



Oldham Town Investment Plan



"The 2030 vision for Oldham is that it will be a place where business and enterprise can thrive and where people will want to live, visit, learn, relax and work. Building on its industrial heritage, civic pride and location as a town in the countryside, Oldham will have a sustainable future in a unique urban setting. Oldham will be a stronger economic contributor to Greater Manchester, providing a place where every resident is enabled to contribute to and benefit from the continued growth of the city region."

Oldham Town Deal Board seeks £41 million from the Towns Fund as investment in a total package that will be between £65.4-77.4 million. The five projects in this plan - some of which are regionally and nationally signficiant - are bold and ambitious, but are deliverable, and designed to deliver lasting change that has meaning in the town. These projects will support up to 400 jobs and increase local economic output by approximately £20m per year. The Present Value of this local economic output over a 30 year appraisal period is about £330 million.

- Oldham Town Deal 2030 Vision



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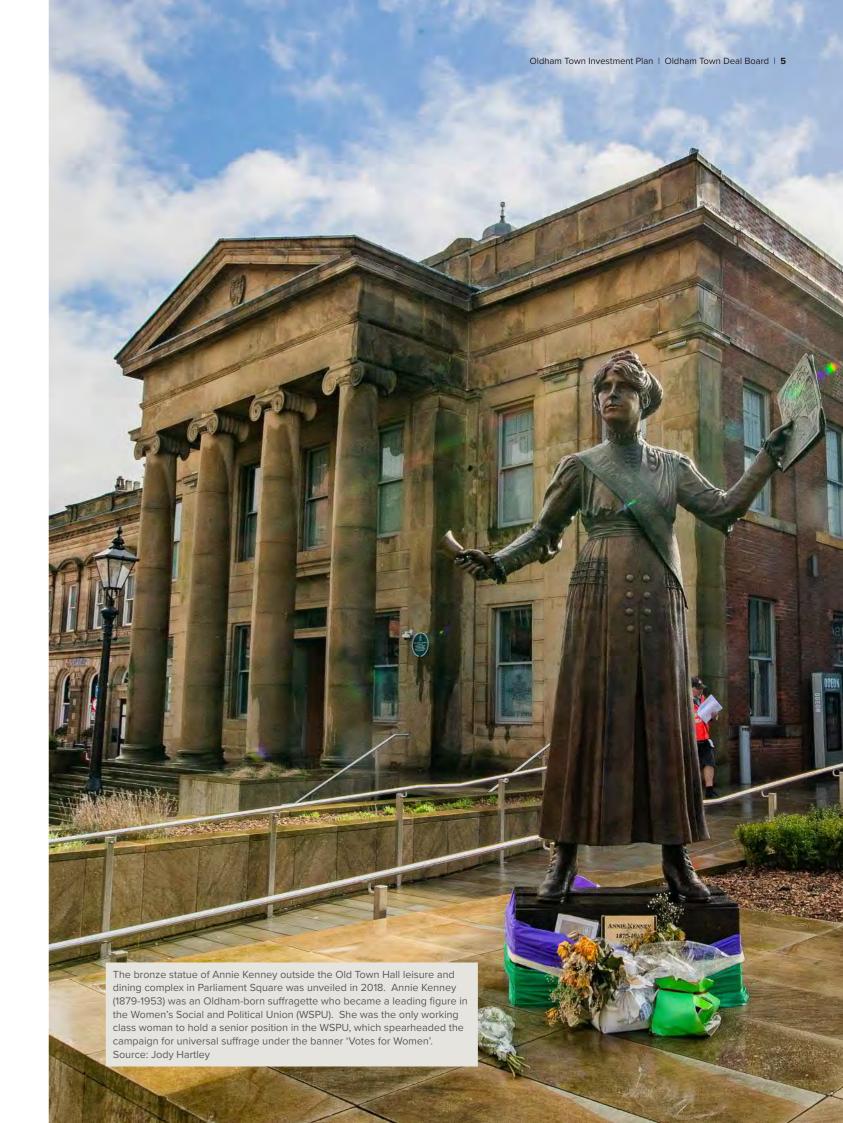
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1. Executive Summary

Oldham's rich heritage as a cotton town and its key role in the Industrial Revolution has shaped the town's perception for many years and its physical infrastructure is testimony to this proud past. This Town Investment Plan (TIP) builds on this strong local identity and takes Oldham forward at the leading edge in the net zero era and with a town centre that everyone can be proud of.

Located between Manchester and the Peak District National Park, the borough of Oldham is a mix of dense urban and much sparser rural areas on a roughly one-third to two-thirds split. The rapid urbanisation of the town which occurred as a result of its world renown for textile manufacturing and cotton spinning during the Industrial Revolution is still evident today. This is represented in dense, inner-urban housing interspaced with former mill buildings and a number of historical public buildings, showcasing civic pride in what the town and its entrepreneurs achieved during the 1800s.

However, recent decades have brought mixed fortunes for Oldham's economy. Relative to many parts of Greater Manchester, the town has struggled to diversify from its industrial heritage, leading to concerning levels of deprivation and disadvantage in pockets throughout the town. On average, an Oldhamer can expect to live 2.3 years less than the average person in England, and within the borough, male life expectancy is 11 years less in the least affluent ward compared to the most affluent ward, and female life expectancy is 12.4 years less. Furthermore, Oldham's leaders are aware that the economic impacts of COVID-19 have exacerbated and will continue to exacerbate poverty in the borough and further deepen and widen existing inequalities.

Oldham Council has long recognised that the substantial public sector investment available through programmes like the Towns Fund and Future High Streets Fund is fundamental to the success of the town's regeneration; levels of private investment are historically low because of Oldham's industrial heritage and legacy (contaminated land and physical structures too costly to renovate), and are insufficient to address the key challenges of acute levels of deprivation, a low skills base, and a struggling, retail-led high street.

In recent years, the Council has developed a strong track record in coordinated public sector activity, demonstrating a momentum of delivering transformative and inclusive projects and programmes. The town centre is undergoing an exciting transformation to attract and retain people to live, work, invest and relax, and to support the narrowing of the employment rate and productivity gaps within the Greater Manchester (GM) city-region. However, the COVID-19 crisis is exacerbating issues and threatening to derail recent progress achieved through improvements to transport & connectivity, housing & healthcare, and major regeneration projects including the Oldham Library and Lifelong Learning Centre (2006), Oldham Leisure Centre (2015) and Old Town Hall (2016).

The Council's bold vision for Oldham town centre and wider borough is embedded within the £285m Creating a Better Place strategic framework, which has a focus on: building good quality homes; providing opportunities to learn and gain skills; growing local businesses and creating jobs; improving residents' life chances, health and wellbeing; and, embedding sustainability to make Oldham the greenest borough in GM.

It is on this strategic framework that the vision for Oldham's TIP is built – that by 2030, Oldham will be a place where business and enterprise can thrive and where people will want to live, visit, relax and work. Building on its industrial heritage, civic pride and location as a town in the countryside, Oldham will have a sustainable future in a unique urban setting. Oldham will be a stronger economic contributor to Greater Manchester, providing a place where every resident is enabled to contribute to and benefit from the continued growth of the city region. The productivity gap between Oldham and GM – as well as the wider UK economy – will narrow, supporting both a localised and a national levelling-up.

Without Towns Fund support the projects within the Plan would not be able to proceed at all, or proceed at the same pace or scale. With the Towns Fund, the pace of change in Oldham town centre will be accelerated as a mix of projects of local, regional and national significance are delivered. The vision for the TIP recognises the importance of the town centre and its role as the social and economic focal point of the borough, as well as its role in a post-COVID recovery phase where local town centres are more important than ever.



1.1 Building Back Better for Oldham Town Centre

The Oldham Town Deal Board has identified five intrinsically linked projects for this TIP that reflect the needs of local communities and will simultaneously address local market failures and support economic recovery from COVID-19. Underpinning these projects are a set of key targets which link to the Creating a Better Place strategic framework, and reflect a number of stakeholder engagement activities undertaken previously. These targets are that the projects will:

- Contribute towards narrowing the employment rate gap and productivity gap with GM, including through creating opportunities for skills development and labour market participation.
- Link with other key investments to make the town centre a thriving economic and social hub, supported by a diverse leisure and recreational offer.
- Capitalise on its location between Manchester and the Peak District National Park/ Pennine Hills by enhancing green infrastructure and ecosystem services which promote Oldham as the greenest borough in GM.
- Bring the countryside into the town and providing space for the community to work and spend leisure time in urban parkland.
- Actively promote opportunities for low carbon economic growth and sustainable energy production.
- Reuse, repurpose and revitalise Oldham's vacant and underused buildings.

The common theme across the projects is sustainable, clean growth linked to the Green New Deal and other local, regional and national policies, which in combination will support Oldham to become a place where people will want to live, work and visit.

The five projects which the TIP requests £41m towards the cost of delivering are:

- Northern Roots the UK's largest urban farm and eco-park is of national significance, creating 160 acres of high-quality green space and environment enhancement for community use, a short stroll from Oldham's town centre. Opportunities for local recreation are important for Oldham's deprived communities as well as being important generally for all residents in a post-COVID-19 situation. The project has already been approached by national bodies like the National Trust and the Landscape Institute and other councils keen to learn from this approach.
- Minewater Heat Network developing a district heat network in the town centre that extracts heat from water in disused flooded mines underneath Oldham town centre to generate 4MW of heat. A nationallysignificant project that can address fuel poverty in a sustainable manner. The project aligns with national

and regional policy objectives around clean growth and, with the potential to link up with another similar Towns Fund project in County Durham, it has potential to be of national significance.

- Relocating Tommyfield Market from its existing site into Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre supports the existing masterplan set out in the Oldham Town Centre Vision as it safeguards the economic contribution of a historical market, as well as releasing the site of the current market hall for future redevelopment incorporating an urban linear park and new homes. The addition of greenspace to the heart of the urban environment will set Oldham apart from other towns whilst more housing will generate dynamism, establish the town as destination of choice, and increase footfall to businesses while also delivering against what local people have said they want a greener town centre.
- Flexible Workspace like the relocation of Tommyfield Market, the introduction of the town centre's first Grade A office accommodation to Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre will diversify the space into a thriving economic and social hub with increased levels of footfall. The contemporary office space will appeal to new entrepreneurs and growing sectors like creative design and media, in order to deliver new jobs for local people and replicate successes elsewhere in GM.
- Making Space For Live Performance adds to the appeal and sustainability of the town centre, and particularly the night-time economy. Vacant listed buildings in Oldham's Cultural Quarter will become a net-zero carbon home for the arts to widen audiences and creative practice, offer training and employment opportunities to local people, and enhance socio-economic profile of the town centre. The vision is to enhance and enrich the lives and life chances of the people of Oldham and to inspire a new generation of artists while serving an audience market in Oldham, GM and West Yorkshire.

In keeping with Oldham Council's sustainability ambitions, all the projects will be re-using and re-purposing existing buildings (rather than building new), thereby minimising the carbon footprint of redevelopment and placing green recovery at the heart of town centre revitalisation.

The economic benefits expected to arise in the town centre from Towns Fund and other projects include:

- Up to 400 jobs created as a result of the new employment floorspace to be delivered.
- This will increase local economic output by approximately £20m per year. The Present Value of this over a 30 year appraisal period is about £330 million

Oldham town centre has a strong strategic location with good transport connections to the rest of the borough, the Greater Manchester city-region and the wider North-West. The Metrolink tram network and easy access to the motorway network are captured in this aerial view. Source: Oldham Council



- Constructing these schemes will support up to 100 jobs, producing around £50m of economic activity in the borough.
- The new town centre housing can increase the local population by approximately 2,400 new residents.
- The spending on comparison and convenience goods by these residents could be worth up to £20m per year to the Oldham economy.
- Many of the jobs created will be provide opportunities for Oldham residents, this includes direct jobs, as well as indirect and induced jobs (through the supply chain). Some of these jobs will be in new and emerging sectors, such as green technology, as well as business and technology-related jobs aligned with the GM Local Industrial Strategy. To ensure these jobs are accessible to Oldham residents, Oldham Council envisages an exciting collaborative programme with Oldham FE colleges, University Campus Oldham (UCO) and potentially some links to Manchester Universities' R&D functions.

Additionally, there are project-specific benefits that will only be provided with Towns Fund investment and include:

- A cumulative reduction of 43.3 kilotons of CO₂ over 40 years with the Minewater Heat Network in operation compared to the counterfactual of not having it.
- Northern Roots includes 11 kilometres of footpaths and other opportunities for local recreation including mountain bike trails, mixed-terrain trail runs and

equestrian paths. The social and economic value in recreation in enhanced green infrastructure and ecosystem services will be captured through the business case phase.

Oldham town centre is partway through a £0.5 billion* physical transformation reflecting the wishes and needs of local people and businesses as well as the ambition of the Council and its partners. Physical change - such as the projects in this TIP - is being supplemented by 'wraparound' support services to ensure there is provision for skills and training for local people so they can benefit from construction and subsequent stages of development. Similarly, support for local businesses and entrepreneurs is being provided so they can be part of local supply chains and thrive in the new business environments being created. This total package, driven by the town's cooperative principles, means that the opportunities and benefits from physical change can be more widely felt and will tackle the entrenched levels of multiple deprivation evident in Oldham.

All the projects in this plan will undergo further work on benefits capture and articulation as part of the business case process that builds on work to date and presents them in a way that support Benefit Cost Ratios and Value for Money assessments in 2021.

Oldham – 'creating a better place' with Towns Fund support.

^{*} This includes investment in the Metrolink tram system, a new leisure centre, a new secondary school, Accessible Oldham projects, public realm enhancements, the proposed Future High Streets Fund projects, 'Creating a Better Place' programme of investment and the Towns Deal projects

2. Foreword

Oldham is a proud town with a rich heritage and we are keen to make the town centre a more attractive place to live, visit, work and relax. Being selected by the Government for Towns Fund consideration was welcomed and we have worked hard to establish our Oldham Town Deal Board and bring forward the projects that form the basis of this Plan. We are keen to create the conditions for investment in the town centre so that public and private sector investment can happen and support the development of the modern town centre we are all working to deliver.

The COVID-19 crisis has affected Oldham town centre but has not dampened our determination to deliver this Plan. The Oldham Town Deal Board's commitment and enthusiasm continues to grow, and we look forward to delivering the projects that will deliver change in the town centre and support the longer-term ambitions for change in the area.

Our Board has not been working alone and we have been very well supported by our partners as well as the local business and residential community. We are keen to continue our engagement work to ensure local support is maintained as we seek to keep the momentum for change.

We are living in unprecedented times but should take comfort from the ambition and commitment we have within the town that will deliver a successful investment programme. Our town centre is central to our ambitions for Oldham and this Plan presents the opportunity for our visions to be realised and change to be implemented. We recognise that our town needs more jobs and our people need better life chances, and we are working hard to bring about change that benefits all parts of our community. Our cooperative ideals flow through this Plan and embody the spirit with which Oldham is facing the future. Our proud industrial heritage is what we build on as we modernise for the future and this is most prominent in our town centre.

Oldham's future is one built on our community spirit. It will enshrine our position as the greenest borough in Greater Manchester where our leading work on a zero carbon future is evident to residents, workers, investors and visitors. We will focus our recovery from COVID-19 on long-term economic opportunity that helps overcome poverty and disadvantage, and deliver urban greenspace of national significance that current and future generations can be proud of.

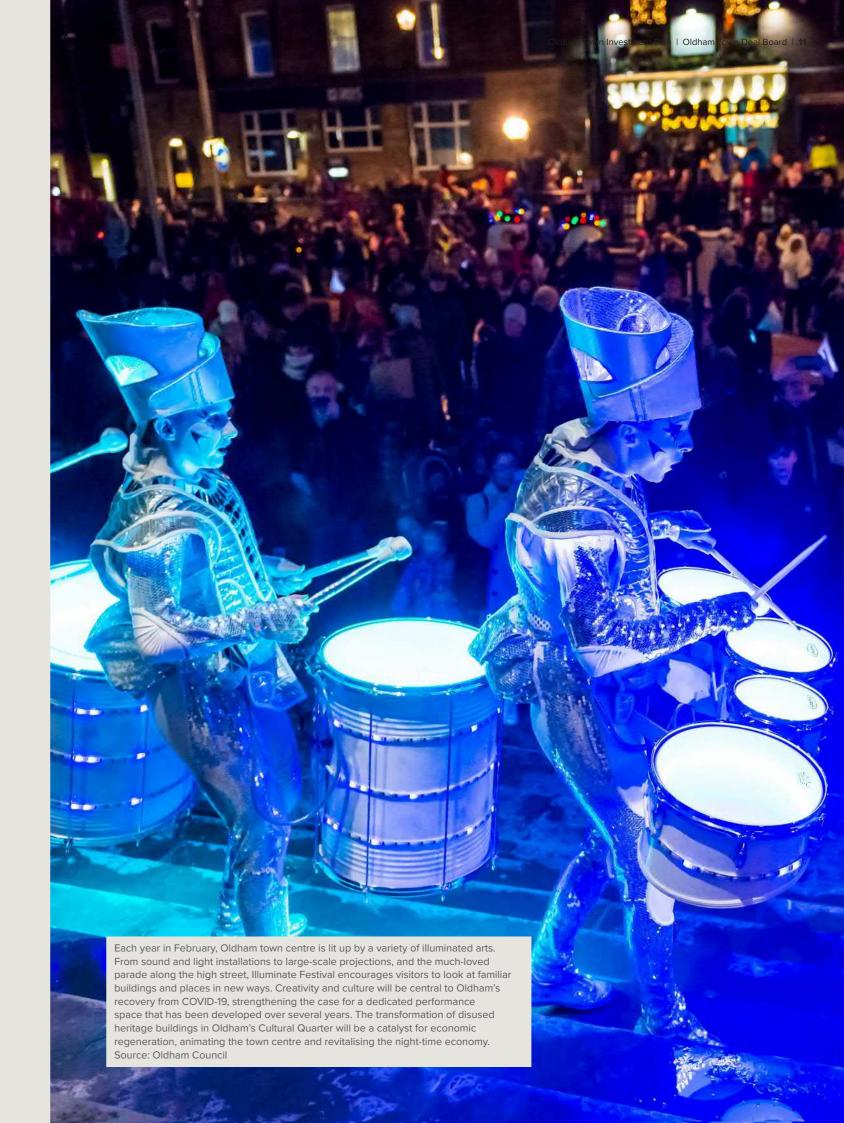
We are proud of what Oldham has achieved, confident about our future and excited about how we are shaping the future of our borough and its town centre. A reinvigorated Oldham town centre as part of a successful Greater Manchester economy is a worthy objective for us to work collaboratively towards.



William Lees-Jones
Managing Director of JW Lees
Chair of Oldham Town Deal



Cllr Arooj Shah Leader of Oldham Council



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3. Context

This section sets out the strategic context for investing in Oldham via the Towns Fund. Understanding the current role and economic performance of the town and its wider catchment area, and how it forms part of the wider GM economy, is critical for developing ways to address key growth constraints and deliver sustainable long-term economic regeneration. The key opportunities and assets of the town are also outlined below.

3.1 History of Oldham

Oldham rose to prominence during the 19th Century as an international centre of manufacturing. It was amongst the first industrialised towns and its world renown for textile manufacturing and cotton spinning reflects the population growth the area experienced through the Industrial Revolution as workers attracted to work in the mills saw population grow from 41,000 in 1801 to 255,000 by 1911. This rapid urbanisation is represented in the dense inner-urban housing interspaced with mills of which there were 320 at the peak of the cotton era. Cotton was a lucrative business and the wealth generated through the 1800s supported development of public buildings showcasing civic pride in what the town and its entrepreneurs had achieved.

The built heritage is presented through Oldham's many listed buildings such as the Old Town Hall as well as the Grade II* listed Alexandra Park built by mill workers during the cotton famine caused by the American Civil War. Post-World War 2 globalisation and increased competition from textile manufacturing overseas fuelled the demise of Oldham's cotton industry and with it the mills that were essential to it.

Recent decades have brought mixed fortunes for Oldham's economy; diversification has been slow and economic productivity levels have dropped with concerning levels of deprivation and disadvantage in pockets throughout the town. Many mills are in need of repair, becoming derelict, underused and costly to refurbish and failing to meet the needs and standards of modern businesses.

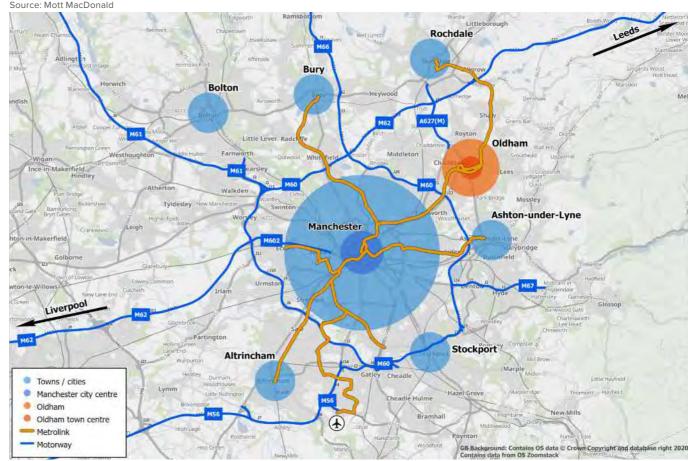
3.2 Oldham in Greater Manchester

Oldham is situated in the north east of GM1¹, approximately six miles from Manchester city centre. In 2018, the GM economy consisted of 2.8m resident people, 1.3m employees and £146.3bn of Gross Value Added (GVA), representing almost a fifth of the total economy of the North2². The GM conurbation has grown significantly over the last decade, driven by the large-scale and rapid expansion of the services sector and by strong economic assets, such as Manchester Airport and the four universities³.

Nevertheless, there are still significant challenges at a GM level including the considerable potential to raise productivity levels and address long term weakness within the labour market relating to high levels of worklessness, often linked to low skills. There are also significant disparities in economic performance experienced across GM with, in general, districts in the north (Oldham, Wigan, Bolton and Bury) experiencing much lower GVA growth and private sector investment than the south (Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Trafford), which largely stems from underlying structural differences given the industrial legacy in the north of the conurbation. The borough of Oldham accounts for approximately 8.4% of the GM population making it the conurbation's seventh largest district (in population terms). The town has a strategically strong location with good transport networks to the rest of the conurbation, including the Metrolink tram network, and easy access to the motorway network, as shown opposite.

Key socio-economic headlines, which form the context against which the TIP vision and projects have been developed, include (a full set of key economic indicators are appended to this document.)

Figure 3.1: Oldham – strategic location within GM Source: Mott MacDonald



- In 2019, the Oldham economy consisted of 200,000 resident people, 100,000 employees and £3.7bn of GVA, representing 2.5% of the GM economy.
- Oldham's economy underperforms relative to GM averages with lower labour market participation rates, lower levels of productivity and greater deprivation.
- Between 2000 and 2018, Oldham's population increased by 8.0% compared to 11.8% in GM and 12.8%in UK4⁴). This links closely to a lack of higher skilled jobs being provided that attract people to live in the borough.
- Oldham's economy remains over-dependent upon relatively low-skilled and low-wage enterprise.
 Manufacturing, construction and public sector employment are all proportionally higher than the GM average, whereas employment in high value sectors, such as Information & communication, Financial & professional services is proportionally lower than GM.
- The public sector, which accounts for 19.5% of workers, represents the fourth highest rate of public sector employment in GM5⁵, and a rate that is greater

- than the North West average (18.3%). Oldham's transition from a centre of industry and trade to a productive, service-based economy has been slow. Over the last decade, whilst new jobs have been created, the majority of these have been lower value service jobs.
- Many of the communities surrounding the town centre have large proportions of residents from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. Between the 2001 and 2011 census, the proportion of the population from white backgrounds decreased from 86.2% to 77.5%, signalling this increase. Meanwhile, the South Asian population continued to grow, with residents of Pakistani heritage increasing from 6.3%to 10.1%, and residents of Bangladeshi heritage increasing from 4.5% to 7.3%.
- Oldham lacks the housing and amenity offer of some of GM's southern districts to attract and retain significant numbers of skilled residents, especially around the town centre.

The borough is one of contrasts with significant levels of deprivation but also areas of prosperity. The many distinct areas that make up the borough, and their communities, are a source of strength locally and to the sub-region which contribute to the local distinctiveness and character of the borough. Many of the communities surrounding the town centre have large proportions of residents from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds.

Spatially, the borough is also very diverse. Oldham is a mix of dense urban and much sparser rural areas on a roughly one-third to two-thirds split. Pennine moorland dominates the eastern side of the borough, part of which falls within the Peak District National Park. It consists of a large area of countryside with a settlement pattern of densely settled river valleys, dispersed farmsteads and open moorland. To the west, most of the borough has an urban character reflecting its industrial legacy and proximity to Manchester. Much of the west and centre of the borough (including the town centre) was originally developed at high densities, and there are fewer green spaces here, making those there are (for example Alexandra Park) a precious asset to communities. Oldham's economy underperforms relative to GM averages with lower labour market participation rates, lower levels of productivity and greater deprivation. Oldham's economy remains over-dependent upon relatively low-skilled and low-wage enterprise. Manufacturing, construction and public sector employment are all proportionally higher than the GM average, whereas employment in high value sectors, such as information & communication, financial & professional services is proportionally lower than GM. The public sector, which accounts for 19.5% of workers, represents the fourth highest rate of public sector employment in GM, and a rate that is greater than the North West average (18.3%). Oldham's transition from a centre of industry and trade to a productive, service-based economy has been slow. Over the last decade, whilst new jobs have been created, the majority of these have been lower value service jobs. Oldham town centre is the main focus for retailing in the borough, in addition to the seven smaller centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill. These centres function as the hub for local communities, providing a focus for a range of social, civic and community services and activities close to people's homes. Out-of-centre

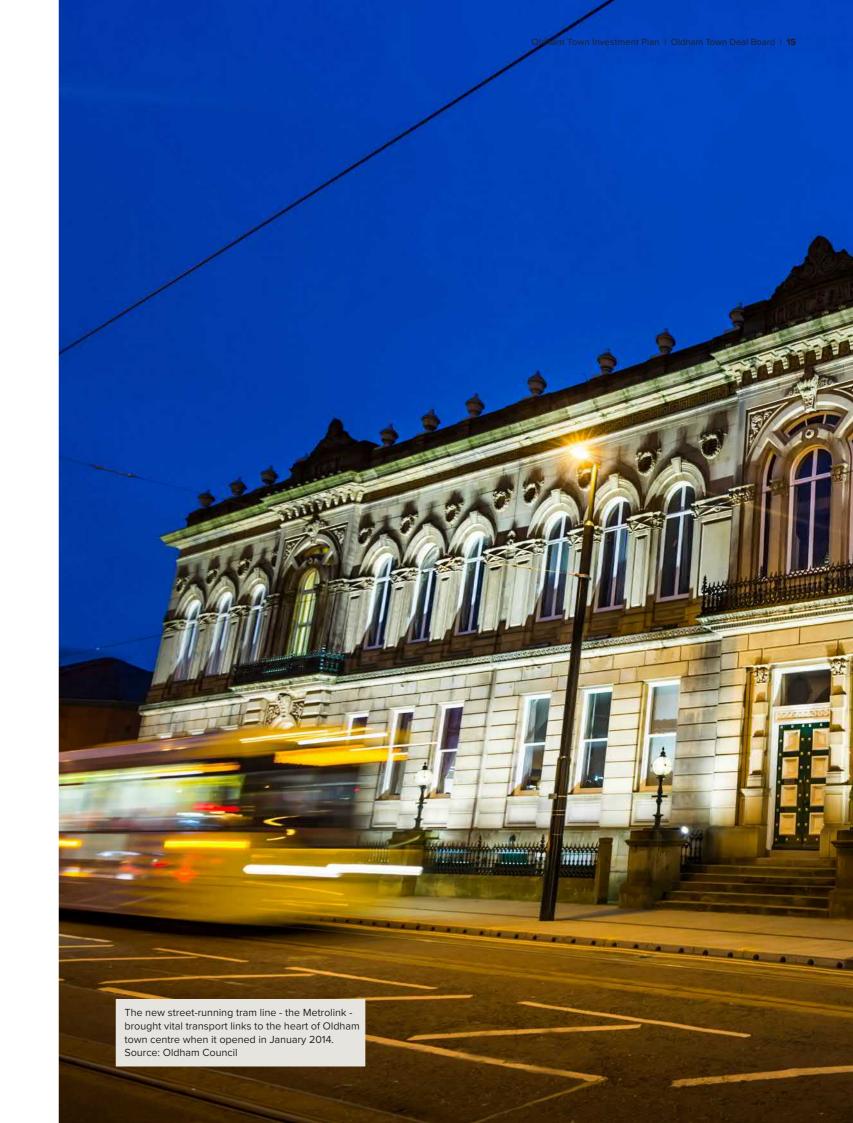
retail parks, such as Elk Mill and Alexandra Retail Park, also form a significant part of the retail offer in the borough. The potential for the town centre to enhance its role as a focal point for the borough and beyond is substantial, building on its existing strengths (such as its heritage, transport connections to the rest of GM and further afield) to become a place where business and enterprise can thrive and where people will want to live, visit, relax and work.

3.3.1 Oldham town centre

Oldham town centre is at the commercial, retail and cultural heart of the borough. It acts as a focal point for local communities with the Spindles Town Square shopping centre, Tommyfield Market and the Civic Centre (home to Oldham's Council's main offices) located here. The key employment sectors underpinning the town centre are health (19.5%), wholesale, motor trades & retail (18.1%) and professional services (15.5%), with a noticeably lower proportion of professional services than most of the GM local authorities. The town centre struggles with the leakage of jobs and spending to nearby towns and central Manchester, as well as failing to attract large numbers of visitors.

According to the latest BRES data, the town centre accounts for around 45.9% of Oldham's total employment. However, Oldham's town centre has seen a decline in employment over many years. Even pre COVID-19, Oldham town centre had lost a number of national retailers such as BHS. Greenwoods Menswear. New Look and Gourmet Burger Kitchen. In addition, the Magistrates' Court, County Court, and other legal practices serving these activities have also closed. The proportion of vacant units is 23.8% and the proportion of vacant floorspace is 19.3%. Oldham town centre also lacks scale or profile as an office location that attracts private investment and speculative development. Manchester's city centre presence coupled with occupier trends towards major urban centres means that it continues to appeal to smaller office occupiers with strong local connections. Much of the existing town centre office stock is small and dated, which constrains achievable rental levels, and prevents the attraction of new occupiers from outside of the borough.

Many of the historic buildings in the town centre (which contribute to the town's identity and heritage) present a problem for potential developers because renovations can be complex and expensive. A low-



value development environment has created a legacy of underinvestment in Oldham town centre by the private sector, leading to a number of ageing and otherwise unsuitable buildings.

Over the last five years rental growth for Oldham has been consistently behind the city-region overall. This trend can also be seen in the type of accommodation and average asking rents. For lower quality "3" star office space, (Grades B and C), the average asking rent for GM is around £15.71 per sq.ft compared with £10.23 per sq.ft for Oldham, and Oldham town centre has no Grade A accommodation. Whilst such information is calculated on a broad basis, it is illustrative of a market within Oldham which lacks modern accommodation 7 .

Oldham has been identified as one of the top 20 town centres in the country most 'at risk' from key consumer trends⁸. Alongside this, the night time economy offer is weak, with no overlap between day and night time economy. The Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) 2040 Town Centre Perceptions survey reported that only 59% of respondents in Oldham rated places to eat and drink as good or very good, compared to the GM-wide average of 67%. The 2020 Oldham Retail and Leisure Study concludes that the town centre has strengths in terms of having an historic character and sense of place, but as the supply of commercial premises exceeds demand within the market, vacancy rates remain an issue. To remedy this, a diversification of the town centre use is required. The town centre is currently focused towards retail, but with decreasing demand and increasing vacancy rates, the justification for a shift towards leisure uses is clear.

On the following three pages spatial plans are included showing the town centre's character, its compact structure and the quantum of housing land available to support the planned housing market growth in the centre.



With roots dating back to 1788, Tommyfield Market consists of over 115 businesses operating six days a week from the indoor market hall and adjacent outdoor units. Action is required to sustain and grow the market's contribution to the local economy but refurbishing or redeveloping the outdated market hall is undesirable because of its size and gradient. Therefore, Oldham Council is set to create a permanent new home for market traders in its newly acquired asset, Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre. In the longer-term, the market hall will be cleared to make way for a new urban park surrounded by homes to meet open space and housing ambitions. Source: Oldham Council

Figure 3.2: Town Centre – Character



Figure 3.3: Town Centre – Structure
This diagram demonstrates Oldham's compact town centre, which has excellent pedestrian connectivity as well as good public transport accessibility (with two Metrolink stops and two bus stations located in the core and intermediate areas). Three of Oldham's five Towns Fund projects (the Flexible Workspace, Relocation of Tommyfield Market and Making Space - For Live Performance) are located in prominent locations in the core and intermediate areas.

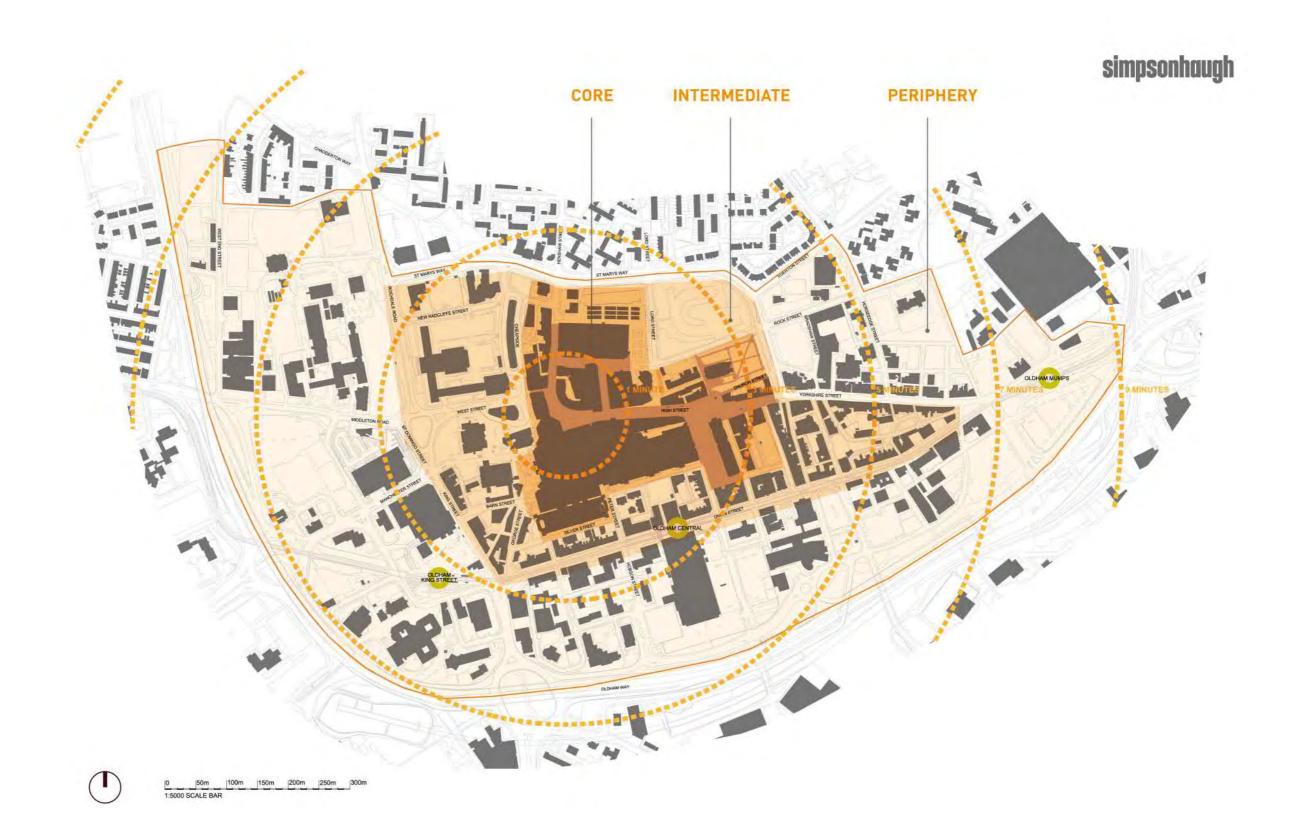
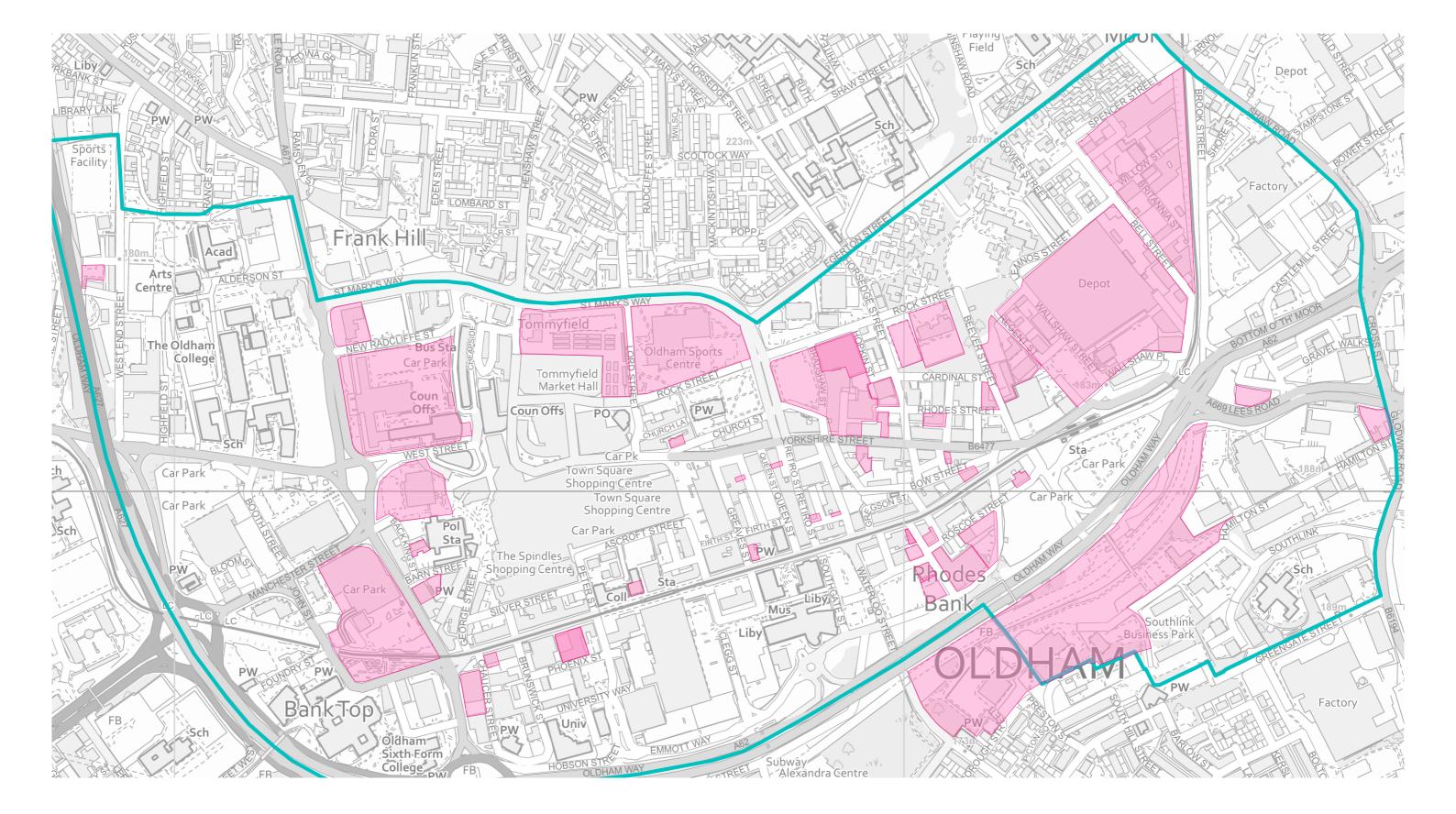


Figure 3.4: Oldham town centre SHLAA sites

This map illustrates the sites within Oldham town centre that are identified as being suitable, available and achievable for residential development (or mixed-use) within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) as at 1 April 2020.

The total capacity of the SHLAA sites within Oldham town centre is around 2,500 homes within the plan period (2020-2037). A further 300 homes, on two of the sites, have been identified as being deliverable in the post-plan period (post 2037).



The main challenges facing Oldham



Oldham's legacy of traditional manufacturing industries has left it with a **low skills base**, meaning its residents struggle to compete for jobs in professional services in and around GM. While adult skills have improved in recent years, Oldham still has both a higher proportion of residents with no qualifications and fewer residents holding degree level qualifications compared to GM, North West and national averages (only 26.9% of working age residents within the borough are qualified to NVQ4+, whilst 13.3% have no qualifications⁹).



A weak skills base is also a contributing factor to difficulties in attracting high productivity jobs and businesses. With the fourth highest rate of public sector employment in GM, Oldham has a clear vulnerability to public sector contraction. There is evidence to suggest that Oldham's talent is being drained by the lure of higher skilled and higher paid jobs in areas such as Manchester that have a greater availability of graduate level jobs, which Oldham lacks¹⁰. In addition, there is a projected 7% fall in the number of people living in Oldham aged 20-29 between 2016 and 2026¹¹.



The dependency on public sector employment is partly due to a **lack of private sector investment**, which has resulted in a lack of high value development in the town centre (particularly in Grade A office space, which has tended to be focused on Manchester city centre and the southern districts in recent years). Furthermore, low land values are a major barrier to redevelopment and sustainable economic growth.



Deprivation in Oldham, alongside acute concentrations within the wider GM economy, is very high with 30.5% of all neighbourhoods within 10% of the most deprived neighbourhoods nationally and the borough is ranked the 19th most deprived local authority in the UK. Large proportions of the unskilled population live in close proximity to the town centre. These neighbourhoods suffer with high levels of unemployment, no doubt impacted by the more challenging nature of accessing the labour market without any qualifications.

In September 2020, the unemployment count in Oldham had risen to 13,695 claimants (an increase of 6,165 claimants in the three months since the COVID-19 Lockdown started) – a 45% increase in unemployment producing an unemployment rate of 9.5%.

Youth unemployment as a sub-set of the overall picture included 2,050 young people aged 18-24 unemployed giving a youth unemployment rate of 15.4%.



With the increasing move of retail online (especially in the wake of COVID-19) and the strength of out-of-town shopping centres, local town centres with physical premises are struggling. This is demonstrated by the retail offer in Oldham town centre reducing, leaving many units in prominent locations vacant, particularly in Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre. The traditional model of a **retail-driven high street** is failing, so there is a need to diversify and provide a mixed high street of retail, culture, music, leisure and residential offer.

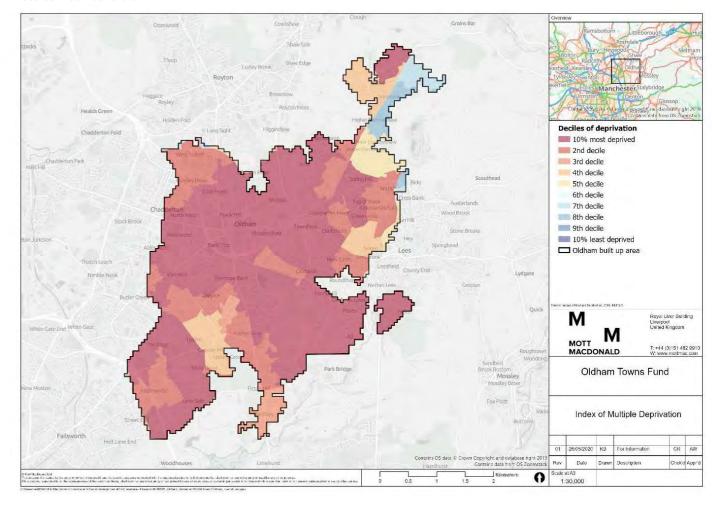


There is currently no overlap between the day and **night time economy** in the town centre, with the night time economy weak and not a destination in its own right.



Currently, Oldham is ranked 19 most deprived Local Authority in the IMD, a position that has worsened over time. Poverty is also reflected in high levels of health inequality. On average, an Oldhamer can expect to live 2.3 years less than the average person in England, and within the borough, male life expectancy is 11 years less in the least affluent ward compared to the most affluent ward, and female life expectancy is 12.4 years less. Oldham's leaders are aware that the economic impacts of COVID-19 have exacerbated and will continue to exacerbate poverty in the borough and further deepen and widen existing inequalities. The area is likely to see demand for services increase. Evidence from the Emergency Helpline, for example, shows that queries from members of the public struggling to make ends meet have increased since lockdown and remain high; many people are struggling with debt and unable to pay bills or put food on the table.

Figure 3.5: Index of Multiple Deprivation – Oldham Towns Fund Boundary Source: Mott MacDonald



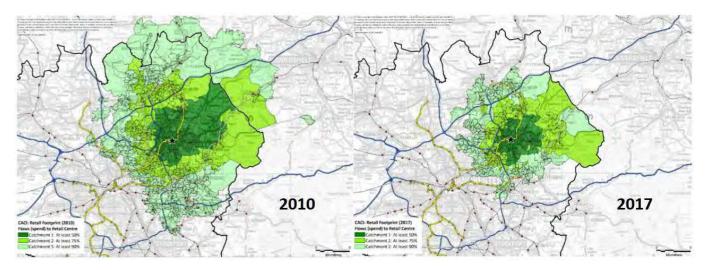


Figure 3.6: Oldham town centre retail footprint 2010-2017
This figure shows how Oldham's retail footprint decreased

This figure shows how Oldham's retail footprint decreased between the years 2010 and 2017. The different catchment areas shown on the maps illustrate the proportion of trade expected to originate from each area – Catchment Area 1 shows the origin of 50% of trade/ shoppers, the following 25% from Catchment Area 2 and the following 15% from Catchment Area 3. As such, the maps illustrate that core retail footprint of Oldham (i.e. the area which supports 90% of trade in the town centre) has significantly reduced in size. Source: Oldham Council, Quarterly Economic Bulletin (summer 2019)

In order for the TIP to tackle the fundamental barriers to growth and develop a long-term strategy for change, the projects must also be responsive to the impacts of COVID-19.

The impacts of COVID-19 on Oldham as well as key exogenous trends have formed part of the evidence base for this investment strategy and the development of the projects, with long-term adaptation and transformation in mind rather than short-term mitigation of impacts.

Prior to COVID-19, in March 2020 Oldham's claimant count was 7,470. The impact of COVID-19 means that this figure increased by 56% in April 2020. Whilst this is less than the 67% increase for the UK in the same time frame, Oldham started at a significantly higher claimant count rate of 5.1% compared to 3% for the UK in March 2020. Similarly to the UK, Oldham has experienced a steady increase in the claimant count rate since March 2020; in September 2020 the claimant count rate stood at 9.5%. Growth in claimant counts are most likely driven by Oldham's key sectors, such as manufacturing and wholesale & retail trade, possessing vulnerabilities to social distancing measures. The general theme of increasing claimant counts is common and widespread across all other comparator areas given how COVID-19 is impacting across the national economy.

Beyond the immediate impacts, COVID-19 is also accelerating many existing retail and leisure trends, including the shift to greater online spending and changing demands around a modern leisure offer. This will accelerate the changing role of Oldham town centre in future and require focus to be paid to its repurposing and revitalisation. At the same time future working practices and the "new normal" may lead to more opportunities for remote working and help to relocalise work. Strategic connectivity will potentially become less important and locations such as Oldham could become more competitive, providing there is the availability of excellent digital infrastructure and digital skills.

At Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre, footfall decreased by 49% between 2019 and 2020.





As a cooperative borough, combined with the wider devolution deal for GM (2014) and the GM Cooperative Commission 2020 recommendations, Oldham has a track record in coordinated public sector activity, demonstrating a momentum of delivering transformative and inclusive projects and programmes. This includes investment in transport and connectivity, housing and healthcare, as well as Oldham Library and Lifelong Learning Centre (2006) and Oldham Leisure Centre (2015). The Old Town Hall development (2016) includes a cinema, bars, and restaurants, while there has also been investment in the 'Independent Quarter' – an area of the town centre where local independent and family-run businesses are prioritised.



Oldham Council, via the Opportunity Area, has significantly invested in programmes that will improve skills and education outcomes for Oldham's residents. The Council is committed to also help to improve the employment rate (particularly among BAME communities). A coordinated approach to investing in skills and higher education has included the University Campus Oldham (UCO) opening in 2005 and initiatives such as Get Oldham Working, the Oldham Education and Skills Commission and the Oldham Enterprise Trust. Oldham College is planning a new Construction Skills Centre (due to open this year), which will be circa 2500 m² over two floors, comprising workshops and practical spaces and classrooms. Trades provided will include electrical, plumbing, joinery, woodwork, brickwork and roofing. The Centre will have a stunning showcase of construction career options and information. Both employers, apprentices and learners alike will benefit from industry standard modern facilities.



Oldham benefits from an accessible location and is well served by road and rail networks, as well as being in close proximity to the regional centre (Manchester). The area has two main motorway connections, linking it with other areas of GM via the M60, and with Leeds via the A627(M) and M62. Oldham has recently seen the arrival of the Metrolink, which has greatly improved public transport, particularly the connectivity into Manchester and Rochdale centres and beyond¹².



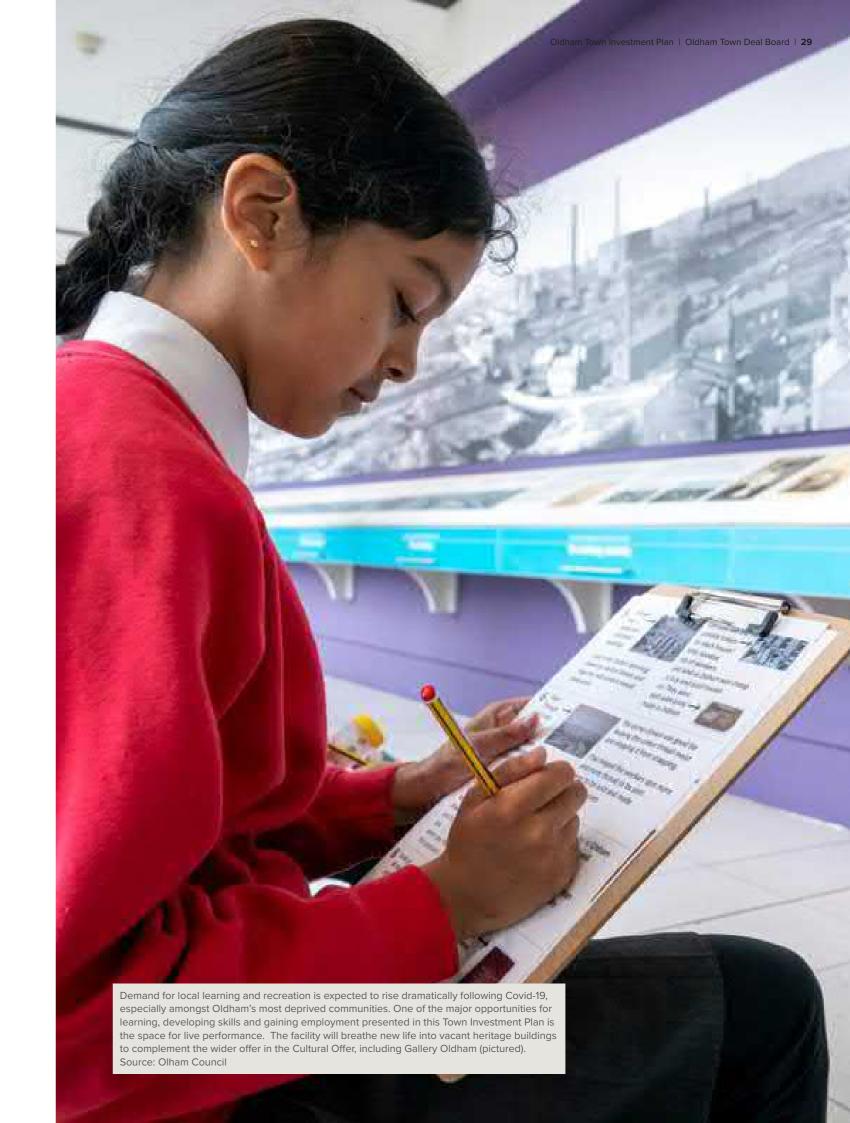
There are multiple nearby business opportunities in Manchester city centre and key sites in neighbouring districts, such as at Kingsway in Rochdale, Ashton Moss in Tameside and the Piccadilly Basin/ Oxford Road area in Manchester, offering economic opportunities for Oldham's residents¹³ and businesses.



Oldham is located close to a number of **environmental assets** including the Peak District National Park/Pennine Hills and has a significant amount of allocated green belt. Alexandra Park is a Grade Two site of national importance on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens.



Oldham Council has already demonstrated leadership on climate change and energy, both locally and regionally, through successful programmes such as the GM Collective Energy Switching programme and the development of community owned hydroelectric power in Saddleworth¹⁴. Other projects focused on carbon emissions and protecting biodiversity include award-winning programmes such as Warm Homes Oldham and Generation Oldham (the borough's community energy programme)¹⁵.



Key opportunities for Oldham



Oldham's cooperative framework - combined with the wider devolution deal for GM agreed in 2014 - allows for devolved decision-making for local areas. This allows services and decision-making to be closer to local communities, so that control passes to local people, who then become partners with the Council in managing and improving their streets and neighbourhoods. The long-term aim is to devolve as much as possible from the town hall to local areas, so that services and social and economic outcomes can be co-produced with local citizens.

Oldham Council's 'Creating a Better Place' 2020 sets out a comprehensive vision and strategic framework for the borough, which includes the Oldham Town Centre Vision, the Housing Strategy, and utilisation of the Council's corporate estate to support development and open space requirements across the borough. The programme includes £285m of priority schemes: in turn this will generate £10.5m of revenue savings. The plan has been amended to reflect COVID-19 recovery and to ensure spending public capital funds is still justified. This TIP is produced in close alignment with 'Creating a Better Place'.



Substantial investment is ongoing in Oldham's **town centre**, maximising the historic assets which make up the town's core. The town centre environment is largely positive, and improving, with high-quality public realm in the recently renovated Old Town Hall area. In secondary areas of the town centre there has been obvious investment in street furniture and planting. Within the town centre, there are 26 listed buildings and monuments, some of which are Grade II* listed. The eastern edge of the town centre is also included within the Town Centre Conservation Area. Oldham Council has adopted the Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) SPD, which extends the Conservation Area in four locations to the north and west along Market Place and Henshaw Street and east along Yorkshire Street¹⁶.



As part of Greater Manchester's Plan for Homes, Jobs and the Environment (GMSF) published by GMCA in October 2020, Oldham is set to be the location for eight GM Allocation sites, accommodating a mix of both residential and employment land uses. In addition to these eight GM Allocations, the north-western area of the borough of Oldham falls within the catchment area of the M62 North-East Corridor, which includes a cross-boundary allocation with Rochdale at Stakehill for homes and employment as well as the High Crompton Broad Location.



As part of a joint bid with other GM authorities, Oldham has secured funding from the DCMS Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) fund to invest in high speed fibre infrastructure. Virgin Media Business Limited has been contracted to provide gigabit capable fibre to 151 sites across the borough as part of the GM LFFN programme. This will provide high speed connections to various public sector buildings within the town and beyond.

Oldham Council is committed to exploiting this fibre coverage and has aspirations to ensure this provides connectivity to key areas and schemes within the town centre such as the Digital Start Up facility, businesses and offices, as well as to work with developers to enhance domestic provision for residents. Many of the sites fall within the Towns Fund boundary.



As the first 'Green New Deal Council', Oldham is developing a reputation for **clean growth** and green innovation – a leader in low carbon, community renewables and a flourishing food economy. Oldham's Green New Deal sets out how the Council will achieve carbon neutrality by 2025, followed by the whole borough by 2030, aiming to become the greenest borough in GM. The strategy also outlines how the Council will invest in the green sector to develop the borough's economy, in terms of employment, business and tourism – it is estimated that the current low carbon business sector in Oldham is worth £338m and employs around 2,300 people.¹⁷ It is estimated that by 2050, there will be 1,120 jobs in the low-carbon electricity sector in Oldham, 950 jobs in low-carbon heat and 600 jobs directly linked to energy efficiency.



More widely in GM, there are two Green Infrastructure Opportunity areas in Oldham: the extensive South Pennine Moors that stretches across Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside, and the Moston Brook Corridor that encompasses parts of Manchester and Oldham.



The purchase of Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre by Oldham Council in October 2020 comprises a key part of the Council's 'Creating a Better Place' strategy. This will enable the repurposing of much of the vacant space in Spindles for retail and non-retail uses (including office space for both private sector tenants and Oldham Council offices) and relocating Tommyfield Market. This will free up the exisiting market and Council premseis for residential development and the creation of a new linear park in the town centre.

Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre is the third largest shopping centre in Greater Manchester. In 2019, average monthly footfall to the shopping centre was 872,280.
Source: Oldham Council



3.4 Evidence of need, relevant to proposed projects

In a post-COVID era new localism is a mindset that places local town centres, local recreation, local workplaces and local services in the forefront of all our minds. The projects being proposed for Oldham town centre reinforce this new localism perspective.

Through its previous strategy and project development work focused on the town centre, Oldham Council and its partners have undertaken considerable engagement and stakeholder consultation, which has provided the basis to inform this TIP. For example, key findings of the engagement undertaken as part of formulating the Creating a Better Place strategic framework include:

- The need to build quality homes.
- · Providing opportunities to learn & gain new skills.
- Providing opportunities to grow local businesses and create jobs.
- Ensuring Oldham is the greenest borough.
- Embedding sustainability, energy efficiency & low (zero) carbon.
- Improving life-chances and the health / well-being of residents and local communities.

The findings from these engagement processes have shaped the vision and strategy for the Oldham TIP, as well as the selection of projects by the Oldham Town Deal Board, to make sure the projects reflect what local people have asked for and, importantly, can be delivered to make a difference. The projects identified for inclusion include some which are already well-developed and have undergone significant stakeholder engagement at a project level, and others which are more recent but nonetheless respond to the themes identified by earlier engagement and reflect the shared ambition for the town centre of residents, business and the Town Deal Board.

The projects are as follows:

- Northern Roots urban farm and eco-park the UK's largest urban farm and eco-park, close to the town centre.
- Minewater Heat Network tapping into the area's industrial legacy to extract heat from water contained in underground mines no longer in use.
- Flexible Workspace creating much-needed Grade A office space in the town centre.
- Making Space For Live Performance expanding the existing performing arts offer in Oldham through building a new facility.

- Relocating Tommyfield Market supports existing economic activity in the town centre, providing a modern, purpose-built location for the market whilst freeing up land to meet Oldham's wider town centre ambitions for residential development and the creation of a modern, linear park.
- Property acquisition to facilitate redevelopment as part of the capital acceleration grant, Oldham Council is seeking to purchase a currently vacant building in the town centre and use the site to meet Oldham's housing needs. Further details of this project can be found in the capital acceleration grant proposal, but the project is shown on images in this document.

The following table sets out how these projects link to the challenges, assets and opportunities identified above. Further information on the projects can be found in Section 5, and further information on engagement in Section 7.

"Oldham is moving in the right direction, and fast. I have seen first-hand that it has a progressive and ambitious vision, with a thriving night-time economy at its core. I look forward to seeing Oldham grow, not only as an exciting place to live and work, but also as a distinctive destination in its own right."

Sacha Lord, Night Time Economy Adviser for Greater Manchester Table 3.1: Evidence relevant to proposed projects Source: Mott MacDonald

	Northern Roots	Minewater Heat network	Making Space - For Live Performance	Flexible Workspace	Relocating Tommyfield market
Oldham challenges					
Need to improve low skills base	≪	≪	≪	≪	
Difficulties in attracting high productivity jobs and businesses		<	<	<	
Difficulties attracting young, educated residents	♦		♦	<	
Increasing private sector investment	♦	৶	<	<	<
Reducing deprivation levels	≪	৶			
Need to diversify town centre away from retail dependency			৶	<	♦
Improving the night-time economy			≪		
Oldham assets & strengths					
Track record in coordinated public sector activity	\checkmark	≪	≪	<	<
Increasing skills and education levels	♦	<	<	<	
Good regional connectivity	≪		≪	≪	<
Nearby employment and business opportunities			<	<	
Existing environmental assets	≪	≪			
Leadership on climate change, energy and carbon reduction	♦	≪	≪	♦	<
Oldham opportunities					
Devolved decision-making for local areas	\checkmark	<	<	<	$ \checkmark $
Location for planned GM growth		≪	≪	≪	
Investment in Oldham's town centre		<	♦	<	<
Clean growth and green innovation	≪	≪	<	<	<

4. Strategy

4.1 Town Deal 2030 Vision

The borough of Oldham is an integral part of the (GM) economy, and Oldham town centre is central to the future viability and attractiveness of Oldham as a place to live, work and invest. But there is much to do by 2030 to improve the contribution Oldham makes to GM's productivity levels and the Town Deal is an important component in building momentum towards delivering sustainable economic growth and development in both the town centre and the borough overall.

The post-COVID-19 recovery period is likely to make opportunities for local recreation, local employment and local interaction more important than ever for communities and Oldham's vision and approach reflects this. Oldham's leaders are intent on tackling issues of lower productivity, social inequality and lower private sector market demand and in doing so will deliver their vision buttressed by local stakeholder engagement and support as well as close alignment with local and national policy objectives. Improving Oldham town centre and making it work in a better way to the benefit of local communities is the essence of the vision for 2030.

Oldham Council has developed an evidence base to understand how its local economy and community operates and to understand where opportunities for clean, sustainable growth and urban enhancement can be supported. This analysis informs the 2030 vision for Oldham set out within the Strategic Investment Framework¹⁸, which underpins the strategic vision and aims for Oldham's Town Deal, which is set out on the following page.

4.2 Creating a Better Place

Oldham has invested in a series of policies and strategies developed to support the borough's growth and development. Of primary importance for the TIP and wider Town Deal is the £285m 'Creating a Better Place' strategic framework introduced by Oldham Council in January 2020. The projects being recommended for the Town Deal through the TIP will feed into and support the framework and two of its main components, the Oldham Town Centre Vision and Housing Strategy.

This TIP is directly aligned with Oldham Council's town centre policies and overall approach to delivering regeneration. The following points illustrate this:



Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre in the centre of Oldham was purchased by Oldham Council in October 2020. Part of the Council's 'Creating a Better Place' strategy, this will enable the repurposing of much of the vacant space for retail and non-retail uses (including office space), relocating Tommyfield Market, and freeing up the existing market premises for residential development. Source: Oldham Council

Creating a Better Place aims to provide an approach for the Council to support inclusive growth, thriving communities and the co-operative agenda by:

- · Building quality homes.
- Providing opportunities to learn and gain new skills.
- Providing opportunities to grow local businesses and create jobs.
- · Supporting Oldham's ambition to be the greenest borough.
- · Improving life chances and the health/ well-being of Oldham's residents and local communities.
- Embedding sustainability, energy efficiency and low (zero) carbon.

Oldham's Town Centre Vision can be defined as 'Our Town Centre: a place that thrives'...by:

- · Building quality homes.
- Providing opportunities to learn, develop new skills and gain employment.
- Having a diverse culture, leisure and night time economy.
- · Attracting, retaining and growing businesses.
- · Ensuring a safer, healthier and friendly environment.
- Ensuring it is green, clean and sustainable.

Oldham Town Investment Plan targets: (this document)

- Contributing towards narrowing the employment rate gap and productivity gap with GM, including through creating opportunities for skills development and labour market participation.
- Linking with other key investments to make the town centre a thriving economic and social hub, supported by a diverse leisure and recreational offer.
- Capitalising on its location between Manchester and the Peak District National Park/ Pennine Hills by enhancing green infrastructure and ecosystem services which promote Oldham as the greenest borough in Greater Manchester.
- Bringing the countryside into the town and providing space for the community to work and spend leisuretime in urban parkland.
- Reuse, repurpose and revitalise Oldham's vacant and underused buildings.

Source: 'Creating a Better Place' (2020); 'Oldham Town Centre Vision' (2019)

Where does the Oldham TIP vision come from? Investment Flexible Workspace, Making Space in skills and Relocating Tommyfield Market For Live Performance education Sustainability goals - reusing Flexible Workpace, heritage and underused buildings Relocating Tommyfield Market Strengthening local economic assets including local cultural assets Plan for town centre housing developments (through Creating a Better Place and Town Centre Vision), enabled by TIP projects "The 2030 vision for Oldham is that it will be a place Making Space For Live Performance, where business and enterprise can thrive and where Northern Roots people will want to live, visit, relax, learn and work. Having a diverse culture, leisure and night time economy Building on its industrial heritage, civic pride and location as a town in the countryside, Oldham will Location between Manchester have a sustainable future in a unique urban setting. and Peak District National Park Northern Roots, Oldham will be a stronger economic contributor to Heritage as a Pennine Greater Manchester, providing a place where every Lancashire town Inclusive growth resident is enabled to contribute to and benefit Improving life chances and the health/ well-being of Oldham's from the continued growth of the city region." residents and local communities Minewater Heat Network Northern Roots Making Space - For Live Performance Flexible Workspace Oldham Council's Green New Deal Sustainability goals reusing heritage and underused buildings Towns Fund projects Wider Oldham plans and strategies GM Plan for Jobs, Homes & Environment Oldham's strengths Acknowledging role in the Levelling up – at a regional city region, and the interand a national level Greater Manchester strategies Clean growth dependency of economic, social Towns Fund principles and environmental issues Other

4.2.1 Achieving the 2030 vision for Oldham

GM is a significant agglomeration of economic activity and Oldham contributes to this in many ways (as outlined in Section 1). Nevertheless, if Oldham's economy was strengthened, for instance if Oldham could attain the same level of average Gross Value Added (GVA) per head as GM, then Oldham's economy would be 40% larger¹⁹. This would contribute to mitigating many of the identified issues and concerns set out in the overarching policy framework for Oldham.

Closing the productivity gap between Oldham and GM supports a narrowing of the differential between GM and the UK average: a localised levelling-up.

To help narrow this gap by 2030 and meet its objectives, Oldham needs:

- more jobs at a higher density in sectors that are more productive;
- increased opportunities for more of its residents to enter the workforce and contribute to improved GVA levels including training and skills support where required;
- a more diverse town centre offer with high quality business space and recreational venues; and,
- more housing in the town centre to generate dynamism and increase footfall to town centre businesses.

The forecast growth sectors in GM are going to require people in both high and low skilled occupations. It is therefore imperative for Oldham to comprehensively improve its skills base, allowing residents the opportunities to access the higher skilled and therefore more lucrative new jobs.²⁰ Oldham's employment growth (based on a pre-COVID-19 scenario) is forecast at 7.9% over the next 20 years (0.37% annually) and growth will likely take place mainly in the construction, professional services, business services and administrative support sectors. The manufacturing sector is predicted to continue to shed jobs, whilst there will be less available employment within the public sector.²¹

This forecast shift in the make-up of the labour market means Oldham will need to invest in skills development whilst in parallel supporting and enabling key growth sectors, and investing in Oldham to make it an attractive place to live, work and visit (which will help with attracting and retaining workers and residents). To support, facilitate and encourage growth, Oldham will also need to deliver other areas of change to improve its environment and play its part in shifting to a low carbon economy while also enhancing the opportunities for recreation and leisure in the area.

A multifaceted approach to change is what will help achieve Oldham's vision and support national policy ambitions. This approach is reflected in Oldham's strategies and plans as well as in its dedication to developing projects that reflect the strategic ambitions for the town. This TIP supports and reflects this approach, making Oldham a model of an authority where the economy is productive, sustainable and inclusive, thus allowing communities to thrive.

A key factor of production is land and property. The provision of higher quality, modern office space in the town centre will address deficiency in this respect and, more importantly, provide the type of space that is attractive to new entrepreneurs and growing sectors like creative design and media which can establish themselves and grow within Oldham as they have done elsewhere in GM. Utilising and making the best use of brownfield-greenfield land is also central to the vision and through the Northern Roots project there will be scope for economic activity, productivity and development to occur through what could be a nationally-significant project in a post-COVID-19 world. Utilising town centre land and property assets to deliver economic growth and social value is also embedded in the proposals for the Flexible Workspace and the relocation of Tommyfield Market; both proposals will lead to the reuse of existing buildings and create space for new development that aligns with the Creating a Better Place (2020) strategic framework and plans to refresh the Oldham Town Centre Vision during the 2020/21 financial year. Perhaps more innovatively, the potential to create a minewater heat network by extracting heat from water in disused mines beneath the town centre demonstrates how using existing assets to drive growth in a (net) zero carbon future is at the heart of the TIP and also brings forward another potentially nationally-significant project.

4.2.2 Town Deal investment targets for 2030

The economic imperative for change is the mainstay of the vision for improving Oldham set out across its strategy and policy documents. The Town Deal builds from the economic imperative and integrates it with the focus on improving attractiveness of place and building a sustainable future. The vision of Oldham as a desirable place to live is equally applicable to Oldham as a nice place to visit and invest in.

The targets for the Town Deal investment to 2030 for Oldham are to:

 contribute towards narrowing the employment rate gap and productivity gap with GM, including through creating opportunities for skills development and labour market participation;

- link with other key investments to make the town centre a thriving economic and social hub with increased levels of footfall, supported by a diverse leisure and recreational offer;
- capitalise on its location between Manchester and the Peak District National Park/ Pennine Hills by enhancing green infrastructure and ecosystem services which promote Oldham as 'the greenest Borough' with urban parkland at its core;
- bring the countryside into the town and provide space for the community to work and spend leisure time in urban parkland; and,
- actively promote opportunities for low carbon economic growth and sustainable energy production.
 The TIP aligns with, and reflects the visions of, the overarching policy framework for Oldham and Greater Manchester. It is part of Oldham's combined and concerted effort to make Oldham town centre better.



4.3 Town Deal projects

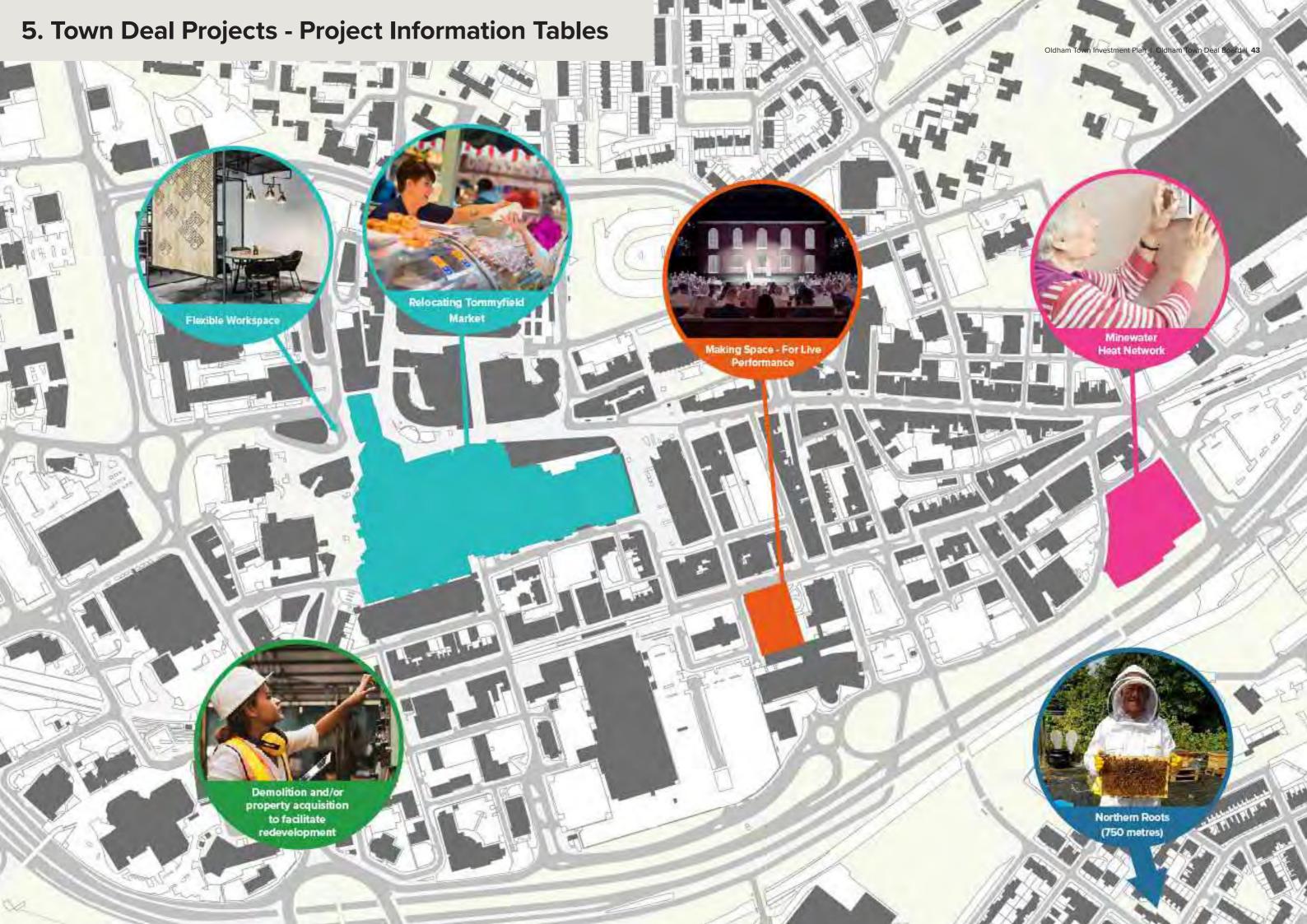
The projects identified and prioritised for inclusion in the TIP all support the economic imperative of increasing jobs and economic productivity, and combine to make Oldham a better place to live, work, visit, relax and invest in.

4.3.1 The projects

The five projects have been developed with a careful understanding of the underlying evidence and context, building on Oldham's challenges, strengths and opportunities (set out in Section 2). The rationale for intervention is summarised below.

- The Northern Roots project will form the UK's largest urban farm and eco-park, creating 160 acres of high quality green space for community use. Opportunities for local recreation and enterprise are important for Oldham's deprived communities as well as being important more generally for all residents in a post-COVID-19 situation.
- The Minewater Heat Network project aims to develop a district heat network in the town centre that extracts heat from water in disused flooded mines underneath Oldham town centre. This heat can be captured through heat pumps and transported around the town centre via pipes to businesses and homes.
- The Making Space For Live Performance project offers the opportunity to re-use existing listed buildings in the wider Cultural Quarter, expand the existing performing arts offer in Oldham in terms of scope, scale and quality, to nurture and grow audiences, increase provision for participatory activities and offer an inviting and comfortable environment for audiences and participants that reflects Oldham's diverse communities.
- The Flexible Workspace project will provide office space for private sector occupants on a currently vacant upper floor of the existing Spindles shopping centre. This will support digital, knowledge-related and creative sectors of the local and regional economy, creating a space where they can collaborate and flourish.
- Relocating Tommyfield Market from its existing site into currently vacant areas of Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre supports the Oldham Town Centre Vision. It safeguards the economic contribution of the market and allows for residential development and a linear park on the current site, which is needed to satisfy the longer-term vision for more people living in the town centre.







Project Name: Northern Roots



Timescales for delivery



2020: pilot project delivery, consultation, business model, and masterplan development

2020/21: planning permission

2021/22: Full Business Case

21/22 - 24/25 for capital development

Estimated project cost



c. £14.7m

Towns Fund ask



£8m

(cost of enabling works and access routes, the construction of key infrastructure including the visitor centre, education centre, market garden and mountain biking hub).

Rationale for Towns Fund investment



Northern Roots is a project which will attract support from a wide range of funders and investors, because of the clear range of public goods that it will deliver. However very few of these funders would be prepared to finance the initial investment in enabling infrastructure, without which the project cannot succeed. For this reason, Towns Fund monies will play a vital role in creating the initial infrastructure and conditions to then unlock subsequent funding and the full potential of this ground-breaking project.

Project description:



The Northern Roots project will create the UK's largest urban farm and eco-park, providing 160 acres of high-quality green space for community use. Situated on Snipe Clough to the south of Oldham's town centre, the project will integrate into Alexandra Park and the proposed Environmental Centre of Excellence. There is potential for local people to develop a range of activities and businesses on the site, including:

- · Creation of a visitor centre, café and shop.
- Growing edible and ornamental crops at scale.
- Animal husbandry, bee-keeping.
- Production of food and drink products (available to purchase at a number of locations in the town centre, as well as at Northern Roots itself).
- Improved facilities for sport including football and hockey.
- Recreational activities such as camping, mountainbiking, high ropes and graded walking routes.
- · A venue for events including outdoor performances, weddings, festivals and workshops.
- Courses, outdoor classrooms, forest school and workspaces.

At a time when many local authorities are disinvesting from their vital green spaces due to budget challenges, Northern Roots will pioneer an economically sustainable approach to enhancing and harnessing urban greenspace. The project has already been approached by national bodies like the National Trust and the Landscape Institute and other councils keen to learn from this approach.

The Northern Roots project strenghtens and extends town centre regeneration occuring through the other Towns Fund projects, and other interventions, such as Creating a Better Place, the Town Centre Vision and the FHSF projects. A new cycleway will connect the town centre and Northern Roots, providing residents and visitors with a sustainable way to access this nationally signficant greenspace from the amenities - and transport conenctions - in the town centre. Produce grown and made onsite at Northern Roots will be sold at locations in the town centre, further strengthening local identity and sense of place.

Figure 5.1: Northern Roots Site Source: Planit IE and Mott MacDonald



Rationale for intervention



Northern Roots is the first project of its kind in the UK. It will develop a new business model that can be adopted by other locations to harness greenspace to benefit people, place and planet. For this reason, it is of regional and national significance. The government has emphasised the importance of green skills in post-COVID-19 economic recovery. Northern Roots will create, and showcase, a wide range of green skills, jobs and technologies in an area of acute and sustained economic deprivation.

The Northern Roots site lies adjacent to a number of diverse communities in Oldham, including established white, British residents, as well as more recent arrivals from south Asia and eastern Europe, all within a mile of Oldham's town centre. A number of these communities are amongst the 1% most deprived nationally. A recent survey showed that 50% of residents in wards surrounding the site don't exercise regularly. Across Oldham, only 29% of young people are active for the Government's daily recommended 60 minutes. Levels of diabetes are increasing and 22% of Oldham children in Year 6 are obese. Furthermore, 43.8% of Oldham's children have a mental health concern - the highest rate in the North West.

There is a wealth of evidence affirming the health and wellbeing benefits of urban greenspace, particularly in deprived areas. Oldham is the first council in the UK to use an "Innovation Partnership" mechanism to put a borough-wide social prescribing network in place. In addition to providing informal opportunities for outdoor exercise and recreation, Northern Roots will also join this network to offer a range of social prescriptions to support residents' physical and mental health through physical activity and "green care". Due to its location, Northern Roots also has a unique opportunity to evolve and share new mechanisms for engaging BAME populations with nature. BAME communities are amongst those worst affected by COVID-19; they are also amongst those least likely to access and benefit from greenspaces.

The 160-acre site has been neglected and its use limited to dog walking, weekend football practice, and infrequent model aeroplane flying. It is currently subject to fly tipping and antisocial behaviour. Northern Roots will turn the site into a productive asset, delivering economic, social and environmental benefits, attracting new visitors to Oldham, helping to change the town's image and bring its green future to fruition.

"I want to inspire other towns around the world"

- 13-year-old participant in a creative writing project for Northern Roots

Project aims & objectives



The project aims to create a valuable green space which benefits local communities and attracts visitors from further afield. It aligns with the objectives of the GM Spatial Framework 2020, the GM Local Industrial Strategy and the Oldham Local Plan. This will be achieved through:

- Enhancing the biodiversity and ecosystem service value of the site, in keeping with the Oldham Green New Deal and the GM Environment Plan.
- Improving the local food system, enhancing access to local healthy food and building the "Made in Oldham" brand set out in Oldham's new Food Strategy, as well as growing the local social and community enterprise economy.
- Inspiring people to engage with nature and lead healthier lifestyles, while pioneering new approaches to green social prescribing.
- Offering high-quality learning opportunities for young people.
- Building new sustainable economic activities that will aid the post-COVID-19 recovery and deliver green economic growth.

Northern Roots will connect Oldham's urban core to the foothills of the Pennine Hills and the Peak District National Park – drawing residents out to engage with the nature on their doorstep and drawing visitors into the town centre. The site will be developed to harness diverse revenue streams to create a unique, financially self-sustaining exemplar which simultaneously enhances biodiversity and ecosystem service value, develops skills and boosts residents' health and well-being.

Financial sustainability will be ensured by harnessing a variety of revenue streams including commercial revenues, licensing fees, commissioning contracts, sponsorship, membership and environmental subsidies. This will be reinvested to manage and enhance the site and facilities and support an ecosystem of businesses and social enterprises operating under licence from Northern Roots.

Figure 5.2: Northern Roots will be developed for and with local communities, creating a wide range of activities and businesses on the site. This could include growing edible crops at scale, animal husbandry and bee-keeping, forestry, mountain biking, outdoor events and performances, amongst other opportunities. The ambition is that Northern Roots will become self-financing in the longer term through a blend of social investment, enterprise, tourism, licensing and commissioning.

Source: Northern Roots



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Project costs

The estimated costs for delivering the capital development of the site is £14.7m.



The Towns Fund ask (£8m) will cover the cost of enabling works and access routes, as well as the construction of key infrastructure including the visitor centre, education centre, market garden and mountain biking hub. Towns Fund support will be critical in bringing this ambitious vision to life, supporting COVID-19 recovery and setting Oldham on the path to a new, greener future.

Benefits



Northern Roots will be a productive eco-park, looking to benefit and inspire the residents and communities of Oldham whilst becoming an asset for GM and a site of national importance. It is developing a new business and operating model that can be used by sites across the country to enhance and harness their greenspaces for public and economic benefit in a financially sustainable way. Residents will benefit from having greater access to greenspace, whereas businesses will prosper from attracting visitors and further investment to the area. Local communities will also benefit from improved skills, training and employment prospects. This project will contribute towards making Oldham a more attractive and desirable place to live, encouraging people and businesses to visit and potentially locate in the borough. The project will also benefit adjacent residential areas through improving access to good quality greenspace. It also builds on Oldham's rich heritage and will be as significant for today's generation as Alexandra Park was in the 1860s.

Within five years the project will deliver the following benefits:

- 25% increase in the biodiversity of the site;
- at least 300 social prescriptions and 150 volunteering placements per annum;
- 28 trainees/apprenticeships per annum; and
- up to 40 new businesses and 80 new jobs created.

By 2050 the site will capture 20,000 tonnes of atmospheric carbon.

Link to Towns Fund objectives

Urban regeneration, planning and land use - ensuring towns are thriving places for people to live and work through the enhancement of local green space for community, green business and visitor uses.



Skills and enterprise infrastructure - driving private sector investment and ensuring towns have the space to support skills and small business development. Northern Roots will provide this space through its development of facilities to support a wide range of businesses, provision of training and business support and licensing of new businesses to operate on and from the site.

Connectivity – Northern Roots will evolve into a corridor for both people and nature, linking the town centre to the rural fringe. Funding from Greater Manchester's Beelines project is being used to improve off road walking and cycling access from the town centre, to Alexandra Park and Northern Roots, and from Northern Roots, across the River Medlock and on to Ashton-under-Lyne. Within the site an additional 11kms of paths and cycle routes will be created. A transport plan will be developed to optimise public transport and vehicular access to the site. Events and activities will be curated in partnership with other town centre attractions and businesses to encourage visitors to Northern Roots to make secondary visits to Oldham's wider town centre offer.

Engagement



Extensive engagement for this project has taken place with both stakeholders and the local community. Workshops, surveys, focus groups and site visits have been used to elicit views on the project, some conducted and analysed by the project team and some by University partners. In total 288 individuals have taken part in these consultation exercises. Organisations consulted include local and national government, charities, environmental organisations, educational establishments (at a primary, secondary and tertiary level), commercial organisations and funding and sponsorship organisations (e.g. Heritage Lottery). The project leads have also presented Northern Roots at numerous conferences and workshops attended by at least 3,000 people, including the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework workshop in July 2019 and the Greater Manchester Natural Capital Conference in February 2020. Five public facing events have been held to share the project with the local community and solicit their views; these have been attended by over 300 people. Pilot projects ranging from environmental volunteering to beekeeping to creative writing have been organised to raise awareness and engagement from different sectors of the community. Additionally, Northern Roots has created a website and shares information daily on social media. The project now has around 2,000 followers across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram who interact with the project team. These engagement activities have directly and positively influenced the plans for the site in a wide range of ways, from the inclusion of equestrian facilities and a mountain-biking pump track to the location of the forest school. Responses to the project have been overwhelmingly positive. The Northern Roots Bike Hub & Trails consultation is currently ongoing - this consultation is essential to provide evidence to support a the funding application for Sport England's 'Places to Ride' programme. The consultation focusses on the proposal to develop a Bike Hub & Trails facility.

Delivery



The business model for this project is for the Northern Roots charity to take a long lease on the site from Oldham Council, but then license 40+ small, mainly local, businesses to operate the different activities and facilities on the site. This will foster innovation and support local wealth building - the Northern Roots project team are unware of this delivery model being used elsewhere, making it a potential role model for other porjects nationally.

The Northern Roots charity is looking to harness a number of emerging financing mechanisms – from social investment to biodiversity net gain payments to DEFRA ELMs subsidies to community share options – to sustain the charity and the overall site, and lower the costs/barriers to entry for the licensees.

Key partners



Salford University (specifically the School of Science, Engineering and the Environment, the Business School, and the School of Health and Society); Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation (as part of their 100 Resilient Cities project); Sustainable Food Cities; LANTRA (interested in a partnership to showcase landscape based skills and training); Landscape Institute (Northern Roots presented at a national skills seminar exploring the new skills that will be needed in parks teams in future); RHS (Northern Roots was due to exhibit at Hampton Court Flower show this year until it was cancelled due to COVID-19); Natural England; Forestry Commission; Wildlife Trusts; DEFRA (the project has funding, through City of Trees, for treeplanting from next year); Marketing Manchester; Manchester Growth Hub; Greater Manchester Resilience Unit; GM Natural Capital Group; Centre for Local Economic Studies (including Northern Roots in a forthcoming study exploring how local authorities are transitioning to a low carbon economy); Newcastle Parks Trust (have been helping the project with the charity set up and governance structure. Northern Roots in turn has been giving some advice to Worthing and Adur Council who want to do something similar).

Next steps



- Refining the business model produced by University of Salford on the basis of research and reports commissioned to date.
- Continuing community and stakeholder consultation as possible under COVID-19 conditions.
- Updating the masterplan produced by Planit IE to reflect the proposed business model.
- Drafting the business case based on the work completed to date and positioning it into a compelling case for public investment including work on benefit capture.
- Developing and submitting the planning application.
- Identifying assets that can be used as collateral and defining the contractual relationship between the Council and the 'Project Company' to ensure assets can be used to secure debt funding and social investment.

Table 5.2: Minewater Heat Network



Project Name: Minewater Heat Network

Timescales for delivery



21/22 Full Business Case22/23 Trial Boreholes24/25 Development of full network

Estimated project cost



£18.7m - £24.7m (depending on which scenario is taken forward)

Towns Fund ask



£4m

Rationale for Towns Fund investment



The upfront costs to drive the borehole and extract water to test the feasibility of the system are prohibitive for operators without public investment presenting a classic market failure. With Towns Fund investment the project can prove its viability and deliver the expected 4MW of heat to local premises through a network around the town centre. This low carbon approach to sustainable energy is innovative in the UK and of national significance in terms of proving the concept and understanding viability concerns for other potential similar projects. The project has potential to act as a catalyst to further green growth in Oldham as the network is developed but this won't happen without the market failure viability gaps being addressed.

Project description



The project aims to develop a district heat network in the town centre that extracts heat from water in disused flooded mines underneath Oldham town centre. This heat can be captured through heat pumps and transported around the town centre via pipes to businesses and homes, creating a totally renewable heat sourced from the comparatively warm mineworkings that are prevalent below. Once fully operational, the project will deliver 4MW of heat to Council-owned buildings (including Spindles Town Square shopping centre), Oldham Leisure Centre and newly built new homes in the town centre.

This project will build on the existing St. Mary's District heat network in Oldham that currently provides 1.5MW of heat and hot water to around 1,400 homes (around 1.5% of homes in the borough).

The first stage of this project – for which Towns Fund funding is sought – is the construction of trial boreholes to prove the mine-water temperature, flow capacity, chemical content and depth are in line with desk-based feasibility studies produced by the Coal Authority. Subject to the borehole work being positive, the network will be commercially viable (thus attracting private sector investment) as there is an existing heat network in place that can switch energy supply to geothermal.

Converting abandoned minewater into a sustainable heat source supports the Council's ambitions for carbon neutrality by 2038 and addresses climate change. The project will also contribute to the wider regeneration of the town centre through providing a fixed-cost heat source and improve Oldham's attractiveness to investors and residents, support local energy businesses, improve air quality (thus improving health and wellbeing), contribute to reducing fuel poverty for residents and reducing operating costs for businesses, and utilise defunct mines and brownfield land to generate sustainable and renewable heat for businesses and homes, without the need for individual heating systems.

The development of this project is timely, given the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution (announced in November 2020), which focusses on clean energy and innovative technologies, to allow the UK to forge ahead with eradicating its contribution to climate change by 2050, particularly crucial in the run up to the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow next year.

Image overleaf is an illustration of how a district heat network using water from abandoned mines would work.

Rationale for intervention:

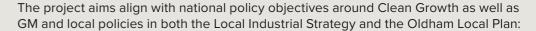


The cost of the test borehole represents a commercial risk as the flow rate and temperature predicted from the desk-based analysis need to be confirmed in practice. This risk deters private investors, and the ask from the Towns Fund will address this market failure.

If the intervention is allowed to proceed through a Towns Fund grant, the following will be achieved:

- Make use of a low-emission and reliable energy source to support post-COVID recovery and clean growth.
- Ensure that the ambitious carbon dioxide emission targets set in Oldham's Local Plan and Green New Deal Strategy are met.
- The Council would not have to rely on a natural gas CHP system, which is a less financially viable and more carbon-intensive solution compared to the proposed intervention.
- · Local Industrial Strategy carbon neutrality targets supported.

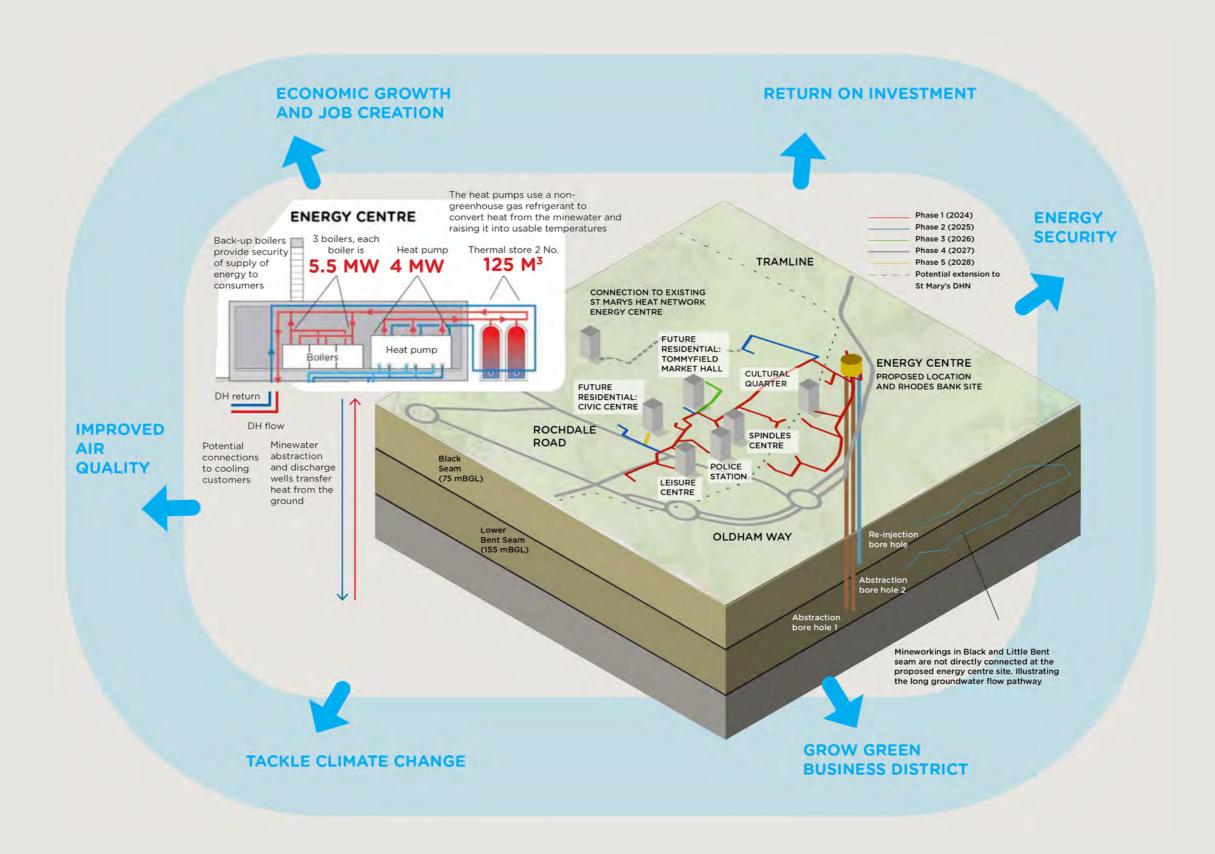
Project aims & objectives





- Climate change support the Council in becoming carbon neutral by 2025, and the Borough by 2030.
- Economic growth provide a fixed-cost heat source and improve Oldham's attractiveness to investors and residents; support local energy businesses.
- Heath & wellbeing reduce harmful nitrogen oxide emissions (responsible for smog and acid rain) to improve health and well-being.
- Energy security build a secure, decentralised and locally-sourced heat network.
- Adressing climate change and supporting clean growth.
- A fixed cost heat network will support reductions in fuel poverty for residents and reduced operating costs for businesses.

Figure 5.3: Illustration of Minewater Heat Network Source: Ramboll



Project costs

£18.7m - £24.7m (depending on which scenario is taken forward).



Benefits



- Cumulative reduction of 43.3 kilotons of CO2, compared to the counterfactual case, over 40 years.
- Local population benefitting from fixed-cost heating, with resulting reduction in fuel poverty and particulate matter pollution.
- Local businesses benefitting from fixed-cost heating and a reliable local energy resource, bringing down overheads.
- Addressing climate change and supporting clean growth.
- Delivers a nationally-significant project addressing climate, economical, and social issues.
- Realises the opportunity presented by the minewater to support alleviation
 of deeply embedded patterns of multiple deprivation around the town
 centre which is ranked in top 10% most deprived areas in England.

Value for money



 A cumulative reduction of 43.3 kilotons of CO₂ over 40 years with the Minewater Heat Network in operation compared to the counterfactual of not having it.

Link to Towns Fund objectives

Urban Regeneration, Planning and Land Use - the proposal aims to utilise defunct mines and brownfield land to generate sustainable and renewable heat for businesses and homes, supporting sustainable development across Oldham, without the need for individual heating systems.



Skills and Enterprise – The creation of a district heat network can support the development of new skills in sustainable heating supply and maintenance, in addition to the potential for downstream businesses and services generated from the network and the broader contribution to Oldham's ambitions to develop as a green borough.

Key partners

The Coal Authority; First Choice Homes; Ramboll



Engagement



A feasibility study for the Minewater Heat Network has recently been completed – this is the first step in identifying potential beneficiaries and stakeholders for the project. The study recommended for the next stage of work to include:

- Starting the stakeholder engagement process along with the Oldham Council
 project team to capture, where possible, actual energy usage data for the buildings
 (existing) and improve the level of information available for future developments. A
 list of stakeholders has been drafted and is included in an Appendix to this TIP.
- Potential engagement and discussions with First Choice Homes regarding appetite for a synergy with Oldham Council.

Next steps



Drafting the business case based on the work completed to date including the inputs from the Coal Authority and positioning it into a compelling case for public investment including work on benefit capture.

Commercialisation stage – finalising of the technical specifications and procurement of all the main contractual arrangements.

Construction stage – installation of the Boreholes, Energy Centre and Distribution Network

Operational stage – delivery of the operational and maintenance services.

- Oldham Council is currently exploring delivery models for this project, and is
 engaging with other councils and organisations around the country who have
 delivered and managed heat networks. This project remains unique however,
 in that it is linking an already existing network with a further intervention.
- Once operational, showcasing the approach and delivery at events, conferences and hosting visits from other towns with abandoned mines beneath them.

"District heating has come a long way since it was first developed and a modern system can provide an efficient, cost-effective and energy secure solution for the buildings in Oldham town centre. From the Council's perspective, a district heat network supplied from renewable minewater heat would be a key piece of anchor infrastructure to deliver both savings on our energy bill and a significant contribution towards the organisation's net zero carbon emissions target for 2025."

Andrew Hunt, Green Energy and Sustainability Manager, Oldham Council

"At First Choice Homes Oldham we know the benefits of district heating. Our district heat network at St Mary's provides affordable warmth to around 1,400 homes in the St Mary's neighbourhood and the single energy centre is a far more efficient way to deliver heat than boilers in individual homes. We are fully supportive of the proposed new low carbon district heat network which the Towns Fund will enable, and as we are currently developing our new Sustainability Strategy, we hope that there could be an opportunity in future to link the new network with our own."

Simon Davies, Energy Efficiency & Sustainability Manager, First Choice Homes Oldham

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Table 5.3: Making Space - For Live Performance



Project Name: Making Space - For Live Performance

Timescales for delivery	Estimated project cost	Towns Fund ask	Location
0-0-0		(E)	
Under development	£16-20m	£16m	84 Union Street

Rationale for Towns Fund investment

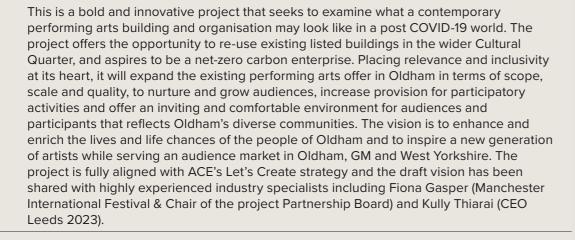
This will be a key anchor for performance and cultural activities in Oldham, which can only be delivered through public investment, and working closely with partners across many sectors. Arts, culture and creativity will play a significant role in rebuilding our communities in a post COVID-19 world. It is envisaged this new centre will be a key economic and social driver and will hold service to its community at its core.



Town centre theatre developments in northern England are essential in providing the rich mix of activities that local populations desire and are key to making town centres more attractive. However, there is a need for public investment to address the funding viability gap which is inevitable. This can be seen in recent developments such as Chester Storyhouse's £37.2m development (Arts Council England £3m, Cheshire West & Chester Council £33m, MBNA (Bank of America £1.2m) and Prescot's Shakespeare North Playhouse currently under construction with an estimated cost of £27.7m (Knowsley Council £12.2m, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority £10.5m, National Government £5m). Towns Fund investment provides a means of addressing the viability funding gap given that Oldham Council and its partners do not have resources available to invest in this project.

Project description

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Rationale for intervention

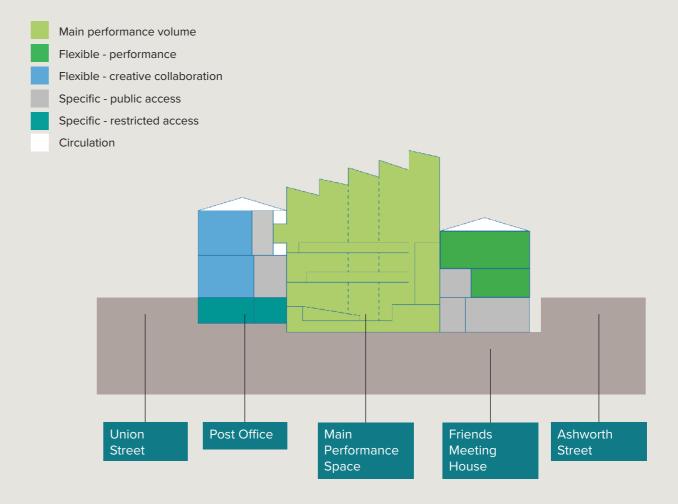


The current Oldham Coliseum Theatre – a cultural anchor institution in the borough - is no longer fit for modern audience needs. Spaces are constrained, it is restricted in terms of how the space can be used and, structurally, is nearing the end of its lifespan.

This project will provide a new, fit-for-purpose performance space in the town centre that meets modern requirements and provides additional, flexible, creative arts and performance spaces. Cultural institutions and provision in town centres are important elements of the dynamic offer that attracts visitors and increases the time spent in town centres. This project safeguards the role the Coliseum Theatre has played in Oldham for decades while positioning the provision for modern needs. This project is essential to supporting town centre diversification and the planned residential growth in the town centre.

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Figure 5.4: Illustrative concept diagram for Making Space - For Live Performance Source: Mort MacDonald



Project aims & objectives



This is an ambitious, innovative and exciting project that has, and will continue to be influenced by the many changes that have taken place across the world as a result of the pandemic and other societal challenges such as inequality. The project will seek to build new models of cultural delivery providing a ground-breaking cultural enterprise for Oldham. The new space will be a centre of excellence for professional theatre production and a welcoming and exciting hub of for a range of community engagement and participatory activities. It offers a new and better located theatre with increased opportunities to engage all communities in the borough and beyond.

- The scope and scale of the theatre programme will expand, offering opportunities for audience growth, both in the main auditorium and the new studio theatre, offering a programme of both established work and new writing, supported by a programme of music and dance.
- The new studio theatre will provide a major opportunity to diversify cultural production and to engage with new audiences. Offering opportunities to amplify and celebrate the work of local writers and creative artists.
- The potential to deliver an augmented programme of activities centred on learning and engagement, both in a formal education setting and through informal learning, both at the theatre and across communities.
- Boosting the night-time economy in Oldham and the supporting the work of the Greater Manchester Night-Time Economy Task Force (formed in 2019) with support from the Night-Time Economy Adviser for GM, Sacha Lord.

Project costs



The project budget, including fees, is estimated to be between £16m and £20m.²² This cost estimate reflects the proposed plans to deliver a mixed performance development that incorporates a performance space as well collaboration and service space.²³

Costs reflect an environmentally aware design embracing low carbon principles and aspiration to achieve a net-zero carbon operation.

Benefits

Economic



 The new performance space safeguards 30 jobs and £863,010 in GVA per annum. Depending on the offer at the new building, there is potential to increase the number of jobs and GVA directly linked to the theatre.

- Beyond these direct benefits, Oldham Coliseum Theatre currently boosts the local economy with an economic impact of around four times its spend through direct and indirect effects.
- Previous studies highlight the indirect benefits from public transport spend and expenditure at nearby restaurants, pubs, bars and shops.

Social

- Individual development increasing opportunities for residents to become involved as attenders and participants and contributing to their confidence and aspiration.
- **Social capital** interactions between stakeholders, partners, audiences, participants and lifelong learners reinforcing the theatre as a place of understanding and exchange.
- **Sector partnerships** engendering stronger industry partnerships with organisations and individuals.
- Improved educational attainment the education programme will work more effectively with the formal education sector.²⁴

Wider social and community benefits

- The project will make a significant contribution to enhancing the vitality of the town centre, supporting and increasing footfall.
- The provision of a cultural, leisure and entertainment offer is recognised as an important factor in the ability of towns and cities to attract and retain residents and encourage return visitors.
- Media impact and Borough profile the increase in the number, range and quality of shows, events and exhibitions as a result of the development will attract media coverage, which will in turn promote Oldham to potential new visitors whilst further encouraging return visits from all sub-sectors of society.
- The development is likely to have a positive impact on the profile of adjacent regeneration initiatives and other developments.²⁵
- Increasing capacity at a local and regional level will provide the Borough with a vibrant artistic centre, bringing together diverse cultural activities.²⁶
- The project builds on Oldham's heritage and enhances its sense of place and unique offering in GM.

Value for money



The new performance space safeguards 30 jobs and £863,010 in GVA per annum. Depending on the offer at the new building, there is potential to increase the number of jobs and GVA. Beyond these direct benefits, Oldham Coliseum Theatre currently boosts the local economy with an economic impact of around four times its spend through direct and indirect impacts.

Link to Towns Fund objectives

Urban Regeneration, Planning and Land Use – The project will create a new contemporary theatre, arts and cultural space through the redevelopment of existing vacant buildings to aid in the ongoing process of regenerating Oldham town centre.

Skills and Enterprise – The creation of an expanded venue offering expansive floorspace capable of hosting a range of education, skills and training activities linked with theatrical performance and the creative arts, but also on a range of other subjects.

Engagement



Due to the final ratification requirements of the project location, no direct community engagement has so far taken place. However, the vision and architectural study has been informed by broader sector specific engagement and collaboration including: Oldham Coliseum Theatre's Senior Management Team and Board of Trustees; Senior Council Arts and Cultural Officers including Oldham Theatre Workshop; and a range of independent artists and cultural leaders.

Key partners



Arts Council England; Bennetts Associates; Oldham Coliseum Theatre; Oldham Theatre Workshop; plus, numerous specialist cultural and theatre groups.

Next steps



- Conduct an updated economic impact assessment, calculating the potential wider economic benefits associated with this project.
- Carry out extensive community and sector-specific engagement.
- Continue to develop the site masterplan.
- Draft the business case based on the work completed to date and position it into a compelling case for public investment including work on benefit capture.
- Develop a Council-led delivery model to undertake this project.

Figure 5.5: The Old Post Office on Union Street, the site for this project Source: Oldham Council



Figure 5.6: Impression from Oldham Gardens Source: Bennetts Associates



Figure 5.7: Impression from Greaves Street. Source: Bennetts Associates



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Project Name: Flexible Workspace

Timescales for delivery:



Under development by Oldham Council and its property advisers. This project will be delivered alongside, but separate from, Oldham Council's office relocation.

Estimated project cost:



£8m

Towns Fund ask:



£6m

Rationale for Towns Fund investment



A lack of space for entrepreneurism to be supported and grow has held back diversification and growth in Oldham's business base. The purchase of Spindles Shopping Centre by Oldham Council creates an opportunity for the space to be repurposed and additional office space for enterprise development to be introduced at the heart of the town centre and in what will become a multi-use building. Oldham Council is also planning to move its corporate offices into Spindles, the cost of which will be borne by the Council. The Flexible Workspace project is a separate project and the cost of refurbishing the space for enterprise and innovation activity is sought from Towns Fund. The total cost for refurbishment of the Spindles is estimated at £8m of this required for the Flexible Workspace element. Recent research by Keppie Massie confirmed that Oldham has an office portfolio that is of lower grade stock deriving lower rental values than GM. The private sector will not provide this type of opportunity in Oldham at present and Towns Fund investment allows market failure to be overcome and a market to be created for this type of space. Latent demand for flexible, high quality office space from the digital and creative sectors is reported by MIDAS, Greater Manchester's investment agency, and experience from the 2008 recession suggests that an entrepreneur-led recovery can be expected from the COVID-19/ EU-Exit-fuelled recession we are entering and the Flexible Workspace will provide space for entrepreneurism.

Project description



The Flexible Workspace project is designed to support entrepreneurism, tap into latent demand in the creative & digital sectors and provide space for the new enterprises to be created in Oldham linked to the green economy, for example from the Minewater Heat Network and Northern Roots as well as other firms attracted to the area by its green credentials and cooperative ideals. With its own 'front door' and access point it will be located in the repurposed Spindles Shopping Centre and offer a flexible space, with flexible letting terms and an environment with more collaboration space than traditional office space. It will be marketed to start-ups, micro-enterprises, social enterprises, small businesses and larger, more established, businesses looking for agile workspace. Oldham has nothing similar and this is an opportunity to inject new vitality to the local office market and respond to demands in a post-COVID-19 environment.

Rationale for intervention:



Oldham struggles to attract investors and occupiers for office space due to its outmoded stock and strong competition from Manchester city centre. The office market in Oldham is small, characterised by dated stock and dominated by public sector occupiers for many years (including Oldham Council currently seeking to rationalise its office use). Available office stock is of low grade, second hand quality which is reflected in low rental levels and is impacting upon both the ability to attract and retain occupiers seeking good quality space and constraining the financial viability of delivering new built office space. Oldham also faces competition from the development of sub-regional Enterprise Zones (e.g. Airport City Enterprise Zone) offering business rate discounts and enhanced capital allowances. The rationale for intervention is therefore to address market failure and support creation of a new market that refelcts changing working practices in a post-COVID-19 environment where smaller towns and satellite offices have advantages over prime city centre locations.

The impacts of COVID-19 notwithstanding, office space is still very much part of the culture of many companies as a space where innovation takes place, which isn't always possible remotely or virtually. Many digital companies in particular are looking for coworking, flexible space where they can interact with other like-minded companies. Many companies are re-designing their spaces to allow the office to become somewhere where employees come to meet and collaborate rather than just sit at a desk and work. With this is mind, this project will incorporate meeting space into the design and use this as a destination for tech events and meet ups in Oldham to particularly encourage a more collaborative digital community in the area.

Flexibility and agility are going to be crucial for office working and office workers. In a recent review by KKS Savills (July 2020) it was noted that 89% of respondents 'believed the office will remain a necessity' and that isolation due to home working is resulting in mental health issues and a lack of confidence, especially in younger workers. A balanced approach of office-based, with more human contact, and home-based working allows individuals to shape their working week and boost productivity levels. The Flexible Workspace project will be designed to accommodate this pattern and have a design ethos that enhances worker's wellbeing. This will be a key attractor to the space, companies looking for flexible terms and flexible space will find this in Oldham town centre.

There is also some emerging evidence that as a result of COVID-19, an increase in homeworking and people staying 'local' for shopping or recreational needs (due to regional lockdowns) is leading to an increase in footfall in secondary towns and cities. This in turn is fuelling an increase in demand for local property, with regional and satellite locations recording the biggest increases.



Project aims & objectives



- The Flexible Workspace will provide modern, adaptable, office space in the heart
 of the town centre, contributing to the diversification of activity in Oldham's retail
 core and providing an opportunity for the repurposing of an existing building.
- The Flexible Workspace will addess under-utilisation in Oldham's existing built stock and introduce a new product to the office market that will support growth in the economy from micro and small businesses in futureoriented sectors. Its existence will stimulate further market interest and encourage private sector investment in the town centre.
- The Flexible Workspace can be the focal point for new ways of working in sectors new to the town that have longevity. It also demonstrates Oldham's ambition to deliver innovation driven growth through providing attractive space for young entrepreneurs and those new to entrepreneurship in a supportive environment with coworking space that is affordable and encourages new business to thrive, grow and collaborate.
- The Flexible Workspace will provide a mix of coworking space, start-up space and grow-on space to support flourishing ideas and business growth.
- Oldham's 2019 Local Economic Assessment noted there were 7,295 business (an increase of 1,000 since 2015) with a high proportion of microbusinesses (<9 employees) and an increasing rate of start-up businesses and entrepreneurial capital (42 per 10,000 population compared to 57 per 10,000 for England). The Flexible Workspace project will support this growth and provide a focus for entrepreneurial activity.

Project costs



- The Flexible Workspace project is being brought forward as part of a wider package
 that will see Oldham Council relocate from its current base at the Civic Centre
 into the repurposed Spindles Shopping Centre. This is being driven by the Civic
 Centre no longer being fit for purpose and the desire to reuse the Spindles for a
 more dynamic range of uses at the heart of the town centre than at present.
- The Council and its property advisers are managing the relocation and the refurbishment of part of Spindles for office use. At present the total cost is £8m and work is ongoing to refine this and will continue through the business case phase into 2021.
- The Council is seeking £6m as part of this overall cost to bring forward the Flexible Workspace element of the scheme which would be for rent to private businesses and individuals and managed separately from the rest of the office space at Spindles.
- The balance of costs will be covered by Oldham Council.

Benefits



This project will:

- Provide a new offer to the office market in Oldham town centre; one that is modern and attractive.
- Provide a supportive space for entrepreneurism to grow and flourish, strengthening the already growing microenterprise strand of the local economy.
- Support creative & digital and green economy enterprise along with more traditional enterprises in a business environment that fosters collaboration.
- Send a clear signal to the market that development of this nature can successed in Oldham thereby encouraging downstream investment from the private sector in other schemes.
- A recent OBI survey (September 2020) of businesses in Manchester revealed that 40% of respondents were concerned about the commute to the city as part of the return to the office post-COVID-19. This supports the view that smaller and satellite towns in a conurbation are well placed to capture some displaced demand for office working but on an agile basis and the Flexible Workspace project can satisfy this demand.

"The Towns Fund investment bid / success will be critical for the development of high quality grade "A" office space within the town centre, attracting a variety of new businesses from further afield including Manchester city centre, in turn generating increased footfall for the remainder of the town centre regeneration proposals."

Adnan Yousaf, The Cross Group

Link to Towns Fund objectives



Urban Regeneration, Planning and Land Use - The Office Space project will support the Towns Fund's objectives to deliver economic growth as the site will ensure Oldham is a thriving place for people to work.

Skills and Enterprise – The creation of modern, flexible Grade A office space will provide a supportive environment for entrepreneurship that is not elsewhere available in Oldham. This will benefit new start, microenterprise and small businesses and will conribute to Oldham's increasing stock of private enterprise. This aligns with research by JLL (July 2020) looking at how 'offices will find a new purpose' and outlines three imperatives for post-pandemic resilience: 1) Working remotely, productivity can be affected if the environment and technology are not ideal; 2) Rethinking the office as a social hub, 6-in-10 employees have missed some aspect of working in an office and a mix of working remotely with some time in the office is seen as the emerging solution; 3) Providing highly personalised and human experiences so that offices are meeting places with comfortable collaboration spaces and soft furnishings to create a more humanized approach.

Engagement



Due to Oldham Council's recent purchase of Spindles shopping centre, no direct stakeholder engagement has taken place, as the location for this project was unconfirmed until that point. However, the need to make Oldham a better place to work and the need for Grade A office space has been highlighted by previous engagement activity.

Key partners



 MIDAS; Manchester Growth Company; Chamber of Commerce; Oldham Enterprise Trust; Upturn Enterprise Ltd; HACK / Create Oldham

Next steps



- Oldham Council and its property advisers are currently considering delivery models and management options as part of a detailed review to feed into business case preparation.
- Oldham Council and its property advisers are undertaking a market assessment exercise but given that the Spindles shopping centre was purchased in October 2020 this is ongoing.
- Oldham Council and its property advisers are considering how the space could be managed and the rental levels for different levels of service required by occupiers which will be finalised in the business case



"The Oldham Town Investment Plan (TIP) recognises the drastic changes the COVID-19 pandemic has had on people's personal and professional lives and as a result, their relationships with the office. Despite a vast array of people working from home over recent months, it is now clear that the office environment is far from redundant but rather needs re-imagining to suit the needs of businesses and employees post-pandemic. The Oldham TIP will help to enhance the town's enterprise offer, complementary to that of [Manchester] city centre, and help meet the developing needs of the investor market."

Tim Newns, CEO of MIDAS (Manchester's Inward Investment Agency)

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Project name: Relocating Tommyfield Market

Timescales for delivery

Estimated project cost





Under development by Oldham Council and its property advisers



£8-10m



£7m

Rationale for Towns Fund investment



Tommyfield Market is not meeting modern customer requirements and traders have expressed excitement about the proposed moved to the Spindles shopping centre which would allow for a more modern operation and layout to be provided. The move would release the existing site of Tommyfield Market for conversion to urban parkland in accordance with the Town Centre Vision, but will not deliver a capital receipt sufficient to pay for the relocation. Without Towns Fund investment the relocation would not be able to proceed, resulting in an unsuitable market offer, empty space in Spindles and a delay in delivering the spatial objectives of the town centre Vision. Through Towns Fund investment the reinvigoration of Oldham town centre and reuse of buildings and land for delivery of green growth will be achieved.

Project description





- Create a shopping and eating destination of choice within a welcoming environment that helps to increase the number of visitors.
- Strengthen the independent trading sector in the town centre, thereby promoting entrepreneurship.
- Create an opportunity to increase market footfall by locating in the centre of town within the existing shopping centre.
- Broaden and diversify the market's customer demographic to increase shopper spend and encourage cross-trading with other retail and leisure offers; which in turn will strengthen not only its economic but also its social value within the town.
- Improve perceptions of Oldham amongst residents and visitors.
- Free up the site it currently occupies for the creation of an urban park and new housing development in the town centre in line with stated policy objectives.

Rationale for intervention



A condition survey from November 2018 confirms that the current market hall constructed in the early 1990s has reached the end of its lifespan. Although the hall is the largest covered market offer in the North-West, it is located on a sloping site, meaning that the market hall floor slopes. Furthermore, the internal space lacks adaptability and flexibility, and the potential for re-use/conversion to alternative use is severely limited. The relocation from a space that no longer satisfies trader or shopper requirements is the next stage in the long-term strategic journey for the historical market dating back to 1788. It will realise shared ambitions to reposition and strengthen the future of the market in a sector (retail) that has experienced significant changes in recent years, as developed through regular engagement and consultation with traders and shoppers, and informed by options appraisal / feasibility reports and business plans, since 2014.

Tommyfield Market is an important market that accounts for 80.98% of all Oldham borough market income and, based on footfall data for 2016-2018, attracts 1.1 million visits per annum. In a 2015 ROI team survey, 19% of customers said they would be persuaded to visit more if there were improvements in parking and connectivity near the market, while a greater variety of stalls, more seating, more entertainment and the provision of toilets were considered key required improvements. The desire for more seating areas and cheaper parking were also highlighted as part of a survey by Oldham Council in 2019.

Relocating the market allows for the existing site to be repurposed as an urban park, supporting the residential and greenspace ambitions of Creating a Better Place and the Oldham Town Centre Vision.



"The Towns Fund opportunity comes just as we are seeking to breathe new life into Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre in response to changing consumer trends and community needs. The investment will kickstart the diversification of the traditional retail complex, transforming vacant space into an Flexible Workspace for business and a modern home for Tommyfield Market. Spindles Town Square has been at the heart of the community for 40 years and the bold ambition in this TIP will ensure it remains there for many generations to come."

Mike Flanagan, Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre Manager

"It's exciting news that gives traders a reason to carry on through these tough times. It will be small businesses that will survive and on which we can rebuild the town centre."

Rehan Aslam, Kandy Kingdom

"It's fantastic that we're keeping the market when other towns are losing theirs. A market is important not only for people's livelihoods, but it's also the heart of the town."

Justin Brierley, Brierley's Shoes

"Moving the market hall into the shopping centre makes so much sense. We're on the edge of the town centre at the moment but this will bring us into the centre with the other shops and attractions."

Elaine Rothwell, Best Wishes

Project aims & objectives

The relocation of Tommyfield Market aligns with local Oldham Council objectives (in the Local Plan and the Strategic Investment Framework):



Inclusive Economy objective in the Oldham Plan to make significant progress in wages and skills for everyone. The continuation of the market, and the associated skills offer ensures this remains in place for Oldham.

Delivery of a Cultural Regeneration Programme is a priority for Oldham's Strategic Investment Framework (SIF) to support and enhance existing assets.

Relocating the market will preserve and safeguard the economic contribution it makes to the local economy while providing it with a basis on which to shape a modern offer and increase footfall over time.

Project costs



- The relocation of Tommyfield Market is central to longer term ambitions
 to deliver more residential units in the town centre as the current market
 site can be used for development of an urban park once vacated and
 residential units are proposed for the area around the park.
- The proposal is to relocate the market into the Spindles Shopping Centre. Oldham Council and its property advisers are working to manage the relocation and the refurbishment of part of Spindles for the relocation of the market. At present the total cost range is £8-10m and work is ongoing to refine this and will continue through the business case phase into 2021.
- The Oldham Town Deal Board is seeking £7m as part of this overall cost.

Benefits

Economic



• Tommyfield Market contributes £7.3m per annum and supports an estimated 258 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) jobs in the local economy.²⁷

Social

• Supporting enterprise, community cohesion within markets and promoting community health through fresh produce.

Wider social and community benefits

- This project will make a significant contribution to enhancing the vitality of the town centre
- · Produce grown and goods made at Northern Roots will be sold at the new market.

Value for money



Maintaining current economic activity (currently estimated to be £7.3m in GVA per annum and supporting 258 FTEs).

Link to Towns Fund objectives:



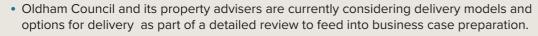
Urban Regeneration, Planning & Land Use – The market's relocation will enable wider town centre regeneration by freeing up an existing site for residential units and a linear urban park, in line with Creating a Better Place and ongoing works to refresh the Oldham Town Centre Vision, Local Plan ambitions and support subsequent creation of an urban park on the site of the current market. The market relocation will also allow the market to modernise its offer and continue serving its customers for many years to come and attract footfall into the town centre as it does so.

Engagement:



As demonstrated on the engagement timeline in Section 7, engagement with traders is regular and ongoing, and relocation has been contemplated and discussed for several years due to changes in the retail sector. Oldham Council engages regularly with the Tommyfield Market Traders' Association.

Next steps





- Oldham Council and its property advisers are undertaking a market assessment exercise but given that the Spindles shopping centre was purchased in October 2020 this is ongoing.
- Oldham Council is undertaking consultation and engagement with market traders following purchase of the Spindles Shopping Centres in November 2020.

Figure 5.8: This project will safeguard the future of a historical market and release the site of the current market hall for future redevelopment incorporating an urban linear park and residential units. The addition of green space to the heart of the urban environment will set Oldham apart from other towns in GM, whilst more housing will generate dynamism, establish the town as destination of choice, and increase footfall to businesses while also delivering against what local people have said they want – a greener town centre.

Source: Planit IE

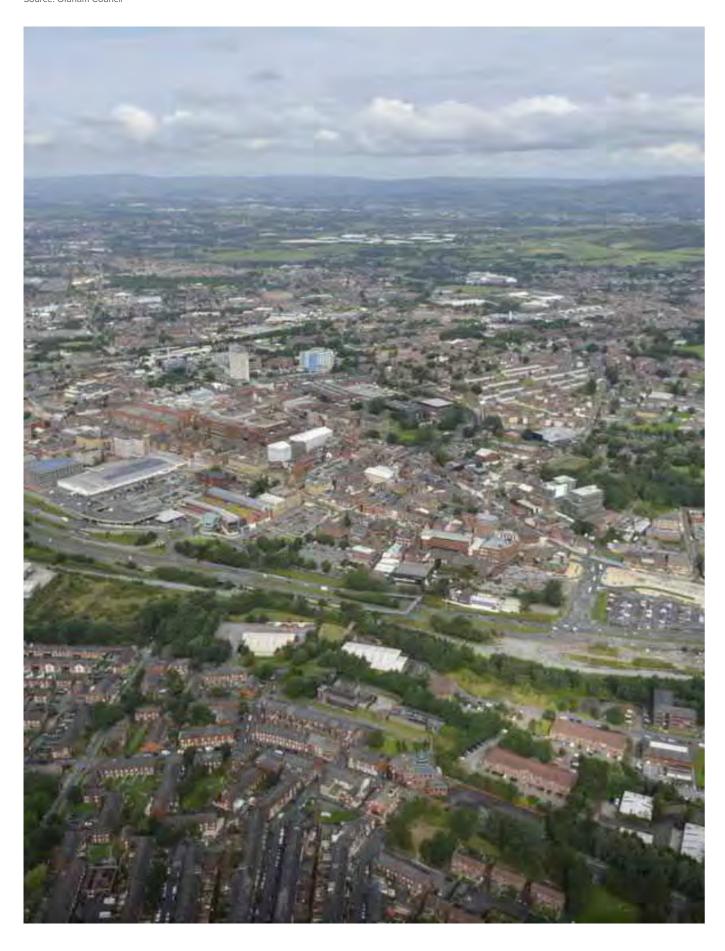


Kandy Kingdom and Cob and Coal Tap traders, Tommyfield Market Source: Oldham Council





Oldham, where town meets countryside Source: Oldham Council



5.6 Impact areas of projects

All of the projects have significance and relevance locally. Figure 5.11 also considers where they have significance at the regional level (GM and North West) and the national level. This is a bold and exciting project, and one that aims to reimagine the way arts and culture is delivered and consumed across all our communities. The project will repurpose the old Post Office and former Quaker Meeting House to create a highly innovative and unique cultural enterprise. The project will enshrine Net Zero carbon design, alongside an operating model which will seek new ways to ensure all of Oldham's diverse communities benefit from this project. This innovative, vision-led approach to deliver cultural services has the potential to become an exemplar of best practice for similar ventures around the country in a post COVID-19 world.

Figure 5.9: Mapping projects against geographical significance Source: Mott MacDonald

Project	Local	Regional		National
		GM	NW	
Northern Roots				
Minewater Heat Network				
Making Space - For Live Performance				
Flexible Workspace				
Relocating Tommyfield Market				

The Making Space - For Live Performance project is regionally significant given it serves a GM and North West audience and supports the GM Cultural Strategy and the activities of the GM Night-Time Economy Task Force. The existing theatre is notable for being one of the few repertory theatres in the North West (i.e. it has a resident company) and its activities would continue and expand in the new space. The provision of a cultural, leisure and entertainment offer is also recognised as an important factor in the ability of towns and cities to attract and retain residents, and the increase in the number, range and quality of shows, events and exhibitions as a result of the development will attract media coverage, which will in turn promote Oldham to potential new visitors whilst further encouraging return visits.

The Minewater Heat Network aligns with national and regional policy objectives around clean growth and, with the potential to link up with another similar Towns Fund project in County Durham, it has potential to be of national significance. Its alignment to national and regional policy objectives includes:

- Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the Future (2017) supports interventions for the UK to become the world's most innovative economy and maintain position as global science and innovation leader.
- The Clean Growth Strategy (2017) prioritises delivering clean, smart and flexible power, phasing out the use of unabated coal by 2025.
- Greater Manchester's Local Industrial Strategy (2019) targets carbon neutrality by 2038, including creating a new green industry in Oldham to deliver significant carbon reductions.
- Greater Manchester's Our People, Our Place Strategy (2019) envisages a green city-region and a high-quality culture and leisure offer for all, with reduced carbon emissions and air pollution.
- Greater Manchester's Five-Year Environment Plan (2019) highlights the need for increasing renewable electricity generation, decarbonising the heating of buildings and diversifying the supply of energy.

Northern Roots is nationally significant given its potential to link modern and historic green infrastructure provision to form the country's largest urban park supporting green entrepreneurism and clean growth along with local recreational provision. Specific alignments with national and regional policy include:

- The Culture White Paper (2016) Priority 2 states that the riches of our culture should benefit communities across the country through using green landscapes effectively and sustainably.
- Environmental Land Management Scheme mentions the importance of: biodiversity net gain; nature recovery networks; carbon sequestration; and woodland creation.
- Greater Manchester's Local Industrial Strategy (2019) will encourage increased walking and cycling. There is an opportunity for Northern Roots to be a part of this network.
- Greater Manchester's Our People, Our Place Strategy (2019) sets out ambitions for a green cityregion with more sustainable consumption and production and an outstanding natural environment.
- Greater Manchester's Five-Year Environment Plan (2019) mentions the importance of the natural environment, managing land and water resources sustainably and increasing investment in the natural environment.
- Northern Roots has also generated interest from a range of national-level funding opportunities, including Heritage Lottery, Sport England and DEFRA.

6. Oldham's strategic plan

6.1.Objectives, targets, and priority areas for Oldham

The Council's plans for Oldham – the objectives, targets and priority areas in the short, medium and long term – are summarised in the table below. In many cases, these plans are directly linked to regional objectives, so a GM picture is also provided.

Table 6.1: Objectives, targets, and priority areas with links to Oldham's Towns Fund targets Source: Oldham – Town Centre Framework & Development Sites – Initial Study (2020)

Priority area	Objective	Targets	Links to Towns Fund projects		
		Short	Medium	Long	
Attracting, retaining and growing businesses	Providing opportunities to grow local businesses and create jobs	Increases the footfall in the town centre Increases the office and service sector space Offers a quality shopping experience accessible to all	Decreases the number of voids in the town centre Increases job opportunities and skills	Supports an increase in residents earning the living wage Increases investment in creative and digital sectors	Flexible Workspace Relocating Tommyfield Market Northern Roots Making Space - For Live Performance
Exploiting opportunities to learn, develop new skills and gain employment	Providing opportunities to learn & gain new skills	Increases footfall in the town centre Increases access to work experience and jobs	Provides strong links between education and business Provides a coordinated and successful town centre education campus	Provides quality Lifelong Learning Increases healthy opportunities for young people to access in the town centre	 Flexible Workspace Northern Roots Minewater Heat Network Making Space - For Live Performance
Being green	Green New Deal The importance of green open space in alignment with Council priorities to become the greenest borough.	Increases the access to integrated public transport Increases footfall Increases dwell time	 Increases purposeful green and open spaces Has low carbon / zero energy building and energy supply 	Sets a high clean street standard	Northern Roots Minewater Heat Network Relocating Tommyfield Market

Priority area	Objective	Targets	Links to Towns Fund projects		
		Short	Medium	Long	
Having a diverse cultural, leisure and night time economy	Enticing night- time economy and enhanced safety / security to instigate the catalytic transformation of the town centre	Increases the footfall in the town centre Increases dwell time by people visiting the town centre	 Supports an increase in tourism opportunities Gives a wider choice of activity for all residents and visitors Provides the opportunity to make the town centre a destination of choice 	Helps lead to an increase in job opportunities Showcases heritage assets within the town centre	Making Space For Live Performance Northern Roots
Providing a safe, healthy and friendly environment Improving life-chances and the health / well-being of residents and local communities	Improving life- chances and the health / well-being of residents and local communities	 Ensures a fully accessible town centre that is easy to navigate Increases footfall and dwell time Decreases road traffic Enables Active Streets 	 Increases public perception and enhances image Decreases the opportunities for crime to take place Fully enables inclusive initiatives and events Increases the opportunities for Get Oldham Growing 		Making Space For Live Performance Northern Roots Flexible Workspace
Building quality homes	To create 2,000+ new homes for residents with a range of different budgets and needs.	 Increase the footfall in the town centre Support an increase in the town centre leisure offer Decrease anti- social behaviour 	Give a wider choice of residential options for all	 Increase the population living in the town centre Increase the number of young people staying in the borough 	Relocating Tommyfield Market

Several of Oldham's Towns Fund projects also have links to regional ambitions for GM, as set out in the table below.

Table 6.2: Greater Manchester – priority areas, objectives and targets Source: Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy (2019)

Priority area	Priority area Objective Targets				Links to Towns Fund projects	
		Short	Medium	Long		
Clean growth Greater Manchester's 5-year Environment Plan sets out its long- term environmental vision "to be carbon neutral by 2038.Government welcomes this locally led mission, which will support the delivery of the government's Clean Growth Grand Challenge.		Tackle poor air quality Accelerate new models of local renewable energy generation Design and trial innovative technology and financial mechanisms to support delivery of energy efficient homes, buildings and low carbon transport	 Deliver environmental improvements that directly enhance well-being, health, resilience, biodiversity and quality of life, including by enhancing the natural capital of the city-region Support Greater Manchester enterprises to accelerate the implementation of energy and material efficiency measures in the design and production of products and services through the Growth Hub and local partners' activity. 	Achievement of carbon neutrality by 2038	Northern Roots Minewater Heat Network	
Transport system and connectivity	Improve transport system performance through rail devolution, bus reform, trialling tram-trains, continuing to expand the city- region's walking and cycling infrastructure, and changing regulations to promote a cleaner, more efficient and integrated transport system	Develop an Infrastructure Plan for the city-region and identify sources of sustainable, long-term local investment, to sit alongside devolved funding streams, to fund the delivery of the Plan. Develop a roadmap for digital-led innovations that enable better coordination of the transport system.	Radically improve connectivity with other UK cities through High Speed 2, continue developing Greater Manchester as the global 'Gateway to the North' through the Manchester Airport Transformation Programme, and work through Transport for the North to deliver the growth case for Northern Powerhouse Rail.	Supporting low carbon transport methods to support clean growth targets	• Northern Roots	
Digital, Creative and Media	Greater Manchester will be a leading European digital city-region, with the infrastructure, skills, and networks needed to digitalise all sectors, and internationally significant clusters in broadcasting, content creation and media, and cyber security.	 Revitalise town centres and high streets by supporting creatives, digital entrepreneurs, and innovators to start or scale a business, social or cooperative enterprise. Grow existing and emerging sector strengths in cyber security, broadcasting, content creation and media, software development, digital telecoms, fintech and e-commerce. 	 Full fibre coverage by 2033 and full roll-out of 5G technologies for most people by 2027 Underpin cross sectoral growth by developing a digital skills pipeline and taking a Made Smarter approach to all industries, supporting firms across Greater Manchester to adopt productivity-enhancing digital technologies Transform the local economy and public services by digitally enabling citizens and making more publicly held real-time open data available for anyone to use. 	Sustain and grow the internationally significant digital, media and creative industry clusters in the regional centre.	Flexible Workspace Making Space - For Live Performance	

Priority area	Objective	Targets	Links to Towns Fund projects		
		Short	Medium	Long	
Health Innovation • Greater Manchester aims to lead the UK and the world in the roll-out of innovative new health and care solutions improving local population health. • Continue using devolved health and social care arrangements to act as a test-bed for large scale clinical and med-tech trials		 Lead the transformation of health and care systems to respond to the needs of an ageing population Capitalise on the broader economic and innovation potential of demographic change by creating a city-region test-bed to trial close-to-market goods and services for older people Through the Greater Manchester Ageing Hub, link the Greate Manchester health and care innovatio pipeline to global econom opportunities around healthy ageing 		Northern Roots Minewater Heat Network	
Advanced Materials and Manufacturing	• Greater Manchester will aim to be a world- leading region for innovative firms to experiment with, develop and adopt advanced materials and Made Smarter technologies in manufacturing, facilitating the design of new products and processes. It will support other national centres to build the UK's leadership in tomorrow's technologies.	Strengthen the city-region's advanced materials and manufacturing clusters Develop an ecosystem to commercialise graphene and other advanced materials for the benefit of the Greater Manchester and UK economy	Develop 'Advanced Materials City' in the M62 North East Growth Corridor, focused on opportunities in Greater Manchester's manufacturing base	Improve productivity in Greater Manchester's manufacturing base by adopting Made Smarter approaches to accelerating the development, design, adoption and creative application of digital technologies	Flexible Workspace

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6.1.2 How do Towns Fund projects fit with Oldham's strategic plans?

These five projects have been developed with a careful understanding of the underlying evidence and context, building on Oldham's challenges, strengths and opportunities (set out in Section 2). The rationale for intervention is set out in the project tables above, but summarised below.

- Opportunities for local recreation are important for Oldham's deprived communities as well as being important more generally for all residents in a post-COVID-19 situation. Northern Roots reflects this need and also aligns with Oldham's policy ambitions around clean growth and being a green borough, illustrated through the Green New Deal. Creating opportunities for learning and employment in environmental-related sectors also reflects the Local Industrial Strategy and Oldham Plan 2017-2022.
- The Government's Clean Growth Strategy and Industrial Strategy dovetail with the Local Industrial Strategy, Oldham Plan 2017-2022 and Green New Deal through the **Minewater Heat Network** project. Boosting Oldham's green credentials will also position it as a location for companies considering a location with strong environmental credentials which can further support economic growth. Simultaneously, the project has the potential to reduce heating costs which can reduce operating costs for businesses and help address fuel poverty in areas of disadvantage.
- Knowledge-related and creative sectors of the economy can flourish in town centres where appropriate office space is provided. GM has shown how this can occur in several locations and the provision of Flexible Workspace in Oldham town centre will support the Oldham Plan 2017-

2022, Strategic Investment Framework (2018) and Town Centre Vision, as well as help realise the ambitions in the Local industrial Strategy. Providing space for digital, creative and media start-ups and expanding firms can also support the town centre economy and residential market.

- Arts and culture provision forms part of the offer that makes towns compelling places to visit, and revisit, and also to live in. Making Space - For Live Performance project will improve the town centre offer immensely and is also aligned with the GM Cultural Strategy. There is also an economic dimension as attracting increased footfall to the town centre has spillover effects for other town centre businesses and transport providers creating economic multiplier effects, while the Making Space - For Live Performance will also provide training and employment opportunities itself aligning it with the Oldham Plan 2017-2022 and Town Centre Vision.
- Relocating Tommyfield Market from its existing site supports the Town Centre Vision as it safeguards the economic contribution of the market and allows sites for residential development to be brought to market which are needed to satisfy the longer-term vision for more people living in the town centre. Attracting more people to the town centre will affect the socio-economic profile and drive demand for town centre services, especially from younger residents with more disposable income. This will also allow for the creation of a linear park in the town centre, on site of the existing market, which will enhance the provision of greenspace in Oldham town centre.

These projects have also been developed with regional and local policy and strategy documents in mind. This is summarised in the figure below.



Figure 6.1: Strategic policy alignment with Town Investment Plan projects Source: Mott MacDonald

Regional Policy Local Policy Towns Fund targets Projects Flexible GM Local Industrial Oldham Plan 2017-22 Contribute towards Workspace Strategy (2019) narrowing the Key themes: Clean growth; **Strategic Investment** employment rate Carbon neutrality; Walking & Framework (2018) gap and productivity Cycling; Business environment Objective 6: Create a gap with Greater Manchester, town centre that meets local residents' needs and **Greater Manchester: Our** wants, is a thriving place through creating People, Our Place (2019) for business and attracts opportunities for Minewater Key themes: A green city visitors to the borough skills development Heat region; High quality culture and labour market Objective 5: Ensure Network and leisure offer for all; a participation that Oldham supports thriving economy in GM.; sustainable economic increased inward investment, growth, encourages Actively promote re-purposed town centres enterprise and capitalises with residential development opportunities on new technology for low carbon with a good environment and transport. economic growth Making Space for retail and other uses and sustainable For Live **Green New Deal Strategy** energy production. Component 1: Green Performance Economy, including **Greater Manchester Five-Year** work, skills and business Environment Plan (2019) Capitalise on its engagement Target: Carbon Key themes: increasing location, enhancing neutrality for the council by investment in the natural green infrastructure 2025 and carbon neutrality environment; increasing and ecosystem for the borough by 2030 Northern renewable electricity services to promote Roots generation; decarbonising Oldham as 'the Creating a Better the heating of buildings greenest Borough' Place (2020) Building quality homes; Providing opportunities Link with other **Greater Manchester Work** to grow local businesses kev investments and Skills Strategy (2019) and create jobs; Ensuring to make the town Priority 3: Developing Greater Oldham is the greenest centre a thriving Manchester's work and Relocating borough; Embedding economic and social Tommyfield skills infrastructure to meet sustainability, energy hub, supported by a Market needs of the economy efficiency & low (zero) diverse leisure and carbon; Improving liferecreational offer chances and the health well-being of residents Capital and communities Bring the Acceleration GM Strategy for Culture incorporating the Oldham project countryside into and Creativity Town Centre Vision Property the town and **Priority 1:** create the conditions (2019 - refresh pending) provide space for acquisition for creativity to flourish-Building quality homes; to facilitate the community to develop and support cultural Being green; Attracting, work and spend redevelopment businesses and attractions retaining and growing leisure time in

businesses; Having a

GM Plan for Homes, Jobs,

Vision includes importance

of a productive economy, action on climate change and living healthy lives

and Environment

diverse cultural, leisure

and night-time economy;

Providing a safe, healthy

and friendly environment

urban parkland

6.1.3 Spatial strategy

The Oldham Town Centre Vision seeks to create a thriving town centre that provides a liveable environment for people to live, work and enjoy. It will achieve this through the identification of specific town centre priority areas, designed to address key systemic issues and bring about positive change for the borough on a whole. Ensuring Oldham has the draw to attract, retain and grow businesses is of paramount importance in the Vision and is identified as an area of priority within the town centre. The Town investment Plan reflects the same objectives.

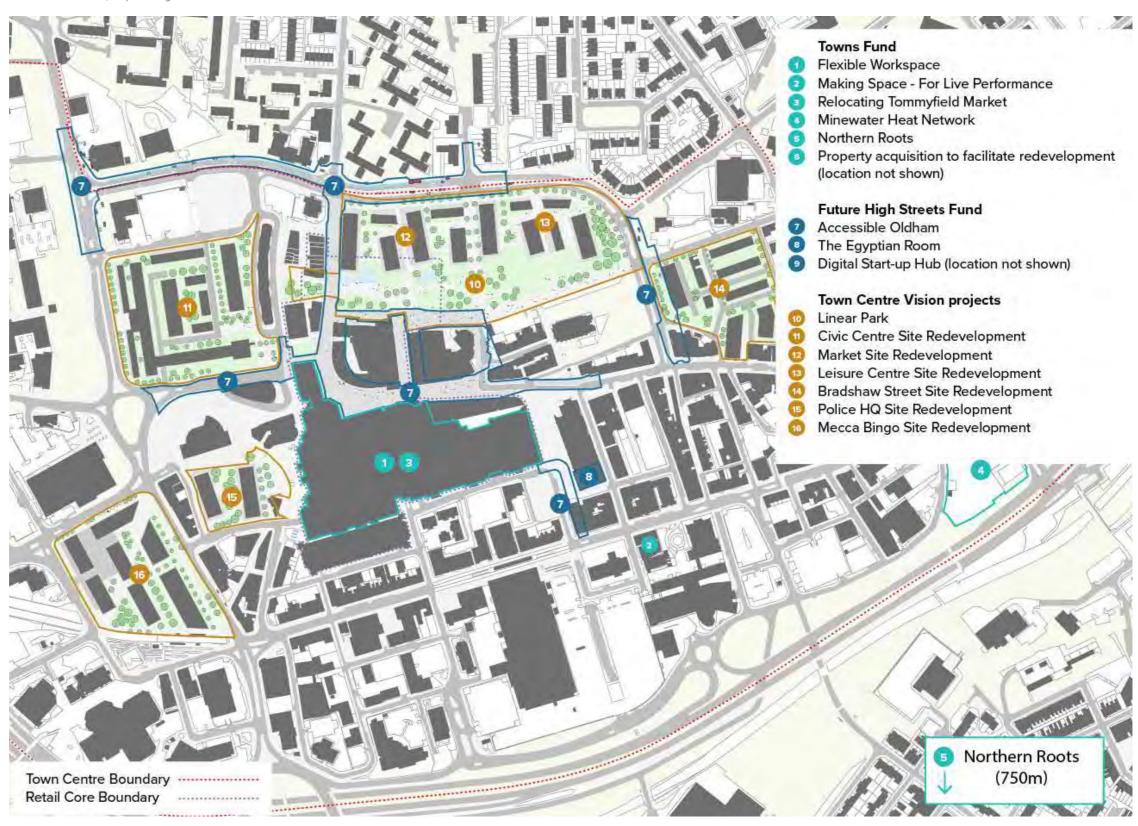
The Vision was informed by previous plans for a town centre masterplan during 2017. One of the main points fed back from public engagement work was that the town centre suffered from a lack of green space. Making the town centre greener subsequently became one of Oldham's Town Centre Vision objectives, aligning with the objective of making the town centre a more desirable place to live in. This Town Investment Plan actions these objectives.

The relocation of Tommyfield Market allows Oldham's vision of a linear park to be advanced and will stimulate the market for residential development around the park. The recent purchase of Spindles Town Square shopping centre creates the opportunity for residential development, as the relocation of Oldham Council from the Civic Centre into refurbished office space in Spindles allows for residential development on the Civic Centre site to follow.

Creating new, modern green space at the heart of the town centre is a worthwhile ambition that will build on Oldham's green heritage (see comments on Alexandra Park in the Northern Roots project summary) and strategic vision through its Green New Deal. It also forms the setting for residential development to occur which supports the combined visions of the Town Centre Vision, Creating a Better Place and this Town Investment Plan.

Oldham town centre is working towards delivery of about 2,700 new dwelling units at high density (1,556 on Town Centre Vision sites and 1,160 on other town centre sites identified for housing). Simultaneously, the town centre offer to residents and visitors is improving. The vision for a compact, walkable, dynamic town centre set within an attractive, green environment is in place; its delivery is beginning and the Town Investment Plan accelerates this.

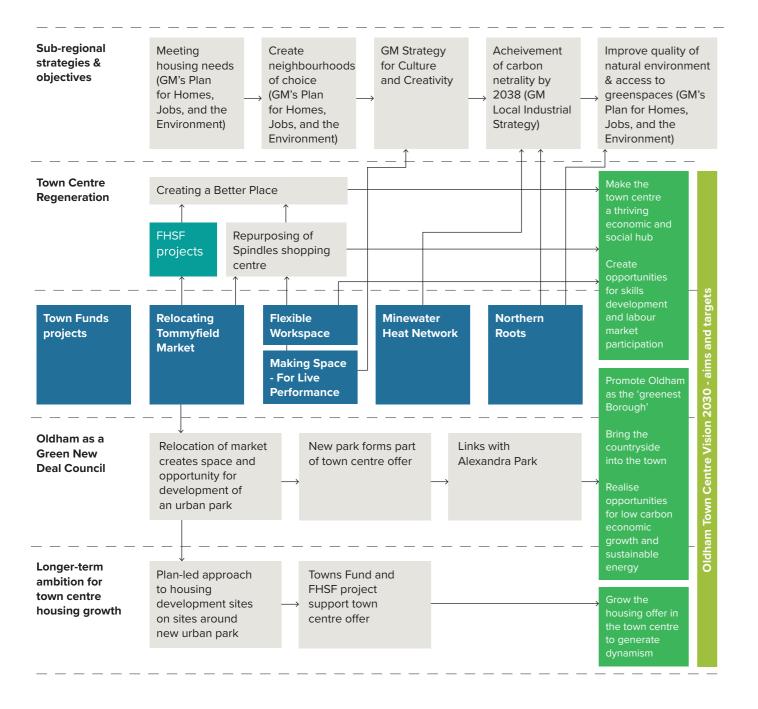
Figure 6.2: Oldham town centre spatial plan Source: Mott MacDonald, Simpson Haugh



6.2 Mapping of all strategies, partnerships, programmes and investments relevant to the vision and strategy

The diagram below illustrates how the Towns Fund projects are linked to other strategies, programmes and investments in Oldham and GM. These interventions will also help support the 2030 vision for Oldham.

Figure 6.3: Link between Towns Fund projects, vision and other interventions Source: Mott MacDonald





Source: Mott MacDonald

Close proximity to Manchester

Reliance on low skilled, low

amenity offer

nearby towns

Legacy of

Weak night-time

Oldham Town Deal Targets to 2030

employment at a higher density in sectors that are more productive

Increased and skills support, for more of its residents to enter the workforce in Oldham

output in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA)

Greater provision of recreational

Comprehensive town centre offer with high quality business space. to drive private sector investment

More housing in the town centre to generate increase footfall to town centre

Developing local transport schemes that complement regional and national networks*

A more detailed depiction of how these projects will help achieve the vision for the Towns Fund - and link with broader policy objectives - is set out in this theory of change model.

Inputs

Public/political stakeholder engagement

Private sector engagement

Support from **Oldham Council**

Project development

Design and architectural support

Business Case development

Obtain direction from MHCLG team

Co-ordination with other emerging

Legal and commercial advice and support

Funding from **Towns Fund**

Northern Roots, UK's largest urban farm and eco-park

Outputs

Boreholes to facilitate the development of a town centre minewater district heat network

Development of a mixed-use, flexible performance space

Provision of Grade A commercial office space in Oldham town centre

Relocation of Tommyfield Market in Oldham town centre

Capital Acceleration project Property acquisition to facilitate redevelopment

Outcomes

Greater accessibility to leisure facilities, cycle network and an eco-park in Oldham

Reduction in energy costs due to the heat network

Greater agricultural production and employment from Northern Roots

Increased tourism offer through provision of camping and glamping sites at Northern Roots

Greater cultural and night time offer from flexible performance

Greater availability of office space in Oldham town centre

Increased activity in the town centre from Tommyfield Market redevelopment

Increased opportunity for employment in Oldham town centre from greater economic activity through office and performance space

Impacts

Short term

Increased footfall in the town centre with an enhanced public perception of the town centre as an attractive and worthwhile place to visit

Increased output to aid recovery from economic effects of COVID-19

Increased evening and night time footfall in Oldham due to the performance space

Increased sustainable energy production from the heat network

Increased revenue for the night time economy bars and restaurants resulting from the performance space in Oldham town centre

Enhanced business environment in Oldham, enabling the town to compete with neighbouring towns and to attract inward investment and an increase in the number of SME startups in the town centre

Medium term

Link with other key investments in Oldham town centre to create a thriving economic and social hub, increasing visitors to the town

Greater employment in the tourism and leisure industry as a result of Towns Fund interventions

Increased employment within the energy sector due to the Heat network

Increased skills and sustainable production of agriculture due to land at Northern Roots

Increasing low carbon economic growth in repurposed buildings and energy efficient offices

Attracting inward investment due to enhanced business environment and leisure offer

Increased revenues for town centre businesses – supporting existing businesses in the town centre

Improved access to quality greenspace

Long term

Diversification of Oldham's economy into high value, service-led sectors resulting from greater, more effective office provision, alongside more low carbon economic output

Reduction in the employment rate gap and productivity gap with Greater Manchester

Increased demand for housing in Oldham, as individuals are attracted and retained due to the more attractive living offer

Modal shift towards sustainable and active modes of travel. for example walking and cycling, for shorter distances due to Northern Roots

Greater ability to retain and attract skilled workers in Oldham town centre by providing public realm enhancements to attract businesses and investment to the town

Greater skills base in Oldham town centre as a result of service-led sector employment directly within Oldham town centre

Improved public health and wellbeing due to an ecopark at Northern Roots

Carbon neutrality by 2038 supported.

Levelling up supported > Oldham > GM > UK

Future-orientated economic growth delivered.

7. Engagement and delivery

7.1 Local business and community engagement

Engagement with local businesses and communities in the preparation of the projects which comprise the TIP has occurred in a number of ways, including through meetings of the Oldham Town Deal Board, wider consultation as part of other plans and strategies being developed by Oldham Council, and on an individual project basis.

7.1.1 Oldham Town Deal Board

The drafting of this TIP has been overseen by the Oldham Town Deal Board, a new body that was created by Oldham Council in February 2020 to deliver the Towns Fund locally. Chaired independently by the Chief Executive of Social Enterprise UK, the Board has been working to develop and agree the TIP, agree a programme of interventions, approve a capacity funding expenditure plan and oversee its delivery, and approve an annual Towns Fund Communications and Marketing Plan and oversee its implementation. In accordance with the Towns Fund Prospectus, Board membership reflects all tiers of local government for Oldham, MPs, the Local Enterprise Partnership, local businesses and investors, community/local voluntary community sector representatives, and other relevant local organisations such as further education colleges and Clinical Commissioning Groups:

Oldham Town Deal Board Membership:

Oldham Council; Northern Care Alliance (Royal Oldham Hospital); Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre; Social Enterprise UK; Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy; Greater Manchester Combined Authority; Artbuilding Projects; Oldham Community Leisure; The Regenda Group; Oldham Coliseum Theatre; NHS Oldham CCG; Action Together; Arts Council England; Pearson Solicitors; Oldham College; Oldham Youth Council; Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership; Oldham Interfaith Forum; Cob and Coal Tap (local business); The Cross Group (local business centre).

The Oldham Town Deal Board has met monthly since its formation in February 2020 and will continue to meet every 4-6 weeks for the foreseeable future. To maintain momentum during the pandemic, the Board has chosen to meet virtually since April 2020, successfully sustaining meeting attendances of 20-30 individuals.



7.1.2 Previously undertaken engagement Oldham level

In October 2019, Oldham Council formed a new Research, Engagement and Consultation team. The team formed in response to the Information and Consultation design and assurance review to deliver and support research, engagement and consultation activity across the Council. Working with a corporate focus, the team has most recently been focussed on a borough-wide resident engagement programme entitled, "Let's Talk Oldham", which engaged around 4,000 residents in the development of the Corporate Plan.

One of the Council's key partners is Action Together, the main capacity-building voluntary, community and faith sector development agency in Oldham. The charity's aim is to develop and promote voluntary action throughout the borough of Oldham in order to meet the needs of diverse local communities. Action Together does this through:

learning and evaluation is undertaken.Accessing and disseminating information

Providing practical support services to voluntary

sector organisations and community groups

• Signposting. This assurance will ensure

involves local people, VCFSE, equality

expertise in all aspects of the lifetime of

the TIP projects and appropriate feedback,

that engagement is meaningful and

Recruiting and supporting volunteers

Action Together is now chairing the Oldham Town Deal Board's Community Engagement

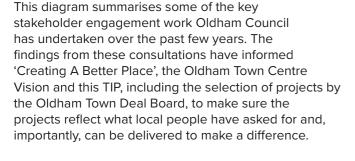
sub-group, as detailed in section 7.1.3.

Identifying funding sources

Through its previous strategy and project development work focused on the town centre, Oldham Council and its partners have undertaken considerable engagement and consultation which has provided the basis to inform this TIP. Key elements of this approach are summarised below:

Table 7.1: Previously undertaken engagement Source: Oldham Council

Plan	Creating a Better Place	Town Centre Vision				
Key themes	Building quality homes	Building quality homes				
	Providing opportunities to learn & gain new skills	Providing opportunities to learn, develop new skills and gain employment				
	Providing opportunities to grow local businesses and create jobs	Having a diverse culture, leisure and night time economy				
	Ensuring Oldham is the greenest borough	Attracting, retaining and growing businesses				
	Embedding sustainability, energy efficiency & low (zero) carbon	Ensuring a safer, healthier, and friendly environment				
	Improving life-chances and the health / well-being of residents and local communities	Ensuring Oldham is green, clean and sustainable				
Who was engaged?	Stakeholders, partners, Council teams and services, elected members, public sector organisations and different voices from local communities	Extensive consultation with Oldham residents has taken place over the last 12-18 months through the development of the Town Centre Vision, the Housing Strategy, the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework, and more recently the Locality Asset Review (linked withthe One Public Estate work), all of which are now formally adopted by Oldham Council.				
Engagement events	Consultation has included face to face meetings, drop-in events, postal survey (to 15,000 residents of the borough), workshops, engagement meetings, briefing sessions, and stakeholder events.					
Result of engagement	The findings of the engagement process has shaped the vision and strategy in these documents – they reflect what local people have asked for. For exmaple more greenspace in the town centre and a more diverse town centre.					
	Oldham Council has now allocated resources t and is working with partners to shape delivery.					



TfGM Town Centre Perception Survey

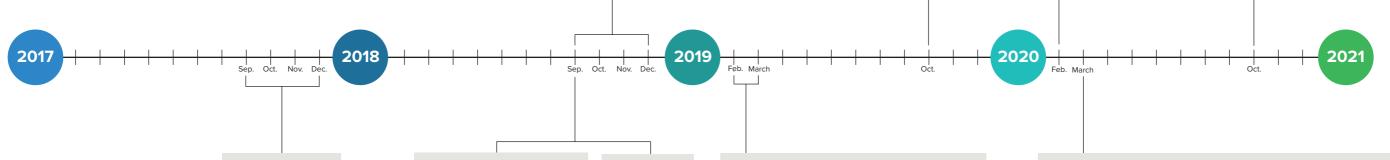
- Door to door resident questionnaire carried out by an interviewer
- 400 people within town centre catchment area
- The town centre perceptions survey had an objective to understand how easy Oldham town centre is to get to by any mode of transport, by sustainable modes of transport, and how pleasant it is to walk around and spend time in. The survey also measured the perceptions of residents about the other aspects, such as the cultural and consumer offer.

Market Traders meeting 30+ traders; Update on Oldham Construction Sector Insider Business Event

60+ attendees; Event to introduce Town Centre Vision (including the projects to be nominated for the Towns Fund) and construction opportunities to local businesses.

Market Traders meeting

30+ traders; Update on the purchase of the Spindles Shopping Centre and the relocation of the market hall in to Spindles



20+ locations across the Borough 800+ people engaged Consultation on the Town Centre Masterplan.

Market Traders meeting 40+ traders; Update on the new

vision for the Town Centre. Views sought by the Leader of the Council as to redevelopment / relocation of the market hall.

Stakeholder consultation on the new Town Centre Vision

Accessible Oldham Survey

Face to face exhibitions in Oldham Town Centre (248 responses). The survey was to seek residents' view on options for improving access to and within Oldham Town Centre, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists, as part of the Accessible Oldham scheme.

redevelopment / relocation

of the market hall.

The importance of a thriving town centre economy was highlighted, as well as a sense of local pride: "I think any changes that improve the town and encourage visitors is to be recommended." "I support my council by always shopping in my own town."

Let's Talk Oldham

Oldham Council recently conducted a borough-wide engagement of over 1,000 people who live, work or visit in Oldham. The aim was to discover the priorities of these people, to support the development of a new plan for the borough. Key issues across both the local areas and the whole borough were making Oldham a better place to live, cleaner and greener and safer and stronger. The engagement took place over six weeks between February and March 2020. Engagement activity took place at 17 separate venues across the borough with over 1,000 individuals participating, contributing over 3,000 inputs across a blended approach methodology and Over 10,000 individuals were engaged via social media channels.

Key findings

- Participants indicated that measures to make Oldham a better place were most important, with efforts to make Oldham cleaner and greener, and safer and stronger second.
- A third of respondents highlighted the need for good quality parks and open spaces.
- Participants felt that the provision of quality and affordable homes for all and improved public transport would have the greatest impact on making Oldham a better place to live.
- Around 300 people highlighted the need to improve Oldham as a place to visit. They stated the importance of supporting local business and the importance of cultural events and entertainment.
- 243 participants commented on how to make Oldham

- a better place to work. For them, securing more job opportunities and making it easy to get around on public transport were of highest priority.
- 300 participants suggested ways in which they would improve their local area. Key issues were the impact of well-maintained and under used local town centres, poor quality roads and pavements and below par cultural and leisure facilities.
- Young people stated that more job opportunities/ experience and working to make Oldham a safer place for young people would help to improve the borough.
- 70% of respondents indicated that making Oldham a better place to live would also make it a better place to visit. Participants commented on the importance of supporting local business and but also upon the importance of cultural events and leisure activities.

These findings directly relate to the projects set out in the TIP, for example Northern Roots and the Minewater Heat Network will enable Oldham to become cleaner and greener and the Flexible Workspace and Relocating Tommyfield Market will support local businesses and provide job opportunities in the town centre. Northern Roots and Making Space – For Live Performance will strengthen Oldham's cultural events and leisure activities, while Relocating Tommyfield Market will enable residential development, including the provision of quality affordable homes.

7.1.3 Project level

The engagement work to date in relation to the individual projects has brought forward support and buy-in from a range of public and third sector organisations, as summarised below.

- Northern Roots. Extensive engagement for this project has taken place with both stakeholders and the local community. Workshops, surveys, focus groups and site visits have been used to elicit views on the project, some conducted and analysed by the project team and some by University partners. In total 288 individuals have taken part in these consultation exercises. Organisations consulted include local and national government, charities, environmental organisations, educational establishments (at a primary, secondary and tertiary level), commercial organisations and funding and sponsorship organisations (e.g. Heritage Lottery). The project leads have also presented Northern Roots at numerous conferences and workshops attended by at least 3,000 people, including the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework workshop in July 2019 and the Greater Manchester Natural Capital Conference in February 2020. Five public facing events have been held to share the project with the local community and solicit their views; these have been attended by over 300 people. Pilot projects ranging from environmental volunteering to beekeeping to creative writing have been organised to raise awareness and engagement from different sectors of the community. Additionally Northern Roots has created a website and shares information daily on social media. The project now has around 2,000 followers across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram who interact with the project team. These engagement activities have directly influenced the plans for the site in a wide range of ways, from the inclusion of equestrian facilities and a mountain-biking pump track to the location of the forest school. Responses to the project have been overwhelmingly positive.
- Minewater Heat Network. A feasibility study for the Minewater Heat Network has recently been completed – this is the first step in identifying potential beneficiaries and stakeholders for the project. The study recommended for the next stage of work to include:

- Starting the stakeholder engagement process along with the Oldham Council project team to capture, were possible, actual energy usage data for the buildings (existing) and improve the level of information available for future developments.
 A list of stakeholders has been drafted and is included in an Appendix to this TIP.
- Potential engagement and discussions with First Choice Homes regarding appetite for a synergy with Oldham Council.
- Making Space For Live Performance. Due to the final ratification requirements of the project location, no direct community engagement has so far taken place. However, the vision and architectural study has been informed by broader sector specific engagement and collaboration including; Oldham Coliseum Theatre's Senior Management Team and Board of Trustees, Senior Council Arts and Cultural Officers including Oldham Theatre Workshop, and a range of independent artists and cultural leaders. Following the formal ratification of the preferred site, the team will seek to engage with all of Oldham's many communities and find ways to give voice to those who in the past may have been silent.
- Through a process of consultation and engagement the aim will be to address some of the following questions:
- **1.** What should a post-COVID-19 building and cultural organisation look like?. How can the sector harness the use of digital and what are the new models which align with new realities?
- 2. How can we create something that sets out to dismantle some of the traditional hierarchical conventions concerning the way our cultural buildings operate or do we even want to do this? And how might this project set a precedent for the sector?
- **3.** How might genuine cultural democracy be created where a broader range of players have an influence on Oldham's creative output?
- **4.** How can we make sure this building's core aim is to serve its community and ensure it is accessible for everyone in the town, regardless of their socio-economic position?
- **5.** How do we maximise limited public funding and use it to create an effective, resilient model for the future?

- **6.** How do we connect and collaborate with other sectors in Oldham and the North West, especially those who have had little or no previous engagement? A lot of consultation has taken place around how the Coliseum Theatre moves forward to offer arts and culturein the town centre and from what location. The Arts Council is also supportive of the proposals.
- Flexible Workspace. Due to Oldham Council's recent purchase of Spindles shopping centre, no direct stakeholder engagement has taken place, as the location for this project was unconfirmed until that point. However, the need to make Oldham a better place to work and the need for Grade A office space has been highlighted by previous engagement activity.
- Relocating Tommyfield Market. Engagement with traders is regular and ongoing, and relocation has been contemplated and discussed for several years due to changes in the retail sector. Oldham Council engages regularly with the Tommyfield Market Traders' Association..

7.1.4 Planned community engagement

Interventions supported through the Towns Fund should have the support of the community, through early and ongoing engagement and genuine partnership arrangements. Plans made with the communities that they affect are most likely to be successful, lead to innovation and creativity, and result in less controversy.

For this purpose, the Oldham Town Deal Board has established a dedicated Community Engagement Sub-Group which builds on prior engagement and shapes it to support the Town Investment Plan, the details of which are set out below.

Oldham Town Deal Board Community Engagement Sub-Group – purpose and remit

- To advise the Oldham Town Deal Board on its communications and engagement plan for the Towns Fund.
- To hold and manage a community engagement budget on behalf of the Oldham Town Deal Board to commission engagement if required.
- To provide assurance to the Oldham Town

- Deal Board that meaningful engagement has taken place in the development and delivery of the funded projects.
- To review the Equality Impact Assessment in relation to all projects and provide challenge and feedback to Project Leads and the Oldham Town Deal Board.

In October 2020, the Community Engagement Sub-Group asked the wider Oldham Town Deal Board to adopt seven guiding principles to ensure that all engagement:

- 1. Is supported by those with power to change things
- 2. Invests in capacity for safe, innovative and equitable engagement methods
- 3. Is designed with a clear goal in mind
- 4. Involves learning through doing
- 5. Is targeted at specific audiences and communities, not the general public
- 6. Is beneficial for everyone involved
- 7. Is informed and facilitated

Since then, the Sub-Group has started working with the project and communication leads to publicise opportunities for wider engagement and consultation where relevant – so, far this has happened with the Northern Roots project team. In January 2021, the Sub-Group will hold a session on community wealth-building, to help ensure this forms part of the Towns Fund projects going forward. This work will be supported by LocalMotion, an initiative which sees six funders work in partnership to develop new, radical and innovative ideas to boost communities and drive systemic change.

7.1.5 Planned engagement by project

A number of projects have developed plans for future engagement, beyond what is planned by the Town Deal Board Community Engagement Sub-Group. This includes the following:

 The next phase of Northern Roots consultation will run between November 2020 and March 2021, to coincide with the development of the planning application. There will be a range of ways in which people can share their input and ideas, including via social media, Zoom consultation sessions, online surveys, public consultations (COVID-19 restrictions depending) and via the Northern Roots website.

7.2 Funding secured to date

Additional funding leveraged for and applied for, is set out by project in the table below.

Table 7.2: Funding secured to date Source: Various

Project	Public sector body	Support given	Current funding	Potential future funding
Northern Roots	Oldham Council	 £705,000 for two years developmental cost for Northern Roots £30,000 to fund a Green and Blue infrastructure study 	£735,000	
	Greater Manchester Bee Network/TfGM	New bridge across the valley at Park Bridge. Further funding expected for construction of the bridge.	£500,000	£1,000,000
	DEFRA	City of Trees bid for funding for planting and maintenance of additional woodland in Greater Manchester. 16 hectares (ha) for Northern Roots.	£200,000	
	Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	Fairbairn Foundation offered the project an initial grant of £20k to raise local awareness and engagement with Northern Roots. The funding will allow us to pilot activities which show potential to deliver both social value outcomes and commercial revenue and engage a broad cross section of local residents in these pilot activities.	£20,000	£1,000,000 to support staffing costs and fund activities on site.
	Heritage Lottery, Arts Council, other statutory funders	 Capacity Building to build the organisational capacity of Northern Roots Arts, culture and heritage engagement activities to animate the green space. 		£5,000,000 For activity that meets social outcomes in the area of nature, health, and connecting people with heritage.
	GMMoving bid	Funding committed to signage, benches and way finding.	£10,000	
	GMWalking bid	Installation of composting toilets, and a contribution to staff time to support the trial of walking activities for young people, for example orienteering and treasure hunts.	£5,000	£10,000-£25,000

Project	Public sector body	Support given	Current funding	Potential future funding
	Sport England	Cycling facilities, away from traffic. Funding for relocation of pitches		Up to £500,000
	Trusts and Foundations	To fund a range of projects delivering environmental, social and economic benefits.		£1m +
	Environmental Funding	Biodiversity Net Gain, Carbon Banking, DEFRA ELMS payments		£2m
	Landfill Funding	Fund large scale built environment projects or natural environment projects.		Up to £750,000
	Financial sponsorship	From: Park Cakes Walker Simpson Mio Care NLTG For Housing	£13,500	
	In-kind donations		£20,300	
Making Space - For Live Performance	Arts Council England	Grant aid currently for Oldham Coliseum Theatre. Intending to reapply for ACE's national portfolio grant for the period 2022/23.	£604,067	
	Association of Greater Manchester Authorities	Grant aid currently for Oldham Coliseum Theatre currently in the first year of a two-year funding agreement with AGMA.	£102,430	
	Oldham Council	Annual grant aid currently for Oldham Coliseum Theatre. This stakeholder has expressed its interest in maintaining a relationship with the theatre in future years.	£145,550 per annum	
Minewater Heat Network	The Coal Authority	Technical support on the viability of the proposals.	N/A	

7.3 High-level plan of business case development

The table below sets out the next steps for developing the business case for the five projects. This captures the work done to date, outstanding gaps and next steps.

Table 7.3: Business case development

Project	Accountable body/bodies	Business case development - next steps Ti							
		Strategic	Economic	Commercial	Financial	Management			
Northern Roots	Northern Roots Oldham Council	Work around the strategic narrative has largely been completed. Next step is to conduct detailed feasibility studies.	The estimation of economic benefits and their monetisation in a way that accords with the requirements of the Towns Fund and other potential public sector funders. Develop an economic impact assessment to calculate the potential wider economic benefits.	Map out all funding and implementation partners and begin to test commercial models at a small scale. Develop a Social Impact Bond (SIB) model approach and partner with surrounding local authorities to create new SIBs. A number of local housing providers also have experience in delivering to a SIB contract, and this could be an opportunity to develop a practical partnership experience and knowledge-sharing.	Identify assets that can be used as collateral and design the contractual relationship between the Council and the 'Project Company' to ensure assets can be used to secure debt funding. Developing the grant funding position in the form of a three to four-page prospectus detailing the place- based regeneration and social impact story, using data and information gathered by Salford University.	Identify key personnel needs and start recruiting for project leads with fundraising, commercial, and social impact experience. Development of a governance and accountability model that satisfies requirements and is agreeable to all partners with clear roles and responsibilities as well as a risk mitigation strategy.	Planning application to be submitted by March 2021, planning consultancy to be appointed in 2020. FBC to be drafted by late 2021		
Minewater Heat network (SOBC has been drafted)	Coal Authority Oldham Council	The production of an Outline Business Case (OBC) that will set out the need for intervention, projected costs and benefits Construction stage – delivery of the detailed design and installation of the Boreholes, Energy Centre and Distribution Network by the D&B Contractor on behalf of the SPV.	Detailed project development (DPD) stage – to assess the economic, financial and delivery viability of the Project in detail.	Commercialisation stage – securing of the anchor load for heat sales, finalising of the technical specifications and procurement of all the main contractual arrangements	Financial Close – signing of all main contracts, including the D&B Contract, Services Provision Contract, the anchor load heat sales agreements and the funding arrangements	Operational stage – delivery of the operational & maintenance services, and also the meter & billing services, by the Services Provider/s on behalf of the SPV.	FBC to be drafted by late 2021		
Making Space - For Live Performance	Oldham Council Arts Council England	Much of the work required for drafting this case has already been undertaken, including identifying the existing challenge and the need for an intervention, the policy fit, aims and objectives of the project, dependencies and constraints, as well as the overall scheme narrative. However, this would need to be further developed in the event of a specific location and design being selected, as well as strengthening the case for how the project would support Oldham town centre and the arts scene in the town through stakeholder engagement. Case studies of projects elsewhere (e.g. the Storyhouse in Chester) could help demonstrate the impact of the proposed project.	Conduct an updated economic impact assessment to calculate the potential wider economic benefits associated with this project. Until a location for the new performance space is finalised, drafting an economic case is difficult. This would be required for setting out options for delivery in order to arrive at Do-Minimum and Preferred Option. Once a full design and operational structure is agreed, the Economic case could capture the fullest range of benefits, including audience numbers, community participation, numbers of shows and events, role of non-performance spaces (bars, restaurants etc.) and how the performance space would interact with other spaces in the town centre.	Requires a fully worked up design and operational structure.	Requires a fully worked up financial proposition (including funding requirements and funding sources, forecast revenue generation and delivery timescale), this would be very difficult to draft.	A preliminary Management case could be drafted at this stage, assuming that a similar management structure would be in place as for the existing Coliseum theatre.	FBC to be drafted by end of 2021		
Flexible Workspace	Oldham Council	OBC to be drafted by March 2021, FBC by end of 2021	outer spaces in the town centre.						
Relocating Tommyfield Market	Oldham Council	OBC to be drafted by March 2021, FBC by end of 2021							

Delivery of the Towns Fund projects will be council-led, bringing in suitable external support and expertise where necessary. The Towns Fund is a public-sector led catalyst for wider town centre regeneration and private-sector investment (such as the delivery of residential development). Risk identification and mitigation will be a crucial part of the delivery process.

7.4 High-level delivery plan

The next steps for delivering the five projects are set out below.

Table 7.4: Delivery plan Source: Oldham Council

Projects	Headline task	Indicative date		
Northern Roots	Detailed business case - Project team & advisors	July 2021		
	Planning permission for key sites — Project team & Oldham Council	Spring 2021		
	Pilot projects, communications and consultation - Project Team	Ongoing		
	Build Phase – Project team & advisors	2021		
Minewater Heat Network	Completion of feasibility study - The Coal Authority	Planning application to be submitted by March 2021, planning consultancy to be appointed in 2020.		
	Review of mining and mine water situation, and borehole target options study and assessment	March 2021		
	Pre-Applications, Environment Desk Study/ Screening	April 2021		
	Outline specification for boreholes and hydrological testing	March 2021 to March 2023		
	Environmental surveys	March 2021		
	Final draft of Outline Business Case (OBC) issued by Project Team	October 2021		
	Procurement of drilling contractor and hydrogeological testing	August to December 2021		
	Drilling and reporting phase for pilot boreholes	December 2021 to March 2022		
	Drilling and reporting phase for operation borehole	March 2022 to January 2023		
	Cabinet decision to proceed based on OBC	January to March 2022		
	Cabinet approval of Full Business Case (FBC)	Summer 2023		
	Finalise funding arrangements	July 2023		
	Sign heat supply contracts with key heat users	Summer 2023		
	Start on site for Heat Network	Autumn 2023		
	Minewater Heat Network operational	2025/2026		
Making Space	Outline Business Case	March 2021		
- For Live Performance	Full Business Case	December 2021		
Flexible	Outline Business Case	March 2021		
Workspace	FBC	December 2021		
Relocating	Outline Business Case	March 2021		
Tommyfield Market	FBC	December 2021		

7.4.1. Delivery of business cases

Work on the Outline Business Cases (OBCs) is

underway for each project along with technical and commercial supporting assessments. The table below provides an overview of how we see the OBC stages completing for each project before they move to Full Business Case (FBC) stage. This is based on work completed to date and the complexity of each project so as to provide a best estimate at this point. The working assumption is that OBC stage will be reviewed by the Town Deal Board and Oldham Council, with the FBC stage being reviewed and appraised by MHCLG. The sequencing of business case delivery is also important in terms of planning for physical delivery post approval at FBC stage.

Table 7.5 Indicative sequencing of business case delivery in 2021 Source: Mott MacDonald

Project	2021	l (mont	hs)									
2021	J	F	М	A	М	J	J	A	S	0	N	D
Northern Roots												
Minewater Heat Network												
Making Space - For Live Performance												
Flexible Workspace												
Relocating Tommyfield Market												

Outline Business Case delivery

Full Business Case delivery

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8. Value for money

8.1 Value for money

Through 'Creating a Better Place', Oldham is receiving investment to deliver plan-led economic growth. An assessment of the economic benefits likely to arise based on available information is set out below with some of the Towns Fund projects contributing to these figures:

- Up to 400 jobs created as a result of the new employment floorspace to be delivered
- This will increase local economic output by approximately £20m per year.
- The Present Value of this local economic output over a 30 year appraisal period is about £330 million.
- The construction of these schemes will support up to 100 jobs, producing around £50m of economic activity in the borough
- The new housing can increase the local population by approximately 2,400 new residents
- The spending on comparison and convenience goods by these residents could be worth up to £20m per year to the Oldham economy.
- Many of the jobs created will be provide opportunities for Oldham residents, this includes direct jobs, as well as indirect and induced jobs (through the supply chain). Some of these jobs will be in new and emerging sectors, such as green technology, as well as business and technologyrelated jobs aligned with the GM Local Industrial Strategy. To ensure these jobs are accessible to Oldham residents, Oldham Council envisages an exciting collaborative programme with Oldham FE colleges, UCO and potentially some links to local/GM universities' R&D functions.

Additionally, there are project specific benefits that will only be provided with Towns Fund investment and include:

- A cumulative reduction of 43.3 kilotons of CO₂ over 40 years with the Minewater Heat Network in operation compared to the counterfactual of not having it .
- The country's largest urban farm and eco park with Northern Roots which includes 2.8 miles (11 km) of footpaths, mountain bike trails, mixed terrain trail runs and equestrian paths. The social and economic value in recreation in enhanced green infrastructure and ecosystem services will be captured through the business case phase.

All the projects in this plan will undergo further work on benefits capture and articulation as part of the business case process that builds on work to date and presents them in a way that support Benefit Cost Ratios and Value for Money assessments in 2021.

Jobs



Up to **400 jobs** supported includina:

- 258 safeguarded through the relocation of Tommyfield Market
- 80 new jobs at Northern Roots
- 30 safeguarded at Making Space For Live Performance

Approximately 100 temporary jobs could be supported during constructi

Housing



rojects will: Support the delivery of 2,700 new homes across Oldham to

Support the increase of the local population by approximation 2,400 new residents

GVA



ncrease economic output by approximately £20m per year,

- £7.3m per annum through relocating Tommyfield Market
- £0.9m per annum from Making Space For Live Performance

A one-time £50m boost through the construction of the projects

Environment



A cumulative reduction of 43.3

- vith the Minewater Heat Netwo
- 11km of new footpaths, bike trails trail runs and equestrian paths at
- Reduced project costs and carbon sions by repurposing current

8.2 Social Value

The inclusion of social value in the procurement of capital project works, goods and services is a key pillar of local wealth building. Oldham Council has taken steps to implement the Social Value Portal (SVP) to maximize its opportunities for delivering social value, and to be an effective toolkit for measuring, monitoring and tracking that what is delivered benefits Oldham as a place and our residents in the best possible way.

As part of the Council's procurement processes, bidders will define their social value proposition against Oldham's bespoke Construction TOMS (Themes, Outcomes, Measures), having been informed of Oldham's social value needs and objectives in the form of Oldham's bespoke 'Needs Analysis' document.

The Four Themes the TOMS are mapped to are:

- 1. Inclusive Economy
- 2. Co-operative Services
- 3. Thriving Communities
- 4. Oldham's Green New Deal

Some key target outcomes of Oldham's Needs Analysis are:

- · More local employment and skills opportunities, and reduced pay inequality.
- · Increased collaboration with local MSMEs and VCSEs.
- Creating a healthier local community with stronger community networks; addressing homelessness, health interventions, mental health, and crime reduction.
- · Positive environmental change and safeguarding (Green New Deal).

The Council will record and monitor the 'Social Value Add' each capital project delivers in context of its scale and value, and will drive forward any opportunities for continuous improvement to maximize this. In recognition that its capital projects programme provides significant opportunities in this respect, the Council has made great strides to accelerate the embedding of the SVP in its capital projects procurements which started earlier this year, and it is committed to ensuring its inclusion in all future projects having a construction value above £100,000.

In addition, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Social Value Framework (2020) will look to use social value to tackle inequalities and make activities good, fair and sustainable. They will encourage every organisation in GM to carry out its primary activity, managing the resources that it controls and drawing in investment, in such a way that it encourages them to create lasting benefits for the people of GM, improve the local economy, whilst positively contributing (or at least minimising damage) to the environment. The Framework is built around key priorities, some of which relate directly to the projects in the Oldham TIP. These include:

- Keep the air clean in GM. Air pollution harms health at every stage of life and is linked to early deaths - interventions such as the Minewater Heat Network and Northern Roots will help tackle this.
- Create the employment and skills opportunities that we need to Build Back Better. Employers need to be able to grow, have access to and invest in the skills they require and encouraging in work support and wage progression. Projects such as Relocating Tommyfield Market and providing an Flexible Workspace in the town centre will be key to helping acheive this for Oldham.
- Be part of a strong local community. This includes supporting the arts and culture sector (linking to Oldham's Making Space - For Live Performance project).

The Oldham Town Fund Board would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the development of the TIP and our Towns Fund investment programme. This includes our public, private, community and third sector partners, all those who submitted project ideas, and our team of strategic advisors. We would also like to thank all those who contributed images to this document. As a Board we recognise that the publication of the

TIP is only the first step in helping us to realise our vision for Oldham, but it will not be the only step. As we set out to 'create a better place', we need to ensure that we continue to engage with partners, listen to new ideas and initiatives aligned with our vision and priorities, and ensure that the TIP continually evolves and can be supported by Towns Fund and other future funding opportunities.

Oldham Town Deal Board Membership	List
Independent Chair	William Lees-Jones, Managing Director, JW Lees
Independent Vice-Chair	Maggie Hughes, owner, Zutti Co
Lead local authority / anchor institutions	Harry Catherall, Chief Executive, Oldham Council
Lead local authority	Councillor Arooj Shah, Leader, Oldham Council
MPs	Debbie Abrahams MP, Oldham East and Saddleworth
MPs	Jim McMahon MP, Oldham West and Royton
MPs	Angela Rayner MP, Ashton-under-Lyne
Mayoral Combined Authority	Andrew Lightfoot, Deputy Chief Executive, Greater Manchester Combined Authority
Local businesses and investors	Michelle Riley, Owner, Cob and Coal Tap
Local businesses and investors	Richard Eastwood, Equity Partner, Pearson Solicitors
Local businesses and investors	Mike Flanagan, Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre Manager
Communities	Liz Windsor-Welsh, Chief Executive, Action Together
Communities	Fazal Rahim, Project Coordinator, Oldham Interfaith Forum
Anchor Institutions	Alun Francis, Principal and Chief Executive, Oldham College
Anchor Institutions	David Jago, Director of Finance/Chief Officer, Northern Care Alliance (Royal Oldham Hospital)
Anchor Institutions	John Patterson, Chief Clinical Officer, NHS Oldham CCG
Anchor Institutions	Susan Wildman, Interim Chief Executive, Oldham Coliseum Theatre
Anchor Institutions	Liam Harris, Member, Oldham Youth Council
Anchor Institutions	Stuart Lockwood, Chief Executive, Oldham Community Leisure
Anchor Institutions	Bill Lovat, Regional Director, The Regenda Group
Arms-length bodies and other non- departmental government agencies	Pete Courtie, Relationship Manager, Arts Council England
Other private investors and developers	Adnan Yousaf, Real Estate Manager, The Cross Group
Arms-length bodies and other non- departmental government agencies	Beverley Dawson, Senior Manager (Capital and Projects), Arts Council England

Wordcount is 9,000 words (excluding text in tables, graphics, charts, Acknowledgements and the Executive Summary and Foreword sections)



Endnotes

Greater Manchester comprises the following ten districts: Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Sal ford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

- 2 As defined by the three Government regions of the North West, North East, and Yorkshire & Humber.
- 3 University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University, University of Salford, and University of Bolton.
- 4 Oldham Council (2019) 'Oldham in Profile Business Intelligence Service: April 2019'
- 5 Employment by Local Authority District within Region for public/private sector, ONS, 2012-2018
- 6 Stantec (2020) 'Oldham Retail & Leisure Study'
- 7 Office market data from Amion (2019) 'Oldham Structural Investment Framework'
- 8 Javelin Group's evaluation of centres, the Battlefield Britain Index
- 9 APS, ONS, 2019
- 10 Oldham Council (2019) 'Oldham's Local Economic Assessment 2019: An analysis of the local economic
- 11 Housing Strategy
- Oldham Council (2019) 'Oldham's Local Economic Assessment 2019: An analysis of the local economic conditions in Oldham Section 3: Transport & Business Connectivity'
- 13 Oldham Council (2019) 'Oldham in Profile Business Intelligence Service: April 2019'
- 14 Oldham Climate Change Strategy Oldham Council
- 15 https://www.oldhampartnership.org.uk/business-investment/
- 16 Oldham Retail & Leisure Study
- https://www.oldham-chronicle.co.uk/news-features/139/main-news/133278/oldham-set-to-become-the-first-'green-new-deal-council'
- Oldham Council (2019), Strategic Investment Framework Refresh and Sector Requirements Review, produced by Amion Consulting and Keppie Massie
- 19 Op. Cit.
- Oldham Council (2019) 'Oldham's Local Economic Assessment 2019: An analysis of the local economic conditions in Oldham Section 2: Labour Market and Skills'
- Oldham Council (2019) 'Oldham's Local Economic Assessment 2019: An analysis of the local economic conditions in Oldham Section 1: Business, Enterprise and Competitiveness'
- Bennetts Associates, 'Making Place for Live Performance, Oldham: Feasibility Study Update', 14th April 2020
- 23 Bennetts Associates, 'Making Place for Live Performance, Oldham: Feasibility Study Update', 14th April 2020

- 24 Oldham Coliseum Theatre: Toward a New Coliseum Theatre Business Plan 2016-2023
- 25 Oldham Town Centre Economic Impact Assessment Draft Report
- 26 Oldham Coliseum Theatre: Toward a New Coliseum Theatre Business Plan 2016-2023
- 27 Tommyfield Market Impact Assessment Summary Paper, AMION, 2019