half of the borough, the land is predominantly upland in character. Land utilisation is predominantly pastoral with a high representation of unenclosed moorland. Forestry, quarries (historic and modern) and reservoirs are dominant features. A substantial number of historic farms and folds survive. The landscape of post medieval piecemeal enclosure and later surveyed enclosure is also well preserved.
- 3.18** There were no settlements of significant size in the eastern half of the borough until the 18th century. The economic boom in the textile industry and other factors were responsible for an increase in the number of dispersed farms and the development of folds. Many of the houses from this period have characteristic rows of mullioned multi-light windows that were originally associated with domestic workshops. Some farms and domestic workshops have recently undergone residential conversion.
- 3.19** The early industrial revolution was also responsible for the establishment of small towns such as Greenfield, Uppermill, Dobcross, Delph and Diggle. These were probably founded in association with 18th and 19th century communication nodes such as canal basins or road junctions, and early mills. The larger settlements typically have a Georgian/Victorian commercial core with an element of contemporary domestic workshops and houses. Late 18th to early 20th century mills, factories and small-scale warehouses were prevalent in the valley bottoms.
- 3.20** Twentieth century development includes small-scale private and social housing, small industrial parks and some modernisation of commercial cores. Changes in the agricultural regime have led to the abandonment of upland settlement and the decay of historic field boundaries. Despite some later development, settlement in the eastern half of the borough of Oldham is of low density and retains much of its 18th and 19th century historic character.

Character Types in Oldham

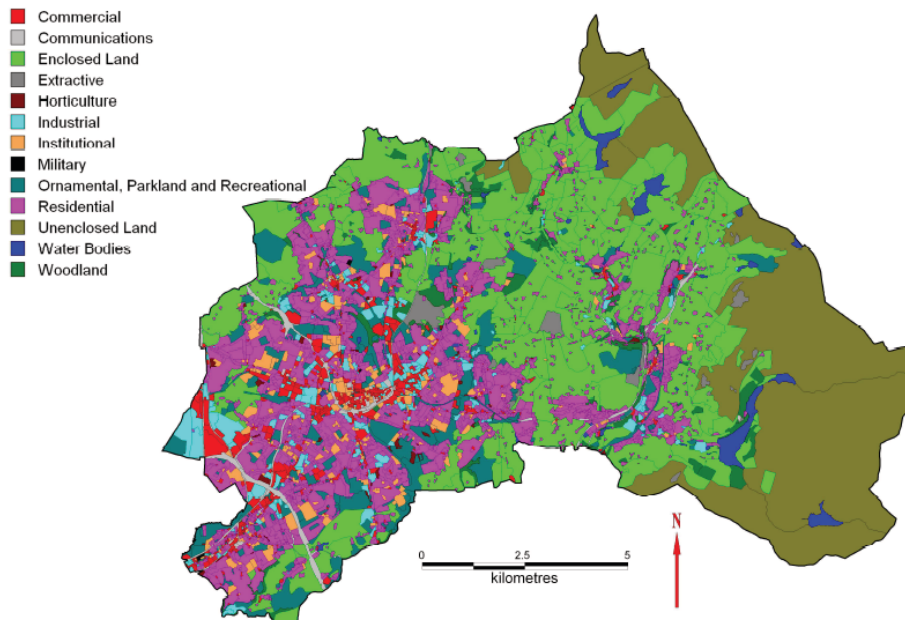


Figure 4 Map showing the borough of Oldham by broad character type

- 3.21** The western half of the borough is predominantly urban in character. Before the industrial period the settlement pattern consisted of dispersed farms and small halls set in a landscape of mainly piecemeal enclosed fields. There were no medieval towns. Nucleated settlement probably took the form of large folds. Some of this historic landscape survives in more or less its original context at the fringes of later development. Historic buildings occasionally stand in isolation within the modern urban landscape.
- 3.22** Oldham was probably founded as a small town after the 16th century. It developed at a meeting point of several roads. Unlike Saddleworth, the settlements around Oldham developed into a large scale industrial town typical of the central Pennine region. The railway and canal were probably contributing factors to this development. Another factor in Oldham's growth was the ready supply of local coal which fuelled the early steam powered mill engines. Steam power allowed mills to be positioned away from water power sources and closer to communication routes, labour sources and market centres.
- 3.23** Oldham appears to have been at the core of industrial development in the late 18th and 19th centuries with satellite settlements at Shaw, Royton, Hollinwood and Greenacres. The 19th century landscape consisted of textile mills, supporting engineering works and gridiron developments of workers' housing, all found in close association. Collieries were also a significant presence in the rural landscape.

- 3.24** Wealth generated by the textile boom allowed for the development of commercial urban cores, markets, churches, halls, parks and prestigious civic buildings. The principal roads which radiated out of Oldham became foci of commercial and residential ribbon development. Oldham also developed a small middle-class villa suburb around Werneth Park and Alexandra Park.
- 3.25** As the 19th century proceeded, the inner core of industrial works and workers' houses around Oldham expanded to incorporate some of the earlier satellite towns. The character of the town centre became more commercial and civic. In an effort to improve living conditions terraces, yard developments and town houses were cleared. Traces of earlier residential phases can be found in the Firth Street/Queen Street area of the town core. The building of mills and the development of the industrial urban landscape continued into the early 20th century.
- 3.26** The inner urban zones of workers' housing around Oldham's core were replaced after the Second World War with large-scale institutions, modern factories and commercial parks. Late 20th century development has radically impacted on the 19th century urban landscape. The A62 and the Mumps roundabout, for example, obliterated a large area of workers' housing and industrial works. Away from the areas of 20th century urban renewal, the survival of the historic industrial landscape is better. Many mills were reused as warehouses or works after the collapse of the textile industry in the mid-20th century. The planned late 19th century gridiron development of terraces and villas around St Thomas's Circle still retains much of its historic character. Larger areas of survival also occur at Glodwick, Shaw, Greenacres, Werneth, North Moor, and Failsworth. 19th century ribbon development survives along Oldham Road, Huddersfield Road and Shaw Road. Historic mills and other industrial works still have a significant landscape presence in Oldham borough. However, many are suffering from neglect, redevelopment and insensitive modernisation.
- 3.27** Oldham benefited from social and private housing development in the early 20th century. They were built largely on undeveloped agricultural land within commutable distance from the larger urban cores. They typically form large planned estates of short terraced rows and semi-detached houses. They were planned as neighbourhood units, each with local amenities such as schools, denominational churches and suburban commercial cores. Estates around Coppice, Hollins, Greenacres and Hathershaw are well preserved examples of this type of housing.
- 3.28** The house-building boom continued after the Second World War. The Fitton Hill development is an example of social housing from this period. One of the aims of post-war redevelopment was to clear away Victorian 'slums'. The St Mary's multi-deck flats of the 1960s were an example of experimental high density social housing close to Oldham town centre.
- 3.29** The later part of the 20th century was a time of civic improvement and commercial and industrial renewal. As part of a planned government scheme, derelict areas were cleared, disused mills refurbished and the town core redeveloped. The town centre has many prestigious institute buildings which are less than twenty years old. New precincts, a market hall and a shopping arcade formed elements of the town centre's commercial redevelopment. Parts of Oldham's 19th century historic commercial core do survive though, particularly around Yorkshire Street and Union Street. Retail, business and industrial parks (such as Salmon Fields and Broadway Business Park) are a significant element of Oldham's modern landscape character, while early 20th

century textile mills lie derelict awaiting redevelopment or demolition. Urban redevelopment continues to the present day. Government backed housing association schemes continue to build new estates, frequently upgrading run-down social housing developments. Edwardian terraced houses are still being cleared to be replaced with low cost subsidised housing.

3.30 The Report provides analysis and recommendations for each character type. The management recommendations are summarised below:

Table 1 Management recommendations

Character Type	Management recommendations
All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undesignated historic buildings and structures of local interest can be placed on a 'local list'. This could include historic boundaries of locally distinct types, for example flagstone walls. • Where good legibility of historic character exists, there should be enhancement through positive management, including restoration where appropriate, and protection through the planning process. • This might include maintaining the historic urban structure within new development, e.g. road networks, boundaries, respecting urban grain, form and legibility, and maintaining identity of street frontages. • Careful consideration should be given to the siting and extent of car parks and other areas of hardstanding, particularly where the historic urban grain would be sensitive to the unprecedented opening up of large open 'grey' areas. • Memories of historic identity could be retained in street naming, public art etc. • Where development is proposed, applicants should identify heritage assets and their significance at pre-application stage. • Where planning permission is granted conditions should be attached where appropriate to ensure that provision is made for the investigation of the site's archaeological potential and for the preservation in situ or recording of any archaeological deposits that are encountered. • Awareness of issues relating to the importance of the above historic buildings, sites, areas and land should be promoted and should feed into Local Plans.
Mossland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There can be a strong link between archaeological and historical issues and Green Belt policy.

Character Type	Management recommendations
Enclosed Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links should be developed with Green Infrastructure strategies and management plans, with trees, hedges and wildlife value also considered. • Continuity of historic enclosure boundaries in a modern street scene should be respected to retain distinctiveness.
Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-density new build that results in the loss of historic plots as visible landscape features should be discouraged. The building of apartment blocks on a similar scale to the villas that are being replaced, and set in landscaped grounds, can help to ensure some continuity of the grain and character of areas. • Historic settlement cores should be seen as primary areas for conservation-led regeneration. • Well-preserved historic settlement cores are often designated as Conservation Areas. Where this is not the case, these areas should be considered for designation. • The creation of new Conservation Areas should be considered for areas of well-preserved villa housing / well designed distinctive local authority estates or houses/terraced housing/flats of historical interest that have retained original features and settings. • In relation to flats special consideration should be given to the impact that large new buildings may have on historic character.
Ornamental, parkland and recreational broad type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A park's designed or historic landscape and its associated features should be understood and protected through a Conservation Management Plan.
Religious Buildings and Cemeteries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special consideration must be given to burial grounds.
Commercial Core	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic commercial core should be seen as primary areas for conservation-led regeneration. • Well preserved historic commercial cores that are not currently designated as Conservation Areas should be considered for designation.
Retail (general), Business (general) and Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where good, representative examples of local shops and small scale offices of the 20th century are affected by development proposals, recording of the site at an appropriate level, such as a photographic survey, should be considered.
Canals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of new Conservation Areas should be considered for well-preserved stretches of canal with associated groups of historic buildings, structures and features.

Oldham Baseline:

3.31 The baseline for Oldham is set out in more detail below.

Listed Buildings:

3.32 There are 549 listed building in Oldham. Of these 13 are Grade II* and 536 are Grade II.

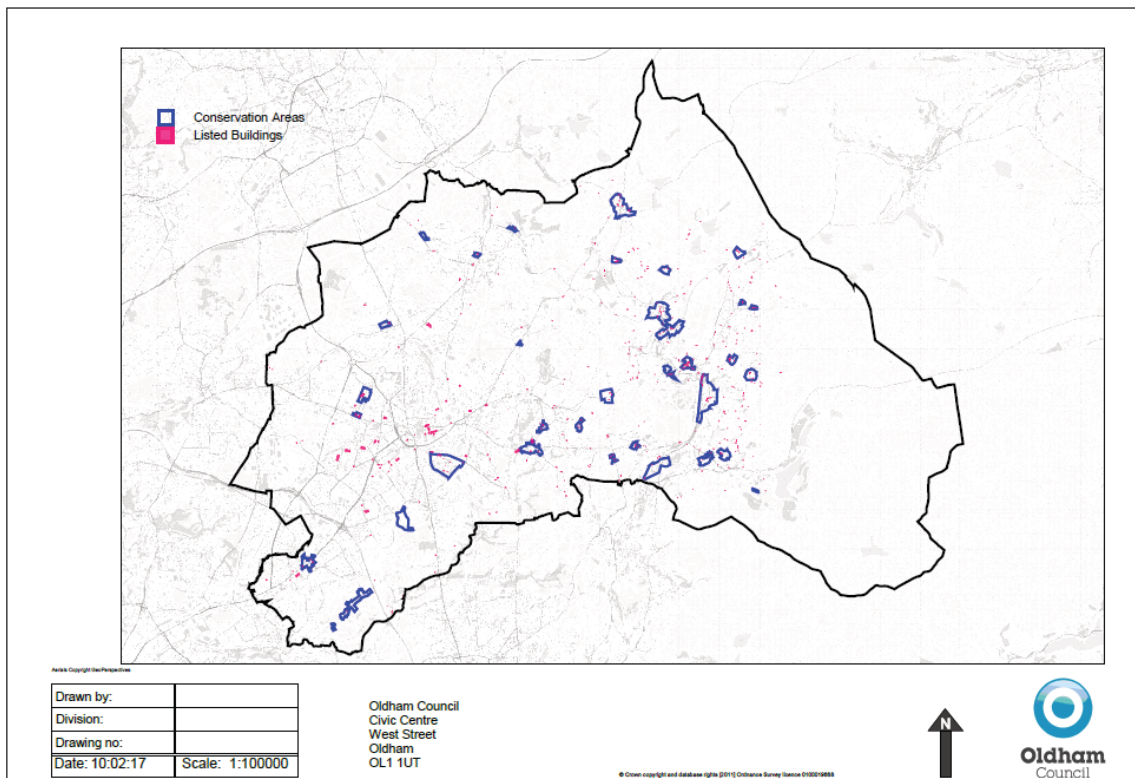
Conservation Areas:

3.33 There are 36 conservation areas in the borough covering 250.79 ha. These are listed in Appendix 2 along with a description of each Conservation Area.

3.34 An updated Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Oldham Town Centre has been carried out and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document in August 2019 (described below). This has included four extensions to the conservation area totalling 4.04 hectares. This variation has been designated under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. However, until the reviewed Local Pan is adopted these extensions cannot be shown on the Local Plan Proposals Map and will be treated as a material planning consideration. It is hoped that the Management Plan will help to remove Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area from the 'Heritage at Risk' register.

3.35 The Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings are shown on the map below.

Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings in Oldham



3.36 There is a need for up to date appraisals and management plans for the borough's other conservation areas.

Registered Parks and Gardens:

3.37 Oldham has the following three Registered Parks and Gardens:

- Chadderton Cemetery (Grade II) and Greenacres Cemetery (Grade II) opened in 1857. They were designed by Manchester architect N G Pennington following an 1854 Government Inspector reporting adversely on burial accommodation in Oldham. Following a town meeting, the mayor was petitioned to consider the provision of new cemeteries. In 1855 the Board purchased land at Chadderton and Greenacres Hill to provide two cemeteries, to the west and east of the town respectively. Chadderton Cemetery includes an Anglican mortuary chapel, a small Gothic building with a steeply pitched slate roof and a small entrance porch to the south, with views north over the lower area of the cemetery. There are lots of beautiful walks through the cemetery, with plantings and many fine monuments. Greenacres cemetery is on the north-west side of the Medlock Valley. Throughout the cemetery there are dramatic views to the south and east across the Medlock Valley to the Pennine foothills beyond. There are lots of beautiful paths winding through the cemetery. Both cemeteries are managed by Oldham Council.
- Alexandra Park (Grade II*) is a Victorian town park, which was built by the people of Oldham during the cotton famine. Alexandra Park has won a Green Flag Award.

Scheduled Monuments:

3.38 Oldham has two Scheduled Monuments in the borough. Neither of these are on the 'At risk' register. These are:

- Bowl Barrow - Bowl barrows, the most numerous form of round barrow, are funerary monuments dating from the Late Neolithic period to the Late Bronze Age, with most examples belonging to the period 2400-1500 BC. They often acted as a focus for burials in later periods. There are over 10,000 surviving bowl barrows recorded nationally, occurring across most of lowland Britain. Often occupying prominent locations, they are a major historic element in the modern landscape and their considerable variation of form and longevity as a monument type provide important information on the diversity of beliefs and social organisations amongst early prehistoric communities. They are particularly representative of their period and a substantial proportion of surviving examples are considered worthy of protection. Despite two 20th century excavations, the bowl barrow 190m NNE of Knarr Barn survives reasonably well. Neither of these limited excavations located human remains or grave goods therefore the monument will contain undisturbed archaeological deposits within the mound and upon the old land surface beneath.

Bowl Barrow



- Castleshaw Roman Forts - Roman forts served as permanent bases for auxiliary units of the Roman Army. In outline, they were straight sided rectangular enclosures with rounded corners. Roman forts are rare nationally. As one of a small group of Roman military monuments, which are important in representing army strategy and therefore government policy, forts are of particular significance to our understanding of the period. All Roman forts with surviving archaeological potential are considered to be nationally important. The Roman fort at Castle Shaw and the fortlet survive reasonably well despite the damage caused by later land use and a number of archaeological excavations. They provide an important insight into early Roman strategy and the arrangements for patrols along this stage of the trans-Pennine road. They will provide important information on the early occupation of the north of England. Further information on the relationship of the forts to the road will be preserved as well as information about the scope and nature of the civilian settlement attached to the forts.

Castleshaw Roman Forts



Other entries on Historic Environment Record:

Blue Plaques:

3.39 Oldham's HER also lists 34 'blue plaques' to commemorate past events and people. This includes subjects on the Peterloo Massacre, Sir Winston Churchill (MP for Oldham 1990), Annie Kenney (leading suffragette), Ben Brierley (writer) and John Lees (originator of fish and chips) to name a few.

Canals:

3.40 The Rochdale Canal and Huddersfield Narrow Canal both pass through Oldham. The canals are a historic asset within the borough. The canal network has played a significant part in the development and heritage of the settlements in Oldham since the 18th century. This is especially evident at Failsworth Pole Conservation Area and Uppermill Conservation Area, where the Rochdale and Huddersfield Narrow canals respectively provide an important focal point alongside neighbouring historic former industrial buildings and contain several historic assets, including lock cottages, lock features, stone walls and bridges, some of which are listed.

'At Risk' Register:

3.41 Historic England maintains a 'at risk' register. There are ten entries in the borough on the heritage at risk register. These are:

- Church of St Mark with Christchurch, Glodwick Road, Glodwick (Grade II). The Church is generally in very bad condition with the roof and high level stonework of particular concern. Its condition is very bad and it falls within a Priority Category 'A' as there is immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric.
- Union Street United Reformed and Methodist Church, Union Street (Grade II). A first phase of work has been undertaken with the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund's Grants for Places of Worship scheme. Its condition is poor and falls within priority category 'C'. A second phase should complete a comprehensive repair programme.
- Church of St Stephen and All Martyrs, St Stephen's Street (Grade II). Three phases of work have been completed; 2006 to the roofs; 2013 to the clerestory wall; and 2014 to the tower. The latest phase of masonry and making good the interior completed in October 2018. A Minor Repair Grant from the Taylor Review Pilot was received in 2019 to help with roof maintenance. Further wall stabilisation is required. The building is in a poor condition and falls within priority category 'C' due to slow decay.
- Church of St John, Oldham Road, Failsworth (Grade II). Repair phases to the eastern roofs and the tower and spire now completed, but slate roofs to the nave and aisles remain in a vulnerable condition. A Minor Repair Grant from the Taylor Review Pilot was received in 2019 to help with gutter maintenance. The condition is poor and it falls within priority category 'C' due to slow decay.
- Church of St Chad, Church Lane, Saddleworth (Grade II*). There is a significant fault with the east window, where the tracery has bowed due to the presence of rusting iron dowels within the joint positions. The church is in poor condition and falls within priority category 'C' due to slow decay.
- St Paul's Methodist Church, Rochdale Road, Shaw and Crompton (Grade II). Vacant church in declining condition. Its condition is very bad and it falls within

priority category 'A' due to immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric.

- Church of St Mark with Christchurch, Glodwick Road, Glodwick (Grade II). The building is generally in very bad condition with the roof and high level stonework of particular concern. The building falls within priority A as it is at immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric.
- Foxdenton Hall, Foxdenton Lane, Chadderton (Grade II*). Discussions are ongoing with Oldham Council regarding the schedule of repair works and finding a long-term use for the building. This is a vacant building in poor condition and falls within priority category 'C' due to slow decay.
- 1-5, Hollins Road, Oldham (Grade II*). One of very few pre-industrial revolution buildings in Oldham, believed to date from the C16, possibly incorporating parts of an earlier C15 manor house on the site. The building is now at risk because of the poor condition of the roof, which is allowing considerable water ingress. It is an occupied building in poor condition and falls within priority category 'C' due to slow decay.

There is also one Conservation Area on the 'at risk' register.

- Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area is on the heritage at risk register, principally owing to the number of existing vacant and deteriorating heritage assets. An updated conservation and management plan Supplementary Planning Document (adopted August 2019) has been adopted to address the issues and threats to the conservation area.

Oldham Buildings at Risk Assessment Report (Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service, 2016)

3.42 Historic England commissioned Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service to undertake a review of the stock of historic textile mills that were identified during the Greater Manchester Textile Mills Survey in the 1980s. The review was urgently required in response to nearly three decades of change and erosion to textile mills and the industrial historic environment across the country, and reflect a growing concern at the rate of loss of this ironic industrial monument type due to economic pressures.

3.43 The review aimed to provide an understanding of the loss rates of historic textile mills across Greater Manchester, and provide an up to date audit of the number of surviving mills, noting their locations, condition and completeness. It was proposed that a Buildings at Risk assessment survey of the remaining stock of mills was carried out, together with the floorspace available to inform economic potential for re-use. There were 104 extant mills identified in Oldham. The headline results at the time of the report were:

- 66 mills have been demolished across the borough since the 1980 survey, representing an average loss rate of 38.8%.
- The rate of loss varies considerably across the borough, with the highest numbers of demolition occurring in Coldhurst, Shaw and Chadderton Central.
- The total floor space in historic textile mills in the borough of Oldham is approximately 1,010,059 square metres (sqm), although this includes 27,093 sqm of residential floor space.

- It is estimated that 186, 471 sqm of floor space appears to be vacant or under-used, equating to 18.97% of the total commercial / industrial floor space in mills across the borough.
- Most of the extant mills are at 'Low Risk' / 'No Risk' based on their current condition and levels of occupancy / commercial use.
- Approximately 12% of the total stock of textile mills are considered to be 'vulnerable' (Risk Grade 4) to change or loss, including the Grade II listed Lion Mill in Royton South.
- Some 17% of the total stock in the borough, are 'At Risk'.
- A further 13 mills across the borough have been identified as Risk Grade 3, and are thus also considered to be 'At Risk'. These include the Grade II listed Nile Mill in Chadderton Central, representing a priority for investment, together with several non-designated but nevertheless significant historic mill complexes, such as Maple Mill in Alexandra, Heron Mill in Hollinwood, and Thornham Mill in Royton North.

3.44 The assessment concludes that notwithstanding the rates of losses, it is apparent that the borough has an important stock of textile mills still standing, making a significant contribution to the character of the historic industrial environment. The national importance of several of these mills, representing 14% of the total stock, is reflected in their designation as listed buildings, although the borough also contains numerous very significant but non-designated mills. In particular the borough has a particularly fine collection of late Victorian / early Edwardian mills, such as Bell Mill in Medlock Vale and Heron Mill in Hollinwood, representing Oldham's ascendancy as the world's leading centre for cotton spinning by the late twentieth century.

Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document (Oldham Council, 2019)

- 3.45** A Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) Supplementary Planning Document has been adopted (August 2019) for Oldham Town Centre.
- 3.46** The CAAMP has been prepared to support existing plan policy on the historic environment, inform the Local Plan review and support regeneration plans for Oldham Town Centre. The CAAMP was seen as a high priority as Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area is identified on Historic England's "At Risk" register. An up to date CAAMP was required in order to re-assess the designated area and evaluate and record its special interest.
- 3.47** The appraisal proposes four extensions to the existing Oldham Town Centre conservation area boundary. The extensions have been designated under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and will be treated as a material planning consideration until formally adopted through the Local Plan review process.

Extensions to Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area



3.48 The CAAMP SPD also identifies the following buildings that could be added to a local list, should we wish to establish one.

- Hilton Arcade;
- Greaves Arms;
- 3 Greaves Street;
- Victoria House, Greaves Street;
- The Old Bill, Greaves Street;
- 31 Queen Street; and
- The Old Museum (Former Friends Meeting House and Former Museum), Greaves Street.

3.49 The Management Plan followed on from the appraisal of the conservation area. It sets out policies and recommendations around enhancement. The Management Plan aims to:

- Secure the viable use of vacant heritage assets to prevent their decay and dereliction and ensure their long-term preservation and contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area;
- Reverse the cumulative negative impact that the poor upkeep and maintenance of buildings and inappropriate alterations have on the appearance of buildings and the character of the conservation area;
- Uplift the human experience of the conservation area at ground floor level and the perceived quality of the urban environment in order to bring about major enhancement to its character and appearance;
- Ensure the significance of the conservation area is preserved and that any future development enhances its positive characteristics;

- Ensure that only applications for development which reflect careful consideration of the character and appearance of the conservation area are approved, and to encourage the redevelopment of cleared vacant sites within the conservation area and its setting;
- Protect the established and valued views of the surrounding area which contribute to the historic context and setting of Oldham Town Centre conservation area, as well as local views within the conservation area;
- Ensure interventions in the public realm are considered carefully in the context of good surviving examples of street furniture, surface coverings and public art/ sculptures / monuments to preserve and enhance its essential character and to encourage the introduction of appropriate greening and landscaping;
- Improve wayfinding into and around the conservation area, between key transport links and better define the conservation area;
- Give the conservation area a clear identity, engage the public and celebrate the heritage of Oldham whilst incentivising the care and conservation of its buildings and character and appearance overall;
- Create a place that people find welcoming and which contributes to their sense of identity, local pride and well-being;
- Ensure that the conservation area is correctly managed and the tools available to Oldham Council are used to effectively enforce the conservation area status; and
- Make best use of the powers available to Oldham Council to secure the enhancement of the conservation area and its removal from the 'At Risk' register.

3.50 The CAAMP must be reflected in Local Plan review policy.

Oldham Mills Strategy (Oldham Council and Historic England, 2021)

3.51 A Mills Strategy is being undertaken to set out which undesignated (unlisted) mills are the highest priority in terms of their historic significance with opportunity to be retained and put to a sustainable use and which mills are of lower priority and may offer potential for alternative redevelopment.

3.52 A separate report feeding into this is a landscape overview providing an overall analysis of the contribution existing mills make to the landscape character of Oldham using a high, medium, low classification. The landscape overview identified 36 'high' landscape value mills, 21 medium landscape value mills and 19 low landscape value mills.

3.53 Whilst high value mills are important in defining Oldham's landscape character, of greater significance is the grouping or clusters they form in the landscape. Seven mill clusters have been identified that would benefit from conservation to illustrate Oldham's past and protect the most significant feature of Oldham's landscape character.

The mills will be categorised as high, medium and low priority based upon the assessment of their landscape and heritage value, alongside housing and employment potential considerations, in order to inform the formulation of a positive strategy to support the long term sustainability of the textile mill stock across Oldham.

The mills assessed as having high landscape value and heritage / townscape value are placed within the high priority category with a clear presumption against their loss or demolition. The mills identified as being of medium priority will remain important to retain and re-use, however, there will be a higher degree of flexibility in their alteration / conversion.

It is likely that mills within this category will be less sensitive to alteration than those in the high category and therefore more significant interventions may be deemed acceptable, subject to being weighed in the planning balance.

3.54 Those mills which are assessed as having comparatively low landscape value and heritage significance will be placed within the low priority category. It is anticipated that there will be greater flexibility in how these mills could be reused or converted and such mills may also have potential for redevelopment. These sites feature mills which have very little architectural presence, where they have been altered significantly so that their heritage value is decreased and where the mills may be causing harm to the social and environmental value of the local community.

3.55 The following policy approach has been recommended for the different mill categories (please note at this stage the mills are not listed within each category as the mills strategy is still emerging. Similarly, the policy approach is also subject to change):

Policy 1

Recommended Mills Policy

The non-designated mill stock forms a fundamental part of Oldham's historic environment and gives the landscape of the borough a clear distinctive character thereby contributing to local identity and sense of place. Proposals should retain those elements of the mill stock which contribute to the local identity and sense of place of Oldham and ensure they are appropriately conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Development proposals affecting non-designated mills will be assessed having regard to the following order of priority:

High Priority Mills:

The high priority mills make a clear positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness and are identified as non-designated heritage assets. There will be a clear presumption in favour of the retention of the high priority mills and all associated buildings and structures. Proposals which would remove, harm or undermine the significance of a high priority mill or its contribution to local distinctiveness and sense of place will be permitted only where the benefits of the development would outweigh the harm.

Medium Priority Mills

There will be a general presumption in favour of the retention of medium priority mills and associated buildings and structures. The alteration, extension or demolition of any buildings contributing to the landscape or heritage interest will require clear justification in relation to the significance and setting of the asset.

Low Priority Mills

The identified low priority mills are generally considerably altered and make a limited contribution to local distinctiveness and sense of place. Development proposals involving the comprehensive redevelopment of low priority mills will be supported in principle subject to compliance with other policies of the Local Plan.

Mill Clusters:

The clustering of particular groups of mills provide a unique character to the local landscape and give Oldham an exceptionally strong sense of place and local distinctiveness.

There will be a clear presumption in favour of the retention of the mills and all associated buildings and structures contained within the identified Mill Clusters. There will also be a general presumption against development that unacceptably detracts from important views of the identified Mill Clusters by virtue of its height, location, bulk or design.

- 3.56** The emerging Mills Strategy also sets out a number of key actions and recommendations to implement the strategy, which the council will consider:

Table 2 Summary of Key Actions

Priority Level	Summary of Key Actions
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of high priority mills as non-designated heritage assets. • Imposition of Article 4 Directions to remove permitted development rights for demolition relating to high priority mills; • Planning applications relating to high priority mills to be accompanied by detailed Heritage Statements to provide clear justification for the approach adopted and should also consider how social significance of the mills could be incorporated into the scheme. • Proposals involving the full demolition or partial loss of important mill elements will need to be supported by robust evidence including detailed viability assessments and evidence of marketing to demonstrate the re-use of the mill for alternative uses is not viable. • Building recording to be undertaken in connection with proposals involving the loss of key elements of high priority mill building fabric.
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imposition of Article 4 Directions to remove permitted development rights for demolition relating to medium priority mills identified as being of high landscape or heritage value or lying within an identified Mill Cluster. • Planning applications relating to medium priority mills to be accompanied by detailed Heritage Statements to provide clear justification for the approach adopted and should also consider how social significance of the mills could be incorporated into the scheme. • The alteration, extension or demolition of any buildings contributing to the landscape or heritage interest will require clear justification in relation to the significance and setting of the asset. • Building recording to be undertaken in connection with proposals involving the loss of key elements of medium priority mill building fabric.
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development proposals involving the comprehensive redevelopment of low priority mills to be supported in principle subject to compliance with other policies of the Local Plan. • Building recording to be undertaken in connection with proposals involving the loss of key elements of low priority mill building fabric, where deemed appropriate.
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LPA need to remain proactive in identifying potential funding streams that remain available to support landowners, developers and other parties seeking to bring forward mill conversion schemes. • Prospective designation of identified mill clusters as Conservation Areas. • Definition of Visual Buffer Zones around the identified mill clusters. • Preparation of View Management Framework to protect key views. • Development of a Mill Streetscape Project to improve the setting of individual mills. • Early engagement with mill owners and other key stakeholders in relation to individual mills that may become partly or fully vacant in the future to develop individual mill-specific strategies to support the active re-use of the building in question, which could involve input from representatives of

Priority Level	Summary of Key Actions
	<p>the council's Business & Housing Teams, the Local Enterprise Partnership and Historic England.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is imperative that the LPA recognise the risks associated with bringing residential mill conversion schemes forward, particularly large-scale mill sites, and adopt a progressive and supportive policy framework and decision-making approach to support such proposals. This could include relaxing affordable housing contributions and other planning obligations, which can significantly impact on the delivery of such schemes subject to appropriate viability testing. • Supportive environment should be developed in order to maximise the contribution that suitable mill sites within appropriate and attractive locations can make to supporting established and emerging key employment sectors within Oldham through both a positive planning regime and other support mechanisms. • Development of a marketing strategy collaboratively between bodies including Oldham Council, the Local Enterprise Partnership, mill owners, local business groups and other key stakeholders to promote the existing mill stock for employment and residential use to the development sector. Such a strategy would need to highlight the potential suitability of mill buildings to accommodate such uses, affordable rental / land values and the strategic advantages offered by Oldham relative to the motorway network and the wider Greater Manchester region. • Use of appropriate enforcement powers for any mills which may fall into disrepair.

4 CONSULTATION

- 4.1** To begin preparation of the Local Plan the council carried out a 'Regulation 18' notification between July and August 2017.
- 4.2** To inform this work we asked what the local community and stakeholders thought:
- a. the Local Plan should contain and what the key planning issues are for Oldham; and
 - b. what, in broad terms, should be the main aims of the Local Plan.
- 4.3** In addition we published our Integrated Assessment Scoping Report and invited the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England to comment on the scope of the Local Plan. This was also available for the local community and stakeholders to view and comment on if they wished.

Thematic comments

- 4.4** The main messages that came out of the initial consultation regarding design and heritage are set out below:
- 4.5** Historic England outlined the need to:
- identify what contribution the historic environment makes to the character of the area and to its economic wellbeing and to the quality of life of its communities.
 - identify what issues and challenges it is facing and likely to be facing in the future.
 - identify subtle qualities of the borough and its local distinctiveness and character.
 - undertake an assessment of the likelihood of currently unidentified heritage assets including sites of historic and archaeological interest.
 - identify heritage assets outside the council's area where there may be setting impacts.
 - identify any Registered Parks and Gardens or other assets worthy of a designation or inclusion on a local list.
 - include strategic policies to conserve and enhance the historic environment and guide how the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be applied locally.
 - appreciate that strategic policies will derive from the overall strategy to deliver conservation and enjoyment of the area's heritage assets such as the development of types of heritage asset, the use, design of new development, transport layout etc. Plan policies in all topics should be assessed for their impact on conservation objectives.
 - consider the role which the historic environment can play in delivering other planning objectives.
 - consider how development in conservation areas and within the settings of heritage assets might enhance or better reveal their significance;
 - consider how local lists might assist in identifying and managing the conservation on non-designated assets.
 - consider how the archaeology of the plan area might be managed.
 - consider how CIL funding might contribute towards ensuring a sustainable future for individual assets or specific historic places and whether heritage assets might need to be identified.

- consider whether masterplans or design briefs need to be prepared for significant sites.
- include detailed development management policies which could cover designated and undesignated heritage assets (including significance of setting, extensions, demolition, alternations, change of use); Archaeology; Conservation areas; Registered parks and gardens; Heritage at risk; Important views and vistas; Landscape character; Local character and distinctiveness; Individual settlements; Historic shopfronts and advertisements; Public realm Design; and Information to accompany an application.
- consider any strategic cross boundary issues that need to be addressed with regards to heritage assets.
- undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment for site allocations.
- make reference within policies for allocated sites to identify historic environment attributes to guide how development should be delivered, for example detailed criteria or providing supplementary information with the supporting text.

4.6 Other comments were that:

- the vision needs to recognise the diversity within the borough in terms of the characteristics of the different areas. Each area has its own history, heritage and issues. The plan should show how the area's heritage can be leveraged to enhance the development of the borough in a way that is consistent with and preserves the ethos and spirit of the borough over hundreds of years.
- the built environment and heritage should retain and re-use heritage assets and put them to use. Mills could be developed into retail /business premises or housing. Demolishing them for development could also be an option.
- a significant number of high quality historical buildings contribute to Oldham's identity. Redevelopment could ensure that listed buildings and structures are repaired, refurbished and brought back into use. The Local Plan should consider how the character of these historic buildings can be maintained whilst encouraging viable uses.
- the Theatres Trust recommends that major developments are required to incorporate opportunities for cultural activity, including through interpretation of the heritage of the site and area.
- the canal network has played a significant part in the development and heritage of the settlements within the Borough of Oldham. Green Infrastructure contributes to cultural heritage.
- the historic environment should aid the Local Plan objective to requiring good design. The design of new development should derive from the overall strategy to deliver conservation and enjoyment of the area's heritage assets.
- there needs to be detailed development management design policies.
- design policies should not be overly prescriptive and should not place undue burdens upon development. This is to ensure that development remains viable and industry is able to react to local site and market conditions at the time.
- the impact of new housing design on traditional homes should be considered.
- design needs to be in keeping with what is already established, necessary and appropriate for purpose, considering the aesthetic, functionality, economic and sociopolitical dimensions of the design.
- the Code for Sustainable Homes has been incorporated into Building Regulations. The Local Plan should not contain policies that infer or require delivery of design

standards above those prescribed nationally. The inclusion of such would be a further constraint.

- housing developments should include electric vehicle charging points; incorporate business premises and support home working through providing fibre; be well connected to the surrounding area, particularly schools, shops, employment and parks by sufficient walking and cycling routes; and be built at high densities.
- the Local Plan should include an ambition to create innovative housing solutions set out around construction; the flexibility of use to meet the changing demands of the population and the quality in relation to maintenance costs, heating and power and tenure.
- the plan should ensure that new development is designed that will not affect an existing cultural venue to the point it would have to change how it operates through appropriate noise mitigation and design.

Spatial comments

- In relation to OPOL 12, the character of the surrounding heritage assets should be preserved, including historic dry stone walls. This area has a great heritage dating back to Oliver Cromwell. Extending OPOL 12 to include the land at Knowls Lane would bring additional protection and help preserve the heritage, beauty and distinctiveness of the area.
- The Local Plan should support the Saddleworth Neighbourhood Plan preserving the character, local heritage and countryside in Saddleworth.
- The Local Plan should seek to recognise and support the unique heritage and landscape of Saddleworth.
- Hartford, Marple and Bailey Mills could be demolished and homes built. Mill sites should be prioritised for development / redevelopment.

5 FUTURE EVIDENCE REQUIRED

- 5.1** The above evidence gives a good baseline of Oldham's current position and some of the issues that need to be addressed. However there is further evidence required:
- Enhance information in the Historical Environment Record. This may be addressed at a Greater Manchester level.
 - Further conservation area appraisals and management plans should be carried out in the future.
 - Further Heritage Impact Assessment to be completed for site allocations.
 - Completion and consideration of the recommendations in the Oldham Mills Strategy.
 - In terms of design and heritage there is a need to carry out an assessment of the different areas within Oldham to recognise and record the area's local distinctiveness to inform Local Plan design policies and if appropriate a code that can set out how development should make a positive contribution and reinforce the local distinctiveness of different parts of the borough.

6 KEY ISSUES

Heritage:

- There is a need to understand local identity, character and distinctiveness to prevent erosion of sense of place.
- There is a need to support heritage-led regeneration and identify specific opportunities for the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets, including establishing a positive policy framework to support the identified assets on the heritage at risk register and those identified as being vulnerable to improve their condition and vulnerability.
- There is a need for a positive policy for the sustainable use of Oldham's textile mills to help support the long term use of priority mills and to address key actions, as recommended in the Mill Strategy.
- There is a need to promote the repair and maintenance of heritage assets.
- There is a need to implement the Oldham Town Centre conservation area management Plan Supplementary Planning Document. This will include reflecting the proposed changes to the conservation area boundaries on the Local Plan proposals map and embedding relevant policies from the management plan into the Local Plan.
- There is the need for the Local Plan to identify any areas where certain types of development might need to be limited or would be inappropriate due to the impact that they might have upon the historic environment, for example tall buildings within identified view corridors.
- There is an opportunity to form a Local List, identifying undesignated assets worthy of inclusion.
- There is the need to ensure that the canal network is integrated into the Green Infrastructure network and policy detail to ensure that its heritage interest can be protected and enhanced.
- There is a need to consider the recommendations from the urban historic landscape characterisation assessment and the landscape character and sensitivity assessment into the Local Plan.
- There is a need to conserve and enhance archaeology, including through its recording.

Design:

- There is a need to evaluate and understand the defining characteristics of the area as part of its evidence base, in order to identify appropriate design policies and design codes, possibly through an Urban Townscape Character Assessment.
- There is a need to ensure design objectives and policy link strongly to the wider objectives for the future of the area and that they enhance the quality of buildings and spaces.
- There is the need to ensure that design is inclusive and takes account of an ageing population.
- There is a need to ensure that Building for Life 12 and the Home Quality Mark is embedded within replacement design policies and any subsequent guidance.
- There is a need to ensure that the requirements of the National Design Guide are embedded within Local Plan and specific design related policies and any subsequent guidance.

7 PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 7.1** The following draft plan objectives are proposed as a result of the initial issues that have been identified in relation to the built environment. These will be refined as further evidence and the Local Plan is progressed:
- 7.2** PO8 Improving and valuing a better environment, including the borough's historic environment, by:
- protecting people's amenity and local environmental quality;
 - maximising opportunities for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and heritage assets ensuring that a positive framework for heritage derives from the overall strategy for Oldham and the wider plan objectives;
 - ensuring that development responds positively to the local character, townscape and distinctiveness of the different communities within Oldham, taking into account any conservation area management plans and design codes;
 - ensuring that proposals within Oldham Town Centre follows the recommendations set out in the Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Management Plan with the aim of removing the Conservation Area from the at risk register;
 - seeking to identify, protect and enhance non-designated heritage assets that are worth inclusion on a local list; and
 - committing to develop "The Oldham Code" to ensure that the places and spaces of Oldham are of a high quality, promote beauty in the built environment, whilst protecting heritage assets and ensure that people can lead healthy and active lifestyles.

8 INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT

- 8.1** The Local Plan will be supported by an Integrated Assessment (IA). The IA will include the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) and a Health Impact Assessment (HIA). The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) will still be a standalone document; however its findings will be integrated into the IA.
- 8.2** The role of an IA is to promote sustainable development through assessing the emerging Local Plan against economic, environmental and social objectives. It is a way of ensuring that the preferred approach in the Plan is the most appropriate when assessed against any reasonable alternatives. It also allows for any potential adverse effects to be identified and mitigated and for improvements to environmental, social and economic conditions to be made.
- 8.3** The Scoping Report is the first stage of the IA process (Stage A). It identifies the scope and level of detail to be included in the IA report.
- 8.4** The IA Scoping Report identified the following issues to be addressed in the Local Plan in relation to the built environment:
- Requires objective to protect and enhance the historic environment, including their wider settings and to preserve and conserve archaeological heritage;
 - Requires objective and policies relating to the protection and management of our rural and historic landscape;
 - Requires objective for the protection and enhancement of listed buildings and conservation areas or areas of special architectural or historic interest; an
 - Requires objective to promote high quality design and reduce opportunities for crime and antisocial behaviour.
- 8.5** The IA proposed an Integrated Assessment approach and scoring system to the assessment of the emerging Local Plan.
- 8.6** Consultation on the Integrated Assessment Scoping Report took place between 10 July and 21 August 2017.
- 8.7** The IA Scoping Report has been updated (Update 1) to support the Issues and Options consultation. The issues in relation to this topic paper have been updated to read:
- There is a need to protect, conserve and enhance the borough's historic environment and heritage assets, including listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, conservation areas, registered parks and gardens, undesignated assets and their settings as well as archaeological heritage.
 - There is a need to promote high quality, beautiful design through establishing local design expectations.
 - There is a need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality and foster community cohesion between people.
- 8.8** The Integrated assessment has appraised the vision, plan objectives and spatial options.

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- 8.9** Plan Objective 8, which addresses the built environment scored a mixture of neutral, positives and significantly positive scores. No mitigation / enhancements were identified.
 - 8.10** The IA will help to develop and refine the options of the Local Plan as work progresses and assess the effects of the Local Plan proposals and consider ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects. An IA report will be published alongside each Draft Local Plan published for consultation before the final Publication stage.

9 EVIDENCE SOURCES

- National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG, 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>
- Planning Practice Guidance (MHCLG, July 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1 (Historic England, 2015) <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa1-historic-environment-local-plans/>
- The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans (Historic England Advice Note 3, 2015) <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-environment-and-site-allocations-in-local-plans/>
- The National Model Design Code & Guidance Notes (MHCLG, February 2021) <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-planning-policy-framework-and-national-model-design-code-consultation-proposals>
- The National Design Guide (MHCLG, October, 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>
- Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission (Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission, December 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/building-better-building-beautiful-commission>
- Greater Manchester's Plan for Homes, Jobs and the Environment: - Greater Manchester Spatial Framework Publication Plan (GMCA, Draft for Approval, 2020) <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing/gmsf2020/>
- Engines of Prosperity: new uses for old mills North West (Historic England, 2017) <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/engines-of-prosperity-new-uses-old-mills/>
- Greater Manchester "Moving Strategy" (GM Moving, 2017) <https://www.greatersport.co.uk/what-we-do/gm-moving>
- Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (Oldham Council, 2011) https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/145/development_plan_document_joint_core_strategy_and_development_management_policies
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- The Oldham Plan 2017-2022 (Oldham Council, 2017) <https://committees.oldham.gov.uk/documents/s83732/Oldham%20Plan%202017-22.pdf>
- Covid-19 Recovery Strategy
- Creating a Better Place (Oldham Council, January 2020) https://www.oldham.gov.uk/news/1798306_million_investment_strategy_set_to_be_approved_by_oldham_council
- Greater Manchester Spatial Framework: Historic Environment Background Paper (GMCA, 2020) <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing/gmsf2020/supporting-documents/>
- Historic England At Risk register <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk>
- Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment (GMCA, 2018) <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing/gmsf2020/supporting-documents/>
- Greater Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation – Oldham District Report (Updated July 2010)
- Oldham Historic Environment Record (HER)
- Oldham Buildings at Risk Assessment Report (2016)
- Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document (2019) https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/256/supplementary_planning_documents

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- Draft Oldham Mills Strategy (Oldham Council, 2021)
 - Building for Life
12 <https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/resources/guide/building-life-12-third-edition>

10 APPENDIX 1: CONSERVATION AREAS IN OLDHAM

Table 3 Conservation Areas in Oldham

Conservation Area	Description
Alexandra Park	The conservation area was designated in 1974 and expands 30.48 hectares.
Alexandra Terrace (Moorside)	<p>Alexandra Terrace was designated a Conservation Area in 1988 and extends over an area of 0.54 Hectares.</p> <p>This area comprises of three stone terraces of two storey properties within the Moorside area. Built in the mid 19th century by Thomas Mellodew a prosperous businessman. The area incorporates Alexandra Terrace, a particularly attractive row of houses each facing its own tiny garden across the narrow private road. A few stone steps lead up to each individual garden.</p> <p>The row is named after his daughter. There is also a stained glass window to commemorate Alexandra in the Church he built nearby.</p>
Bleak Hey Nook	Bleak Hey Nook was designated a Conservation Area in 1988 and extends over an area of 4.2 Hectares.
Boarhurst	<p>Boarhurst was designated a Conservation Area in 1976, and extends over an area of 5.37 Hectares.</p> <p>Boarhurst is a small group of residential properties. The core of the area is a collection of old stone-built properties that create a focal point to the conservation area located on the junction of Boarhurst Lane and Park Lane. These buildings date from the mid 18th and early 19th Centuries and exhibit many of the traditional features of the Pennine domestic architecture, such as coursed grit stonewalls, deeply recessed mullioned windows and stone slate roofs. Around this group but still within the conservation area more recent housing development has taken place, particularly along Park Lane and Steadway. However, the use of traditional material's and solid robust designs, have ensured that the houses by and large are in keeping with the older core despite their relatively recent origins.</p> <p>Although individual buildings within this conservation area are undoubtedly attractive none can perhaps be considered as architecturally exceptional in terms of the Saddleworth area, their importance lying more in their uniformity of scale and style and in their adherence to the local tradition. It is only when the buildings are considered in their setting that the true environmental quality of Boarhurst becomes apparent. Mature trees in spacious, well landscaped, gardens, traditional dry stone walls and dense hedges bounding narrow lanes and the truly exceptional views out to the</p>

Conservation Area	Description
	Pennine Moorlands are all major contributors to the prevailing quiet and peaceful rural atmosphere of Boarshurst and as such are felt to be every bit as worthy of preservation as are the buildings themselves.
Bottom of Woodhouses	<p>Bottom of Woodhouses was designated a Conservation Area in 1985 and extends over an area of 1 Hectare.</p> <p>The special character of Bottom of Woodhouses is that of a rural community set within open countryside surrounded by agricultural land. There are three main types of buildings: large detached houses on each side of Vale Lane, modern dwellings on in-fill plots, and short terraces of traditional cottages. There are a number of fine, mature trees within the Conservation Area. The traditional cottages are two storey, usually constructed in soft 'handmade' common brick and in a red-brown colour with roofs of grey slate (flagstone) or blue slate.</p>
Crompton Fold	The Conservation Area was designated in 1988 and is 1.14 hectares.
Delph	The Conservation Area was designated in 1972 and expands 18.6 hectares.
Denshaw	<p>Denshaw was designated a Conservation Area in 1988 and extends over an area of 18.16 Hectares.</p> <p>Denshaw is situated 8 miles northeast of Oldham town centre, in the foothills of the pennines. It is an area of great tradition within its setting, layout and landscape. The area extends around the road junction where five main roads meet, and generally the buildings are traditional cottages or Georgian style properties constructed in local millstone grit. The oldest buildings in Denshaw would have originally been roofed with local stone flags, some of which remain. These were laid in diminishing courses, giving a graded effect. Those properties built during the last 150 years have generally been roofed in Welsh slate, which is in regular courses.</p> <p>Two traditional window patterns predominate in Denshaw. Firstly, 'weavers lights', with their vertical emphasis and stone mullions. And secondly, typical Georgian horizontal sliding sash windows, subdivided into separate panes.</p> <p>Tree coverage is a predominant feature of Denshaw and is clearly visible when entering the village. The majority of trees are mature and situated mainly in the grounds of the Church and along Oldham Road.</p>
Diglea	Diglea was designated a Conservation Area in 1972 and extends over an area of 1.33 Hectare.

Conservation Area	Description
	<p>Diglea is a physically distinct hamlet to the north west of Diggle Village. The Diggle Brook flows along the valley to the south to join the River Tame between the villages of Uppermill and Dobcross.</p> <p>To the north of the settlement marginal agricultural land sweeps up to merge into the Pennine Moors while to the east is the bleak Pennine section of the Peak District National Park.</p> <p>Most of the buildings date back to the 18th Century although it is thought that some may be considerably older. Originally Diglea and the neighbouring conservation area of Harrop Green were small farming hamlets clustered around route junctions but the large strip windows at first and second floor levels provide evidence of the hand loom textile industry.</p> <p>The route pattern was radically altered and the hamlet physically separated by the construction of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and the later Trans-Pennine railway line which enters the Standedge tunnels at this point.</p> <p>The settlement form of Diglea follows the traditional Pennine moorland pattern with the main block running with the contours and the buildings virtually set into the hillside producing, in some cases, a 3 storey building on one side and a 2 or single storey building on the other.</p> <p>Standing nearly 700 feet above sea level on the windward side of an exposed hillside the buildings huddle together as if to provide a united front against the elements. The layout of the interior of the dwellings, with part of one directly above another etc., emphasises the close-knit community living around which the settlements were built.</p> <p>The layout is basically introspective with unexpected corners and turning providing interesting vistas with occasional long distance views, between buildings, down the Diggle Valley and up to the hills around. Sudden changes in level can result in an interesting roof line almost at eye level, while the irregularity of the roof patterns emphasises the organic growth of the settlement.</p> <p>Walls are of local gristone with long and short stone work at corners and door openings. Roofs are of grey slate at a fairly shallow pitch although some buildings have been re-roofed in concrete tiles. Windows are basically of the mullion type and the general absence of timber features in the buildings emphasises the attention paid to the rigours of the climate.</p> <p>Diglea has areas of open space at route junctions, probably village greens originally, containing clumps of mature trees and other individual mature trees which play an important part in the village scene.</p>

Conservation Area	Description
	<p>The basic floorscape is hard, with house walls back and front coming up to, and alongside, the public roadways while stout stone walls divide public from private open space where individual garden plots have been developed.</p>
Dobcross	<p>Dobcross was designated a Conservation Area in 1972 and extends over an area of 5.74 Hectares.</p> <p>The settlement of Dobcross lies on a moderately sloping site to the west of the A670 (Wool Road) between the villages of Uppermill and Diggle. To the south is the River Tame and Dobcross New Road (A6052) linking the A670 with the A62 in Delph.</p> <p>To the north the land rises up to Harrop Edge and the Pennine Moors beyond.</p> <p>Prior to the industrial revolution Dobcross was small Hamlet on one of the main pack horse routes over the Standedge Moors.</p> <p>The origin of the name Dobcross is somewhat obscure although it is thought that it could be derived from the situation of the settlement at a point where ancient trans Pennine routes met to cross the marshy land of the Tame Valley.</p> <p>With the increase in trade and communication Dobcross began to grow around a natural route junction at the confluence of the two valleys of the River Tame and the Diggle Brook until by the 1800 it was the main commercial centre of Saddleworth. At this time the textile industry was in the process of transforming from the domestic workshops to large factories, the looms being mainly driven by the water power. Evidence of the earlier domestic hand loom textile industry is provided by the large strip windows at the first and second floor levels in the earlier dwellings.</p> <p>To the east of the original settlement between Sugar Lane and Sandy Lane are the more recent council estates of Briarfield and South gate while to the west is the Nudger Green private housing estate.</p> <p>The settlement form follows the traditional Pennine moorland pattern with the buildings clustered closely together along the narrow roadways.</p> <p>Towards the centre the positioning of the buildings is such as to create a series of irregularly shaped squares linked by narrow roadways and passages. This, together with the somewhat oddly shaped buildings and different roof heights etc., emphasises the organic growth of the settlement and reflects the close-knit community living around which it was built.</p>

Conservation Area	Description
	<p>The layout is basically introspective with unexpected corners and rapid change in level providing interesting vistas with occasional dramatic long distance views, between buildings, to Ladcastle and across the Tame Valley.</p> <p>The square in the centre of the settlement, although surrounded by attractive buildings is dominated by the Ramsden Memorial erected in 1901 in memory of Dr, W.H.F Ramsden, the local country doctor.</p> <p>Another interesting building is the Church of the Holy Trinity built in the Italian Style in the 1780's.</p> <p>Walls in the settlement are of local gritstone, blackened by the atmospheric pollution of the industrial revolution, with long and short stone work at the corners and door openings. Roofs are of grey stone slate laid to a fairly shallow pitch. Windows are basically of the mullion type and the general absence of timber features on the buildings emphasises the attention paid to the rigours of the climate.</p>
<p>Failsworth Pole (Wrigley Head)</p>	<p>Failsworth Pole was designated a Conservation Area in 1988 and extends over an area of 7.93 Hectares.</p> <p>The first evidence of the existence of Failsworth is to be found in the 'Roll of Richard', which outlines fines imposed on anti-monarchists in the area during the 12th century.</p> <p>Up until around 1450, records indicate that much of what we know as Failsworth was woodland and swamp – a very thinly populated area, which centred on Wrigley Head. Indeed, until the 18th century, Failsworth mainly consisted of farmsteads scattered throughout the area. A census in 1663 recorded only 50 families living in Failsworth.</p> <p>Cottages lined the route of the 'old' Oldham Road – this was thought to be a winding, poorly surfaced lane, which ran in front of 'the Rocks' and up the existing Wrigley Head. 'The Rocks' are situated in the centre of the conservation area 5 feet below the existing road and started life in the 18th century as cottages. They were the birthplace for the famous author, poet and 'free thinker' Ben Brierley. Later these cottages were converted to workshops and the first Jacquard loom imported into Lancashire is said to have been erected at the Rocks.</p> <p>The Oldham Road of today was constructed at the turn of the 18th century and in the late 19th century tracks were laid and it became a tramline.</p> <p>As in the rest of Oldham and indeed much of northern England, the Industrial Revolution transformed Failsworth. Here, the seeds had been sown with the emergence during the eighteenth century of hat making and silk weaving as important occupations. These trades were initially carried out as cottage industries at Wrigley Head and Pole Lane.</p>

Conservation Area	Description
	<p>However, the growth of Failsworth was mainly due to the cotton trade and was accelerated by the presence of the Rochdale Canal which was completed in 1804. The first cotton mill to be built (by local businessman Thomas Walmsley) was the Firs Mill in 1839. Failsworth Shopping Centre now stands on the site. One of the Listed Buildings in the conservation area – currently ‘The Lock’ public house (407-411 Oldham Road) – was originally Walmsley’s Corn Warehouse and, next door, his house and grocer’s shop at which all his employees were obliged to spend their weekly pay.</p> <p>From the mid-1800’s onwards the ‘village’ of Failsworth gave way to cotton factories, engineering works, silk mills and other industries which welded all the small hamlets into a compact town. St John’s Church, a school (outside the boundary of the conservation area) and, of course, a wealth of terraced houses were by-products of this rapid industrial growth.</p> <p>The Pole, which gives the Conservation Area its name, goes back at least two centuries and has played a large part in the evolution of Failsworth. Over the years it has been the site of public meetings and demonstrations, village fairs and markets. It’s importance in the town can be seen by the number of inns built around it.</p> <p>The decline of the cotton industry has inevitably changed the nature of the conservation area. However, some existing buildings are being successfully re-used and the public houses continue to flourish, while the Oldham- Manchester Road is busier than ever.</p> <p>Eight hundred years have passed since Failsworth was first recognised and the Wrigley Head/Pole area is still considered by its residents to be the centre of the town.</p>
Garden Suburb (Hollins Green)	No information available.
Grange	<p>Grange was designated a Conservation Area in 1982, it extends over an area of 3.42 Hectares.</p> <p>Grange is an isolated stone built hamlet located in open countryside some half a mile north-east of Delph and to the west of the main Huddersfield Road (A62).</p>

Conservation Area	Description
	<p>The hamlet which dates from the 17th century consists of seven cottages straggling the southern boundary of Millcroft Lane. These buildings exhibit the traditional characteristics of Pennine architecture, most notably the use of local stone in the construction of both walls and most roofs and the use of mullioned windows.</p> <p>The most important feature of the hamlet is the group value of the buildings, together with the adjoining mature trees, in an isolated and unspoilt setting. They also have some historic interest and as a group, considerable character forming an attractive feature on Ox Hey hillside overlooking the valley of Oaken Lee below.</p>
Grasscroft	<p>The conservation area was designated in 1974 and is 2.35 hectares.</p>
Harrop Green	<p>Harrop Green was designated a Conservation Area in 1972 and extends over an area of 0.78 Hectares.</p> <p>Harrop Green is a physically distinct hamlet to the north west of Diggle Village. The Diggle Brook flows along the valley to the south to join the River Tame between the villages of Uppermill and Dobcross.</p> <p>To the north of the settlement marginal agricultural land sweeps up to merge into the Pennine Moors while to the east is the bleak Pennine section of the Peak District National Park.</p> <p>Most of the buildings date back to the 18th Century although it is thought that some may be considerably older. Originally Harrop Green and the neighbouring conservation area of Diglea were small farming hamlets clustered around route junctions but the large strip windows at first and second floor levels provide evidence of the hand loom textile industry.</p> <p>The route pattern was radically altered and the hamlets physically separated by the construction of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and the later Trans-Pennine railway line which enters the Standedge tunnels at this point.</p> <p>The settlement form of Harrop Green follows the traditional Pennine moorland pattern with the main block running with the contours and the buildings virtually set into the hillside producing, in some cases, a 3 storey building on one side and a 2 or single storey building on the other.</p> <p>Standing nearly 700 feet above sea level on the windward side of an exposed hillside the buildings huddle together as if to provide a united front against the elements. The layout of the interior of the dwellings, with part of one directly above another etc., emphasises the close-knit community living around which the settlements were built.</p>

Conservation Area	Description
	<p>The layout is basically introspective with unexpected corners and turning providing interesting vistas with occasional long distance views, between buildings, down the Diggle Valley and up to the hills around. Sudden changes in level can result in an interesting roof line almost at eye level, while the irregularity of the roof patterns emphasises the organic growth of the settlement.</p> <p>Walls are of local gritstone with long and short stone work at corners and door openings. Roofs are of grey slate at a fairly shallow pitch although some buildings have been re-roofed in concrete tiles. Windows are basically of the mullion type and the general absence of timber features in the buildings emphasises the attention paid to the rigours of the climate.</p> <p>Harrop Green has areas of open space at route junctions, probably village greens originally, containing clumps of mature trees and other individual mature trees which play an important part in the village scene.</p> <p>The basic floorscape is hard, with house walls back and front coming up to, and alongside, the public roadways while stout stone walls divide public from private open space where individual garden plots have been developed.</p>
Hey	<p>Hey was designated a Conservation Area in 1988 and extends over an area of 2.96 Hectares.</p> <p>Hey Conservation Area is situated approximately 3km to the east of Oldham Town Centre, in a suburban district below Saddleworth Moor. It includes two Grade II listed buildings, St Johns Church and The Grapes Public House. The conservation area is located just outside Lees village and is a residential area with some small businesses. It is enclosed by two main roads, Oldham Road, the A62, and Huddersfield Road, the A669; St John Street and Stamford Road, running centrally through the conservation area, link these roads together.</p> <p>It is characterised by a predominance of vernacular industrial age two storey terraced housing, which have a consistency in materials used but have slight variations in architectural features that give each terrace its architectural style. The density of buildings combined with the topography and size of the area gives an intimate yet open feel, and the church provides an interesting and dominant focal point. Also key to the area is the Grapes Public House, which is historically and architecturally significant and acts as the hub of civic activity. These elements together provide the main character of the area.</p> <p>Historically this area was known as Taylor Green and incorporated a large open green space with little pockets of development and very few buildings noted throughout the early 18th Century. Important buildings remaining in the area include St John the Baptist church, which was once</p>

Conservation Area	Description
	<p>known as Hey Chapel and was constructed in 1742, and, the Grapes Inn constructed around the same time of 1777 and historical provided refreshment to the worshipers of the church that travelled great distance to pray there.</p> <p>Core streets within the area were almost certainly laid out by the early 19th Century and most still remain intact today, following the historic routes. However, to the south eastern part of the area, the historic street pattern has been almost entirely lost, especially with the new development proposals at Owen Fold. Fortunately, all footpaths, which would have originally led to Taylor Green, still remain intact today.</p>
Hey Top, Greenfield	<p>Hey Top was designated a Conservation Area in 1989 and extends over an area of 0.71 Hectares.</p> <p>Hey Top consisted of cottages that were built in several extensions from 1820 to 1860 by the owners of Greenfield mill. At one time they were 40 back to back properties, now there are about 22 through cottages with allotments, street and bin store. The first meeting of the Greenfield Co-operative Society was held in one of the houses here, and at various times Sunday Schools and religious services were conducted here.</p> <p>These cottages are in a remote location, a short distance from the Greenfield mill, set on the hill side close to the Dovestones reservoir and sailing club car park.</p>
Holly Grove	No information available.
Ladhill Lane	No information available.
Lees	<p>Lees was designated a conservation area in 1976 and extends over an area of 20.24 hectares.</p> <p>Situated at the northern tip of the parish of Ashton, Lees was described in 1841 as an 'Extensive village' covering '5.5 miles'. In the early years of the 18th century, it was stated to have had only four dwellings, but by 1842 the number of dwellings had risen to 150 houses, which gives an approximate population 750. In 1901, Lees returned a population of 1901 in the census of that year.</p> <p>The growth in population can be well illustrated by the fact that in 1744 a chapel of ease was created at Hey to serve not only the lees area, but also the parts of Oldham and Saddleworth close by. The parish of St. Thomas' Lees was created as a separate parish in 1846 and the Grade II listed church dates from 1848.</p>

Conservation Area	Description
	<p>The development of Lees Village was very much a product of the 19th century Industrial Revolution. A number of large cotton mills were built at this period, including Milking Green, Willows, Stanley Mill and Lees Brook.</p> <p>Lees Village has charm and character, and although the appearance of much of the village was somewhat marred by poor design in the 1960's and 1970's, recent developments have been more sympathetic to its traditional architectural character.</p> <p>Lees retains a sense of individuality and its essential character continues to be that of a village despite now being surrounded by more recent suburban development.</p> <p>The greater part of Lees village consists of typical stone built terraces, built for workers at the local mills and based on the familiar rectangular grid-iron pattern of streets much favoured by 19th century developers. Scattered in amongst these are some familiar larger buildings such as churches, mills and schools. Two of these larger buildings are listed as being of special architectural and historic interest, namely St Thomas' Church and Wellfield House.</p> <p>The focus of Lees Village remains the High Street with its variety of predominantly small shops and pubs and the bustling daytime activity that does so much lend a village atmosphere to Lees.</p>
Lydgate	No information available.
New Delph	No information available.
New Tame	<p>New Tame was designated a Conservation Area in 1980 and extends over an area of 0.67 Hectares.</p> <p>New Tame is an isolated stone built hamlet located in the Tame Valley midway between Delph and Denshaw approximately 100 metres east of the main A6052 road.</p> <p>It is essentially a group of weavers cottages exemplifying the development from a single farmhouse to a small industrial community that occurred widely in Saddleworth during the 18th and early 19th centuries. The oldest building is believed to date from 1642.</p> <p>Many of the buildings exhibit the various features of the traditional architectural style of this part of the Pennines, most notably of course the use of the local stone in the construction of both roofs and walls and the characteristic mullioned windows.</p>

Conservation Area	Description
	<p>The buildings are important individually but also as a group. They are packed closely together in a tight-knit fashion displaying a pleasing irregularity of roof lines and enclosing attractive courtyard spaces within.</p> <p>Also very important is the isolated and unspoilt setting of the hamlet in the open landscape. Unlike similar settlements in Saddleworth, the remoteness of New Tame from the neighbouring villages of Delph and Denshaw together with the Green Belt status of the surrounding area has ensured no modern development has taken place to mar its setting.</p>
Oldham Town Centre	<p>Oldham Town Centre was designated a Conservation Area in 1975 and extends over an area of 6.51 Hectares.</p> <p>The Town Centre Conservation Area is located near the summit of the hill. As the town's historic expansion generally followed a pattern of ribbon development, the conservation area's main arteries comprise High Street and Yorkshire Street to the north and Union Street to the south, which eventually intersect before continuing eastward on to Mumps. While the shopfronts of High Street and Yorkshire Street maintain a sense of lively commerce, Union Street retains much of its original air of formality, a lasting result of its mid-late 19th century grand civic architecture. The smaller north-south streets connecting the two thoroughfares generally offer a more intimate, domestic scale, and comprise a good deal of quaint, 19th century terraced cottages now converted for office and retail use. When viewed collectively, such elements exude a rich and diverse historic character representative of a thriving Victorian industrial town.</p> <p>They cumulatively provide a sense of Oldham's dramatic history; a modest hill-top wool town (not unlike those of the Cotswolds) transformed in the space of half a century into a global manufacturing hub that linked cotton plantations of the American south with Britain's colonies in Asia.</p> <p>Green space has been allocated by way of the broad expanse of the Church of St. Mary and St Peter's churchyard at the north of the conservation area and via the verdant library garden south of Union Street.</p> <p>Otherwise, the streetscape largely reflects its industrial history, and with the exception of small garden spaces and local efforts to provide container plantings, greenery is somewhat scarce. Instead, a diverse mix of mid-19th century to early-21st century building stock nestled within a 19th-century streetscape is what defines the immediate setting of the conservation area and generates the most interest.</p> <p>Oldham Town Centre has a high density of listed buildings and numerous buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the area, some of which exhibit qualities worthy of inclusion on a local list.</p>

Conservation Area	Description
	<p>The conservation area, however, is not without its issues; it appears on Historic England’s Heritage at Risk Register, principally owing to its number of existing vacant and deteriorating heritage assets. While a considerable number of buildings make a positive contribution to the appearance of the conservation</p> <p>area overall, they frequently exhibit detracting features, including modern windows, poor condition and, most detrimentally to the overall character of the area, poor shopfronts and signage.</p> <p>There have been enhancements to the public realm in recent years which have uplifted the general character; however, even Parliament Square at the heart of the conservation area and adjoining the landmark former Town Hall conversion feels underused. The conservation area lacks a sense of identity (metaphorically and literally); it would benefit from extension to allow for a more coherent boundary and the inclusion of surrounding buildings which reinforce its character. It also faces significant challenges in terms of wayfinding into the town centre and commercial core from the tram stops along Union Street and addressing the dead-end which the Spindles Shopping Centre has created to the west of the High Street and Market Place.</p>
Park Cottages, Shaw	No information available.
Royal George Mills	<p>Royal George Mills was designated a Conservation Area in 1982 and extends over an area of 15.41 Hectares.</p> <p>The Royal George Mills comprise a self-contained and isolated industrial complex lying between the River Tame and the Huddersfield Narrow Canal two thirds of a mile to the west of Greenfield.</p> <p>The Royal George Mills were originally called Gibbs Mills and were built in 1786 with local stone. The present name dates from 1800 and was intended as a compliment to King George III.</p> <p>The acquisition of the mills in 1835 by the Whitehead Brothers began a period of growth whereby the Whiteheads acquired considerable land interests in the Grasscroft and Friezland area. The Royal George Mills were the cornerstone of the Whitehead’s ‘empire’ and hence one of significant local historical importance.</p> <p>The mills were originally concerned with the woollen trades. This was continued for some time although the Whiteheads were renowned as flag makers. With increasing demand for specialisation the firm entered the business of felt making and produced fine quality felts of all varieties.</p> <p>The complex has recently been converted to residential use.</p>

Conservation Area	Description
Saint Chads Church, Saddleworth	<p>St. Chad's Church, Saddleworth was designated a Conservation Area in 1989, and extends over an area of 6.46 Hectares.</p> <p>It encompasses an area around the St Chad's Church and nearby properties including the Church Inn and Cross Keys Public Houses. The Church and the adjacent Pob Green settlement date back to medieval times as a hillside hamlet.</p>
Saint James, Shaw	The conservation area was designated in 1988 and is 1.22 hectares.
Saint Paul's, Royton	Nil information available.
Scouthead	<p>Scouthead was designated a conservation area in 1975 and extends over an area of 7.36 hectares.</p> <p>Scouthead lies approximately 2.5 miles to the east of Oldham, straddling the main Huddersfield to Oldham Road (A62). The conservation area has three distinct parts: the cluster of stone buildings called Starting Chair at the main junction, the group around the St. Paul's church, and the lower-lying hamlet of New Houses., with the open areas of land in between. Apart from the handsome Victorian church and vicarage, most of the buildings are in the traditional gritstone common to the Pennine settlements of Yorkshire and Lancashire. There are few trees, but from Scouthead there are wide views over the surrounding moorland and towards the town.</p> <p>Scouthead has a number of distinguishing characteristics, which make it of special interest and value to the area. There are a number of well preserved stone houses complete with their long ranges of mullioned windows and stone slab roofs. This character has been recognised with the inclusion of several buildings within the statutory list.</p>
Stone Breaks	Stone Breaks was designated a Conservation Area in 1988 and extends over an area of 2.96 Hectares.
Tamewater	Tame Water was designated a Conservation Area in 1988 and extends over an area of 3.91 Hectares.
The Old Town Hall, Chadderton	<p>The Old Town Hall was designated a conservation area in 1989 and extends over an area of 1.74 hectares.</p> <p>The Old Town Hall conservation area, Chadderton, is situated approximately 1 mile to the west of Oldham Town Centre and 5 miles east of Manchester. It lies on the Middleton road and the A669, which links it to Oldham though Middleton to Manchester, serving several public transport routes.</p>

Conservation Area	Description
	<p>In the late Victorian and Edwardian period, Chadderton developed a number of civic buildings to create a centre of considerable quality consisting of number 422/4/6 Middleton Road, the council offices, Police Station, Library and finally the Baths.</p> <p>The library, built 1904-05, is of outstanding quality both internally and externally. It has survived remarkably intact and now makes a valuable contribution to the Conservation Area. The building is also historically valuable, having retained its use as a library since its opening in 1905.</p> <p>The Police Station is understood to have been built in 1901. Whilst the building's Victoria Street elevation is of good quality, the interior of the building retains very little of architectural interest. However, the building does provide a positive contribution to the conservation area and compliments the adjacent library. It is also historically valuable having been used as a police station since its opening.</p> <p>The swimming pool was built in 1935 –37 in Art-Deco style. The over-riding significance of this building is the swimming pool interior, which survives remarkably intact.</p> <p>The Chadderton Town Hall is still in use by the Local Authority and has recently been altered to house the Registrars and become the venue for civil marriages.</p> <p>The Chadderton War memorial is the only listed structure within the conservation area.</p>
Uppermill	<p>Uppermill was designated a conservation area in 1977 and extends over an area of 30.41 hectares.</p> <p>The rural setting and magnificent scenery surrounding Uppermill make an immediate impact on the first time visitor. The backdrop of sweeping moorland hillslopes, visible from most directions within the centre of the village, belies the urban sprawl effect of the Oldham/Manchester conurbation, which lies only a few miles to the west. Assisted by its geographically isolated location in the rugged Pennine foothills and in later years by the Green Belt designation of the intervening hill slopes, Uppermill, like most of the neighbouring Saddleworth villages, has largely retained its physical and socially separate identity over the years despite the close proximity of the suburbs of Oldham.</p> <p>Despite its rural setting the origins of Uppermill as a village are essentially industrial rather than agricultural and its main period of growth, and consequently most of the buildings in the Conservation Area, date from the 19th Century and the rapid expansion of the factory based textile industry during that period. Prior to that time, the main settlement in the locality would undoubtedly have been farming hamlets on the hillside</p>

Conservation Area	Description
	<p>above Uppermill to the east around the areas known as Saddleworth Fold, Pobjgreen and Clough Bottom, well away from what would have been the wooded, marshy and inhospitable valley bottom where Uppermill now stands. The fact that the parish church was located in this vicinity is clear evidence of this.</p> <p>As late as the mid 18th century there would have been few buildings down in the valley with the notable exception of St Chad's House on High Street.</p> <p>When the invention of new machines in the late 18th century made large scale factory production of textiles possible for the first time Uppermill represented an attractive area for investors. There was already the long established traditions of the cottage woollen industry in the surrounding hills and the River Tame offered abundant supplies of running water for power. The water was also exceptionally soft and pure and ideally suited to textile production. The valley bottom also provided ideal sites for the hitherto unprecedentedly large mill buildings that were required, many of which still make a striking contribution to the village scene today.</p> <p>Along with the mills came numerous houses, shops, pubs and chapels needed to serve a booming semi-urban community. The larger, more important public and commercial buildings were clearly aligned along the axis of the High Street with the more predominantly residential quarters being located behind. These buildings that occupy the greater part of the conservation area today clearly show the influence of the early 19th century fashions in design but still retain the simplicity and robustness of the earlier Pennine building tradition. A notable feature is the exclusive use of natural stone as a building material, the red brick of much contemporary building in nearby Oldham having made little headway into Uppermill. Whilst there are several cottages in the village with the traditional elongated window openings sub-divided by a row of closely spaced stone mullions together with the heavy stone flag roofs so typical of earlier 17th and 18th Century Pennine architecture. The 19th century saw a change of emphasis of building style with the use of square individual window openings becoming the rule and with imported Welsh blue slate increasingly replacing the local stone slates as the main roofing material.</p> <p>Uppermill contains relatively few buildings, taken individually, that are considered to be of exceptional architectural merit. It's main importance lies in the fact that more or less an entire village of late 18th and 19th Century domestic stone built architecture has been preserved largely intact. There is, among other things, much more traffic, better street lights and more signs and advertisements but essentially the view along high street today is much as it was at the end of last Century.</p>

Conservation Area	Description
	<p>After 1900 there was a gradual and largely unplanned spread of typically suburban housing up the gentle eastern hill slopes outside the village and it is significant that the boundary of Conservation area follows closely the 19th Century limits of the village and excludes this more recent development.</p> <p>Other features of historical interest within the conservation area include the Huddersfield Narrow Canal with its wharves behind the museum. The canal was opened to through traffic with the completion of the Standedge Tunnel in 1811, linking Saddleworth with the Yorkshire Woollen markets across the Pennine divide to the east. Later, in 1849, the Huddersfield and Manchester railway line was carried by a magnificent curved viaduct containing masonry skew arches across the valley to the north of the village. For 30 years after opening, more than thirty boats a day plied the canal and the local wharf at Wool Road was able to advertise ‘conveyance by water to London and all intermediate places daily’. When the railway opened, the canal traffic rapidly declined and it was eventually purchased by the railway in the mid 1840’s to stifle the last vestiges of competition. The canal remains an attractive feature much appreciated by residents and visitors to Uppermill alike.</p>
Victoria Street, Chadderton	<p>The Victoria Street Conservation area lies less than 2 miles to the northwest of Oldham town centre within a mixed industrial and residential part of the urban district of Chadderton. The area developed at the turn of this century as a direct result of Oldham’s rapid industrialisation and growth to become the leading mill town in the world.</p> <p>The main focus of the area is the Grade II Listed Manor Mill. Other buildings of note include Falcon Mill together with several rows of both late Victorian and Edwardian terraced properties.</p> <p>The conservation area was designated in 1989 as part of a review of all of the borough’s Conservation Areas undertaken by the Planning Department. The main reason for designation was that the Victoria Street area provided the most typical intact example of a later period mill community remaining in Oldham. This community emerged as a result of the Industrial Revolution, only to decline during the post war slump in the cotton industry.</p> <p>The townscape of the conservation area is dominated by the former cotton mills. The Manor Mill, built at the height of the textile boom in 1906, was designed in the ‘modern’ style of the later mill buildings. It dominates the area and has an elaborate tower, the highlight of which is a copper dome with wrought iron detailing in the form of a coronet.</p>

Conservation Area	Description
	<p>The Kent Mill was built in 1908 by G Stott, the architect responsible for the neighbouring Manor Mill. This building was a similar design to the Manor Mill. However, when the mills were reviewed it was the Manor, and not the Kent which was listed. The Kent was demolished in the mid 1990's.</p> <p>The Kent and Manor Mills contributed a great deal to the character of the conservation area. Part of the rear boundary wall of the Kent Mill remains and the site is now occupied by a modern school building. The two similar mills, side by side, formed an imposing enclosure to Victoria Street, and the loss of the Kent has affected the slightly oppressive feel resulting from the former dominance of the mills.</p> <p>The refurbished Falcon Mill (PS Scott 1885) was used for the manufacture of velvet until 1959 and now provides managed workplace units for small firms. It is considerably less imposing than the neighbouring Manor Mill, being of single storey construction.</p> <p>Eustace Street School, built in 1895, was of a traditional Victorian design with intricate areas of brick, stonework and carved terracotta. It has since been demolished. The historic boundary wall and mature trees on this site remain and contribute to the significance of the area. The decorative iron entrance gates remain and are an attractive feature, being set into brick and stone gate posts with dome shaped coping stones.</p> <p>A further building of note is the former Co-operative Society building on Garforth Street, dating from 1880, which retains much of its original stone detail. The former Methodist Church on Garforth Street, built in 1891, reflects the social history of the area. It was converted to residential use by a housing association in 1987 and from a historical point of view it remains important to the character of the conservation area.</p> <p>Much of the conservation area is made up of rows of terraced houses, dating from 1880 to 1935, for the local mill workers. There are subtle differences between each terrace with varying design of doorways, patterned stonework and windows, reflecting the area's incremental development over the years. Overall, the terraced houses within and around the Conservation Area have remained and have retained many of their original features.</p>
Woodhouses	<p>Woodhouses is a village with approximately 900 residents, located on the northern slopes of the Medlock valley between Oldham and Ashton-under-Lyne. The conservation area covers 20.32 hectares, includes most of the village and was first designated in 1975. It was extended to its present size in 1989 to include the areas of adjacent undeveloped land not included within the green belt.</p>

Conservation Area	Description
	<p>The name Woodhouses is probably derived from ‘woodheys’, meaning ‘an enclosure surrounded by woods’. The original settlement had developed by the late Middle Ages as a hamlet surrounded by scattered farms which were connected by a complex pattern of lanes. Woodhouses grew significantly during the early 19th century as the construction of the canal network and the growth of nearby towns provided alternative sources of work in and near the village, and by the late 19th Century the local economy was based around both agricultural and industrial employment. The growth in population prompted the establishment of basic village facilities, including the church, two schools, public houses and a cricket ground.</p> <p>Woodhouses grew much more slowly from the late nineteenth century due to the lack of major roads or a railway through the village. The relative inaccessibility of the village limited growth until car ownership levels began to rise rapidly in the 1960’s, when Woodhouses became increasingly seen as a suitable location for workers commuting to the surrounding towns. This phase of village expansion has continued to the present day.</p> <p>Woodhouses has developed on a shallow east-west ridge between the river Medlock and Lord’s Brook, which is a small tributary of the Medlock. There are extensive views from the village across the surrounding fields, north to Failsworth and Hollinwood, and south towards Ashton–under-Lyne and the hills beyond, although these can only be glimpsed in a few places between breaks in the Medlock/Ashton Road frontages. The M60 Manchester Outer Ring Road is in a cutting immediately east of the village. Despite the proximity of Oldham and Ashton, the setting of Woodhouses is still semi-rural.</p> <p>The most important feature of Woodhouses is its predominantly linear form, which it has retained despite the residential extensions of the 1960s and 1990’s. There are two significant areas of recent residential development, of these Marston Close is included within the conservation area, due to its predominantly terraced layout.</p> <p>Medlock Road and Ashton Road form the spine of the conservation area, virtually all the pre-C20 properties front onto this route. The conservation area includes fields and new housing around Ashton Road and Failsworth Road, but the only other exceptions to the linear form are the outbuildings of Within Hall Farm, and the bowling green and playground to the rear of the Dog and Partridge public house.</p> <p>There is one listed building in the conservation area: Diamond Hall Farm at 170 Medlock Road is Grade II, listing number 279.</p>