

# Oldham

# Local Plan

**Local Plan Review: Draft Local Plan**

December 2023



**Oldham**  
Council



## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Creating a Better Place.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Policy Context and Legal Requirements .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Issues and Options Consultation.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Spatial Portrait .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Vision for Oldham Borough.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Plan Objectives.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Homes .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Economy and Employment .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Tourism.....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>Our Centres .....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>12.</b>	<b>Oldham Town Centre.....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>13.</b>	<b>Addressing Climate Change .....</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>14.</b>	<b>Natural Environment and Open Land.....</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>15.</b>	<b>Addressing the Biodiversity Emergency .....</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>16.</b>	<b>Oldham’s Historic Environment.....</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>17.</b>	<b>Creating a Better and Beautiful Oldham.....</b>	<b>149</b>
<b>18.</b>	<b>Creating a Sustainable, Active, Accessible Network for Oldham.....</b>	<b>166</b>
<b>19.</b>	<b>Communities .....</b>	<b>175</b>
<b>20.</b>	<b>Protecting Our Local Environment .....</b>	<b>192</b>
<b>21.</b>	<b>Infrastructure and Delivery in Oldham.....</b>	<b>198</b>
<b>22.</b>	<b>Monitoring.....</b>	<b>207</b>
<b>23.</b>	<b>Glossary .....</b>	<b>210</b>

### Appendices

Appendix 1: Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Proposed Extensions

Appendix 2: Proforma’s for Potential Housing and Mixed-Use Allocations

Appendix 3: Business and Employment Areas Proposed Boundary Amendments

Appendix 4: Proforma’s for Potential Office, Industry and Warehousing Allocations

Appendix 5: Lees Centre Proposed Boundary Amendment

Appendix 6: Oldham Town Centre Proposed Boundary Amendment

Appendix 7: Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs)

Appendix 8: Green Belt Proposed Boundary Amendments

Appendix 9: Local Green Space Proposed Boundary Amendments

Appendix 10: Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) in Oldham

Appendix 11: Scale of harm to designated heritage assets – indicative examples

Appendix 12: Proposed Car Parking Standards

Appendix 13: Thresholds for the requirement of Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans

# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Oldham's Local Plan will guide development in the borough up to 2039. The main purposes of the Plan are to:
- Set out the policies through which the council will manage development coming forward and use to determine planning applications;
  - Identify designations for the protection of the borough's environmental and historical assets, our town centres, employment areas and infrastructure;
  - Allocate land to meet our future housing and employments needs; and
  - Support the development of supporting infrastructure, such as transport, education and utilities.
- 1.2 The Local Plan covers the whole borough except that part which falls within the Peak District National Park.
- 1.3 Upon adoption the Local Plan will replace the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD, which was adopted in November 2011, and any saved planning policies from the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2006.
- 1.4 The Local Plan will sit alongside the emerging Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (see paragraph's 1.5 – 1.7), as part of a suite of documents that form the development plan for the borough that also includes the Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan Document (adopted April 2012) and the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan Document (adopted April 2013). Together these documents will inform decision-making on planning applications in the borough of Oldham.

## Oldham's Local Plan and Places for Everyone

- 1.5 The Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan Document (DPD), is a strategic plan that will, upon adoption, cover nine of the ten Greater Manchester districts - Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan. The Plan:
- Provides the strategic framework for the Oldham Local Plan;
  - Sets out specific requirements to be taken forward through the Oldham Local Plan in relation to housing, offices, and industry and warehousing, and identifies the main areas where this will be focused;
  - Identifies the important environmental assets which will be protected and enhanced;
  - Allocates sites for employment and housing outside of the urban area – in Oldham this is JPA2 Stakehill, JPA12 Beal Valley, JPA13 Bottom Field Farm, JPA14 Broadbent Moss, JPA15 Chew Brook Vale, JPA16

Cowlshaw, JPA17 Land south of Coal Pit Lane' and JPA18 South of Rosary Road;

- Supports the delivery of key infrastructure, such as transport and utilities; and
- Defines a new Green Belt boundary for the borough.

- 1.6 Upon adoption PfE will form part of the development plan for Oldham. PfE will set the strategic policies and direction for the borough. Oldham's Local Plan interprets these at a more detailed local level to reflect our priorities and support delivery of the council's regeneration ambitions and Creating a Better Place.
- 1.7 When considering development proposals and what needs to be taken account of in the determination of planning applications regard must therefore be had to both PfE and Oldham's Local Plan.

## Oldham's Local Plan and Neighbourhood Planning

- 1.8 Communities can prepare Neighbourhood Plans for a designated neighbourhood area. Once these are prepared and adopted they become part of the statutory development plan and are used to determine planning applications (alongside the Oldham Local Plan and PfE) for the designated neighbourhood area. The Neighbourhood Plan can have its own vision, objectives, strategy, policies and designations / allocations.
- 1.9 In the borough of Oldham currently Saddleworth Parish Council are preparing Saddleworth Neighbourhood Plan for the parish council area and The New Chadderton Partnership forum are preparing a neighbourhood plan for the three wards of Chadderton.
- 1.10 It will be important that these plans are positively prepared and support and do not conflict with PfE and the Oldham Local Plan.

## Interpreting policies within the Oldham Local Plan

- 1.11 The policies contained within the Oldham Local Plan are organised by theme, for example Homes, Economy and Employment, and Addressing Climate Change. Policy text is bold and separated into a box for clarity, after which sits the reasoned justification which provides further detail regarding how the policy will be applied and what detail may be needed to accord with the policy requirements.
- 1.12 At the end of each policy there is a linkages box. These boxes show:
- Other policies within the Local Plan that may be relevant to the policy; and
  - Relevant PfE policies that regard should be had to.
- 1.13 Whilst these boxes have been inserted to provide clarity for the reader, it is important that the Local Plan, including PfE, is read as a whole.
- 1.14 And at the end of each thematic chapter there will be a linkages box that will show:
- The plan objective(s) the chapter is seeking to address; and

- The indicators through which the chapter will be monitored.

### Seeking views on the Draft Oldham Local Plan

- 1.15 Planning affects many aspects of our lives and our environment – from where we live, work, shop and how we spend our leisure time. In producing the Local Plan, we will not just consider land uses but we will also consider other issues that can be affected by land use, including health, education and community safety. It is important we get a wide range of opinions and views so that we can create the most rounded and effective plan possible.
- 1.16 This document is called the 'Draft Local Plan' and follows on from the Issues and Options consultation that was carried out in the summer of 2021. It builds upon the comments we received and has been informed by on-going studies and pieces of evidence work. It contains a vision for Oldham, a set of plan objectives and draft planning policies covering a wide range of topic areas including housing, open land, centres, our economy, climate change, design, transportation and our communities.

## 2 Creating a Better Place

- 2.1 The Oldham Plan '[Our Future Oldham – A Shared Vision for 2030](#)'<sup>1</sup>, prepared by the Oldham Partnership, sets the direction for the borough. With a focus on 'resident first', the Plan seeks to ensure that residents are at the heart of decision-making.
- 2.2 Consultation carried out to inform preparation of The Oldham Plan found that residents want services close to home and tailored to meet the specific needs of their community. The contributions emphasise a desire for Oldham to be a clean, green and safe place where public transport allows access to opportunities, activities for young people and communities and where people felt part of the city region.
- 2.3 The main aim of the Oldham Partnership, through the Plan, is to 'uplift every resident', so that we all have:
- A well-rounded, enriching, life-long education
  - The opportunity to get a decent job that pays well and offers security and flexibility
  - Quick, cheap and easy transport to every part of the city region
  - A home that is affordable, well-maintained and appropriate
  - Timely access to vital services to keep people healthy and safe
  - A clean, green and healthy environment
  - Diverse opportunities to get together, with regular activities to boost physical and mental health and community spirit
  - A local area that meets people's needs and makes them proud
- 2.4 The [Oldham Council Corporate Plan 2022-27](#)<sup>2</sup> sets out the council's priorities, with specific actions for 2022-25. It works in parallel with The Oldham Plan and sets out what its priorities mean for Oldham:

- Healthy, safe and well supported residents
- A great start and skills for life
- Better jobs and dynamic businesses
- Quality homes for everyone
- A clean and green future

---

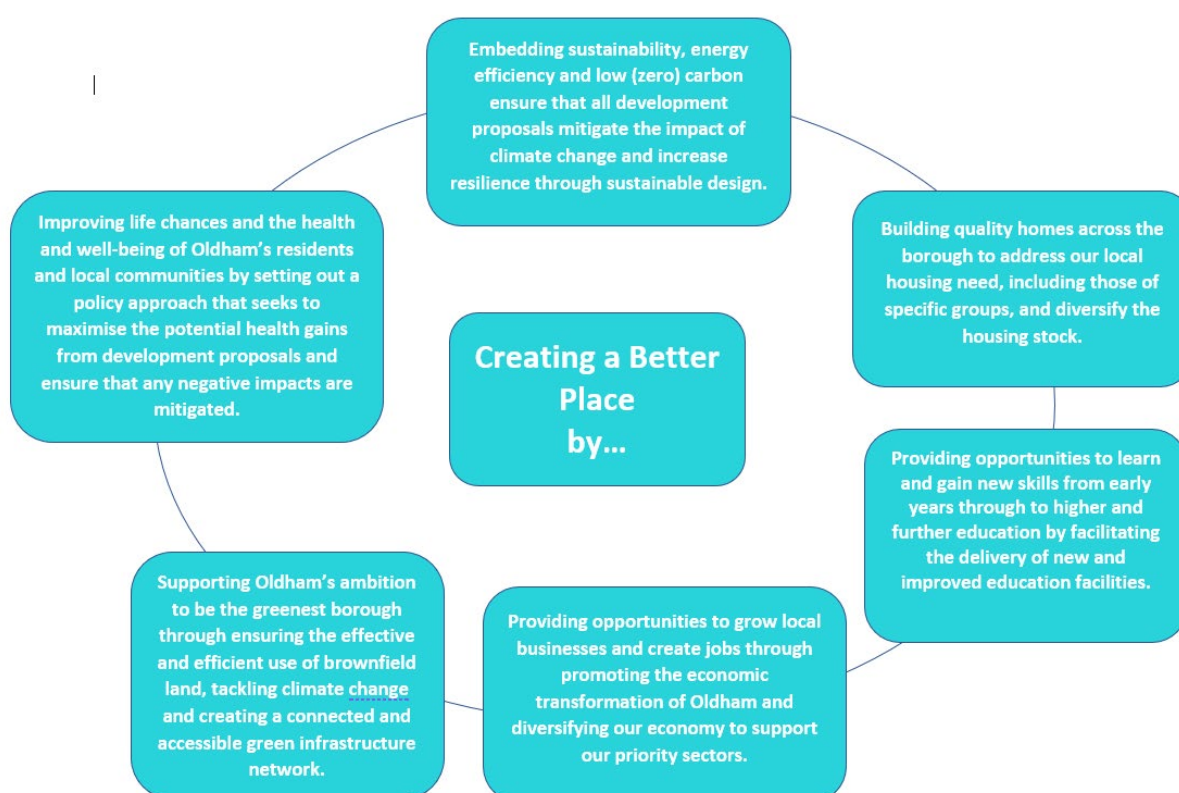
<sup>1</sup> This document can be found at: [https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7589/the\\_oldham\\_plan\\_-\\_our\\_future\\_oldham](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7589/the_oldham_plan_-_our_future_oldham)

<sup>2</sup> This document can be found at: [https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7405/oldham\\_corporate\\_plan\\_2022-27](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7405/oldham_corporate_plan_2022-27)



- 2.5 Delivering against these priorities means that the council can help residents and make Oldham the best place it can be.
- 2.6 The Local Plan represents the spatial expression of The Oldham Plan and the council's Corporate Plan. Their aspirations and priorities are the golden thread that runs through the Plan, along with supporting and facilitating the delivery of the council's ambitious Creating a Better Place agenda which is embedded into the planning framework provided through the policies as illustrated in Figure BP1 below.

Figure BP1: Flow diagram illustrating how the council's Creating a Better Place agenda has been embedded into the planning framework



- 2.7 Through delivering Oldham Council's bold vision for Oldham Town Centre and the wider borough and the ambitions of Creating a Better Place by 2030 Oldham we 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 gateway into 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.
- 2.8 Underneath the overarching theme of Creating a Better Place there sits several key issues that policies within the Local Plan seek to address such as the creation of healthy communities and tackling the climate emergency.

2.9 Through the policies contained within the Local Plan the council will encourage and facilitate development in the borough that provides opportunities for healthy lifestyles, contributes to the creation of healthier communities, and helps to reduce health inequalities. They will help to:

- Create healthy, inclusive and safe places that are well connected to key services and facilities and high-quality open spaces.
- Provide a diverse, and affordable, housing offer that addresses local housing needs with homes that are energy efficient and adaptable.
- Promote sustainable and accessible transport that enables active travel, including walking and cycling, and the maximises opportunities to enhance our green infrastructure.
- Enhance the vitality and vibrancy of Oldham Town Centre and our other centres, by creating new jobs, homes and spaces for people to enjoy.
- Support healthy eating and promote healthy food choices through, for example, increasing opportunities for community food growing spaces.
- Support the delivery and improvement of access to healthcare facilities and education, employment and skills training.

2.10 The policies set out within the Local Plan also provide a robust framework for ensuring that all development proposals mitigate the impact of climate change, make their contribution to meeting nationally binding targets to reduce greenhouse emissions and increase resilience. They will:

- Ensure that development is located in a way that takes account of flood risk and that it is designed in such a way as to increase water efficiency, reduce demand on water resources and protect water quality.
- Encourage the use of decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy in new developments and that through their construction, design and layout they minimise energy consumption.
- Ensure the effective and efficient use of land, reusing existing buildings and materials where possible, including making the most of our mill legacy, and ensuring that housing developments meet minimum density requirements.
- Use the benefits from Green Infrastructure creation, enhancement and protection to underpin our response to climate change and carbon reduction whilst providing connected and resilient networks.
- Reduce the need to travel, promote active travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport and support the expansion of electric vehicle charging capabilities through ensuring appropriate parking provision in new development.
- Our approach to tackling the climate change emergency has many benefits and outcomes that link to our health and wellbeing priorities in that it will help to ensure Oldham residents can afford to live comfortably in their homes; will increase access to an enhanced Green Infrastructure network; and promote active travel choices, including walking and cycling.

## 3. Policy Context and Legal Requirements

### National policy and legal requirements

#### The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

- 3.1 [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)<sup>3</sup> sets out the requirements for local authorities for producing and consulting on their Local Plan. There are various stages in the production of a Local Plan and Oldham Council is at the “Regulation 18” stage. The Regulations allow for considerable flexibility to local planning authorities regarding how they carry out the initial stages of local plan production, provided they comply with the requirements set out in Regulation 18 and the council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). As part of the initial stages of preparing the Local Plan the Draft Local Plan consultation provides the community and other stakeholders with an opportunity to shape the Local Plan based on the current and emerging evidence that has been gathered by the council.
- 3.2 The following paragraphs provide a brief summary of the formal requirements associated with Local Plan making.

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023)

- 3.3 The [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#)<sup>4</sup> sets out the framework for the preparation of a Local Plan. It ensures that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and that plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area.
- 3.4 It states that Plans should be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development; be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable; be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees; contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous, so it is evident how a decision maker should react to development proposals; be accessible through the use of digital tools to assist public involvement and policy presentation; and serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area (including policies in this Framework, where relevant).
- 3.5 It also states that Plans must include strategic policies to address each local planning authority's priorities for the development and use of land in the area.
- 3.6 Both strategic and non-strategic policies should be included in Local Plans. Strategic policies should set out the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places making provision for housing; infrastructure; community facilities; and conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment.

---

<sup>3</sup> The regulations can be found at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/767/contents/made>

<sup>4</sup> This document can be found at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1182995/NPPF\\_Sept\\_23.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1182995/NPPF_Sept_23.pdf)

### Duty to Cooperate

- 3.7 Section 33A of the [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#)<sup>5</sup> seeks to maximise effective working on strategic issues by requiring local planning authorities "...to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis..." with certain prescribed bodies, including neighbouring councils and organisations such as the Environment Agency and Natural England.
- 3.8 This "Duty to Cooperate" is a legal requirement which must be addressed in Local Plans, to demonstrate that the emerging plan has also taken account of needs which require a wider level of co-operation over a wider geographical area.
- 3.9 In Greater Manchester, nine of the ten Local Authorities are working together to produce a joint Development Plan Document (DPD), called 'Places for Everyone', Stockport is the tenth Local Authority, they withdrew from preparing Greater Manchester's Place for Homes, Jobs and the Environment (also known as the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF)) in late 2020. As part of the process of preparing the joint DPD, the nine districts will be required to enter into dialogue with Stockport on matters of strategic, cross boundary significance. The outcome of which will need to be set out in a "Statement of Common Ground".
- 3.10 In relation to the preparation of the Local Plan, Oldham Council have engaged with all the prescribed bodies and neighbouring councils to ensure that the Duty to Co-operate requirement has been met.

### Integrated Assessment

- 3.11 The Local Plan will be supported by an Integrated Assessment (IA). The IA will include the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) and a Health Impact Assessment (HIA). The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) will still be a standalone document, however its findings will be integrated into the IA.
- 3.12 The role of a SA is to promote sustainable development through assessing the emerging Local Plan against economic, environmental and social objectives (including opportunities for net gain). Significant adverse effects should be avoided and wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued. Where significant adverse impacts are unavoidable, suitable mitigation measures should be proposed (or, where this is not possible, compensatory measures should be considered).
- 3.13 The Habitats Directive (2007) requires that a Local Development Document must be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) (to be taken at least through the screening stage). This includes a Local Plan. The purpose of a HRA of land use plans is to ensure that protection of the integrity of European protected sites is an integral part of the planning process at the local level. The findings of the HRA will be integrated into the IA.
- 3.14 As part of the Issues and Options consultation that was carried out between July and August 2021 an IA Scoping Report was produced. That has been updated for the Draft Local Plan and can be found on the council's website.

---

<sup>5</sup> The Act can be found at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents>

## 4. Issues and Options Consultation

- 4.1. To begin preparation of the Local Plan the council carried out a 'Regulation 18' Notification between July and August 2017. To inform this work we asked what the local community and other interested parties thought the Local Plan should contain and what the key planning issues are for Oldham; and what, in broad terms, should be the main aims of the Local Plan.
- 4.2. The next stage of consultation was Issues and Options and the consultation ran from 5th July to 29th August 2021. Comments were also sought on the accompanying Integrated Assessment.
- 4.3. The Issues and Options document set out questions covering a number of topics to gather views about the future of the borough. These included questions on homes, economy and employment, our centres, addressing climate change, the natural environment and open land, green infrastructure, the built environment, transport and improving connectivity, communities and infrastructure.
- 4.4. In total around 100 individuals and organisations submitted over 850 comments. The consultation received detailed responses of varying views a summary of which is set out below in Table IO1. These comments have been considered in the formulation of the Draft Local Plan.

<p>Table IO1: Summary of key comments received as part of Issues and Options consultation</p>
<p><b>Vision for Oldham</b></p> <p>General support for the Vision which was considered positive in its intent and ambitions.</p> <p>Encouraging an appropriate scale of housing and employment growth and protecting the natural and historic environment were broadly supported.</p> <p>Comments highlighted the need to include reference to improving health and wellbeing for the residents of Oldham.</p>
<p><b>Plan Objectives</b></p> <p>The objectives were generally supported, particularly in relation to the supply of housing to meet housing needs.</p> <p>Some amendments were suggested including that multi-functional sustainable drainage should be prioritised and including references to transport in objectives PO4, PO5, PO6 and PO7.</p>
<p><b>Homes</b></p> <p>Concerns relating to building homes on Green Belt.</p> <p>Support for developing brownfield sites.</p> <p>Concerns relating to an over-reliance on brownfield sites.</p> <p>General support for providing for the needs of an ageing population.</p> <p>Some support for all new homes to be built as lifetime homes however concerns around viability.</p> <p>General support for housing mix, but some responses highlight the need to be flexible as a prescriptive mix can be restrictive as needs and demand will vary depending on location.</p> <p>Some support for 30% affordable housing across the borough, however some developers/agents expressed the need to undertake assessments for need as well as the viability implications of providing an affordable housing requirement.</p> <p>Mixed response around Vacant Building Credit (VBC).</p> <p>The level of private rented accommodation should not be set as a policy requirement</p> <p>Concern was expressed for the increase in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).</p> <p>Mixed response to questions relating to custom and self-build with support for custom and self-build towards overall housing supply but acknowledgment that there can be challenges in delivery.</p> <p>Support for a specific policy on the use of properties as children's homes.</p> <p>A mixed response was received to the question relating to minimum density assumptions. More clarity was sought in relations to centres and comments that residential density should be based on local character.</p>

### **Economy and Employment**

Impact of online shopping on the economy must be considered.

Concerns of an oversupply of logistics warehousing due to Northern Gateway.

Mills should be considered on an individual basis in terms of employment use.

Oldham's Green New Deal and tackling climate change should be at the heart of the development of the economy and employment.

Support for a flexible approach to employment areas, sites considered on own merits and some site specific comments.

In relation to allocating employment land, one comment was received in support for a combination of providing some new employment land and improving sustainable connectivity to existing and neighbouring districts key employment sites.

Request that sites with heritage assets have Historic Impact Assessments and that sites in close proximity to SAC and SSSI's are assessed in Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Support for the inclusion of a policy that protects and promotes cultural venues.

Suggestions for building on Oldham's tourism base.

Growing need for overnight/long stay accommodation in appropriate rural locations (log cabins, camp sites).

Need to promote our green areas.

Should support Northern Roots as a sustainable attraction for visitors as well as for the range of other environmentally friendly benefits it will bring.

Support for the retention of a farm diversification policy.

### **Our Centres**

Support for the distinction between the different centres in the borough.

Suggestions that the existing retail hierarchy should be replaced as it does not reflect the retail distribution of the area.

Suggestion that the type of housing that would be suitable for centres would be single person households and older people.

### **Addressing Climate Change**

Support for climate change policy to be intrinsically linked to wider policies in the Plan including those related to design of new development and the provision of green and blue infrastructure.

Suggestion that chapter could make reference to Greater Manchester's Environment Plan targets.

Support for Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) and mapping out opportunities for renewable and low carbon energy though some developers consider a policy is unnecessary.

Support for policies managing surface water runoff which accord with either national standards or standards referenced in the Greater Manchester SFRA. Support for SUDs and using natural processes to mitigate flood risk.

Comments that the natural environment is important for mental health.



<p>Concerns raised over the development of the Green Belt and Other Protected Open Land.</p> <p>General support for Green Belt enhancement opportunities.</p>
<p><b>The Natural Environment and Open Land</b></p> <p>Mixed responses to the question of whether sites that have met Local Green Space criteria should be designated as such.</p> <p>Some felt that sites not meeting the criteria should not be de-designated as Other Protected Open Land (OPOL).</p> <p>Some OPOL sites were put forward as needing safeguarding from future development.</p> <p>Suggestion that the Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt) could be a useful tool.</p>
<p><b>Green Infrastructure</b></p> <p>Some comments advocated the need to protect ancient woodland.</p> <p>Should use brownfield land rather than greenfield.</p> <p>A mixed response to the options put forward to ensure that green infrastructure is embedded across the borough and in the built environment.</p> <p>General support for biodiversity net gain to be delivered as close to the site as possible.</p> <p>Support for net gain being delivered on local projects.</p> <p>Mixed response in terms of whether a higher than minimum biodiversity net gain should be applied to developments.</p> <p>General support for restricting the paving of front gardens. Some respondents favoured setting minimum garden requirements.</p> <p>Varying responses in relation to open space, preferences for on-site provision and pooling.</p> <p>Recommendations that decisions for open space provision are made based on evidence.</p> <p>Peak District National Park requested to be referenced in enhancing the access to the wider countryside.</p> <p>Support for space for food growing new developments.</p> <p>Support for a policy regarding the protection of trees.</p>
<p><b>The Built Environment – Historic Environment</b></p> <p>Most respondents agreed that the extensions to the Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area should be included on the policies map. However, one respondent stated that the conservation area should not be extended.</p> <p>Important policy areas specific to Oldham are the future use of textile mills and seeking to enhance Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area with the aim to remove it from the 'at risk' register.</p> <p>Localised policies supported.</p>



<p>A mixed response was received to the question of the proposed policy approach to high, medium and low priority mills and mill clusters.</p>
<p><b>The Built Environment – Design</b></p> <p>Support for the production of a Local Design Code.</p> <p>Some comments around detailed design policies needing to be flexible and not hinder development delivery or stifle imaginative high-quality design.</p>
<p><b>Transport and Improving Connectivity</b></p> <p>General support for suggestions to improve transport and connectivity.</p> <p>Additional key services could include digital connectivity (broadband and mobile phone).</p> <p>Suggestion that major developments should have access to all or the majority of services.</p> <p>Level of public transport accessibility should be high.</p> <p>General support for the principle of 20-minute neighbourhoods, although one commented that this is not practical in a rural environment such as Saddleworth.</p> <p>General support for all new development to provide EV charging points.</p> <p>Support for a standalone policy for utilising the Streets for All guidance.</p> <p>A policy may also be required that ensures that all access roads into new developments and all roads within new developments that are to be delivered by developers, are designed to be compliant with Streets for All principles. Support for Bee Network proposals to be identified on the proposals map.</p> <p>TfGM suggest that the proposals map shows the ‘confirmed infrastructure’ only (i.e. Oldham’s sponsored schemes).</p> <p>Support for public transport pass as part of some new developments.</p>
<p><b>Communities</b></p> <p>Recognise the importance of protecting heritage assets and assets of community value.</p> <p>The council should commit to maintaining the register of assets of community value.</p> <p>Mixed responses in relation to Hot Food Takeaway question. Support for a policy which restricts the location of hot food takeaways within 400m of a school and in areas with high levels of obesity but another commented that proximity-based policies are weak and conflicting and that there should be no assumption that takeaway outlets will only sell cheap fast food.</p> <p>Health Impact Assessments should be mandated for all developments.</p> <p>Support for protecting suitable sites for potential future education facilities/services.</p> <p>Mixed response as to whether pubs should be included within the definition of community facilities.</p> <p>Community facilities should also include churches, libraries and schools.</p> <p>Support for Article 4 Direction in rural areas.</p> <p>Support for social value in developments policy.</p>

<p>Support for a policy outlining the agent of change principle.</p> <p>Support for separate policies relating to the local environment.</p>
<p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <p>Financial contributions should be channelled into communities where the development occurs.</p> <p>Suggestion that policy be worded to support utility sites in Green Belt /Open Countryside for operational purposes.</p> <p>Support for policy seeking the provision of supporting necessary infrastructure.</p> <p>A policy that provides a formula and clarity over what planning obligations will likely be sought is supported. Suggestion that any policy should allow for flexibility and site-specific circumstances. Suggestion that the council produce a Planning Obligations SPD.</p>
<p><b>Monitoring</b></p> <p>A range of comments suggesting further indicators that should be included.</p> <p>Advice that monitoring indicators should meet the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes 2004 to included suitable monitoring indicators in the Sustainability Appraisal, Local Plan or post adoption statement.</p>
<p><b>Overarching</b></p> <p>Comments received relating to PfE and specific planning application which are separate to the Local Plan Issues and Options consultation.</p> <p>More could be added to the Spatial Portrait - a brief narrative on the evolution of the borough's historic environment and the growth of the town during the 19th century.</p>

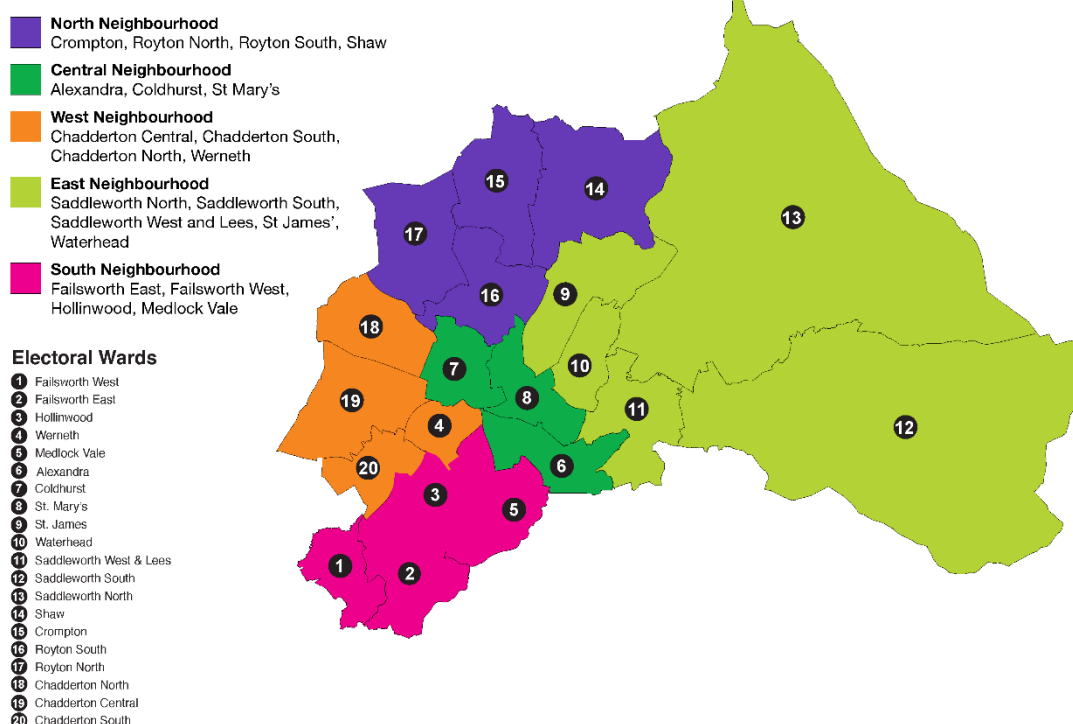
## 5. Spatial Portrait

### Context

- 5.1 Oldham is situated in the northeast of Greater Manchester. It covers an area of 55 square miles. Our neighbouring boroughs are Rochdale, Manchester, Tameside, Peak District National Park, Kirklees and Calderdale. The borough is made up of the town of Oldham and the areas of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hollinwood, Royton, Shaw and Crompton and Saddleworth and Lees. It has a real rural and urban mix, reaching from within five miles of Manchester City Centre, to the moorlands of Saddleworth, with almost a quarter of the borough within the Peak District National Park.

Figure SP1: Map illustrating Oldham's wards and neighbourhood teams

#### Oldham Borough Neighbourhood Teams



### Population and housing

- 5.2 Oldham is home to around 242,100 residents who live across five districts and twenty wards and make up 8.4% of Greater Manchester's population<sup>6</sup>. The borough has a higher proportion (34.8%) of ethnic minority residents than in Greater Manchester (28.7%), the North West (18.8%), and England (26.5%)<sup>7</sup>. The ethnic composition in Oldham currently stands at 68.1% White, 13.5% Pakistani, 9% Bangladeshi and 9.3% 'other'<sup>8</sup>. Equality and diversity are embraced within Oldham

<sup>6</sup> Census, 2021. Information on the Census can be found here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census>

<sup>7</sup> Census, 2021. Information on the Census can be found here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census>

<sup>8</sup> Census, 2021. Information on the Census can be found here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census>

and the number of ethnically diverse communities continue to grow. This diversity is reflected within schools, with over 90 different languages recorded as being spoken<sup>9</sup>. Oldham brings together a variety of cultures and is proud of the uniqueness that this brings to the borough.

- 5.3 The borough has a relatively young population, with a high proportion (22.7%) of residents aged under 16 and proportionally fewer (15.9%) aged 65 and over<sup>10</sup>. Our increasing population profile is a result of improving life expectancy, internal migration and the growth in Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities.
- 5.4 In general, the people of Oldham have poorer health than the England average with Oldham's life expectancy significantly lower than the England average, for males in Oldham it is 77.2 and females 80.5 and in England it is males 79.4 and females 83.1<sup>11</sup>. Significant inequalities in health across the borough continue to be seen, for example inequalities in smoking prevalence and the health effects of smoking.
- 5.5 Oldham's Housing Strategy states that Oldham has the highest proportion of pre-1919 terraced homes in Greater Manchester (41%) and they are concentrated in the parts of the borough that show the greatest levels of disadvantage and deprivation. Oldham also has a high proportion of properties in lower council tax bands, with 70% of homes in band A or B category<sup>12</sup>. Levels of overcrowding are high and there is a legacy of historic low supply of new larger family accommodation.

## Economy and employment

- 5.6 There are over 7,155 businesses, employing 94,000 people in Oldham<sup>13</sup>, people according to the Annual Population Survey<sup>14</sup>. Those businesses span key economic sectors including advanced manufacturing, health and social care, construction, education, digital and creative and financial and professional services. The borough is home to a number of well-known and high-profile businesses including Trinity Mirror Group, Diodes Incorporated, Ferranti Technologies, Seton Healthcare Ltd, Park Cake Bakeries, Innovative Technologies, Ambassador Textiles, and Nov Mono Pumps. The [Oldham Independent Economic Review](#)<sup>15</sup> identified a strong “entrepreneurial culture” in the borough, with large numbers of business start-ups and small and micro businesses. Wholesale and retail, construction, and professional services contribute significant numbers of jobs, with manufacturing the largest single sector in terms of Gross Value Added (although this has declined).
- 5.7 The unemployment rate in Oldham currently stands at 6.6%, compared to 5% within Greater Manchester and 3.8% in England<sup>16</sup>. Oldham's overall rank in the [indices of deprivation](#) has maintained a clear downward trend since 2004, relative to other authorities. The worsening of the ‘extent’ rank may indicate that deprivation (relative to other areas rather than in absolute terms) is taking on a wider geographic scope

---

<sup>9</sup> School Census, 2020

<sup>10</sup> Census, 2021. Information on the Census can be found here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census>

<sup>11</sup> The Oldham Plan, Oldham Council, 2023. The document can be found at:

<https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7589/the-oldham-plan-our-future-oldham>

<sup>12</sup> Oldham Council Tax Data, May 2020

<sup>13</sup> Business Demography and UK Business Counts, 2022

<sup>14</sup> ONS Annual Population Survey, 2023

<sup>15</sup> The document can be found at: <https://oerb.org.uk/>

<sup>16</sup> ONS Claimant Count, August 2023. This information can be viewed at: [CC01 Regional labour market: Claimant Count by unitary and local authority \(experimental\) - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

across Oldham. Pockets of deprivation are particularly concentrated around the inner Oldham area. The borough is the 19th most deprived local authority area<sup>17</sup> in the country, with five Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA's) sitting within the worst 1% nationally, one more than in 2015 with the addition being parts of Littlemoor/Greenacres.

- 5.8 The median household income for Oldham in 2022 was £27,800, which is below Greater Manchester (£31,00) and national (£35,154) levels<sup>18</sup>. Oldham has traditionally had a weak skills base, a legacy of generations of manual employment, which means Oldham residents have found it difficult to enter key economic sectors in recent years. In relation to skills the latest census data shows that the proportion of residents with no qualifications has decreased from 22.2% in 2011 to 19.6% in 2021. However, the 2021 figure still remains above Greater Manchester (14.5%) and England (12.4%) proportions. The proportion of residents with NVQ 4+ (Degree level or above) has increased from 20.3% in 2011 to 26.6% in 2021. The 2021 figure still remains below both Greater Manchester (35.0%) and England (37.1%) proportions.
- 5.9 The council's ambitions for Oldham Town Centre aim to create a more vibrant, revitalised centre that plays a greater role in Greater Manchester. Oldham's cultural offer includes Gallery Oldham which has collections of regional and national importance, a variety of museum collections, archives and arts, the Oldham Theatre Workshop and libraries. Gallery Oldham continues to attract a high number of visits with visitors enjoying the fantastic range of exhibitions and events on offer.
- 5.10 In relation to tourism, Oldham has two distinct areas that make up the main tourist destinations, Oldham Town Centre and Saddleworth. Oldham Town Centre has attractions such as Gallery Oldham and a growing evening economy around Odeon Cinema and a number of independent restaurants. Saddleworth's attractions include Saddleworth Museum and Gallery, Uppermill village, the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and the open countryside leading to attractions such as Dove Stone reservoir. A number of successful events are held annually in the borough including Santa's Reindeer Parade which attracts on average around 9,000 visitors, the Big Bang Bonfire display and Illuminate, a late night arts festival, which attracts performers from all over the world.
- 5.11 [The Oldham Plan](#)<sup>19</sup> explains that towns that succeed will do so because of the experience they create for people, attracting people with the mix of shops, leisure, employment and housing. It goes to say that places like Royton and Uppermill are already doing well, drawing locals and visitors with their independent shops and options for food and drinks. There are a clear set of commitments in place to improve Oldham Town Centre, with work already underway.

## The natural environment

- 5.12 Over half of the borough is open land that provides an attractive setting to built up areas and is an important natural resource supporting agricultural, tourism and recreational activities.
- 5.13 The majority of the open land is designated Green Belt or locally protected open countryside. River valleys and waterways, including the Rochdale Canal Special Area

---

The English Indices of deprivation 2019 can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

<sup>18</sup> CACI, 2022

<sup>19</sup> The Oldham Plan, Oldham Council, 2023. The document can be found at:

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7589/the\\_oldham\\_plan\\_-\\_our\\_future\\_oldham](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7589/the_oldham_plan_-_our_future_oldham)

of Conservation (SAC) and the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, provide habitats and corridors for wildlife, as well as opportunities for recreation, tourism and regeneration.

- 5.14 There is also a range of nature conservation areas, from international through to those of local importance. Oldham has one Special Protection Area (SPA) for rare and vulnerable birds (South Pennine Moors).
- 5.15 Oldham has six Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within the borough. They are listed below):
- Rochdale Canal;
  - South Pennine Moors;
  - Standedge Tunnel;
  - Ladcastle and Den Quarries;
  - Lowside Brickworks; and
  - Dark Peak.
- 5.16 In addition, there are currently 38 Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) across the borough, one Local Nature Reserve (Glodwick Lows) and two Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites (RIGS) at Glodwick Brickpit and Rocher Vale. There are also areas of ancient woodland within Oldham.
- 5.17 The South Pennine Moors, which is designated a SPA and SAC, as well as a SSSI and SBI, has the highest degree of international importance for birds and habitats. The Moors for the Future Partnership, established in 2003, is dedicated to preserving 8,000 years of moorland history. Moors for the Future have been working to reverse more than 200 years of damage that left large areas of these uplands bare of vegetation. Their purpose now focuses on enhancing habitats, improving water quality, tackling climate change, reducing flood risk and wildfires and providing space for health and wellbeing.
- 5.18 Northern Roots, is a project in Oldham which will create the UK's largest urban farm and eco-park on Snipe Clough, 160 acres of green space in the heart of Oldham. The aim is to develop Northern Roots in a way that creates jobs, skills and business opportunities for local people, while preserving and enhancing the biodiversity and environmental value of the site. It will be developed for and with local communities, supporting a wide range of activities and businesses. This will include growing edible crops at scale, animal husbandry and bee-keeping, forestry, mountain biking, outdoor events and performances, and much more. 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. [Oldham Corporate Plan<sup>20</sup>](#) states that Northern Roots has the potential to put Oldham on the map as a key visitor destination in Greater Manchester.
- 5.19 Green Infrastructure provision helps to underpin people's quality of life. It has a key role to play in the protection of the environment: supporting biodiversity, habitats and nature conservation; and combating the effects of climate change. The borough has a number of large, attractive parks including Alexandra and Dunwood and boasts a wide range of green spaces, such as Daisy Nook Country Park and Tandle Hill Country Park.

---

<sup>20</sup> Oldham Corporate Plan, 2022. This document can be found at:  
[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7405/oldham\\_corporate\\_plan\\_2022-27](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7405/oldham_corporate_plan_2022-27)



## The built environment

- 5.20 Heritage and conservation are very important within the borough. There are 36 conservation areas totalling around 255 hectares, 550 listed buildings, three registered parks and gardens and two registered scheduled monuments, all of which contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of the borough. The Heritage at Risk Register is the tool used for the Heritage at Risk campaign to save historic sites and places from decay, neglect and inappropriate development. In Oldham there are ten entries on Historic England's "At Risk" Register, including Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area.
- 5.21 Oldham Town Centre has a high number of listed buildings and numerous buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the town centre and conservation area. The high number of listed buildings and buildings of positive townscape character offers the opportunity for heritage-led regeneration, within the core of the town centre, as seen with the restoration of the Old Town Hall, a Grade II Listed Building, into a 805-seat Odeon cinema with restaurants, which opened in November 2016.
- 5.22 The council adopted the '[Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document](#)'<sup>21</sup> (SPD) in August 2019. The appraisal and management plan was considered to be a high priority due to the conservation area being "at risk". The SPD proposed four extensions to the conservation area, which have been designated under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A plan showing these extensions can be found in Appendix 1. However, these will need to be formally adopted through the Local Plan review to carry more weight in planning decisions and enforcement action. The SPD provides further guidance on the relevant policies contained within the current Local Plan, will provide up to date evidence to inform the Local Plan review and its implementation and will also support the regeneration plans for Oldham Town Centre.

## Transport

- 5.23 Oldham has good transport connectivity with its road and motorway network links, including the A62, A627 (M), A663, A671, A669, A635 and easy access to the M60 and M62. These transport links offer locational advantages for the borough with opportunities for accessing two major centres of importance, Manchester and Leeds, and also Manchester Airport.
- 5.24 Pollution from road traffic is the most significant cause of poor air quality, with sections of the A62, A627, A663 and the M60 the worst affected in the borough.
- 5.25 The Oldham Metrolink system opened as far as Mumps in June 2012, Shaw & Crompton in December 2012 and Rochdale Railway Station in February 2013. It operates from Rochdale, through to Oldham town centre into Manchester City Centre where the network links to Bury, Media City, Manchester Airport, Tameside, Eccles, Altrincham and East Didsbury. Park and Ride facilities within Oldham are located at Shaw, Derker, Mumps and Hollinwood. There are also Cycle Hubs at Mumps and Hollinwood. The rail network in Oldham provides connections to West Yorkshire and Manchester and beyond, with railway stations at Mills Hill and Greenfield.
- 5.26 As part of the Streets for All / City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme, TfGM has commissioned a Strategic Outline Business Case and full

---

<sup>21</sup> This document can be found at:

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/1599/oldham\\_town\\_centre\\_conservation\\_area\\_appraisal\\_and\\_management\\_plan\\_caamp\\_supplementary\\_planning\\_document\\_spd](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/1599/oldham_town_centre_conservation_area_appraisal_and_management_plan_caamp_supplementary_planning_document_spd)

design for a Quality Bus Transit (QBT) project, connecting Rochdale, Oldham and Ashton. The route is a 15km road corridor that holds one frequent bus along its length (the 409 between Rochdale - Oldham - Ashton). The commission has identified proposals to improve highway facilities for buses along this whole corridor, with a focus on improving bus reliability, quality, supporting more active travel and integration into the urban realm. This is expected to create opportunities to deliver bus priority measures, such as bus lanes and bus gates, as well as possibilities to reduce stop frequency (where appropriate). Opportunities to improve the walking, cycling, and general traffic environment along the corridor should also be identified where these support project aims.



## 6. Vision for Oldham Borough

### Our Local Plan Vision

- 6.1 The Local Plan complements and provides the spatial expression of both The Oldham Plan and the Corporate Plan visions to 'uplift every resident' and their priorities. The Local Plan will do this through enabling, and expanding upon, the council's Creating a Better Place programme – a strategic regeneration framework to transform the whole borough.
- 6.2 The vision for Oldham is that by 2039.....
- 6.3 Oldham will have a clean, green and healthy environment. We will have responded to both the Biodiversity Duty and the Climate Change emergency through the protection, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment and having a substantially reduced carbon footprint from meeting the council's ambition to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. Oldham will be a carbon neutral exemplar with a resilient and multifunctional Green Infrastructure network which brings multiple benefits to the natural and built environment as well as to the health of its residents and visitors.
- 6.4 Through delivering around 11,560 new homes of different sizes and types, including affordable housing, Oldham will have quality homes for everyone that meet the needs of Oldham's diverse communities. New homes, delivered in sustainable and accessible locations, will contribute to inclusive communities where everyone can live.
- 6.5 Oldham will be a key contributor to Greater Manchester's economy, with a strong reputation for clean growth and green innovation. It will be a place of dynamic businesses with better job opportunities, where those businesses local to Oldham are supported to thrive and grow, and those new to Oldham are attracted to invest. Every resident will be enabled to contribute to, and benefit from, economic growth of the city region providing significant progress in living standards, wages and skills for everyone in Oldham.
- 6.6 Oldham will have accessible and sustainable transport choices, providing improved connectivity across the borough, the city-region and beyond - for all. We will have a transport system that enables the local economy to prosper and our residents to fully contribute to and benefit from job opportunities, and a comprehensive network of on and off-road walking and cycling routes that encourage active travel, making it easier and safer for people to get to key local destinations.
- 6.7 Oldham Town Centre will be a place that thrives by combining a retail core with quality homes, opportunities to learn, develop new skills and gain employment, and a diverse culture, leisure and night-time offer that supports its local communities and attracts visitors. Our Town Centre will be supported by the borough's other centres – Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Shaw, Royton and Uppermill which will continue to provide a vital role in meeting the needs of the borough's communities, connecting our residents to local services and facilities in a way that fosters a sense of community and local identity.
- 6.8 Oldham residents will be healthy, safe and well-supported, having a great start from early years and with skills for life. They will have access to local community facilities and health and well-being provision and will have active and healthier lifestyles gained from access to active travel and green infrastructure. Opportunities for excellent education, training and life-long learning will be available to all Oldham residents, raising aspirations and reducing inequalities. Providing residents with a great start and skills for life so that they can make the most of opportunities available to them, whilst

meeting the needs for local businesses and helping to attract and retain new business opportunities. New energy efficient development will be brought forward in line with co-design expectations and design codes developed with Oldham's communities, whilst the key characteristics of Oldham's townscape and landscape types and Oldham's historic environment and rich heritage will be conserved and enhanced.

## 7. Plan Objectives

7.1 The following plan objectives have been informed by the initial issues identified through the thematic topic papers and work done to inform preparation of the Plan so far. They will be central to achieving the above vision. The plan objectives will be refined as further evidence is completed and preparation of the Local Plan progresses, taking into consideration future consultations.

7.2 The Local Plan Vision for Oldham up to 2039 will be achieved by:

### PO1 Building quality homes to meet local needs and diversify the housing offer by:

- providing for, and supporting the delivery of, 11,560 new homes;
- delivering a diverse housing offer to meet the needs of all our residents including affordable housing and homes for families, older people and disabled people;
- ensuring the delivery of high-quality, sustainable and well-designed new homes; and
- ensuring appropriate densities and making the best and most effective use of brownfield land.

### PO2 Providing opportunities to learn and gain new skills by:

- supporting the provision of suitable, modern services and facilities for the education and training of all age groups, including addressing the needs for primary and secondary school places; and
- encouraging employment and skills opportunities for local people as part of new developments.

### PO3 Boosting northern competitiveness by providing access to employment opportunities and growing local businesses by:

- providing for, and supporting the delivery of, around 12 hectares of office floorspace and around 41 hectares of industrial and warehousing floorspace;
- protecting designated sites that are suitable and attractive for existing and new businesses to locate to and expand on;
- encouraging and facilitating the development of the borough's key economic sectors with a focus on clean growth and green innovation;
- supporting the expansion of digital infrastructure to assist economic growth; and
- supporting a range of sustainable leisure and tourism activities.

### PO4 Supporting the regeneration of Oldham Town Centre and creating thriving centres by:

- supporting the delivery of the Oldham Town Centre strategic framework and appropriate plans or projects that facilitate the regeneration of the borough's other centres; and
- promoting and enhancing the vitality and viability of the borough's centres to ensure their long-term sustainability.

### PO5 Protecting and enhancing Oldham's landscapes by:

- respecting the Peak District National Park and its purposes;
- promoting the positive use of the Green Belt;
- identifying Local Green Spaces that are special to local communities and supporting their enhancement; and
- ensuring high quality new development makes a positive contribution to Oldham's landscape and townscape features and characteristics.

**PO6 Protecting, restoring and enhancing the natural environment by:**

- achieving net gain in Oldham's biodiversity and supporting opportunities to implement a nature recovery network;
- using nature-based solutions to mitigate against, and be resilient to, climate change; and
- implementing Oldham's Green Infrastructure Strategy and supporting projects such as Northern Roots.

**PO7 Promoting sustainable development that mitigates and adapts to climate change by:**

- achieving high standards of sustainable design and construction;
- adopting a positive approach towards energy schemes and the identification of low carbon and renewable energy opportunities;
- reducing the risk of flooding to people and property taking into account climate change;
- managing flood risk through the use of integrated water management and the provision of multi-functional green infrastructure; and
- promoting the efficient use of water resources and water quality.

**PO8 Uplifting the health and well-being of our residents and local communities by:**

- facilitating and encouraging local and accessible health and well-being provision;
- protecting and enhancing access to open space, sport and recreation facilities, including the provision of new and / or improved open spaces, to meet the needs of new development;
- providing spaces to grow food in new and existing communities, such as allotments and community gardens;
- supporting and protecting new and existing community facilities;
- reducing crime and fear of crime and promoting community safety, through good design of the built environment;
- improving air quality for the benefit of everyone; and
- providing and maintaining high standards of amenity and local environmental quality.

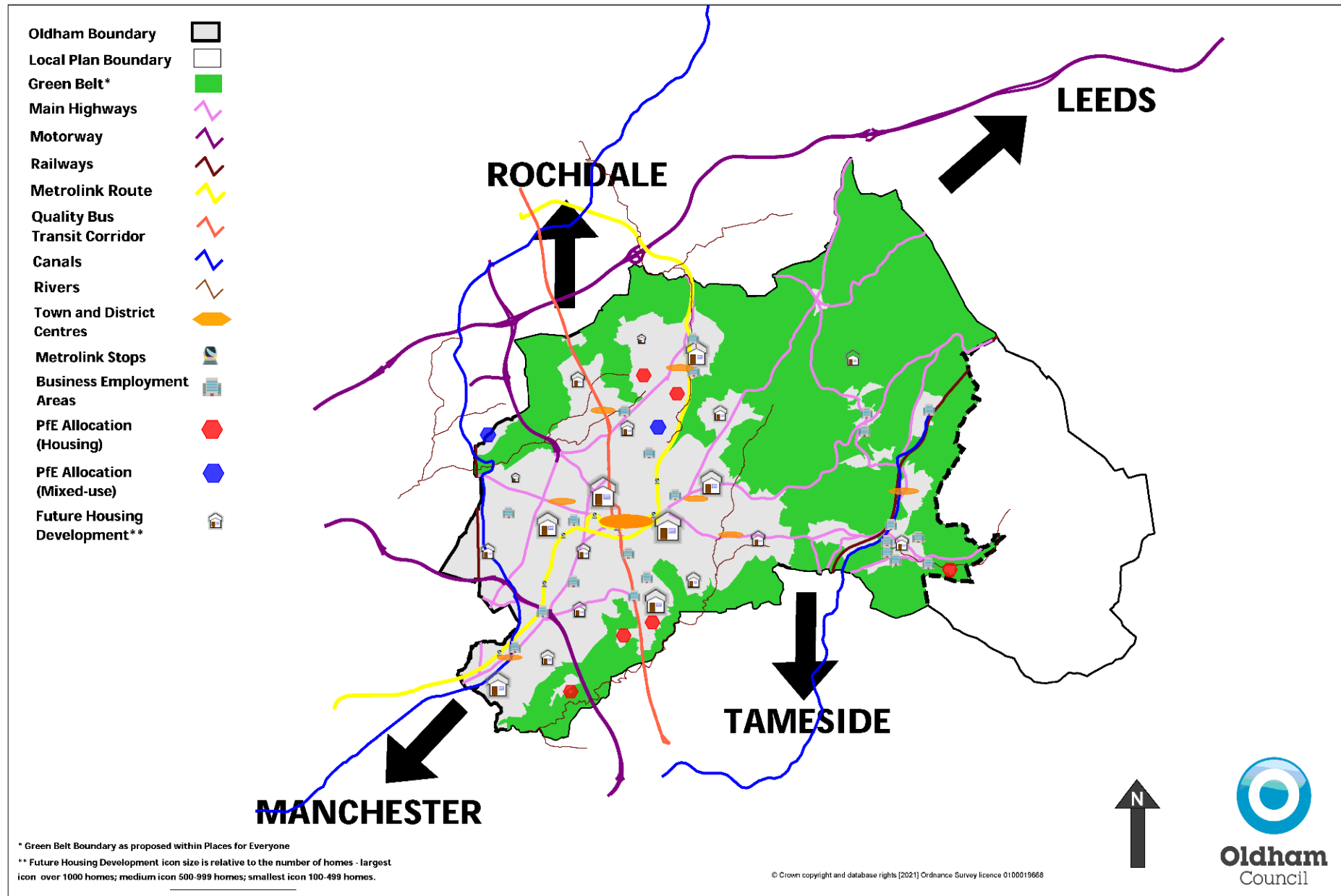
**PO9 Improving and valuing a better built environment, by:**

- delivering high-quality design and placing greater emphasis on place-making, with building and spaces that respond positively to local distinctiveness and character;
- conserving and enhancing the borough's historic environment and heritage assets; and
- ensuring that proposals within Oldham Town Centre follows the recommendations set out in the Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Management Plan with the aim of removing the Conservation Area from the at risk register.

**PO10 Promoting accessible and sustainable transport choices, by:**

- supporting delivery of Oldham's Transport Strategy and the Right Mix approach so as to encourage walking, cycling and an increase in active travel;
- reducing the need to travel through ensuring new development is located in areas with access to local services and facilities; and
- improving connectivity for Oldham's residents to key areas of employment within the borough, the city region and beyond.

## Key Diagram



## 8. Homes

- 8.1 Oldham has a strong housing market, offering a unique draw for residents by having a wealth of green spaces and open countryside, whilst being well-connected to Manchester City Centre and neighbouring towns. Despite the positive characteristics the ever-increasing need for housing has meant there is a shortage of suitable housing to meet local needs. Like other Greater Manchester borough's, the industrial legacy has meant some of Oldham's existing housing stock is not suitable to meet current needs and new housing needs to be built.
- 8.2 Every Oldham resident should have access to good quality, suitable housing. Housing is a significant determinant for health and wellbeing and is a draw for investment and employment opportunities. The construction of new homes can contribute to the local economy and generate local employment opportunities.

### Housing Need

- 8.3 Oldham's local housing need (the number of new homes needed) is set out in Places for Everyone (PfE). PfE sets out that Oldham is required to deliver 11,560 homes over the period of 2022-2039, which equates to an average of 680 homes per year. The housing requirement is phased through a stepped housing requirement as set out in Table H1.

Table H1 Phasing of Housing Requirement<sup>22</sup>

	Annual Average	2022-2025	2025-2030	2030-2039	Total
Number of homes required	680	404	680	772	11,560

- 8.4 [The Local Housing Needs Assessment \(LHNA\) \(2019\)](#)<sup>23</sup> has assessed current housing provision and future needs and has found that there are imbalances in the size, mix and type of new homes required across the borough to meet local housing needs. There is also increasing numbers of people at risk of, or currently experiencing, homelessness in the borough. In addition, there is an outward migration of young people in the borough, as such there is a need to ensure there is an attractive housing offer available in the borough to retain and attract young people. There are also issues of overcrowding in some of Oldham's neighbourhoods, an increased need for larger inter-generational family housing, and an increasing ageing population and a need for adaptable and accessible housing.
- 8.5 It is important that the Local Plan ensures a diverse range of housing that is attractive and meets the needs of different sections of the population at different life stages.

<sup>22</sup> Adapted from PfE JP-H1 Table 7.2.

<sup>23</sup> Policies within this section have been informed by the evidence set out within the 2019 Local Housing Needs Assessment. A partial update of the Local Housing Needs Assessment is currently underway and will inform policies within the next stage - Publication Plan - as appropriate. The full document can be found at:

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/5590/housing\\_strategy\\_needs\\_assessment\\_report\\_2019](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/5590/housing_strategy_needs_assessment_report_2019)

## Policy H1: Delivering a Diverse Housing Offer

**The council will promote a diverse housing offer to meet the differing needs of all Oldham's residents. Planning applications for residential development, in whole or as part of a mixed-use scheme, will be permitted where:**

- 1. The site is allocated for residential development through PfE or the Local Plan; or**
- 2. The site is identified within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA); or**
- 3. The proposal is for small-scale development, comprising conversion or change of use of less than 10 dwellings.**

**Proposed developments on sites identified within the SHLAA, and those not identified within the criteria above and where they are previously developed (brownfield), will be considered favourably where they comply with national planning policy and guidance, PfE and Local Plan policies.**

**All residential developments should be sustainably located, with public transport, local services and facilities accessible to the development by active travel.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 8.6 The council will support sustainable housing development where it complies with national planning policy and guidance, the policies within PfE and this Plan.
- 8.7 The [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment \(SHLAA\)](#)<sup>24</sup> and [Brownfield Register](#)<sup>25</sup> provide details of sites considered suitable, available and achievable for residential development, and should be used as a starting point to identify potential development sites. In addition, site allocations identified within this Plan will be considered deliverable for residential development.
- 8.8 The redevelopment of brownfield land is central to achieving sustainable development and maximising our land supply. The majority of sites identified within the SHLAA are brownfield, however there are also a number of sites which are made up of both brownfield and greenfield land, and also some greenfield sites. It is important in meeting our housing requirement and addressing local needs, that we deliver all sites within our housing land supply. This policy will support the delivery of the housing land supply and also housing on other suitable sites that may become available.
- 8.9 Ensuring that new development is sustainably located is essential in encouraging the use of sustainable travel alternatives, reducing climate change and creating strong

---

<sup>24</sup> This document can be found at:  
[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201230/monitoring/2134/strategic\\_housing\\_land\\_availability\\_assessment\\_shlaa](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201230/monitoring/2134/strategic_housing_land_availability_assessment_shlaa)

<sup>25</sup> This document can be found at:  
[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/homepage/1386/brownfield\\_land\\_register](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/homepage/1386/brownfield_land_register)

communities. New residential development should be accessible, via active travel, to public transport links, local services and facilities, in line with Policy CO9. The level of required accessibility is further determined by the density of development, as is set out in Policy H2.

Linked Local Plan Policies	H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, H9, H10, H11, H12, CO9
Relevant Places for Everyone Policies	JPA12, JPA13, JPA14, JPA15, JPA16, JPA17, JPA18

## Policy H2: Housing Mix

**New residential developments should contribute to a diverse housing mix across the borough, ensuring that Oldham's identified housing needs can be met.**

**Within Oldham Town Centre, Oldham's other centres and within 400m of transport hubs<sup>26</sup>, the housing mix shall predominantly be for apartments, in line with the minimum housing densities, as set out in Policy H3.**

**Outside of these areas, there will be a mix of housing and apartments provided in line with the mix set out within Table H2.**

**For some developments an alternative mix may be appropriate, including in the circumstances listed below:**

- 1. It can be clearly evidenced that an alternative mix is required in relation to specific funding requirements and the proposed development is still able to contribute to meeting local housing needs;**
- 2. It can be clearly demonstrated that the site has distinct characteristics that make a higher density inappropriate or impracticable, such as flood risk, design context, impact on designated and non-designated heritage assets or landscape and ecological designations or assets;**
- 3. The development is for specialist accommodation, such as for older and/or disabled people, or there is a demonstrable need for different types of homes that cannot be delivered at a particular density (for example bungalows or residential institutions); and/ or**
- 4. There is a need to vary existing housing mix in the locality of the proposed development, for example, to provide smaller or larger house sizes.**

**Alternative housing mixes should be agreed with the council at the earliest opportunity, ideally through seeking pre-application advice. Affordable housing mix is further considered within Policy H7.**

**All mix requirements shall be rounded to the nearest full dwelling once the relevant proportion has been applied.**

**Where there is an identified need for bungalows in an area, conditions will be attached to any new provision to remove permitted development rights, ensuring**

<sup>26</sup> Metrolink Stops and Train Stations.



that any extensions or alterations are appropriate in retaining the level-access design of the bungalow.

Table H2: Housing Mix Requirements<sup>27</sup>

The housing mix set out within Table H2 is informed by the Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) 2019. An update of the LHNA is currently underway and will inform the final housing mix requirements within this policy.

Size of Scheme (dwellings/ hectares)	Required Market Housing Mix	Required Affordable Housing Mix
10-25 dwellings	70% 3 bedrooms or more; 30% 1 or 2 bedrooms	60% 3 bedrooms or more; 40% 1 or 2 bedrooms
26 dwellings and above	70% 3 bedrooms or more; 30% 1 or 2 bedrooms	70% 3 bedrooms or more; 30% 1 or 2 bedrooms

## Reasoned Justification

- 8.10 As set out within PfE Policy JP-H3 all new homes must comply with the nationally described space standards and should be built to the 'accessible and adaptable' standard in Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations unless specific site conditions make this impracticable. These will be determined by the council on a case-by-case basis.
- 8.11 The LHNA (2019) set out evidence relating to housing need and mix. The LHNA identified that in terms of market housing there is a particular need for three bedroomed houses and smaller house sizes, including those of 1 and 2 bedrooms. The needs for affordable housing are similar, although the need for smaller house sizes, of 1 and 2 bedrooms, is more prominent. Across both market and affordable housing there is a particular need identified for bungalows, particularly 1 or 2 bedroomed bungalows, which there is a shortfall of in the borough. This is needed to cater for Oldham's increasing older population and people with disabilities and mobility needs. The area with the greatest need for bungalows is within Shaw and Crompton and Royton. It is considered that implementing a restriction on the conversion of new bungalows to ensure that they retain the single level design is important in securing the provision of this type of accommodation to meet current and future local housing needs. The council will also encourage new developments to incorporate the provision of bungalows into the overall housing mix.
- 8.12 A partial update of the LHNA is currently underway. The update will reassess housing mix and identify particular housing needs and make policy recommendations on how the Local Plan can address housing needs through housing mix. This updated evidence may change the identified housing mix required within this policy, as appropriate.

Linked Local Plan Policies	H1, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, H9, H10, H11, H12
----------------------------	---

<sup>27</sup> For sites of 9 dwellings and below or sites smaller than 0.2ha no mix requirements are identified.

### Policy H3: Density of New Housing

It is important in making the most efficient use of land, to achieve appropriate densities on residential developments. In line with PfE, new residential developments should achieve the minimum densities set out in Table H3 below.

Table H3: Minimum Densities for Residential Developments<sup>28</sup>

Location (use highest density that applies when a site falls within more than one location) <sup>29</sup>	Minimum net residential density (dwellings per hectare)	Minimum net residential density (dwellings per hectare)	Minimum net residential density (dwellings per hectare)
<i>Designated Centres</i>	<i>Within the location</i>	<i>Within 400m</i>	<i>Within 800m</i>
Oldham Town Centre	120	70	50
The borough's other centres (Lees, Hill Stores (Huddersfield Road), Failsworth, Chadderton, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill)	70	50	35
<i>Public transport stops/ hubs</i>	<i>Within the location</i>	<i>Within 400m</i>	<i>Within 800m</i>
Metrolink stops within Oldham Town Centre	N/a	120	70
Rail stations with a frequent service (Greenfield and Mills Hill Stations) and all other Metrolink stops	N/a	70	50
Areas within GMAL 6 <sup>30</sup> and above or its equivalent	50	35	35

<sup>28</sup> Adapted from PfE policy JP-H4 – Density of New Housing (Composite Plan August 2023)

<sup>29</sup> Where more than one density applies to the same part of the site, the highest density should be used. Different densities may apply to different parts of the site. Distances should be measured from the boundary of the designated centre or GMAL area. All distances are measured in a straight line.

<sup>30</sup> GMAL is an abbreviation of Greater Manchester Accessibility Level, which measures the accessibility of locations across Greater Manchester by walking and public transport. Areas are

**Outside of the areas identified within Table H3 above, a minimum density of 35 dph will be applied.**

**In some circumstances, lower densities may be acceptable where they can be clearly justified as per the criteria below:**

- a. Local housing market issues, such as a demonstratable need for a particular type of housing that cannot be delivered at a higher density; or**
- b. Site-specific issues, such as the design context and any potential impact on the wider landscape or townscape including designated and non-designated heritage assets and green infrastructure.**

### **Monitoring Density**

**To help assess and monitor the density of development proposals, the following measurements of density should be provided for all planning applications that include new residential units:**

- 1. Gross floorspace (m<sup>2</sup>) per dwelling;**
- 2. Number of habitable rooms per hectare;**
- 3. Number of bedrooms per hectare; and**
- 4. Number of bedspaces per hectare.**

**The council will use these measurements to determine if the proposed development meets the identified density standards set out in Table H3.**

### **Size of Homes**

**In line with PfE Policy JP-H3, the gross internal floor area of new homes will, as a minimum, meet the nationally described space standards<sup>31</sup>. Exceptions to the application of the described space standards apply, as is set out in national planning policy and guidance.**

## **Reasoned Justification**

- 8.13 Ensuring brownfield land is used efficiently means that less land will be required for housing, thereby assisting the protection of our green spaces. PfE Policy JP-H4 sets out minimum densities for developments relative to their accessibility to public transport and key services. Increasing the densities of development in appropriate locations will help reduce the need to travel by car, as more people will live closer to shops, services and public transport links, enabling more active travel. Increasing densities for development within our town centres will also support the regeneration of them, in line

---

scored on a scale of 1-8, with 8 being the most accessible. GMAL scores are published online at [data.gov.uk](https://data.gov.uk) and are available on [MappingGM](https://data.gov.uk).

<sup>31</sup> Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard. This document can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard>

with the aims of Creating a Better Place, creating centres where people can live, work and partake in leisure activities.

- 8.14 To achieve an appropriate mix of housing, developments should include the provision of houses and/or apartments having regard to the following assumptions:
- a. 35-70 dwellings per hectare: primarily houses
  - b. 70-120 dwellings per hectare: mix of houses and apartments
  - c. 120+ dwellings per hectare: primarily apartments, incorporating houses and/or ground floor duplexes where practicable
- 8.15 In some circumstances exceptions to the minimum densities may apply, such as to meet a funding requirement for a particular housing need, to respond to particular site characteristics (i.e. flood risk, design context, heritage assets) or to provide for specialist housing accommodation (i.e. extra care housing, bungalows). The council will assess this on a site-by-site basis and only allow exceptions where necessary.
- 8.16 It is important to be able to accurately monitor the density of schemes being proposed and built. Comparing density between schemes using a single measure can be misleading as it is heavily dependent on the area included in the planning application site boundary as well as the size of residential units. These boundaries may be drawn very close to the proposed buildings, missing out adjacent areas of open space, which results in a density which belies the real character of a scheme. Alternatively, the application boundary may include a large site area so that a tall building appears to be a relatively low-density scheme while its physical form is more akin to schemes with a much higher density. The additional measures contained within this policy will allow the council to accurately monitor the implementation of this policy and the efficiency to which land is used.
- 8.17 In terms of house sizes, it is important in meeting local housing needs that a range of house sizes and types is provided, in line with Policy H2. However, it is important that houses are safe and suitable for residents and can contribute to a good standard of living. The minimum nationally described space standards ensure that this can be achieved.

Linked LP Policies	H1, H2, H4, H5, H6, H7, H9, H10, H11, H12
Relevant PfE Policies	JP-H3, JP-H4

## Policy H4 - Homes for Older People

**The council will support the development of homes suitable for older people.**

**The Local Plan will ensure that housing choices are available for Oldham's growing older population so that they can find suitable homes with easy access to community facilities, local services and public transport, that are well integrated within the wider neighbourhood.**

**Developments of 150 homes and above are required to provide a minimum of 30 units, and a further 20 units for each additional 200 homes thereafter, for housing provision which is suitable for older people, where there is a demonstrated local need at the time of application. This could include:**

- 1. Age-restricted general market housing, such as Bungalows or level-access housing;**
- 2. Extra Care Housing;**
- 3. Sheltered Housing/ Assisted Living; and**
- 4. Nursing and Care Homes, including Dementia Care Homes.**

**Early discussions should be had with the council through the pre-application advice process to determine local needs. Provision must be delivered via a specialist provider or other appropriate body, where appropriate.**

**All provision for older people must meet the design standards as set out within Policy D1, and the following principles:**

- a. Promote ease of movement on foot and with mobility aids;**
- b. Be sustainably located, with access to public transport, local services and facilities (including a hospital or GP practice), accessible to the development via active travel means;**
- c. Feature parking spaces and setting down points in proximity to entrances; and**
- d. Have accessible and appropriately designed built environments, including seating areas, step free spaces and gentle approaches suitable for wheelchair users and people with visual or mobility impairments.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 8.18 [Oldham Council's Market Position Statement \(MPS\)](#)<sup>32</sup> identifies that there are approximately 38,800 people aged 65 and over living in Oldham currently, which is expected to increase by 16% to 42,500 people by 2030. Also, the number of people in Oldham over the age of 75 is projected to increase by more than 10,000 over the plan period. In terms of particular needs, in 2020 there were around 2,267 people aged 65 and over living with Dementia in Oldham. This figure is set to rise by 66% (to 3,756 people) by 2030, including 2,432 people living with severe Dementia.

---

<sup>32</sup> This document can be found at:  
[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/3241/adult\\_services\\_and\\_health\\_market\\_position\\_statement](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/3241/adult_services_and_health_market_position_statement)

- 8.19 There is a growing need for extra care accommodation, sheltered accommodation and bungalows which is outstripping supply. There is also a need for home adaptations so people needing support can continue to live in their own homes. Oldham's Adult Social Care Team can assist in seeking funding for home adaptations.
- 8.20 We are taking a range of actions to expand the housing choices available for Oldham's growing older population so that they can find suitable homes with good facilities and a range of support options on hand. We want people to feel supported to make a positive decision to move to a new home in later life that better suits their needs. We also want older people to 'Live Well at Home', being well supported if they decide to stay in their existing home<sup>33</sup>.
- 8.21 The definitions of provision that is suitable for older people, including the level of care that is associated with the provision, is set out in Planning Practice Guidance<sup>34</sup>. Provision includes Age-restricted general market housing, Extra Care Housing, Sheltered Housing/ Assisted Living and Nursing and Care Homes.
- 8.22 There is a significant amount of variability in the types of specialist housing for older people. The list above provides an indication of the different types of housing available but is not definitive. Any single development may contain a range of different types of specialist housing.
- 8.23 The council acknowledges that there are additional costs associated with the delivery of specialist accommodation suitable for older people. Where matters of viability arise in providing a particular type of housing to meet a housing need for older people, the council will look to work with providers, to identify solutions to secure the delivery of this housing.
- 8.24 Inclusive design is integral to ensuring provision is fit for purpose and reflects the needs of its users. Planning Guidance has informed the inclusive design principles set out in points a to d above. In addition, the [HAPPI Principles](#)<sup>35</sup> are a good starting point for designing provision suitable for older people:
- Integration with the surrounding context
  - Social spaces that link with the community
  - Space standards that facilitate flexibility
  - Enhanced natural light
  - Priority for pedestrians in outdoor spaces
- 8.25 New residential development should be accessible, via active travel, to public transport links, local services and facilities, in line with Policy H1 and Policy CO9.

Linked Local Plan Policies	H1, H2, H4, H5, H6, H7, H9, H10, H11, H12, CO9, IN2
Relevant Places for Everyone Policies	JP-J3

<sup>33</sup> Further information on the 'Live Well at Home' agenda and access to support is available at: <https://livingwellathome.co.uk/> and [https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200369/live\\_at\\_home](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200369/live_at_home)

<sup>34</sup> This guidance can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-for-older-and-disabled-people>

<sup>35</sup> This document can be viewed at: <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/Design-building/HAPPI/>

## Policy H5 - Homes for Disabled People

**The Local Plan will seek to ensure that appropriate provision of housing is provided for disabled people, including people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and mental health needs.**

**Developments of 150 homes and above are required to provide a minimum of 30 homes and a further 20 homes for each additional 200 homes thereafter for housing provision which is suitable for disabled people, where there is a demonstrated local need at the time of application.**

**It is recognised that provision suitable for older people may also be suitable for some disabled people, and vice versa. As such, the provision under policies H4 and H5 may overlap in certain instances. In addition to the provision listed under Policy H4, provision for disabled people may also include:**

- 1. Supported housing (of various degrees); and**
- 2. Accessible and adaptable homes.**

**Where the homes proposed as part of a development are suitable for both older people and disabled people (irrespective of age), the requirement may be combined to 30 homes suitable for older people and disabled people for developments of 150 homes and above or sites larger than 4ha (and a further 20 homes for each additional 200 homes thereafter). In these instances, it should be ensured that the resultant housing mix is appropriate for both groups.**

**All provision for disabled people must meet the design standards as set out within Policy D1, and the following principles:**

- a. Promote ease of movement on foot and with mobility aids;**
- b. Be sustainably located, with access to public transport, local services and facilities (including a hospital or GP practice), accessible to the development via active travel means;**
- c. Feature parking spaces and setting down points in proximity to entrances; and**
- d. Have accessible and appropriately designed built environments, including seating areas, step free spaces and gentle approaches suitable for wheelchair users and people with visual or mobility impairments.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 8.26 There is expected to be an increase in the number of households experiencing a disability in Oldham over the plan period. The LHNA (2019) identified that around 46,800 people reported as experiencing a disability – in 2018 this represented almost 20% of households in Oldham. This is expected to increase by 1.5% by 2037, which represents an additional 7,422 people experiencing an illness or disability<sup>36</sup>.
- 8.27 In terms of particular needs, the MPS identifies that in 2020 there were estimated to be 4,229 adults with a learning disability in Oldham – this is expected to increase by over

---

<sup>36</sup> LHNA (2018), data interpreted from ONS Family Resources Survey 2016/17 and ONS 2016-based population projections.

6% to 4,500 adults by 2030. In addition, the number of adults with autism is expected to increase by 7% over the same period. There is also expected to be an increase in the number of people experiencing a mental health disorder over this period.

- 8.28 There is a need for more wheelchair accessible homes, appropriate housing for those with other physical disabilities, dementia, a learning disability and mental health disorders. The LHNA update will provide further evidence on housing needs, including the types of accommodation required for people with a disability.
- 8.29 In terms of provision, it is recognised that provision for older people may also be suitable for those with disability in some circumstances, especially where the disabled resident is of an older age. However, there is a need for suitable provision for disabled people who are not within this group, who are able to live independently or semi-independently and those living in their own homes. There is also a particular need for suitable accommodation for young adults and those with complex behavioural needs.
- 8.30 The inclusive design and HAPPI principles are applicable to providing accommodation for disabled people. In addition, PfE Policy JP-H3 requires all new homes to be built to the 'accessible and adaptable' standard in Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations. Accessible and adaptable housing enables people to live more independently, while also saving on health and social costs in the future. It is better to build accessible housing from the outset rather than to make adaptations at a later stage – both in terms of cost and in regard to people being able to remain safe and independent in their homes.
- 8.31 Accessible and adaptable housing will provide safe and convenient approach routes into and out of the home and outside areas, suitable circulation space and suitable bathroom and kitchens within the home. Wheelchair user homes include additional features to meet the needs of occupants who use wheelchairs or allow for adaptations to meet such needs.
- 8.32 New residential development should be accessible, via active travel, to public transport links, local services and facilities, in line with Policy H1 and Policy CO9.

Linked Local Plan Policies	H1, H2, H3, H4, H6, H7, H9, H10, H11, H12, CO9, IN2
Relevant Places for Everyone Policies	JP-J3



## Policy H6 – Homes for Children and Care Leavers

**The Local Plan will support residential development for looked after children and care leavers, where the proposed development is compliant with other policies in PfE and the Local Plan.**

**In deciding applications for new children's homes and semi-independent supported-living facilities, the council will seek to ensure that new provision:**

- 1. Is established in appropriate premises and in suitable, sustainable locations;**
- 2. Does not result in an undue concentration of provision for looked-after children in any particular area of the borough; and**
- 3. Gives priority to children and young people from the Oldham area in the first instance, in line with local needs.**

**With regards to criterion 2) permission may not be granted where the proportion of children's residential care homes will result in such uses representing 10% or more of properties within a 50m radius measured from the centre of the application site. In addition, no two adjacent properties apart from those that are separated by a road should be converted to children's residential care home uses. The council will make a decision on a case-by-case basis and considering the factors listed above.**

**Applications for all children's residential care home uses are required to provide a Statement of Community Engagement and Impact Assessment.**

**Applicants should liaise with the council at the earliest opportunity to ensure priority is given to children and young people in need in the first instance.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 8.33 Caring for looked after children is a key part of the council's role. There is a need to ensure that suitable housing is available for all looked after children, with a range of housing options, including smaller group homes and homes suitable for children with disabilities.
- 8.34 A children's residential care home falls within Class C2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). Such uses are intended for the provision of care and are therefore governed by the provisions of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015. As such, they must be registered with OFSTED which is the regulatory body for children's care. OFSTED requires an operator to demonstrate that planning permission is either granted or not required before it will register a property. A child may live in a residential care home up to the age of 18 if their needs are judged to require the provision of care as defined by the Regulations.
- 8.35 For care leavers it is important to secure semi-independent accommodation and emergency accommodation, to support the increasing numbers of young people moving from the care system into independence. It is important that children leaving the care system have access to suitable housing options to support them as they progress to independent living.

- 8.36 A care leaver is defined by the [Children \(Leaving Care\) Act 2000](#)<sup>37</sup> as someone aged 16 or 17 who has been looked after by a local authority for a prescribed period, or periods amounting in all to a prescribed period, which began after they reached a prescribed age and ended after he reached the age of 16. Local Authorities are required to prepare a pathway of support for when they cease to look after them, which can include helping them to find suitable housing to meet their needs. For some this might be supported group living accommodation, homes in multiple occupation (with or without a care element), or an affordable flat or house.
- 8.37 A semi-independent supported-living facility for young people does not provide care as defined by the Care Act Regulations. Instead, and as the name suggests, such facilities provide support and are intended to prepare a young person for fully independent adult living. Supported-living facilities do not have to register with a regulatory body. Nevertheless, as young people under the age of 18 years old cannot lawfully form their own household without the support of an adult over the age of 18 years old, the council considers such uses to fall within Class C2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). This type of accommodation is only appropriate for older teenagers over the age of 16 years old who do not require the level of care provided in a regulated children's residential care home.
- 8.38 Oldham Council has a Care Leavers After Care Team which supports care leavers to find a suitable home, access employment, education and training opportunities and provide support and advice in relation to health and wellbeing and finance. The Local Plan will seek to ensure that there is suitable housing provision for care leavers and will work with the relevant departments in the council to identify areas of need.
- 8.39 New children's homes and semi-independent supported-living facilities should be within sustainable locations, appropriate for the proposed occupants and comply with the criteria set out within the policy. It is essential, in creating sustainable development, that new facilities are well integrated into the local community. To protect local character and amenity it is important that new development will not result in an overconcentration of particular uses within a defined area. As such, the policy sets out specific criteria to ensure that the development of children's residential care homes uses are managed appropriately.
- 8.40 To prove that the proposed development would not result in children's residential care homes uses representing 10% or more of properties within a 50m radius (measured from the centre of the application site) or that no two adjacent properties (apart from those that are separated by a road) would be converted to such uses, applicants should carry out an assessment and provide this as part of their planning application. The council will utilise GIS and other desktop assessment tools in assessing the information provided.
- 8.41 By requiring all planning applications for new children's residential care homes uses to provide a Statement of Community Engagement and Impact Assessment, this will ensure that issues of community cohesion, integration and impact on local amenity can be addressed and discussed with the community at an early stage. This assessment should be appropriate and proportionate to the size of the proposed development.

Linked Local Plan Policies	H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H7, H9, H10, H11, H12
Relevant Places for Everyone Policies	JP-J3

<sup>37</sup> This Act can be found at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/35/contents>

## Policy H7 - Affordable Housing

The Local Plan will ensure that a diverse type and tenure of affordable housing is provided to accommodate all households in need. Affordable housing will be provided alongside other tenures of housing, pepper potted throughout the site, to ensure balanced and mixed communities.

### Affordable Housing Requirements

All developments that provide 10 or more net additional homes<sup>38</sup>, shall deliver an appropriate proportion of the total site capacity as affordable housing in line with Table H4.

Within the high (Zone 1) and medium (Zone 2) value areas as shown in Figure H1, developments shall deliver a higher minimum affordable housing requirement. Zone 3 represents remaining areas located outside of Zones 1 and 2.

**Table H4 Affordable Housing Requirements**

Size of Scheme (homes/hectares)	% Affordable Homes Required Zone 1	% Affordable Homes Required Zone 2	% Affordable Homes Required Zone 3
10-24 homes	At least 15% on site provision. Option of financial contribution for offsite provision for sites of 10-15 homes.	At least 12% on site provision. Option of financial contribution for offsite provision for sites of 10-15 homes.	At least 10% on site provision. Option of financial contribution for offsite provision for sites of 10-15 homes.
25-149	At least 20% on site provision.	At least 15% on site provision.	At least 12% on site provision.
150+ homes	At least 30% on site provision.	At least 20% on site provision.	At least 15% on site provision.

### Affordable Housing Type and Tenure

Affordable housing will be delivered in the tenure split as set out within Table H5 below.

<sup>38</sup> Developments of less than 10 dwellings are not generally required to provide affordable housing unless they form part of a rural exception site.

**Table H5 Affordable Housing Tenure<sup>39</sup>**

<b>Tenure</b>	<b>Proportion of Affordable Homes</b>
<b>Social Rent</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Affordable Rent</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Intermediate<sup>40</sup>/ Shared Ownership</b>	<b>50%</b>

**All affordable housing requirements shall be rounded up to the nearest full dwelling once the relevant proportion has been applied.**

**In certain circumstances, such as to fulfil a funding requirement or meet an identified local need in a particular area, an alternative tenure split or mix to that set out in Table H5 and Table H2 (Policy H2) may be acceptable. The applicant is required to fully evidence an alternative tenure split or mix, considering local affordable housing needs. Any proposed alternatives will be agreed with the council at planning application stage.**

**Developments should seek to provide affordable housing onsite in the first instance. However, by exception, it may be more appropriate, in meeting local needs for the payment of a commuted sum/ developer contribution to off-site provision, or a mixture of onsite/off-site provision.**

**The value of any commuted sum/ developer contribution shall be calculated in negotiation with the council and a registered affordable housing provider. Where appropriate, affordable housing will be secured in perpetuity to retain the benefits of affordability for initial and subsequent owners and occupiers. This will be secured by conditions or planning obligations.**

**The affordable homes provided will be offered to those on the council's affordable housing need register in the first instance and in line with the local authority's local connection test<sup>41</sup>, to ensure the affordable homes provided help to address the borough's affordable housing need.**

<sup>39</sup> The tenure split is informed by the Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) 2019. An update of the LHNA is currently underway and will inform the final affordable housing tenure requirements within this policy.

<sup>40</sup> First Homes are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing introduced by the government. They are a form of intermediate tenure housing, which meets the definition of 'affordable housing', as set out in national planning policy. First Homes should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations. The criteria for First Homes are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes>

<sup>41</sup> Further information on the councils housing needs register and the criteria of the local connection test are available within the [Oldham Council Allocation Scheme](#).

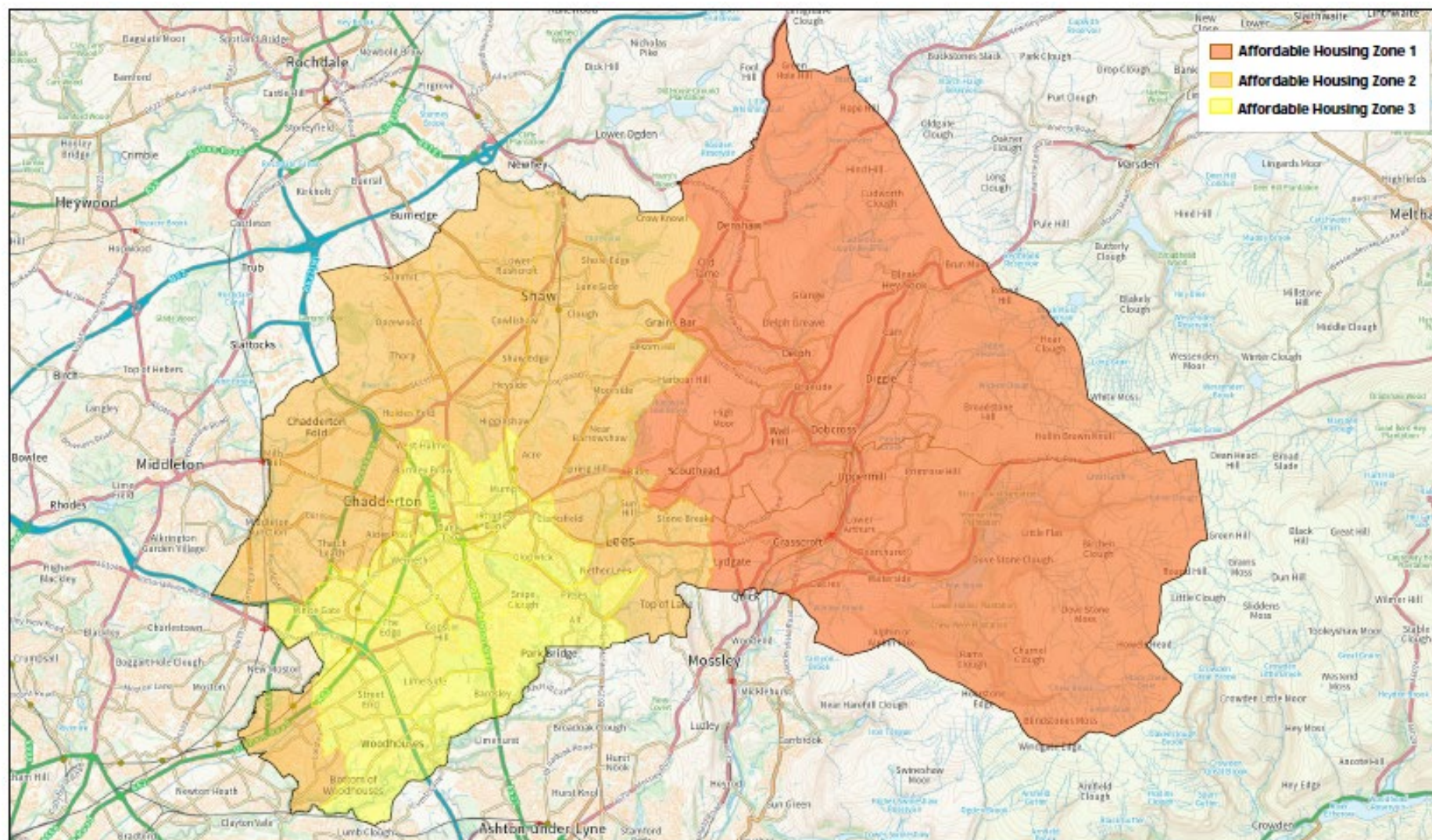
### Exceptional Circumstances

**Whilst it is important to ensure the delivery of affordable housing to meet local needs, there may be some exceptions to providing the full amount of affordable housing required (either on or off-site). The following exceptions may be acceptable, at the council's discretion on a case-by-case basis:**

- 1. There is a high level of existing affordable housing and there is a need to diversify the housing offer in a particular location (to be agreed with the council);**
- 2. It has been clearly demonstrated that all practicable options have been exhausted for delivering the minimum affordable housing requirement, including by partnering with registered providers and accommodating affordable homes financed through various sources such as Homes England, investment funds and commuted sums from other sites; and**
- 3. Developments which involve the conversion of a vacant building, such as mills, in line with the criteria identified within Policy H7, to support viability.**



Figure H1 – Affordable Housing Zones



## Reasoned Justification

- 8.42 The Local Plan will ensure that quality housing, which is affordable for local residents, is provided. The council's [Housing Strategy](#)<sup>42</sup> sets out a commitment to delivering a significant improvement in the amount and types of affordable housing provision within Oldham.
- 8.43 The council support local people to find suitable affordable housing, working with partners and registered providers, however Oldham's existing affordable housing stock is not able to accommodate the demand. Nor is the existing stock suitable for all types of people in need of affordable housing. In the current economic climate, including the increasing cost of living, it is likely that affordable housing need will continue to increase in Oldham, and across the country.
- 8.44 On average, houses are more affordable in Oldham compared to some other Greater Manchester boroughs. The affordability ratio for Oldham is 6.15, compared to the Greater Manchester average of 7.23<sup>43</sup>. However, there are disparities between parts of the borough, with some areas distinctly lacking adequate affordable housing provision to meet local needs. The LHNA (2019) has found that there is a shortfall of affordable housing across the borough, which equates to approximately 1,780 homes over the period of 2018-2037. In particular, the LHNA found that there were deficiencies in smaller accommodation in the form of 2 and 3 bed houses. However, this is indicative of a lack of choice in the market and respondents expectations, as Oldham's local housing register indicates a need for larger family housing also.
- 8.45 There are issues with attracting and retaining young professionals and families. In some parts of the borough there are not suitable affordable homes for people to live in the area in which they grew up, leading to an out-migration of these households to neighbouring boroughs. There is also a lack of smaller single person affordable housing and affordable housing for people with particular needs, such as disabled and older people.
- 8.46 [National Planning Policy Annex 2 'Glossary'](#)<sup>44</sup> defines affordable housing as housing that meets one of the following definitions:
- a) Affordable housing for rent – including Social and Affordable Rent (including Build-to-Rent or Affordable Private Rent). Rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy or is at least 20% below local market rent;
  - b) Starter Homes (now replaced by First Homes) – homes for first-time buyers;
  - c) Discounted Market Sales Housing – housing sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value; and
  - d) Other affordable routes to home ownership – including shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low-cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy.

---

<sup>42</sup> This document can be found at:

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/5561/housing\\_strategy\\_2019](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/5561/housing_strategy_2019)

<sup>43</sup> Data sourced from ONS House price to workplace-based earnings ratio, table 5c, published March 2023:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/ratioofhousepricetoworkplacebasedearningslowerquartileandmedian>

<sup>44</sup> This annex can be found at: [National Planning Policy Framework - Annex 2: Glossary - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)



- 8.47 To ensure that affordable housing is provided where it is most needed, developments which are located within higher land value areas will provide an increased amount of affordable housing. Zone 1 includes wards with high land values, including Saddleworth North and Saddleworth South. The LHNA has identified a need for affordable housing within these areas, particularly to ensure that people who have grown up in these areas can afford to buy their own homes in these locations. There is a particular need for affordable family housing in these wards. Developments in these areas will provide at least 15% of homes as affordable homes, with the amount increasing to 20% and 30% depending on the total amount of homes proposed.
- 8.48 Zone 2 includes wards with medium land values, including Saddleworth West and Lees, Waterhead, St James, Crompton, Shaw, Royton North, Royton South, Chadderton North, Chadderton Central and Failsworth West. The LHNA has identified a need for affordable housing within these areas, particularly for affordable family housing in these wards and larger homes. Developments in these areas will provide at least 12% of homes as affordable homes, with the amount increasing to 15% and 20% depending on the total amount of homes proposed.
- 8.49 Developments proposed within Zone 3, which includes the wards of Alexandra, Coldhurst, Chadderton South, Failsworth East, Hollinwood, Medlock Vale and St Mary's, will provide at least 10% of homes as affordable homes, in line with national planning policy.
- 8.50 Early discussions with the council and registered providers are encouraged, preferably at the pre-application stage, in order to ensure that affordable housing provision will meet relevant requirements and standards.
- 8.51 Affordable housing should be well integrated into developments, being pepper-potted throughout the development alongside market housing. It should not be obvious which homes are affordable compared to market housing. The design principles set out within Policy D1 will apply to all types of housing.
- 8.52 Where necessary, the provision of affordable housing will be secured in perpetuity through a Section 106 agreement. The agreement will specify the timing of delivery of the homes and/ or the payment schedule of commuted sums. The value of any commuted sum/ developer contribution shall be calculated in negotiation with the council and a registered affordable housing provider. The sum shall be equal to the difference between the open market valuation of the affordable units which would have been provided on-site and the purchase price that the Registered Provider would have been willing to pay for these units. Any future variation to an affordable housing contribution must be done in line with the terms set out in the agreement. This is to ensure we have a constant supply of affordable homes available for those in need.
- 8.53 Value areas and viability will be kept under review throughout the lifetime of the Plan and will be updated as appropriate, through a supplementary planning document.
- 8.54 The affordable homes provided will be offered to those on the council's affordable housing need register in the first instance and in line with the local authority's local connection test as set out within the [Oldham Allocations Scheme<sup>45</sup>](#), to ensure the affordable homes provided help to address the borough's affordable housing need.

---

<sup>45</sup> This document can be found at:

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/4269/oldham\\_allocations\\_scheme\\_february\\_2019](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/4269/oldham_allocations_scheme_february_2019)



Linked Local Plan Policies	H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H7, H9, H10, H11, H12, D1, IN2
Relevant Places for Everyone Policies	JP-J2

## Policy H8 - Vacant Building Credit

**Vacant Building Credit (VBC) allows for a deduction of a financial ‘credit’, equivalent to the existing gross floorspace of any relevant existing vacant buildings within the redline boundary of the application site brought back into lawful use or demolished for redevelopment, from the overall affordable housing contribution sought.**

**VBC will apply in the following circumstances:**

- 1. The site must meet the definition in national planning policy of ‘Previously Developed Land’<sup>46</sup> ;**
- 2. The building must meet the council’s definition of a ‘Vacant Building’ and must not have been abandoned (see below). The whole building should be vacant for VBC to apply;**
- 3. The building must not have been made vacant for the sole purposes of redevelopment. The applicant must demonstrate that vacancy has arisen for other reasons; and**
- 4. If the proposal is covered by an extant or recently expired planning permission for the same, or substantially the same, development or there has been an application submitted but not determined since the VBC was reintroduced and VBC not sought, VBC will not apply.**

**A site which has last been used for employment purposes must also meet the requirements for redevelopment as set out in Policy E2, regardless of whether the building is now vacant.**

### Application Requirements

**To apply for VBC, a VBC Statement must be submitted alongside a planning application. The Statement must evidence that the circumstances listed above, in criterion 1-4, have been complied with and also provide information on the existing Gross Internal Floor Area (GIFA) <sup>47</sup> and the proposed GIFA.**

**The council encourages that the above information is also provided as part of the pre-application stage, where possible, so that the application of VBC can be considered at the earliest stage.**

## Reasoned Justification

8.55 The aim of Vacant Building Credit (VBC) is to stimulate the development of vacant buildings, supporting the delivery of housing on brownfield sites. For the purposes of determining whether VBC applies, a vacant building is defined by the council as:

- a building that has not been in continuous use for any six-month period during the last three years at the time of submission;

<sup>46</sup> NPPF - Annex 2 Glossary – ‘Previously Developed Land’: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/annex-2-glossary>

<sup>47</sup> GIFA is the area of a building measured to the internal face of the perimeter walls at each level. The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) definition of GIFA will be used for the purposes of assessing VBC.

- a 'building' does not include structures into which people do not normally go; into which people go only intermittently for the purpose of maintaining or inspecting machinery (such as utility infrastructure and sub-stations), or; for which planning permission was granted for a limited period (including temporary structures, such as portacabins).

8.56 In considering if VBC applies, only relevant buildings that are still extant onsite on the day that planning permission is granted will be taken into account. The definition of what constitutes a vacant building is set out above. VBC does not apply to agricultural buildings or any other structures which do not meet the definition of 'Previously Developed Land' as set out in national planning policy.

### Abandoned Buildings

8.57 VBC does not apply to abandoned buildings and the council will determine whether a building has been abandoned on a case-by-case basis, taking into account relevant circumstances such as:

- the condition of the property
- the period of non-use, including whether there has been active marketing seeking to secure a use;
- whether there is an intervening use; and
- any evidence regarding the owner's intention.

### Application of VBC

8.58 Where the gross floorspace of the proposed development is greater than the existing building/ floorspace being demolished or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution will only be sought on the additional floorspace. This will apply in calculating either the number of affordable housing units to be provided within the development or where an equivalent financial contribution is being provided. Where the floorspace proposed is less or the same as the existing floorspace, the affordable housing contribution may be negated in its entirety.

8.59 For some proposed developments, the proposed GIFA is greater than the existing GIFA. For example, where a building with a gross floorspace of 8,000 square metre building is demolished as part of a proposed development with a gross floorspace of 10,000 square metres, any affordable housing contribution should be a fifth of what would normally be sought as it would be applied to only the additional 2,000 square metres.

8.60 For applications where the amount of housing, or the size of the dwellings/ floorspace is not known, and where it is agreed by the local authority that VBC may be applicable, the applicant is expected to enter into a S.106 Agreement at the outline stage. The agreement will enable the matter to be deferred to a later stage when the relevant details of the scheme have been finalised.

Linked Local Plan Policies	E2
Relevant Places for Everyone Policies	n/a

## Policy H9 - Rural Exception Sites

To meet local housing needs in rural parts of the borough, limited affordable housing for up to 5 homes will be permitted on sites within the Green Belt where it is accepted that there are no suitable alternative sites outside of the Green Belt to meet local need, and:

1. The proposal would help to address an identified local need for affordable housing, including type and tenure specifications as set out within Policy H7;
2. The site is physically well related to a built-up part of a settlement and the facilities it provides;
3. The affordable housing provided is made available solely to people in local housing need at an affordable cost for the life of the property (the council will ensure that any planning permission granted is subject to appropriate conditions and/or planning obligations to secure its affordability in perpetuity); and
4. the scheme is of a scale and design appropriate to its immediate surroundings and is sympathetic to the local area.

In line with Policy H7, the affordable homes provided on rural exception sites will be offered to those on the council's affordable housing need register in the first instance and in line with the local authority's local connection test<sup>48</sup>.

## Reasoned Justification

- 8.61 Rural exception sites are small sites which are outside of the urban area, but adjacent to existing settlements, that are utilised in perpetuity to provide affordable housing<sup>49</sup>, which is suitable for first time buyers, on land that is not allocated for housing and otherwise may not be acceptable, such as Green Belt.
- 8.62 Rural exception sites should only be used to meet an identified local affordable housing need or address an area-specific shortfall of affordable housing. There are several rural areas in the borough, including parts of Saddleworth. Saddleworth has been identified within the LHNA as having an identified need for affordable housing, which has also been cited as a key issue in retaining young people living within district. Furthermore, Saddleworth has higher than borough average house prices, meaning access to housing within the district is limited to those on a higher income. As such, there may be scope for the provision of affordable housing, such as through the allocation of a rural exception site, within Saddleworth. The scope for this may be further considered through the site allocations work and neighbourhood plans.
- 8.63 This policy seeks to provide a positive framework to allow affordable housing within Oldham's Green Belt, that meet other plan policies, where often local communities are unable to afford to live.
- 8.64 This policy applies to Green Belt only and not land designates as Local Green Space.
- 8.65 Rural exception sites are also listed under the exceptional circumstances in national planning policy for development in the Green Belt, whereby development in the Green

<sup>48</sup> Further information on the councils housing needs register and the criteria of the local connection test are available within the Oldham Council Allocation Scheme which can be found at: [Oldham Allocations Scheme February 2019 \(amended April 2021\) | Oldham Council](#)

<sup>49</sup> Housing that meets the definitions of 'Affordable Housing' as per NPPF Annex 2 Glossary.

Belt which relates to limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites).

Linked Local Plan Policies	H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, H10, H11, H12, OL2
Relevant Places for Everyone Policies	n/a

## Policy H10 - Houses in Multiple Occupation

**Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) will be supported where the proposed development:**

- 1. Does not result in the loss of, or impact on the character or amenity to the area as a consequence of increased traffic, noise or general disturbance;**
- 2. Does not result in an undue concentration of HMO provision in any particular area of the borough - permission may not be granted where the proportion of HMOs (either C4 or Sui Generis)<sup>50</sup> will result in HMOs representing 10% or more of properties within a 50m radius measured from the centre of the application site;**
- 3. No two adjacent properties apart from those that are separated by a road should be converted to HMOs; and**
- 4. Complies with the relevant design and amenity standards as outlined in Policy D1, and any future HMO standards developed by the council.**

**The council will make a decision on HMO applications on a case-by-case basis and considering the factors listed above.**

**For the development of a HMO that requires a license, the applicant must meet the council's requirements<sup>51</sup>.**

**Applications for all HMOs are required to provide a Statement of Community Engagement and Impact Assessment.**

### HMOs within Oldham Town Centre

**It is important to ensure a well-balanced mix of housing across the Town Centre. Oldham Town Centre is well-connected to services, facilities and public transport. HMOs are best suited to areas with these assets.**

**However, it is important to protect the core functions and character of Oldham Town Centre. As such, applications for HMOs in this location will be considered in line with the criteria listed above. In addition, within the town centre HMOs should not occupy ground floor uses, unless the proposed development would comply with the exceptions listed in Policy C4.**

<sup>50</sup> Including those which are permissioned but have not yet been implemented

<sup>51</sup> As set out at the following webpage:

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201198/help\\_for\\_landlords/258/houses\\_in\\_multiple\\_occupation](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201198/help_for_landlords/258/houses_in_multiple_occupation)

## Reasoned Justification

- 8.66 A house in multiple occupation (HMO) is a property rented out by at least three people who are not from one 'household' (for example a family) but share facilities like the bathroom and kitchen. HMOs can provide various types of accommodation including bedsits, a hostel, private halls of residence, a shared house, a block of converted flats and individual shared self-contained cluster flats.
- 8.67 HMOs can be a valuable source of housing to meet the local housing needs of various groups, including students, young adults and people with disabilities. They also provide smaller and affordable accommodation which has been identified as being required in the borough. However, there is also a need for larger family housing. As such it is important that large family homes are not extensively lost to subdivision as a result of HMO development.
- 8.68 Furthermore, extensive concentrations of HMO development can result in amenity issues and change the character of an area. It is considered that a concentration of HMOs which would result in 10% or more of properties within a 50m radius (measured from the centre of the application site), could impact on the character of an area. As such, applications for HMOs should include an assessment of the existing concentration as per the criteria listed in the policy and provide this as part of their planning application. The council will utilise GIS and other desktop assessment tools in assessing the information provided.
- 8.69 Oldham Town Centre is a highly accessible and sustainable location which is best suited to HMOs, particularly for students and young adults. However, it is important that HMO development is carefully managed in this location to ensure the viability and vitality of Oldham Town Centre, protect its unique character and maintain its core retail and leisure function. As such, applications for HMOs in this location will also be considered in line with the criteria listed within the policy. The council will also not support proposals for the development of HMOs that would occupy ground floor uses, unless the proposed development would comply with the exceptions listed in Policy C4, at the council's discretion. The Oldham Town Centre boundary will be defined on the Policies Map.
- 8.70 To ensure the ongoing protection of Oldham Town Centre, or other specific parts of the borough, an Article 4 Direction may be sought to remove permitted development rights for conversion of properties to HMOs or consider the implementation of a lower concentration threshold. This is dependent on further evidence.
- 8.71 The council is currently reviewing its HMO standards. Any applications for HMOs must ensure that the proposed development is of a high standard and complies with the relevant design and amenity standards within Policy D1, and any future HMO standards developed by the council. In addition, HMOs should be sustainably located, with public transport, local services and facilities, accessible to the development by active travel. Further information for developers and landlords of HMOs regarding development and living quality and HMO regulations is available on the council's website<sup>52</sup>.
- 8.72 By requiring all planning applications for new HMOs to provide a Statement of Community Engagement and Impact Assessment, this will ensure that issues of community cohesion, integration and concerns relating to the perceived negative impacts of HMOs can be addressed and discussed with the community at an early

---

<sup>52</sup> [https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201198/help\\_for\\_landlords/258/houses\\_in\\_multiple\\_occupation](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201198/help_for_landlords/258/houses_in_multiple_occupation)

stage. This assessment should be appropriate and proportionate to the size of the proposed development.

- 8.73 The LHNA update will provide further evidence on existing concentrations of HMOs. This evidence may inform this policy further at Publication Plan stage.

Linked Local Plan Policies	H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, H11, H12, C4, D1
Relevant Places for Everyone Policies	JP-H3

### Policy H11 - Custom/ Self-Build and Community-led Housing

**A supply of suitable sites/ plots for prospective custom builders, self-builders and community led housing groups will be secured by:**

- 1. Supporting planning applications for custom, self-build and community led housing where this is consistent with other planning policies, council-led regeneration schemes and wider objectives of the Local Plan; and**
- 2. Ensuring developers contribute to the supply of plots available for custom, self-build and community led housing as part of their development. In areas identified as having evidenced demand for self or custom build, residential developments with a capacity of 50 homes and above must provide 2% of the total site units for self or custom build. Developers should ensure that the plots are actively marketed at an appropriate price, and the information be provided to the council to be distributed to all appropriate individuals on the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register.**

**The nationally described space standards as required by Policy H2 shall apply to custom, self-build and community led housing.**

**Where a custom, self-build or community led plot(s) has not been purchased after being actively marketed at an appropriate price for a period of 12 months, the developer can choose to continue to market the plot(s) or develop the plot themselves, to be integrated into the rest of the development.**

**Planning permission for developments which include custom, self-build and community led housing plots should include conditions requiring these plots to be completed within 3 years of the custom, self-builder or community led housing group purchasing the plot. Exceptions may apply for community-led housing schemes where there are several plots to be delivered.**

**Any plots provided for custom, self-build and community led housing whether as part of a wider development site or individually will be exempt from affordable housing contributions. Exemptions from other policy contributions may apply in order to support delivery where necessary and will be decided on as a case-by-case basis.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 8.74 Providing a range of house types, including opportunities for those individuals or groups wishing to build their own homes, is important in ensuring Oldham has an

attractive and varied housing offer. Oldham's Housing Strategy sets out a commitment to supporting self-build, custom-build and community-led housing development.

- 8.75 Self-build is where an individual (or an association of individuals) purchases land and builds their own house on a single plot. The individual or association of individuals may build the house themselves or employ a builder, architect and if necessary, a project manager to oversee the build.
- 8.76 Custom housebuilding is similar to self-build but facilitated in some way by an enabling developer. This still provides the chance to have a unique home, but through a more hands-off approach than a traditional self-build. Custom build can mean a single one-off home commissioned by an individual and built by a developer, through to a group of homes, built by a developer, but with considerable bespoke design for the individual.
- 8.77 A legal definition, for the purpose of applying the [Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015](#)<sup>53</sup> (as amended), is contained in section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act, although many completed schemes that are recognised as custom build do not necessarily meet this definition.
- 8.78 Community-led housing is where people and communities play a leading role in addressing their own housing needs. It comprises the following three principles:
- A requirement that meaningful community engagement and consent occurs throughout the process. The community does not necessarily have to initiate and manage the development process, or build the homes themselves, though some may do.
  - The local community group or organisation owns, manages or stewards the homes and in a manner of their choosing; and
  - A requirement that benefits to the local area and/or specified community must be clearly defined and legally protected in perpetuity.
- 8.79 Community-led housing includes various forms of community-led housing such as cohousing, housing cooperatives, mutual homes ownership schemes, community land trusts, self-help housing, other Community Interest Company models, and non-profit self-build groups.
- 8.80 The council's Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register identifies areas of demand. In this context 'demand' is considered areas where at least 25% of entries on the register (not counting duplicate entries) cite the area as a preferred location. At the time of writing no particular area is cited as a preferred location by 25% of entries on the register. However, Saddleworth is a popular location, cited as a preferred location by 23% of entries on the register. This will be kept under review and analysed at each base-period, informing relevant development proposals on a case-by-case basis.
- 8.81 For proposed developments which include custom, self-build and community led housing plots, developers should ensure that the plots are actively marketed at an appropriate price, taking into account sales values of comparable schemes in the local area, for a period of at least 12 months. Plot sales information should be provided to the council to be distributed to all appropriate individuals on the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register.
- 8.82 Where a custom, self-build or community led plot(s) has not been purchased after being actively marketed at an appropriate price for a period of at least 12 months, as

---

<sup>53</sup> This Act can be found at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/17/contents/enacted/data.htm>



evidenced by the applicant, the developer can choose to continue to market the plot(s) or develop the plot themselves, to be integrated into the rest of the development. This should be dealt with through a variation of condition.

- 8.83 Planning permission for developments which include custom, self-build and community led housing plots should include conditions requiring these plots to be completed within 3 years of the custom/ self-builder or community led housing group purchasing the plot. This is to ensure efficient delivery of these plots, which is particularly important where these plots are included as part of wider development sites. However, recognising that community-led housing is often delivered at a scale greater than individual plots, exceptions may apply at the council's discretion for community-led housing schemes where there are several plots to be delivered.

Linked Local Plan Policies	H1, H2
Relevant Places for Everyone Policies	JP-H3

## H12 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

**As part of creating a balanced and sustainable housing market we will address the needs of the Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople communities by working with partners, partner organisations and communities to identify sustainable sites.**

**When allocating sites and determining planning applications, the council will ensure the following criteria are satisfied:**

- a. it is consistent with national and local guidance and policies; and
- b. protects the residential amenity and safety of current and future occupiers and those living nearby; and
- c. there is safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access to the road network and provision of on-site parking, turning and servicing; and
- d. it is located within or near existing settlements, with public transport, local services and facilities accessible to the development by active travel; and
- e. the site is able to provide adequate pitch sizes, on-site facilities and to make provision for a mix of uses, where appropriate; and
- f. it has access to, or can be linked to, appropriate infrastructure that is required to meet the needs of the occupiers (including facilities for sewage and waste disposal, water, power supplies and drainage).

## Reasoned Justification

8.84 The latest 2018 [Greater Manchester Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment](#)<sup>54</sup> (GTAA) identified no need for pitches or plots in Oldham. A total of 59 transit pitches are required across Greater Manchester.

8.85 A review the existing evidence is being undertaken and should it identify the need for pitches within Oldham the council will seek to identify a suitable site(s) as part of the Publication Plan.

Linked Local Plan Policies	H1
Relevant Places for Everyone Policies	JP-J3

---

<sup>54</sup> This document can be found at: [greater-manchester-gypsy-and-traveller-and-travelling-showperson-accommodation-assessment-update-2018.pdf](#) ([greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](#))

### H13 Housing and Mixed-Use Allocations

The council will allocate sufficient land for housing to assist in meeting the borough's housing requirement.

The allocations for housing, including those part of a mixed-use allocation, will consider local housing needs and will provide opportunities for a range of development types.

Housing allocations are proposed within the existing urban area. Tables H6 and H7 below identify the allocations that are proposed for housing, either in whole or as part of a mixed-use scheme across the borough on sites under 1 hectare and sites 1 hectare and above.

Oldham Town Centre is identified as a highly sustainable and accessible location and as part of the council's Creating a Better Place regeneration programme has an opportunity to support significant residential development. As such several sites within the town centre are proposed to be allocated for housing, in whole or as part of a mixed-use scheme. Potential allocations for housing within the Oldham Town Centre are listed in Table H8.

Site proforma's for each of the proposed allocations are contained within Appendix 2.

Strategic allocations, which involve the release of Green Belt, Other Protected Open Land or Land Reserved for Future Development, are allocated in PfE.

Table H6 Proposed Housing Allocations – under 1 hectare (ha)

Site name	Ward	Total site area (ha)	Indicative Capacity	Minimum appropriate density (dph) as per Policy H3
Land at former Broadway House / Library, Broadway	Chadderton South	0.72	28	50
Hilda Street, Oldham	Coldhurst	0.15	8	70
Pretoria Road, Oldham	Hollinwood	0.46	14	35
James Street, Failsworth	Failsworth East	0.26	10	50
	Failsworth East	0.25	10	50
Thornham Mill, Oozewood Road	Royton North	0.64	60	35
Blackshaw Lane, Royton	Royton South	0.55	15	35
Former Lancaster House, Rochdale Road, Royton	Royton South	0.11	5	35

Site name	Ward	Total site area (ha)	Indicative Capacity	Minimum appropriate density (dph) as per Policy H3
Bailey Mill, Delph	Saddleworth North	0.86	50	35
Land at Ripponden Road, Denshaw	Saddleworth North	0.67	19	35
Ward Lane, Diggle	Saddleworth North		10	35
Lilac View Close, Crompton	Shaw	0.59	18	70
Shaw Health Centre	Shaw	0.25	14	70
Former Cromford Mill	St James	0.58	28	70
Land at Flint Street / Marble Street	St James	0.27	10	50
Former Territorial Army Centre, Rifle Street	St Mary's	0.40	30	70
Land at Springhey Mill, Huddersfield Road	Waterhead	0.34	30	35
Foundry Street	Coldhurst	0.24	15	120

Table H7 Proposed Housing Allocations – 1 hectare (ha) and above

Site name	Ward	Site area (ha)	Capacity	Minimum appropriate density (dph) as per Policy H3
South Chadderton School, Butterworth Lane	Chadderton South	5.10	175	50
Ashton Road, Woodhouses	Failsworth East	1.68	48	35
Kaskenmoor School, Roman Road	Failsworth East	5.11	137	35
Higher Lime Recreation Ground, Limeside	Hollinwood	3.98	110	35
Royton Wastewater Treatment Facility, Middleton Road	Royton North	2.22	75	35

Site name	Ward	Site area (ha)	Capacity	Minimum appropriate density (dph) as per Policy H3
Land adjacent to Huddersfield Road, Diggle	Saddleworth North	2.67	77	35
Saddleworth School, Uppermill	Saddleworth South	4.45	97	35
Land at Knowls Lane	Saddleworth West & Lees	9.80	234	35
Shaw Distribution Centre, Linney Lane	Shaw	12.45	400	70
London Road, Derker	St James	1.78	54	70
Abbotsford Road, Derker	St James	1.27	51	50
Land at Southlink	St Mary's	5.76	158	70
Land at Southlink Phase 2	St Mary's	11.70	415	70
Land at North Werneth	Werneth	1.49	72	70
Hartford Mill, Edward Street	Werneth	1.93	158	70

**Table H8: Proposed housing allocations within the Oldham Town Centre**

Site name	Ward	Site area (ha)	Potential to deliver up to (homes)	Minimum appropriate density (dph) as per Policy H3
Former Magistrates Court and Chambers	Coldhurst	0.60	225	120
Henshaw House	Coldhurst	0.17	45	120
Tommyfield Market, Former Leisure Centre and Linear Park	Coldhurst	3.52	250	120
Civic Centre, West Street	Coldhurst	2.17	600	120
Bradshaw Street Car Park	St Mary's	1.32	150	120
Land at Mumps and Wallshaw Street	St Mary's	0.06	100	120
Land at Waterloo Street	St Mary's	0.83	250	120

Site name	Ward	Site area (ha)	Potential to deliver up to (homes)	Minimum appropriate density (dph) as per Policy H3
Land between Prince Street, Oldham Way and Mumps (Princes Gate)	St Mary's	0.98	300	120

### Reasoned Justification

8.86 Places for Everyone identifies our housing land supply position over the plan period 2022 to 2039, supplemented by the strategic allocations, as set out in Table H9 below.

**Table H9: Oldham's housing land supply 2022 to 2039 as identified in Places for Everyone**

<b>Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment</b>	10,283
<b>Small sites allowance</b>	923
<b>Proposed PfE allocations</b>	1,980
<b>Total</b>	13,186

8.87 The proposed allocations identified in Tables H6, H7 and H8 above will contribute to meeting Oldham's local housing need. As set out in Policy H1 the council will promote the delivery of a diverse housing offer through the allocation of specific sites for residential development and sites identified within the SHLAA and proposals for small-scale development, comprising conversion or change of use of less than 10 dwellings. The allocations identified are therefore just part of how the council will meet its housing need. The majority of allocations proposed were identified in the council SHLAA as at 1 April 2022.

8.88 Sites have been identified for potential allocation where they reflect the council's Creating a Better Place programme and included in our residential pipeline, thereby providing confidence that these will be delivered within the plan period. Several key sites with extant planning permission have been identified where these are considered an important part of our spatial strategy for addressing housing need within the urban area and existing allocations have been carried forward where they are still considered appropriate for residential development.

8.89 In total the proposed allocations have the potential to provide 4,395 homes.

8.90 The proposed allocations vary in size from small sites under 1 hectare to larger sites that are key to the delivery of our spatial strategy and Creating a Better Place. Sites of 1 hectare and above have the potential to provide around 3,243 homes.

8.91 The capacity assumptions identified in the table above are informed by the developable area not total site area and the indicative density presented in the tables is that which would be applied to the site in accordance with Policy H3. Capacity and density assumptions are indicative and may be subject to change as we carry out further evidence to support preparation of the Publication Plan. Importantly, new residential developments will be required to contribute to a diverse housing mix across the borough and alternative capacities and densities to those indicated above may also be

appropriate where they comply with Policy H2 Housing Mix and Policy H3 Density of New Housing, recognising that in some circumstances an alternative mix may be appropriate to reflect a sites characteristics or where there is a need for specialist accommodation or to vary the existing housing mix within a particular location.

- 8.92 In line with national planning policy<sup>55</sup> to promote the development of a good mix of sites we have identified opportunities to accommodate at least 10% of housing requirement, that is 1,156 homes, on sites no larger than one hectare. The capacity of sites below 1ha provide the opportunity for 1,247 homes. Importantly several of these sites under 1 hectare fall within Oldham Town Centre, for example the Former Magistrates Court and Chambers and Land between Prince Street, Oldham Way and Mumps. Whilst small they are proposed to provide a significant amount of housing as part of increasing residential living within the centre and the council's Creating a Better Place programme.
- 8.93 Whilst the location of the proposed allocations is spread across the borough, there is a focus on opportunities for residential development within Oldham Town Centre, as part of delivering the council's ambitious regeneration programme and Creating a Better Place. Sites within Oldham Town Centre have the capacity to provide around 1,805 homes. Housing within Oldham Town Centre will generally be part of a mixed-use development. This reflects that these new homes will be supported by complementary uses, especially at ground floor level, and social infrastructure to create neighbourhoods where residents can readily access amenities and day to day needs are met (as set out in Policy OTC1 Oldham Town Centre). New homes delivered as part of the Tommyfield Market and Former Leisure Centre site will form part of a mix of uses across the whole site, integrated within the Linear Park. Further information on the exact mix of uses will be set out at Publication Plan stage (as set out below).
- 8.94 As the Local Plan review progresses each allocation proposed in the Publication Plan (Regulation 19) will be accompanied by an allocation policy that sets out site-specific requirements. Depending on the nature, scale and location of the proposed allocation such requirements may include:
- The need for a detailed masterplan and infrastructure phasing delivery strategy;
  - Specific housing mix and tenure to address local housing need;
  - Detailed green infrastructure, open space and biodiversity requirements;
  - The need for specific site access arrangements and measures to mitigate the impact of the proposed development on the surrounding highway network;
  - Site-specific design expectations; and
  - The need for any supporting infrastructure, including the provision of new and/or extension of existing, education and health facilities, to meet any additional demand resulting from the development proposed.
- 8.95 It may be that an allocation could help to address a particular housing need within a specific area – whether that be homes for older or disabled people or for self and custom build housing for example. An update of the 2018/19 LHNA is currently underway and this will help to refine policy requirements regarding the number and type of homes to be delivered on specific allocations so as to accord with the relevant

---

<sup>55</sup> Paragraph 69a, National Planning Policy Framework

policies within this Plan – Policy H4 Homes for Older People, Policy H5 Homes for Disabled People, Policy H6 Homes for Children and Care Leavers, Policy H7 Affordable Housing and Policy H11 Custom / Self-Build and Community-led Housing.

8.96 Further information regarding the site selection process and details on the proposed allocations can be found in the Site Allocations Background Paper published alongside the Draft Local Plan as part of a suite of topic papers.

Linked Local Plan Policies	H1
Relevant Places for Everyone Policies	JP-H1

Homes Chapter Plan Objectives	PO1, PO4, PO5, PO8, PO9, PO10
Homes Chapter Monitoring Indicators	50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61



## 9. Economy and Employment

- 9.1 Our ambition is for Oldham to be a stronger economic contributor to Greater Manchester, providing a place where every resident is enabled to contribute to, and benefit from, the continued economic growth of the city-region. If Oldham is to achieve economic transformation and meet its vision of an 'Inclusive Economy' it is essential that we have a portfolio of diverse, sustainable, suitable and attractive employment sites for existing businesses to grow and relocate to and to attract new businesses to invest in the borough and we need to ensure that we seek higher value jobs and job creation through maximising the potential of the boroughs key economic sectors.
- 9.2 Oldham's economy has failed to benefit fully from growth at a Greater Manchester level in many ways, including business start-ups, Gross Domestic Product, wages and skills levels. The fact that Oldham has a significantly higher percentage of its working age population with no qualifications, is a major issue for Oldham if it is to compete with other Local Authorities and attract new businesses. The '[Levelling Up Oldham](#)'<sup>56</sup> paper produced by the Oldham Economic Review Board in March 2022 estimated that in 2020 the share of the local workforce working in the foundational economy could have been as high as 70% of all workers. The 'foundational economy' includes jobs in utilities, food production and processing, retail and distribution, and health, education, housing and welfare. The jobs that lie within the foundational economy perform an essential role in the economy, however they tend to be low paid and the contracts relatively unstable.
- 9.3 In 2019 Amion reviewed the key economic sectors for Oldham as part of the [Strategic Investment Framework \(SIF\) Refresh and Sector Requirement Review](#)<sup>57</sup>. These are sectors in which Oldham has a potential competitive advantage and that provide the potential to support significant further employment and GVA growth. The sectors identified as being key for Oldham were: Construction; Health and Social Care; Digital Industries (including creative industries); Business and Professional Services; Manufacturing sub sectors; and Logistics. Amion then assessed our designated employment areas in relation to their attractiveness to the key economic sectors and the findings have been inputted into Oldham's Employment Land Review. If we are to make a shift from an overreliance on a foundational economy, that our employment areas are attractive to these key economic sectors going forward and that we support and promote their growth in Oldham. In addition, it will be important to ensure that the promotion of our key economic sectors includes links with the council's ambitions regarding the building of the Green Technologies and Services sector (GTS). This will include supporting companies who are looking for opportunities to develop sustainable, environmentally-friendly materials; decarbonise energy; tap digital innovation for doing more with less; and extend the life cycle of goods within a "zero waste to landfill" framework. All of these companies would fall under the 'manufacturing' and 'digital industries' sector.
- 9.4 The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on jobs, livelihoods and the economy have already been widespread and as it continues to affect the economy, the greater the risk of long-term scarring and permanently lower economic activity, with business failures, persistently higher unemployment and lower earnings. [Oldham Council's Covid Recovery Strategy](#)<sup>58</sup> stated that businesses had reported significant stress as a result

---

<sup>56</sup> This document can be found at: [oerb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/ING6167\\_UofM\\_Levelling-up-Oldham-22-03-22.pdf](https://oerb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/ING6167_UofM_Levelling-up-Oldham-22-03-22.pdf)

<sup>57</sup> This document can be found at: [https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7000/sif\\_refresh\\_and\\_sector\\_requirement\\_review](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7000/sif_refresh_and_sector_requirement_review)

<sup>58</sup> This document can be found at: [file:///home/atog/clare.davison/Downloads/Covid\\_Recovery\\_Strategy\\_October\\_2020\\_21AV%20\(1\).pdf](file:///home/atog/clare.davison/Downloads/Covid_Recovery_Strategy_October_2020_21AV%20(1).pdf)

of the pandemic and that the start of interest payments on business loans is likely to cause further economic challenges across Oldham.

- 9.5 In addition to the challenges and job losses that the pandemic has contributed to in the borough, Oldham has also lost some significant employers (such as the Very Group in Shaw which was a loss of around 2,000 jobs), further adding to unemployment levels. This has highlighted the need for Oldham to provide land and sites, of varying sizes, attractive to existing businesses that may be looking to relocate and businesses looking to invest in the borough. If we do not provide suitable land and sites for these businesses, there is the potential that Oldham will fail to attract such investment and lose out to neighbouring boroughs across Greater Manchester and beyond and fail to realise its ambition to be a key contributor to Greater Manchester's economy.

## Policy E1 – Business and Employment Areas

It is important that Oldham has a range of sustainable employment areas to support the local economy. There will be a strong emphasis on protecting and enhancing our existing employment areas. Designated employment areas are spread across the borough. These Business and Employment Areas (BEAs) provide land for existing firms to expand and for new firms to locate to, so providing for job opportunities.

There are 23 BEAs designated across the borough that will be identified on the Policies Map. They are set out in Table E1 below.

Table E1 Business and Employment Areas

<b>BEA 1 Wrigley Street</b>	<b>BEA 2 Hawksley Street</b>
<b>BEA 3 Greengate / Broadgate</b>	<b>BEA 4 Busk</b>
<b>BEA 5 Primrose Bank</b>	<b>BEA 6 Hathershaw (site a and site b)</b>
<b>BEA 7 Higginshaw</b>	<b>BEA 8 Shaw Road</b>
<b>BEA 9 Shaw</b>	<b>BEA 10 Linney Lane</b>
<b>BEA 11 Greenacres</b>	<b>BEA 12 Hollinwood</b>
<b>BEA 13 Broadway Green</b>	<b>BEA 14 Chadderton</b>
<b>BEA 15 Oak View Mills</b>	<b>BEA 16 Hey Bottom Mill</b>
<b>BEA 17 Chew Valley Road</b>	<b>BEA 18 Boarhurst Lane</b>

<b>BEA 19 Waterside Mill</b>	<b>BEA 20 Delph New Road</b>
<b>BEA 21 Valley Mills</b>	<b>BEA 22 Warth and Ellis Mills</b>
<b>BEA 23 Greenbridge Lane</b>	

The uses that will be permitted within our BEAs are:

1. General industry – B2
2. Storage and Distribution – B8
3. Offices (having met the sequential test / impact assessment), light industrial and research establishments – E(g)
4. Building and construction related uses – Sui Generis
5. Transport and transport related uses (including garages, scarp yards, car show rooms, taxi companies) – Sui Generis
6. Waste management facilities (in line with the Greater Manchester Waste Development Plan Document policies) – Sui Generis

In some circumstances, where the proposed development will be complimentary to the uses already in operation in the BEA and will not undermine the functionality of the wider employment area, the following uses may also be permitted:

7. Restaurants and Cafes – E(b)
8. Financial and professional services – E(c)
9. Medical or health facilities – E(e)
10. Creche or day nursery – E(f)
11. Retail facilities up to 300 square metres – E(a)
12. Indoor sports, recreation or fitness – E(d)

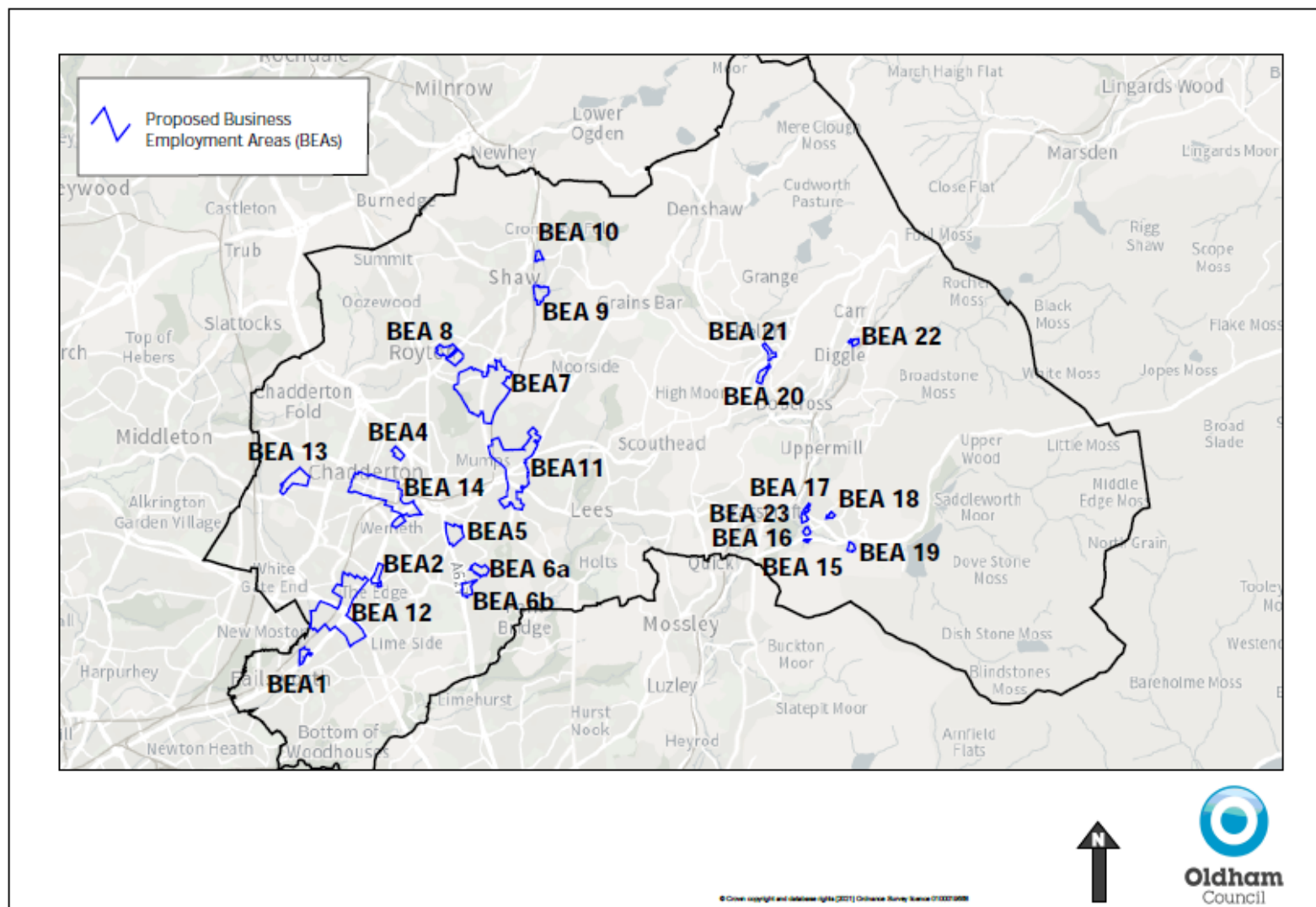
### Reasoned Justification

- 9.6 It is important Oldham has a range of sustainable sites to support the local economy. The council has designated Business and Employment Areas (BEAs) across the borough for a broad and diverse range of appropriate employment-generating uses.
- 9.7 The BEAs are currently designated as either Business and Employment Areas (BEAs) and Saddleworth Employment Areas (SEAs) in the adopted Joint DPD but going forward in this Local Plan they will all be known as Business and Employment Areas (BEAs). These locations will help meet the needs of our changing local economy. They provide land for existing firms to expand and for new firms to locate here, so providing job opportunities.

- 9.8 The BEAs have all been assessed as part of the evidence base to inform this Local Plan to reflect any non-employment development changes that have taken place on the ground and to assess the boundaries. This has resulted in one employment area (SEA 8 Shaw Pallets, Diggle) being de-designated and a number of boundary changes to seven of the BEAs. These map changes can be found in Appendix 3. There has also been consequential changes to the numbering of the BEAs too as a result of the assessment. The proposed BEAs can be seen below in Figure E1.
- 9.9 Until such a time as the revised Local Plan is in place the BEAs proposed for de-designation or amendment will continue to be designated, with their current boundaries, as BEAs and SEAs and protected through policies 13 and 14 in the current adopted Joint DPD.

Linked Local Plan Policies	E2, E3
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-J2

Figure E1: Proposed Business Employment Areas (BEAs)



## Policy E2 - Exceptions within Business and Employment Areas and other existing employment sites

### Exceptions within Business and Employment Areas

Uses other than those set out in Policy E1 will not be permitted within BEAs unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it is no longer appropriate to continue the existing use. This can be done by the applicant providing information to the council to demonstrate one of the four criteria below:

1. The site and premises have been subject to a detailed marketing appraisal that clearly demonstrates that there is no current or likely future demand for them to continue for any of the above employment or commercial uses. The appraisal should take a long-term view of the economic prospects of the site/premises and consider both the re-use / refurbishment of the buildings on site. In instances where the council considers the marketing exercise has been inadequate, the applicant will be advised that the planning application will be recommended for refusal; or
2. The site is specifically identified as being appropriate for other uses in a masterplan or framework and its retention as an employment site would conflict with the masterplan or framework. The masterplan or framework will have been subject to public consultation and prepared collaboratively with, and formally endorsed by, the council. The development proposals must be in accordance with the endorsed masterplan or framework; or
3. The site is required for a facility or infrastructure meeting a regional or national need and there is no more suitable alternative site within the borough of Oldham; or
4. The site and premises are no longer suitable for the existing use when taking into account the modern needs of businesses for highways access, site location, infrastructure, physical constraints, environmental considerations or neighbour amenity issues.

In addition to meeting one of the above criteria the applicant would also need to submit a statement outlining that the proposal meets both of the following criteria:

5. That there is a clear need for the proposed land use; and
6. That the proposed redevelopment would not compromise the primary function and operations of neighbouring users.

### Exceptions for employment sites outside of BEAs

For sites not within a designated BEA but last used for employment purposes, non-employment uses may be permitted provided that:

- a. Sites over 0.25 hectares the applicant demonstrates that either one of points 1 – 4 from above is met and a statement is submitted satisfactorily demonstrates that criteria 5 and 6 listed above have been met; or

- b. Sites below 0.25 hectares the applicant submits a statement that satisfactorily demonstrates that criteria 5 and 6 listed above have been met.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 9.10 Instances can arise when uses other than those listed within the policy may be appropriate within the BEAs or on sites in use or most recently used for employment and commercial uses. The policy outlines circumstances where development proposals for other uses may be permitted.
- 9.11 In relation to carrying out a marketing appraisal the council would expect, as a minimum, the following details to be included:
- An explanation as to why it is not possible to retain or replace any existing occupiers;
  - Consideration of the potential to reuse, refurbish and redevelop the site to accommodate the full range of uses that would be appropriate within an existing employment area. A flexible approach should be adopted including both freehold and leasehold options; and
  - An analysis of recorded and potential interest in the site/premises for a use appropriate within an existing employment area. Where possible the applicant should try and obtain from interested parties reasons as to why they were not willing or able to proceed. This analysis should be informed by the findings of a comprehensive and prolonged marketing exercise of the site and premises (in excess of 12 months) and have regard to enquiries and deals relating to similar sites/premises in the local area.
- 9.12 A lesser financial return on investment relative to other development options will not be sufficient to justify the site not continuing to be available for employment use.

Linked Local Plan Policies	E1, E3
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-J2



## Policy E3 – Reuse and redevelopment of Mill Buildings

**Proposals for non-employment generating uses within mills either in designated BEAs or elsewhere may be permitted in appropriate circumstances where the benefits of securing the active re-use of mill buildings could be seen to outweigh the loss of the use of the site for wholly employment generating purposes.**

**The applicant must demonstrate that the proposed redevelopment would not significantly compromise the primary function of the BEA or locality, or the operations of neighbouring users. The applicant would also need to demonstrate through a viability exercise that their proposals would secure the future of the mill that otherwise would be left vulnerable to deterioration. Any proposals would need to be in conformity with the Policy HE4 Oldham's Mills.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 9.13 Oldham has a rich industrial heritage with around 100 textile mills remaining. Many of the mills are in active use, offering low-cost premises to certain employment uses, residential use, retail or for social uses such as sports clubs. However, some mills have been derelict for many years or are underused with upper storeys not in use, which puts them at risk of falling into poor condition and may make conversion more difficult in the future. They are also often close to existing residential properties and may not always be in the best location for their current use. Building on work done as part of [Oldham's Mill Strategy](#)<sup>59</sup>, the 'Levelling Up Oldham' paper stated that Mill conversion has the potential to deliver significant returns for the borough in terms of employment, skills and jobs while also retaining a link to Oldham's heritage.
- 9.14 It is recognised that, due to the age, scale, format and condition of former mill buildings, it may not always be economically viable to secure the repurposing of individual mills to provide modern, fit for purpose employment and/or commercial floorspace. It is acknowledged that innovative solutions and flexibility regarding the uses permitted may sometimes be required to support the full occupation of individual mills that are currently underutilised, particularly the upper floors of such buildings. There may therefore be circumstances where securing the reuse of a mill buildings outweighs the loss of the site for employment purposes. How we move forward with the repurposing of our mills will be crucial in terms of economic development, housing provision and in the protection and enhancement of our historic environment. More detail on the future of our mills can be found in Policy HE4 Oldham's Mills.

Linked Local Plan Policies	E1, E2, HE4
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-J2

<sup>59</sup> This document can be found at:  
[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham\\_mills\\_strategy](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham_mills_strategy)



## Policy E4 – Office, Industry and Warehousing Allocations

The council will allocate sufficient employment land for office (Eg), industry (B2) and warehousing (B8) development to assist in meeting the borough's employment land requirement, as set out in Places for Everyone (Policy JP-J3 and Policy JP-J4).

Employment allocations will be identified in the existing urban area. Table E2 below identifies the allocations proposed for employment development allocations across the borough.

Strategic allocations, which involve the release of Green Belt or Other Protected Open Land are allocated in Places for Everyone (PfE).

Site proforma's for each of the proposed allocations is contained within Appendix 4.

Table E2 Employment Proposed Allocations:

Site name	Ward	Site area (ha)	Indicative employment floorspace (sqm)
Land at Greengate, Chadderton	Chadderton Central	1.19	3,654
Land at Greenside Way, Chadderton	Chadderton Central	0.63	3,654
Land at Foxdenton	Chadderton South	5.10	20,080
Sellers Way	Chadderton South	0.93	3,960
Land at Albert St, Failsworth, Oldham	Failsworth East	6.21	20,000
Land at Mersey Road North/Albert Street, Failsworth, Oldham	Failsworth East	0.57	2,400
Former Windsor Mill, Hollins Rd, Failsworth	Failsworth East	0.60	2,400
Former British Gas site, Higginshaw lane	Royton South	4.55	16,800

### Reasoned Justification

- 9.15 The proposed allocations identified in Table E2 above will provide around 74,268sqm of employment floorspace and contribute to enhancing Oldham's employment offer.
- 9.16 Policies JP-J3 'Office Development' and JP-J4 'Industry and Warehousing Development' in Places for Everyone (PfE) outline the amount of office, industry and

warehousing floorspace that will be provided across the PfE Plan area over the plan period of 2022-2039. It does not disaggregate this down to a district level requirement.

9.17 Nicol Economics produced a note as part of the evidence base for PfE on the [Employment Land Needs for Greater Manchester<sup>60</sup>](#). For conformity with PfE, Oldham's Employment Land Review 2023 (ELR) has broadly followed this approach to ascertain an employment land requirement for Oldham.

9.18 The overall minimum employment land requirement, in hectares, up to 2039 is:

- Offices – 12 hectares; and
- Industrial and Warehousing – 41 hectares.

9.19 Our employment land supply, as at 1 April 2022 and set out in the reasoned justifications to Policy JP-J3 and Policy JP-J4 of Places for Everyone is set out in Table E3 below.

**Table E3: Oldham's employment land supply 2022-2039**

	Existing supply 2022-2039 (sqm floorspace)	Places for Everyone allocations (sqm floorspace)	Total 2022-2039
<b>Office</b>	81,998	0	81,998
<b>Industry and Warehousing</b>	142,202	136,720	278,922
	224,200	136,720	360,920

9.20 The proposed allocations identified in Table E2 form part of the wider employment land supply identified in Table E3. Sites have been identified for potential allocation where they reflect the council's Creating a Better Place programme, facilitating for example the continued development of Hollinwood Junction and land at Foxdenton, as well as existing allocations have been carried forward where they are still considered appropriate for employment development.

9.21 In allocating land for business we aim to:

- a. provide employment opportunities across the borough in locations that can be accessed easily by the local workforce;
- b. provide sites of varying size with the ability to attract new employment opportunities; and
- c. provide enough land to enable existing firms to expand.

9.22 The potential employment allocations identified in this plan are then supported by the strategic allocations identified in Places for Everyone:

- JPA2 Stakehill – a cross-boundary allocation with Rochdale allocated for the delivery of around 150,000sqm of high-quality, adaptable industrial and warehousing floorspace within a 'green' employment park setting, with a focus on suitable provision for advanced manufacturing and/or other key economic sectors, taking advantage of its accessible location and proximity to Junction 20 of the M62, and complementing the other opportunities within the North-East Growth Corridor; and

<sup>60</sup> This document can be found at: <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/GMCAFiles/PFE/Supporting%20documents/05%20Places%20for%20Jobs/05.01.02%20Employment%20Land%20Needs%20in%20Greater%20Manchester.pdf>

- JPA14 – Broadbent Moss – allocated for the delivery of around 21,000sqm of industrial and warehouse floorspace existing the existing employment opportunities at Higginshaw Business Employment Area, and sitting alongside around 1,450 new homes.

9.23 As the Local Plan review progresses each allocation proposed in the Publication Plan (Regulation 19) will be accompanied by an allocation policy that sets out site-specific requirements. Depending on the nature, scale and location of the proposed allocation such requirements may include:

- The need for specific site access arrangements and measures to mitigate the impact of the proposed development on the surrounding highway network; and
- Site-specific design expectations.

9.24 In addition to allocating our own sites, this plan recognises the role neighbouring authorities play in meeting some of Oldham's employment requirements. Several large, industrial estates are within easy access of many of Oldham's workforce, including Ashton Moss in Tameside, Kingsway in Rochdale and the PfE allocation at Northern Gateway. In addition, Manchester City Centre and Manchester Airport are also key employees for the sub-region. Efficient and affordable public transport to these areas is of upmost importance if we are to improve connectivity and ensure our residents benefit fully from our proximity to them.

Linked Local Plan Policies	n/a
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-J3, JP-J4

Economy and Employment Chapter Plan Objectives	PO2, PO3, PO9
Economy and Employment Chapter Monitoring Indicators	37, 38, 39, 40, 44, 45

## 10. Tourism

- 10.1 The tourism economy could have a significant role in raising Oldham's profile and improving its economic competitiveness, but also in providing employment, creative and leisure opportunities for local residents and visitors. It is therefore important that this plan supports its continued success. Our key focus for tourism will be Oldham Town Centre and our Green Infrastructure network.

### Policy TM1 – Tourism

**The council will support new tourism related development, proposals should protect and enhance the functions of the key tourism locations of Oldham consistent with the following priorities:**

#### Oldham Town Centre

- 1. Diversifying the town centre: it is important that investment is attracted for the night-time and visitor economy, including improving the food and drink offer, expanding the entertainment and leisure sector and developing the cultural attractions.**
- 2. Supporting appropriate developments that will drive footfall into the town centre.**
- 3. Focusing on its role as the borough's centre for culture, arts, leisure and creativity.**
- 4. Providing a new linear park, known as Jubilee Park, creating new space in which to exercise, play, or socialise.**
- 5. Making the most of the town centre's rich heritage by supporting the reuse of historic buildings.**
- 6. Enhancing the existing tourist attractions the town centre has to offer such as Gallery Oldham.**

#### Green Infrastructure

- 7. Promoting our Green Infrastructure assets to generate inbound tourism, including at:**
  - a. Tandle Hill Country Park;**
  - b. Key landscapes within Saddleworth;**
  - c. Recreation Routes such as Oldham Way and Medlock Valley Way;**
  - d. Northern Roots Urban Farm and Eco Park;**
  - e. Alexandra Park;**
  - f. Daisy Nook Country Park; and**
  - g. Rochdale Canal and Huddersfield Narrow Canal Corridors.**
- 8. Encouraging and promoting tourism proposals which improve access to the Green Infrastructure network.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 10.2 The focus for tourism will be Oldham Town Centre with attractions such as Gallery Oldham, the growing evening economy around Odeon Cinema and many independent restaurants and its varied event programme throughout the year that will contribute towards raising Oldham's profile regionally and nationally.
- 10.3 The borough's rich and varied Green Infrastructure network is also a key component of our tourism offer. From parks, such as Tandle Hill, Daisy Nook and Alexandra Park, to our canals and reservoirs and the links through to the Peak District National Park, the opportunities these locations provide for residents to enjoy and to attract visitors to the borough are wide ranging. Oldham's Green Infrastructure Study provides further details on how we can generate tourism by promoting our Green Infrastructure assets.
- 10.4 Going forward Northern Roots will also form a key part of our tourism economy. The project will create the UK's largest urban farm and eco-park on Snipe Clough and 160 acres of green space in the heart of Oldham. It will be developed for and with local communities, supporting a wide range of activities and businesses. Attractions for visitors will include a swimming pond, high ropes and a visitor centre. 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.

Linked Local Plan Policies	TM2, OTC1, N3
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-Strat12, JP-G2

### Policy TM2 - Farm Diversification

**Proposals for farm diversification that supports the rural economy will be supported, including within the Green Belt, provided that:**

- 1. They are in accordance with national planning policy and preserve the openness of the Green Belt;**
- 2. The proposal will make a positive contribution to and support the long-term future of an established agricultural enterprise;**
- 3. The scale of the development is consistent with the rural location and will have no unacceptable negative effects upon the amenity of neighbouring land uses or the environment;**
- 4. It does not harm people's access to the countryside and where possible, enhances access to the countryside;**
- 5. There is no unacceptable impact on the surrounding land, including soils, biodiversity and geodiversity; and**
- 6. It is acceptable in highway terms, including in terms of access, traffic generation and parking provision, taking into account openness of the Green Belt.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 10.5 Farming still plays an important role in the borough's countryside including the livestock industry and dairy farming. Over the years we have seen changes in Oldham supporting the rural economy, with popular places such as Albion Farm which includes a farm shop and café, selling its own grown meat produce; Saddleworth Milk, which also offers accommodation for tourism within its barn conversion and Well-i-hole farm which has diversified offering caravan and camping accommodation and hosting events such as the Saddleworth show.
- 10.6 It is important for the Local Plan to support farm business. [The Path to Sustainable Farming: Agricultural Transition Plan 2021-2024](#)<sup>61</sup> outlines that by 2028, the government wants to see: a renewed agricultural sector, producing healthy food for consumption at home and abroad, where farms can be profitable and economically sustainable without subsidy; and farming and the countryside contributing significantly to environmental goals including addressing climate change.
- 10.7 These regimes link to wider strategies such as the [25 Year Environment Plan](#)<sup>62</sup> on protecting and enhancing our natural environment, Nature Recovery Strategies and England's Peat Strategy.
- 10.8 The Local Plan needs to support the agriculture sector by recognising the challenges and changes in today and in the future. Increasingly family enterprises need to maintain wider holdings by creating additional income by promoting other business opportunities. This may mean the re-use of buildings and creation of space for proposals such as storage and workshop uses professional services and bespoke food production and processing, farm shops, tourism and low carbon energy.
- 10.9 This policy aims to encourage the diversification of the rural economy where it can enhance tourism and recreation but in a way that maintains the open character of the land, its wildlife habitats and food productions capabilities.

Linked Local Plan Policies	TM1, OL2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	n/a

Tourism Chapter Plan Objectives	PO3, PO4, PO5, PO6, PO9
Tourism Chapter Monitoring Indicators	41, 43

---

<sup>61</sup> This document can be found at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60085334e90e073ec94cc80b/agricultural-transition-plan.pdf>

<sup>62</sup> This document can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

## 11. Our Centres

- 11.1 Oldham's centres play a vital role in meeting the needs of people of all ages, through the provision of a range of shops, services, community, leisure, cultural and employment opportunities. The centres are an important contributor to local identity, acting as a focal point for surrounding communities.
- 11.2 There is a need to diversify our centres to promote vitality and vibrancy and their long-term sustainable future. As the role of traditional retail reduces within our centres and new homes are built within them, their importance as community lifelines that connect our residents to services and the local environment will increase. The connectivity they provide as transport hubs to key services, open spaces and neighbourhoods will be essential and the services that are provided within them will foster a sense of community and vibrancy.
- 11.3 The management of the future development of our centres will ensure their long-term success, with a clear focus on sustaining and creating vibrant destinations where activity can continue into the evening, with the retention of a robust retail presence complemented by a varied mix of uses including a leisure and community offer. Opportunities will be taken to make the most of the unique identity of each of the borough's centres and the opportunities within them, access to and through centres will be improved and improvements to the public realm of our centres will be delivered.

### Policy C1 - Our Centres

**A key aim for the Local Plan is to promote and enhance the vitality and viability of the borough's centres, to ensure their long-term success. The centres hierarchy in Oldham is as follows:**

- 1. Oldham Town Centre; and**
- 2. The borough's other centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill.**

**Oldham Town Centre will meet the majority of the everyday needs for our residents for shops and other main town centre uses as defined in national planning guidance.**

**The enhancement of each of the borough's other centres will take advantage of the unique character of each centre. In a co-ordinated approach they will deliver a diverse range of uses, that supports their future vitality and viability.**

**There will be an emphasis on each centre providing a strong convenience retail function so they can continue to minimise the need for our residents to travel further. In addition, they will be complemented by a range of other main town centre uses and housing.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 11.4 A [Boroughwide Retail and Leisure Study](#)<sup>63</sup> was completed in September 2020 by Stantec. The report provided an assessment of retail and leisure needs in Oldham and carried out a health check on all the borough's centres.
- 11.5 The Retail and Leisure Study concluded that there is no 'need' for additional convenience retail provision over the life of the new Local Plan and therefore the Local Plan does not need to plan for any. There will be a small need over the plan period for comparison retail floorspace (2,381sqm) and it was recommended that this is focused in Oldham Town Centre.
- 11.6 The Retail and Leisure Study concluded that the retail hierarchy set out above in the policy was still the most appropriate hierarchy for the borough.
- 11.7 In relation to our centre boundaries, the Retail and Leisure Study proposed an amendment to Lees Centre to incorporate the Aldi foodstore, this can be seen in Appendix 5.
- 11.8 A further amendment is proposed to the boundary of Oldham Town Centre and can be seen in Appendix 6. It better reflects the council's priorities in relation to the Creating a Better Place framework.
- 11.9 The council are working on a partial update to the Retail and Leisure Study, the findings of which will be fed into the next stage of the Local Plan.

Linked Local Plan Policies	C3, C4, OTC1, OTC2, OCT3, OTC4, OTC5
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-Strat12, JP-P4

---

<sup>63</sup> This document can be found at:  
[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1157/retail\\_and\\_leisure\\_study](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1157/retail_and_leisure_study)



## Policy C2 - Local Services and Facilities

**Locally available services contribute towards vibrant communities by providing convenient facilities near people's homes, reducing the need to travel and providing a valuable service for less mobile members of the community.**

**The council will facilitate the need for local shops, services and leisure facilities by protecting existing premises and permitting new local services and facilities within existing built-up areas.**

### Protecting of existing local services and facilities

**Where there are at least 4 units adjacent to each other in use for either commercial, business or service use (Use Class E<sup>64</sup>), the council will only permit a change of use from Class E to another use where at least 75% of the units will still remain in Use Class E.**

### New local services and facilities

**Where appropriate, and within existing built-up areas, local shops and services that fall within Use Class E with a gross floorspace of 300 square metres or less will be permitted outside Oldham Town Centre and the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill.**

**For the avoidance of doubt, this policy applies to proposals whereby the overall gross floorspace does not exceed 300 square metres. Proposals involving multiple units, which individually have a gross floorspace less than 300 square metres but when taken together cumulatively exceed 300 square metres, will be assessed against the requirements that follow in the Policy C3 Retail and Leisure Impact Assessments and Sequential Tests.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 11.10 Local services and facilities represent convenient facilities that help meet the day-to-day needs of our residents. Such services help reduce the need to travel, provide a focus for community interaction and help to distinguish one area from another. They provide an essential service for less mobile residents and residents in more rural areas.
- 11.11 Local services and facilities include small food stores, post offices, pharmacies, advice centres, cafes and other small-scale services of a local nature. For the purpose of this policy, developments with a gross floorspace of 300 square metres or less will be taken to represent a small-scale service or facility.

Linked Local Plan Policies	C1, C3, C4
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	n/a

<sup>64</sup> For a full list of the uses permitted in Use Class E, please see the Planning Portal at: <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission/common-projects/change-of-use/use-classes>

## Policy C3 – Retail and Leisure Impact Assessments and Sequential Tests

In order to recognise our centres as the heart of their communities, uses for main town centre development outside of existing centres will be resisted, unless the proposal is for small scale stand-alone local service provision where Policy C2 'Local Services and Facilities' applies, or unless it can be demonstrated that all relevant tests outlined in current Government guidance can be satisfied as set out below.

### Sequential test

Main town centre uses shall be located in accordance with the sequential approach outlined in national planning policy.

Proposals in sequentially less preferable locations will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that there are no available suitable sites or premises in sequentially preferable locations, and that a flexible approach to scale and format has been applied.

### Impact Assessment

Proposals for main town centre uses outside the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill of between 300 square metres gross and 1,499 square metres gross must be accompanied by an impact assessment to determine its likely effects on all centre(s) located within the anticipated catchment area of the new development.

Proposals for main town centre uses of 1,500 square metres gross floorspace or above, outside of one of our centres, must be accompanied by an impact assessment to determine its likely effects on Oldham Town Centre and the borough's other centres.

The assessment should consider the following criteria:

1. All relevant impacts set out in national planning policy;
2. Likely effects of development on any appropriate plans or projects that facilitate the regeneration of the borough's centres;
3. Whether the proposal is of an appropriate scale in relation to the size, role and character of the intended catchment area;
4. The cumulative impact of the proposal and other similar outstanding permissions or recent completions; and
5. Where the catchment area of the proposed development includes a market location, the specific predicted impact on market trading.

The thresholds above apply to new floorspace, extensions to existing floorspace, developments within our existing out of centre retail and leisure parks, changes of use and applications seeking variations to conditions.

Where any proposal fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have a significant adverse impact on a defined centre, it will be refused.

## Reasoned Justification

- 11.12 Main town centre uses are defined in national planning policy as retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).
- 11.13 Locating larger scale retail and leisure facilities within the borough's centres is considered the most sustainable way of meeting the needs of our residents. It helps to reduce the need to travel and can increase footfall and improve trading conditions within centres. Allowing larger scale main town centre uses in other areas would be likely to adversely affect the vitality and viability of the centres, leading to their gradual decline and reducing their ability to attract new retail floorspace to the borough and serve the needs of residents.
- 11.14 It is therefore essential that as much of the new retail floorspace and as many other leisure and community facilities as possible are located within our centres, in accordance with the national planning policy.
- 11.15 The Retail and Leisure Study considered the scale of Oldham Town Centre and its relatively high turnover, but also its health, high vacancy rate and potential vulnerability to market changes. Taking all that into account the study recommended that the impact threshold for Oldham Town Centre should be set at 1,500 sqm gross. It then went on to conclude that the borough's other centres are considered much more vulnerable to impacts from edge-of-centre and out-of-centre retail proposals and therefore a threshold of 300 sqm gross was considered appropriate for those.
- 11.16 Where impact testing is required, it should assess the net and (where relevant) cumulative impact of the proposal on the vitality and viability of any centre from which the proposal may derive its spending or its users. Whether such impact is acceptable will depend on a combination of factors including the existing health of the centre and how this will affect its ability to withstand impacts from competing development within the defined centre, any reduction in local consumer choice, any increase in vacancies and/or any loss or delay to planned investment.
- 11.17 The detail for carrying out the sequential test can be found in national planning policy.
- 11.18 For information Oldham's existing out of centre retail and leisure parks are as follows:
1. Elk Mill;
  2. Alexandra Retail Park; and
  3. Gateway Retail Park

Linked Local Plan Policies	C1, C2, C4, OTC1, OTC2, OCT3, OTC4
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-Strat12, JP-P4

## **Policy C4 - Changes of use and redevelopment within the borough's centres**

The role of our centres in meeting a wide range of local needs will be protected and enhanced. A strong retail function will be retained for each centre and will be complemented by a broad range of other services and facilities, including leisure and community uses.

Changes of use and redevelopments within our centres will be managed to ensure that they support, rather than detract from, the successful functioning of the centres and their ability to meet local needs. All such proposals will be required to:

- 1. Make a positive contribution to the vitality, viability and diversity of the centre;**
- 2. Not adversely impact on footfall;**
- 3. Maintain a strong role for the centre in providing a varied range of convenience goods and meeting other day-to-day needs;**
- 4. Positively restore and/or enhance the character and appearance of the frontage;**
- 5. Maintain the continuity of active frontages; and**
- 6. Be of a scale and type of use appropriate to the size and function of the centre, or part of the centre concerned.**

Within our centres, proposals for non-main town centre uses, such as Sui Generis uses (including hot food takeaways, payday loan shops and gambling uses) will only be supported where the development would:

- a. Not be harmful to the overall shopping function of the centre;**
- b. Not result in a concentration of Sui Generis uses that would be harmful to the vitality of our centres;**
- c. Extend the offer and range of activities available to shoppers and other users to enhance the visitor experience of the centre; and**
- d. Provide an active frontage and a direct service to visiting members of the public.**

The provision of homes will generally be supported in our centres where it is demonstrated the residential use will not be detrimental to the vitality and viability of the centre, including through the conversion of under-utilised upper floors of commercial buildings into residential properties.

Ground floor residential uses will only be acceptable in our centres where it is demonstrated by the applicant that the proposed development:

- e. is in an area of frontages with low levels of footfall;**
- f. will not be detrimental to the vitality and viability of the centre;**

- g. does not unreasonably restrict existing businesses and community facilities; and**
- h. is designed to ensure the character of the centre is not harmed and allows the premises to be easily converted back to retail use in the future.**

**The applicant must also demonstrate that there is no realistic prospect of securing an active retail or commercial use in the unit.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 11.19 Successful centres are underpinned by a strong retail function both in terms of convenience and comparison goods, and this role should be protected and retained. This is important in meeting the day-to-day needs of residents. Centres must also have an appropriate mix of leisure, community, cultural and service provision, whilst creating new businesses opportunities and making them ‘destination’ places of social and cultural interest.
- 11.20 This will be increasingly important for ensuring that they can generate the footfall necessary to remain attractive in the face of the growth in online shopping and the shift in working patterns to more people working from home.
- 11.21 It is vital that changes of use and redevelopments within our centres are carefully managed, so as to support the long-term success of the centres and their ability to meet local needs. In this context, it is recognised that Oldham’s centres vary in scale, function and composition of uses, and this needs to be taken into account in the determination of individual proposals.
- 11.22 In responding to the changes within the retail sector, the Use Classes Order was amended in 2020 and now allows much greater flexibility with the introduction of a new use class, Class E (Commercial, Business and Service). Changes of use between the different uses within Class E, which includes typical high street uses, can take place without the need for planning permission. This is to help our high streets and town centres adapt quickly to changing demand and trends.
- 11.23 Given this greater degree of flexibility, and in order to protect the vitality and viability of our centres, Sui Generis uses that may undermine the role and function of our centres will have to demonstrate that it meets the four criteria set out in the policy above. Issues associated with some Sui Generis uses can include, in relation to hot food takeaways, a detrimental impact on residential amenity, environmental quality, and the health of the local population, and in relation to pay day loan shops and gambling uses social, economic and health impacts. A proliferation of hot food takeaways and gambling uses are not considered compatible with the positive outcomes sought through our plans for the regeneration of our centres. For additional guidance regarding Hot Food Takeaways see Policy CO8 Hot Food Takeaways.
- 11.24 The council will not support proposals for the development of new homes that would occupy ground floor uses within our centres unless the proposed development would comply with the exceptions listed in above.

Linked Local Plan Policies	C2, C3, C4, OTC1, OTC2, OCT3, OTC4, CO8
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-Strat12, JP-P4

Our Centres Chapter Plan Objectives	PO4
Our Centres Chapter Monitoring Indicators	41, 42, 43

## 12. Oldham Town Centre

- 12.1 Over the last decade, Oldham Town Centre has witnessed several major transformational projects, in particular the redevelopment of the Old Town Hall, improvements to the public realm and investment in public transport infrastructure.
- 12.2 The focus is now on redefining Oldham Town Centre's retail and residential offer as the next stage of its renaissance.
- 12.3 Our vision for Oldham Town Centre is to create 'a place that thrives' by:
- Building quality homes;
  - Providing opportunities to learn, develop new skills and gain employment;
  - Having a diverse cultural, leisure and night-time economy;
  - Attracting, retaining and growing businesses;
  - Ensuring a safer, healthier, and friendly environment; and
  - Ensuring it is green, clean and sustainable.
- 12.4 Our goal is to create a high-quality town centre for the lasting benefit of residents, visitors and investors. The delivery of the continued regeneration of Oldham Town Centre, through supporting and facilitating Creating a Better Place, is one of the Local Plan's most important priorities.
- 12.5 Key proposals through which the Creating a Better Place strategic framework seeks to deliver the vision, and which policies within this Local Plan will support, are:
- Redefining the retail core;
  - The creation of Jubilee Park;
  - Upgrading the night-time and creative economy;
  - The provision of high-quality town centre living, through the delivery of around 2,000 new homes;
  - Supporting our Green New Deal through delivery of a Town Centre Minewater Heat Network;
  - Providing sustainable infrastructure connections; and
  - Enhancing accessibility, connectivity and movement.

## Policy OTC1 - Oldham Town Centre

To deliver our vision, proposals for the continued enhancement, redevelopment and regeneration of Oldham Town Centre will be supported where they align with the broad principles of the Creating a Better Place strategic framework.

The Civic and Residential Quarter will be the focus for our residential offer centered around the redevelopment of the Civic Centre and Queen Elizabeth Hall, Manchester Chambers and the former Magistrates Court site, and the former Oldham Sports Centre site. New homes will be supported by complementary uses at ground floor level and social infrastructure to create neighbourhoods where residents can readily access amenities and day to day needs are met.

The Retail Core will be the focus for an enhanced, vibrant and sustainable retail offer, including the relocated Tommyfield Market in the Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre. Retail uses will be consolidated to the ground floor, linking into the new market through a retail 'loop' that will provide shoppers with a better experience. This will be supported by quality office space for both private sector tenants and Oldham Council and event space linked to Parliament Square that will boost the cultural, leisure and entertainment offer within Oldham.

Within Oldham Town Centre's retail core, proposals will be supported that contribute towards the redefining of the core and a consolidation of retail uses within the retail 'loop'.

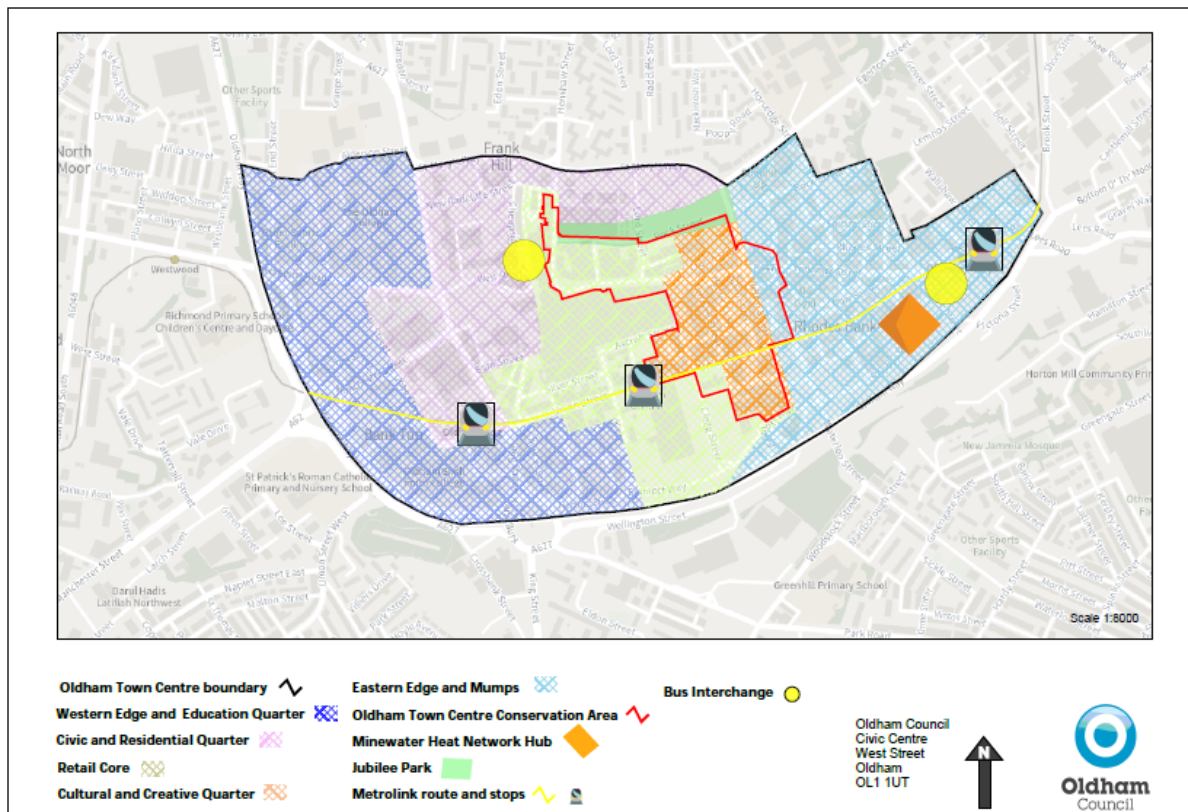
The Cultural and Creative Quarter, centered around the historic core of the town centre and our Creative Improvement District (CID), will be the focus for our night-time and visitor economy, providing an improved food and drink offer, expanded entertainment and leisure sector and cultural attraction. The re-use of existing listed buildings on Union Street will make space for live performance, including a new theatre and home for Oldham Coliseum, and the Prudential Building will be renovated to create innovative and flexible office space aimed at attracting creative and digital businesses to Oldham. The Egyptian Rooms in Oldham Town Hall will be transformed into a high-quality food and drink destination.

Incubation space and the minewater heat centre will be located in the Eastern Edge and Oldham Mump, from which a district heat network will be delivered that will extract heat from water in disused mines underneath Oldham Town Centre to create an environmentally friendly power source that will help deliver our ambitions for carbon neutrality. In addition, a new residential offer will be provided across several sites with opportunities at Mumps and Wallshaw Street, Prince's Gate, Southgate Street and Waterloo Street and Bradshaw Street.

The Western Edge and Educational Quarter will remain home to high-quality further and higher education establishments, with enhanced connectivity into Oldham Town Centre.



Fig OTC1 – Oldham Town Centre Key Diagram



Principles that are expected to form part of any development proposals for Oldham Town Centre include:

1. Promoting high-density, high-quality and sustainable development that reflects the distinctive role of the town centre, with exemplary design at strategically important or other prominent locations;
2. Increasing high speed digital connections to key areas and schemes;
3. Ensuring that high-quality low carbon design that contributes to the borough becoming carbon neutral by 2030 is incorporated as standard;
4. The creation of a green infrastructure network through the focal point that is Jubilee Park and its integration into the built environment, landscaping and the creation of stepping-stones between key development proposals;
5. Ensuring the enhancement of Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area to contribute to its removal from Historic England's heritage at risk register;
6. Ensuring an active streetscene with well-designed ground floor environments, particularly on strategic and well-used pedestrian routes and around key public transport hubs;
7. Ensuring an inclusive and accessible Oldham Town Centre; and

**8. Ensuring that sustainable infrastructure connections and high-quality public realm is achieved to connect development opportunities to the wider town and help to define and enhance the local character and sense of place.**

**Reasoned Justification**

- 12.6 Oldham Town Centre is at the heart of the Creating a Better Place agenda and this policy seeks to support and facilitate delivery of the ambitious regeneration programme, ensuring the development coming forward aligns with its key principles.
- 12.7 The town centre can be divided into several quarters, or zones, that will be the focus for certain types of development – whether that be residential, culture and leisure, education, commercial or its core retail function. Whilst ensuring that each quarter comes forward in a sustainable, accessible and connected way through the integration of complementary uses, the creation of a green infrastructure network and public realm.
- 12.8 The retail core will be redefined through amending the town centre boundary (see Policy C1) to better reflect the council's priorities in relation to Creating a Better Place and consolidating retail uses so there is a more focused retail 'loop' that will provide visitors with a better user experience. The re-location of Tommyfield Market into the Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre will complement and strengthen the existing uses which will also be supported by quality office space which will help to increase footfall and presence throughout the town centre.
- 12.9 The town centre will be transformed with the new Jubilee Park, one of the largest, new, urban parks to be proposed in England. This will be connected to the wider town centre and beyond through the creation of 'stepping-stone' open spaces and integration of green infrastructure as part of new developments coming forward to ensure these are integrated into the wider network. Alongside sustainable infrastructure connections and high-quality public realm the green infrastructure network will aid and enhance accessibility, connectivity and movement through the town centre connecting key locations and new developments together and with the wider area.
- 12.10 Upgrading the night-time and creative economy, including improving the food and drink offer, expanding the entertainment and leisure sector and developing the cultural attractions, is an essential part of ensuring a sustainable future for Oldham Town Centre. The council is working on delivering several projects around the historic core of the town centre as part of the Cultural and Creative Quarter and Creative Improvement District (CID), which covers an area of the town centre directly adjacent to, and interfacing with, the retail core and which includes the majority of the town Centre Conservation Area and many historic landmark buildings.
- 12.11 The creation of opportunities for residential living across the town centre is a key part of the Creating a Better Place programme and ensuring the efficient use of land across the borough so as to minimise the use of greenfield land. Around 2,000 new homes will be delivered within the town centre across several allocations, including at:
- Civic Centre and Queen Elizabeth Hall
  - Manchester Chambers and the former Magistrates Court site
  - Former Oldham Sports Centre
  - Mumps and Wallshaw Street
  - Prince's Gate
  - Southgate Street
  - Waterloo Street
  - Bradshaw Street

- 12.12 Many of these allocations will be for residential-led mixed-use development reflecting the opportunities that may exist to combine these with complementary uses, that will support the development of sustainable and functional neighbourhoods within the town centre.
- 12.13 A central part of the council's Green New Deal is development of the Town Centre Minewater Heat Network. This aims to develop a district heat network in the town centre that extracts heat from water in disused flooded mains underneath Oldham town centre to create an environmentally friendly power source.
- 12.14 The policy sets out some of the considerations the local planning authority will use to make decisions about the quality of design and the place shaping merits of planning applications. It seeks to ensure that all development has regard to key design principles in support of the vision for a high-quality town. High-quality, sustainable design is a central component in producing a distinctive, attractive Oldham Town Centre that reflects its local character and links successfully with its surroundings, provides appropriate transport links, supports local neighbourhoods and communities and makes the best use of natural resources. Reflecting Oldham's topography strategically important and prominent sites perform a particular function across the district, assisting in wayfinding and orientation through their visibility and location. The quality of the architecture should respond to, protect and enhance these established and valued views. It is also essential that any new development coming forward enhances the Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area, in accordance with Policy OTC2, in order that it contributes to the conservation areas removal from Historic England's heritage at risk register.
- 12.15 A great deal of work is underway regarding the town centre and our partnership with Muse as the council's development partner will allow us to draw on the highest levels of knowledge and expertise to ensure that its regeneration comes forward in a co-ordinated and sustainable way. One of the first steps will be the creation of a masterplan and development framework for the town centre. The outcomes of the masterplanning carried out by Muse and the council will help shape and refine the Oldham Town Centre policies and others as appropriate, as we move forward in the preparation of the Local Plan.

Linked Local Plan Policies	H1, H2, TM1, C1, C3, C4, OTC2, OCT3, OTC4, OTC5
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-Strat12, JP-S3, JP-G2, JP-P4

## Policy OTC2 - Protecting and Enhancing Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area

Proposals affecting the setting and character of the conservation area must take into consideration the Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document. Development proposals are required to contribute towards the aim of removing the conservation area from Historic England's heritage at risk register.

Where applicable, development proposals will be supported where they:

1. secure the viable reuse of vacant heritage assets to prevent their decay and dereliction, including opportunities for short-term temporary uses that engage the local community whilst ensuring their long-term preservation;
2. include positive interventions to improve the condition of buildings, or reverse inappropriate alterations;
3. improve active uses at ground floor level, ensure high quality shopfronts are installed and that adverts are of a quality and design appropriate to the conservation area;
4. promote the identity and ensure the significance and appearance of the conservation area is preserved and positive characteristics enhanced;
5. carefully consider and reflect the character and appearance of the conservation area through high quality design of an appropriate scale, density, height, form, massing, layout, plot position, materials, colours, composition and detailed design;
6. protect established and valued views, into and out of the surrounding area which contribute to the historic context and setting of Oldham Town Centre, as well as local views into and out of the conservation area;
7. ensure new interventions in the public realm are considered carefully in the context of good surviving examples of street furniture, surface coverings and public art / sculptures / monuments to preserve and enhance its essential character and to encourage the introduction of appropriate multi functional green infrastructure and landscaping;
8. improve wayfinding into and around the conservation area and between key transport links; and
9. engage the public through measures such as public art to enliven the conservation area and better define the conservation area.

### Reasoned Justification

- 12.16 The [Oldham Town Centre conservation area Appraisal and Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\)](#)<sup>65</sup> was prepared to address the issues facing the at-risk conservation area and sets out a positive approach to enable the conservation area to be enhanced and its eventual removal from the at-risk register. The appraisal outlined that some of the negative features in Oldham Town Centre are

---

<sup>65</sup> This document can be found at:

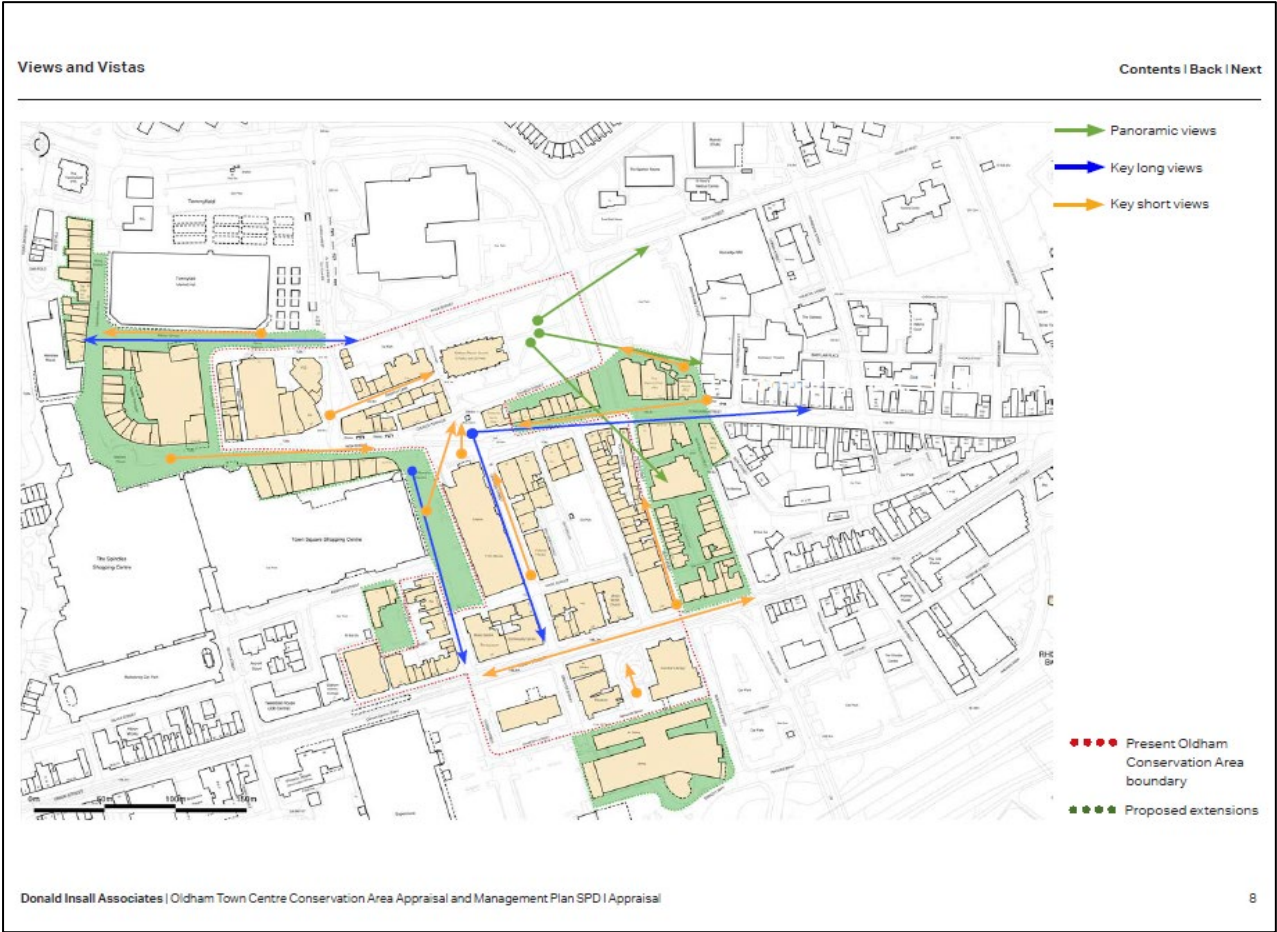
[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201229/current\\_local\\_planning\\_policy/256/supplementary\\_planning\\_documents](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201229/current_local_planning_policy/256/supplementary_planning_documents)

detracting features, such as vacancy levels and buildings being in poor condition. However, the most significant detracting feature is retail frontages, where the poor-quality contemporary shopfronts dominate handsome buildings. Roller shutters also create a deadening frontage and add to the perception of crime and antisocial behaviour. The lack of wayfinding, need for a stronger identity and the appearance / re-use of vacant sites are also key issues to be addressed.

- 12.17 The Management Plan includes policies to address these issues, providing opportunities to enhance, and uplift the human experience of, the conservation area. The policy areas are reflected in the above policy and include securing the viable reuse of vacant heritage assets, opportunities to improve shop fronts, retail frontages and signage and the opportunities that new development can make to improving the character and appearance of the conservation area. Through addressing these issues the conservation area, and Oldham Town Centre, will become a place that people find welcoming, and which contributes to sense of identity, local pride and well-being.
- 12.18 Improved wayfinding, use of public art and co-ordinated street furniture will further emphasise the conservation area and help people to identify when they have entered or left the area. To support this, street furniture and surface coverings will be of a suitable standard of design, which accords with the patterns of items already in use (such as the established green / gold design in the retail core and owl motif). Generally, it should also be sited so as to be visually unobtrusive, having regard to the character and quality of the existing townscape.
- 12.19 In accordance with the Management Plan, the area will require a conservation-led approach that seeks sensitive, well-proportioned and designed new development, which retains the unique historic character reflected in the street pattern, urban grain and townscape and responds to the town centre's distinctive topography and resulting views. The appraisal also provides supporting information such as outlining buildings which make a positive, neutral or negative contribution to the conservation area, key views and vistas (including the Church of St Mary and St Peter and along Church Lane, views through Parliament square, looking west up Yorkshire Street towards Parliament Square, along Greaves Street, views along Albion Street, Retiro Street, Union Street and from Gallery Oldham) and townscape details. The policy seeks to protect these established and valued views (see extract from the SPD below in Figure OTC2), into and out of the conservation area, as they make an important contribution to the historic context and setting of Oldham Town Centre.



Figure OTC2: Valued Views and Vistas



12.20 The appraisal proposed four extensions to the existing Oldham Town Centre conservation area boundary. The extensions have been designated under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and will adopted as part of the Local Plan. The policies map will show the amended boundary for Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area, as shown in Appendix 1.

12.21 The Gazetteer, which forms part of the SPD, provides an important reference of each of the buildings at a point in time within the extended conservation area, noting condition of the assets and a character description. This can be useful for enforcement as well as for development proposals.

Linked Local Plan Policies	OTC1, HE1, HE3
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P2

### Policy OTC3 – Creating a Better Public Realm for Oldham Town Centre

**Major new development within Oldham Town Centre will be required to make a positive contribution to the public realm of the Town Centre by virtue of its siting, design and materials.**

**The public realm will be developed and enhanced in Oldham Town Centre in accordance with the following principles:**

**Principles:**

- 1. Enhancement of the town centre's identity by enriching the urban fabric through creating a simple and uncluttered environment that allows the character of the existing buildings to come through and provides a functional and accessible streetscape;**
- 2. The creation of a spatial hierarchy of routes through and around the town centre that are easy to understand, underpinned by a coherent and consistent palette of materials;**
- 3. The introduction of trees and landscaping in appropriate locations to create a greener, cooler and biodiverse town centre; and**
- 4. The use of robust and durable materials that promote cost effective and sustainable maintenance to ensure long-term quality.**

**For major development a financial contribution towards public realm improvements will be required where appropriate.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 12.22 Work is currently underway to develop the Accessible Oldham programme of works, that is funded by a combination of the Mayors Challenge Fund, City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) and the Active Travel Fund, which are administered by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM). The principles and objectives set out in the Accessible Oldham programme of works have informed the establishment of a hierarchy for streets and spaces that guide the quality of the public realm including new spaces and refurbishments within Oldham Town Centre. One of the main elements is the creation of one of the largest new linear parks in a town centre in England – Jubilee Park, with significant improvements to West Street and the demolition of existing buildings in the Town Centre to create a linear route for active travel, stretching from Oldham College through to St Mary's Way and beyond.
- 12.23 The principles established in this policy, will have a significant impact on the quality of the public realm in the town centre as it continues to re-imagine itself as a place for people to live, work and socialise in. The principles will also help create a people friendly town centre that encourages a diverse street culture.
- 12.24 Going forward, new public realm improvements should include a strong green element (including trees and landscaping) to soften the townscape and create an attractive setting for development. Oldham's principal streets and focal spaces, such as

Parliament Square, High Street and Yorkshire Street will be characterised by high-quality public spaces and natural stone materials. New public realm projects should reflect the form and scale of the street pattern and enhance the importance of these streets. Emphasis will be placed on the inclusion of public art and innovative design features such as street furniture and water features to enhance the pedestrian environment.

Linked Local Plan Policies	OTC1, D1, D2, D6, IN2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P1

## Policy OTC4 - Green Infrastructure within and around Oldham Town Centre

**Proposals will be supported that protect, create and enhance Green Infrastructure within and around Oldham Town Centre, including:**

- 1. the creation of Jubilee Park, a focal point open space providing a linear route of Green Infrastructure;**
- 2. supporting a Greenway that links Oldham Edge to Northern Roots, via the town centre cultural quarter;**
- 3. promoting nature recovery networks linking Alexandra Park, Glodwick Lows Local Nature Reserve and Oldham Edge using open space as steppingstones through the town centre;**
- 4. the integration of multi-functional green infrastructure in development sites, including areas of high business density, incorporating green walls and roofs, trees, encouraging wildlife and creating interest and shade;**
- 5. the promotion of high-quality active travel routes, in a green infrastructure setting, linking homes to schools, workplaces and transport hubs through improved cycle routes and the Bee Network including from Coldhurst to Oldham Town Centre and the National Cycle Network Route 601; and**
- 6. the use of nature-based solutions to manage surface water flood risk in the town centre, particularly around Prince's Gate.**

## Reasoned Justification

12.25 Proposals will be supported that protect, create and enhance Green Infrastructure within and around Oldham Town Centre, having regard to the place-based opportunities within the Oldham Green Infrastructure Strategy for the central district.

12.26 The [Oldham Green Infrastructure Strategy](#)<sup>66</sup> identifies that Oldham Town Centre has virtually no open space and very limited other types of green infrastructure. The Oldham Way is also a major section of road infrastructure that creates severance in terms of movement from the town centre to the south and west. The Strategy sets out

<sup>66</sup> This document can be found at:

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2183/oldham\\_green\\_infrastructure\\_strategy](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2183/oldham_green_infrastructure_strategy)



placed-based opportunities which are linked to seven priority themes of thriving wildlife, carbon neutral Oldham, healthy and active communities, green access for all, distinctive landscapes, slowing the flow of water and sustainable and green jobs.

Linked Local Plan Policies	OTC1, N3, CO2, T2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-G2

### Policy OTC5 - Creating better vehicular parking and drop off facilities in Oldham Town Centre

Development proposals for car parking will be supported that replace, consolidate and improve existing provision in line with the Oldham Town Centre Parking Strategy. Additional provision will only be acceptable where it meets identified operational needs. Oldham Town Centre car parks will be managed in favour of short stay car parking. Long stay car parking will normally only be supported outside of the town centre where need is demonstrated.

Where proposals look to provide a net increase in the number of off-street public car parking spaces, not identified in the Parking Strategy, the need must be demonstrated through a Transport Assessment / Statement, and meet the following principles:

1. Utilising land as efficiently as practicable, supporting a significant reduction in the amount of surface car parking within Oldham Town Centre in line with the car parking standards outlined in Appendix 12.
2. Where sites currently used for parking are identified for alternative uses, as part of a regeneration initiative adopted by the council, its further expansion or intensification will not be permitted.
3. Any new public off-street car parking, whether associated with development or not, will only be permitted in and around Oldham Town Centre where it:
  - a. improves the balance and distribution of car parking within the town centre;
  - b. operates with a tariff that encourages short and medium stay use, and which discourages all day commuter car parking;
  - c. is of high-quality and secure, with level surfacing and marked spaces, is properly lit, and can demonstrate the facility will be well maintained and managed;
  - d. includes adequate and well-designed provision for disabled drivers with appropriate level access to the surrounding area;
  - e. is easily accessible by car from a main road network and on foot to the retail / leisure area(s) that it serves; and
  - f. includes provision for sustainable refuelling infrastructure, such as electric vehicle charging points.

Within Oldham Town Centre fast charging electric charging infrastructure will be supported to encourage use by short stay users and promote high turnover of charging spaces.

Planning permission sought for temporary surface level car parking will only be supported where it is considered appropriate and where such use would not delay

**or prejudice beneficial redevelopment of a site. Such permissions will be strictly time limited.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 12.27 Car parking is an important asset within town centres, helping residents and visitors access businesses and services. However, oversupply of parking can be a problem as it can encourage traffic, which can have a negative impact on congestion and air quality. A surplus of surface car parks can also hinder regeneration, contributing little to the visual fabric of the townscape.
- 12.28 National planning policy supports improvements to car parking in town centres provided it is safe, convenient and secure, alongside measures to promote accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists. A balanced approach is needed with respect to the provision of public car parking. It is important to take account of the need for the centre to be attractive to employers and visitors, while encouraging the use of public transport to reduce congestion and car related air quality impacts.
- 12.29 The [Oldham Town Centre Parking Strategy](#)<sup>67</sup> reviews parking in the town centre and presents a strategy for the future management of car parking provision to ensure equilibrium between parking provision and effective demand management. Annual monitoring of parking provision will be undertaken as part of this strategy to assess changes in demand and supply.
- 12.30 This policy sets out a proactive approach, based on the Parking Strategy and [Oldham Transport Strategy](#)<sup>68</sup>, in which the demand for off-street parking within the town centre and other areas within Oldham will be effectively managed to balance the needs of business and local economic growth alongside the protection of the environment. Our intention is to limit the amount of car trips being undertaken to the town centre whilst improving the range, quality and distribution of available on street parking.
- 12.31 For the purposes of this policy, public off-street car parking is defined as town centre car parking provision that is available for any member of the public to use. It specifically does not include any off-street parking related to a particular use (e.g. a private office car park). This type of parking provision is normally referred to as 'private non-residential parking'.
- 12.32 Consideration will be given to allow more flexibility to accept the temporary use of town centre development sites for public car parking as a means of generating income to support the viability of redevelopment schemes.
- 12.33 Where public parking is proposed in the short term on a temporary basis, the use of a site for car parking should not result in unacceptable traffic impacts or delay or prejudice beneficial redevelopment. Permissions would need to be strictly time limited to ensure that permanent redevelopment was not unreasonably delayed. Proposals of this nature will therefore need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking account of these impacts as well as the availability and quality of existing parking provision.
- 12.34 Improvements to cycle parking provision in Oldham Town Centre will also be sought, which is covered in Places for Everyone (PfE) Policy JP-C4 Streets for All.

<sup>67</sup> This document can be found at:

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7692/oldham\\_town\\_centre\\_parking\\_strategy\\_-\\_october\\_2022](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7692/oldham_town_centre_parking_strategy_-_october_2022)

<sup>68</sup> This document can be found at:

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201058/transport\\_parking\\_and\\_travel/3030/transport\\_strategy](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201058/transport_parking_and_travel/3030/transport_strategy)

linked Local Plan Policies	OTC1, T3
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-C4

Oldham Town Centre Chapter Plan Objectives	PO1, PO2, PO3, PO4, PO6, PO7, PO8, PO9, PO10
Oldham Town Centre Chapter Monitoring Indicators	11, 12, 41, 42, 43

## 13. Addressing Climate Change

- 13.1 The UK government has set a target to become carbon neutral by 2050. National planning policy stipulates that the planning system should help the transition to a low carbon economy. The Local Plan needs to help reduce greenhouse gases, mitigate flood risk, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience, and support renewable and low carbon energy.
- 13.2 Mitigating climate change is one of the five challenges outlined in the [Greater Manchester Five-Year Environment Plan](#)<sup>69</sup>. It sets out an aim for our city region to be carbon neutral by 2038 and meet carbon budgets that comply with international commitments.
- 13.3 The council's Creating a Better Place reflects Oldham's commitment to climate change and seeks to ensure a greener borough by embedding sustainability, energy efficiency & low (zero) carbon. In June 2019, Oldham Council declared its ambition to be the UK's first Green New Deal Council. It subsequently declared a Climate Emergency in September 2019.
- 13.4 The council's [Oldham Green New Deal Strategy](#) was adopted by the council in March 2020. The Strategy's objective is to 'Future-proof the regeneration of the borough by establishing Oldham as an exemplar Green City on energy, carbon, water and green infrastructure'.
- 13.5 The Strategy sets two challenging targets for carbon neutrality – 2025 for the council (council buildings and street lighting), and 2030 for the borough (through renewable energy generation, off set measures such as tree planting, developing a Local Energy Market, low carbon heat networks) and puts in place a framework to work with our residents and partners to make Oldham an even greener, smarter, more enterprising place.
- 13.6 Through the Local Plan we will seek to address climate change through a positive approach on renewable and low carbon energy, flood risk, green infrastructure, design, air quality and transport infrastructure whilst assessing the location of development in relation to public transport and accessibility amongst other factors as part of site allocations. We will also support growth of the green technologies sector. Below we set out our policies on energy, flood risk and water supply. Other plan policies linking to climate change can be found throughout the plan.

### Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

#### Policy CC1 – Sustainable Construction, Energy Efficiency and Retrofitting

**Developments will be required to achieve high standards of sustainable design and construction in order to mitigate the effects of climate change and to realise the council's ambition of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030. Development should:**

- 1. Reduce the energy load of the development by good layout, orientation and design to maximise natural heating, cooling and lighting, and reduce the heat loss area;**

<sup>69</sup> This document can be found at: <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/five-year-environment-plan/>

2. **Minimise use of resources, including ensuring that roofs and walls are constructed of material with a high thermal mass, roofs are well insulated, and windows and doors are airtight;**
3. **Use sustainably sourced and recycled materials; and**
4. **Incorporate soft landscaping to create space for biodiversity habitats and natural cooling measures. Soft landscaping should incorporate native species.**

**Modern Methods of Construction will be encouraged, such as modular/off-site construction techniques where appropriate.**

**In historic buildings the council will enable the sensitive retrofitting of energy efficient measures (including Listed Buildings and buildings of solid wall or traditional construction) and in conservation areas, whilst safeguarding the special characteristics of these heritage assets for the future. A 'Whole Building Lifecycle Assessment' (WBLA) will be required for all major applications in historic buildings.**

**Applicants should include details of how this policy has been met in an Energy Statement.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 13.7 New development, including the construction of new buildings and the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing building stock will be required to incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques to minimise Oldham's carbon footprint.
- 13.8 Planning is limited in the role it can play in helping existing properties to become more energy efficient. To achieve carbon reduction targets as cost effectively as possible, all new development must, therefore, be fit for purpose (i.e., be energy efficient and climate resilient, and maximise low carbon and renewable energy). It is important that new development in Oldham does not create a legacy of poor performance that will require remedial action in the future.
- 13.9 Developers must consider sustainable construction early in the design process to maximise energy and carbon savings and minimise construction and operational costs. Measures to address thermal efficiency, overheating, indoor air quality and moisture must be considered together when retrofitting or building new homes.
- 13.10 Buildings contribute to global warming over their lifespan with the carbon emitted during building, maintenance, use, demolition, and re-use. A 'Whole Building Lifecycle Assessment' (WBLA) measures carbon emitted at all stages of a buildings lifespan and demonstrates the importance of embodied carbon emissions. This approach seeks the best balance between saving energy, maintaining a healthy indoor environment and sustaining heritage significance, by understanding the building in its context.
- 13.11 The historic environment can play its part in meeting these current and future challenges. There are many ways to improve energy efficiency and performance of historic buildings that work with traditional fabric and will not harm their special character. Acceptable changes will depend on the measures proposed and its impacts on a building's significance. Some standard retrofitting measures can cause damage to traditional buildings, causing problems with trapped moisture which may reduce energy efficiency and bring health risks to its occupants. It is important to understand the building and its construction history to ensure that suitable energy efficiency measures are chosen. It is vital that any changes are consistent with the aims of

heritage protection and the statutory duty of care placed on the Local Planning Authority by primary legislation and Government policy. Further guidance is set out in [Historic England Advice Note 14 Energy Efficiency and Traditional Homes](#) (July 2020)<sup>70</sup>.

- 13.12 Modern methods of construction' (MMC) differ significantly from conventional construction methods such as brick and block. They are fundamentally about better products and processes which improve efficiency, quality, customer satisfaction, environmental performance, sustainability, and the predictability of delivery timescales.
- 13.13 Part F and L Building Regulations uplift is achieved by employing measures to conserve fuel and power, limiting heat gains and losses, installing energy efficient buildings, and fitting and having effective controls on heating and ventilation. The new regulations are called the 'Future Homes and Buildings Standard' (FHS) and will be introduced by 2025. The standard (which requires carbon dioxide emissions to be at least 75% lower than those built to current building regulation standards) will be a mandatory requirement for all new build properties which is separate from any local plan requirements. All homes will be 'zero carbon ready' becoming zero carbon homes over time as the electricity grid decarbonises, without the need for costly retrofitting work.

Linked LP policies	CC2
Relevant PfE Policies	JP-S2, JP-S7

### Policy CC2 Renewable & Low Carbon Energy

**Proposals for renewable and low carbon energy development, including wind energy, will be supported where any adverse impacts have been satisfactorily addressed having regard to impacts on:**

- 1. Local amenity, including noise, air quality, traffic, vibration, dust and visual impact, light (including reflection, glint, glare and shadow flicker);**
- 2. Highway safety and network capacity;**
- 3. Biodiversity, geodiversity, nature conservation designations, habitats and species, particularly in relation to displacement, disturbance, and the impact emissions;**
- 4. The openness of the Green Belt and whether very special circumstances have been demonstrated to justify otherwise inappropriate development;**
- 5. Loss of open space;**
- 6. The significance of Local Green Space;**
- 7. Flood Risk, hydrology and water supply;**

<sup>70</sup> This document can be found at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/energy-efficiency-and-traditional-homes-advice-note-14/>

8. Land stability, contamination, and loss high quality soil and agricultural land;
9. Public rights of way including access tracks and recreational routes;
10. Telecommunications and other networks, including operational equipment required to connect to the National Grid, electromagnetic production and interference and aeronautical impacts such as radar systems;
11. The qualities and sensitivities of key landscape characteristics and townscapes;
12. The historic environment including heritage assets and their settings;
13. Mineral Safeguarding Areas; and
14. Cumulative effects with other existing and proposed energy developments.

Where a development proposal would have a landscape impact, proposals should be accompanied by a detailed Landscape Impact Assessment carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced professional.

Proposals for wind energy can be considered across the borough, except within 400m of the South Pennines Moors SAC /SPA. A refined area of search for wind energy may be identified in a supplementary plan.

Where appropriate, any proposal should include full details of the arrangements for decommissioning and the reinstatement/restoration of the site at the end of its operational life.

Significant weight will be given to community-led schemes and other schemes where evidence of community support can be demonstrated, with appropriate procedures in place to deliver and manage the project.

### Reasoned Justification

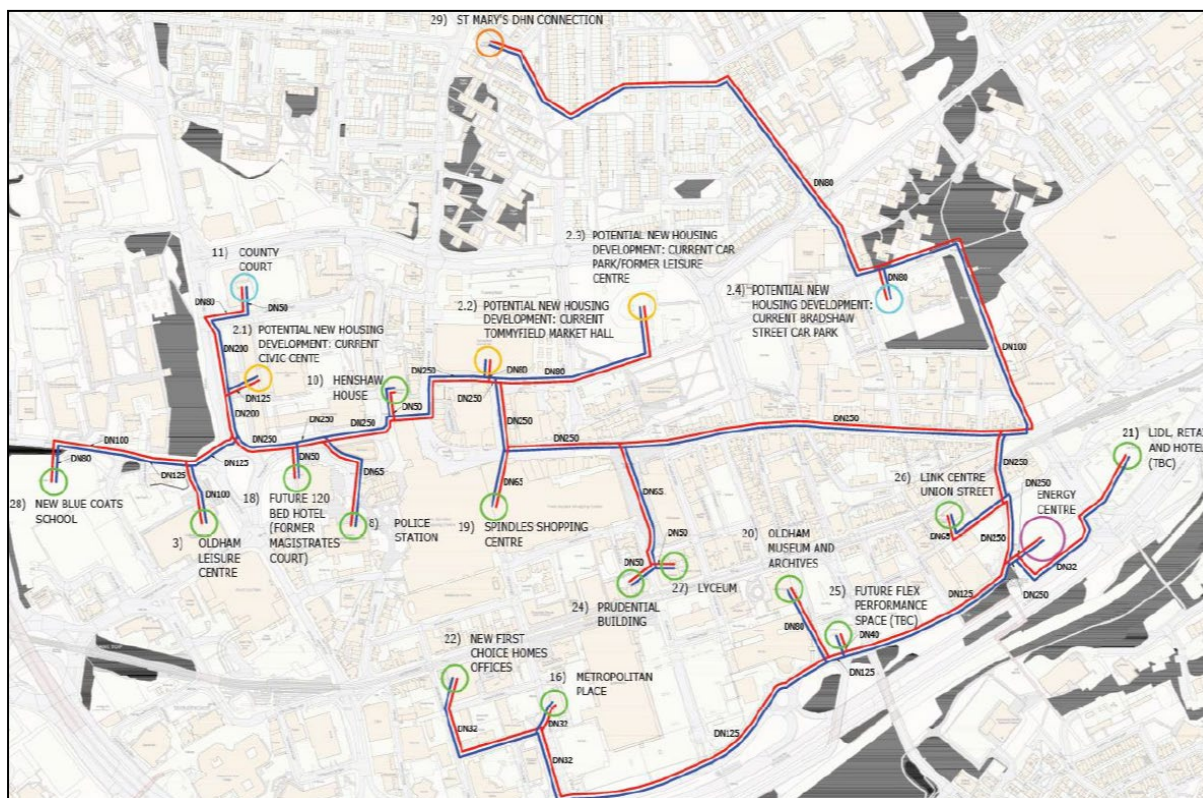
- 13.14 The renewable and low carbon energy sector plays a significant role in ensuring the energy security of the UK. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions limits the impacts of human induced climate change and stimulates investment in new jobs and businesses, with a range of environmental and economic benefits, such as reduced air pollution and lower energy bills for residents and businesses.
- 13.15 Planning has an important role in the delivery of new renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure in locations where the local environmental impact is acceptable.
- 13.16 The [Oldham Local Area Energy Plan](https://committees.oldham.gov.uk/documents/s129736/OS%20Feb%2022%20-%20OGND%20Appx%20C_Oldham%20LAEP.pdf)<sup>71</sup> (LAEP) identifies opportunities for low carbon energy including solar, hydrogen, heat pumps, electric vehicle charging and a district heat network. In addition, the council is working on an Oldham Mine Water Heat Network project which can be seen in Figure CC1 below.

---

<sup>71</sup> This document can be found at:  
[https://committees.oldham.gov.uk/documents/s129736/OS%20Feb%2022%20-%20OGND%20Appx%20C\\_Oldham%20LAEP.pdf](https://committees.oldham.gov.uk/documents/s129736/OS%20Feb%2022%20-%20OGND%20Appx%20C_Oldham%20LAEP.pdf)



Figure CC1: Potential expansion of St Marys Heat Network across Oldham Town Centre including a new Minewater Energy Centre

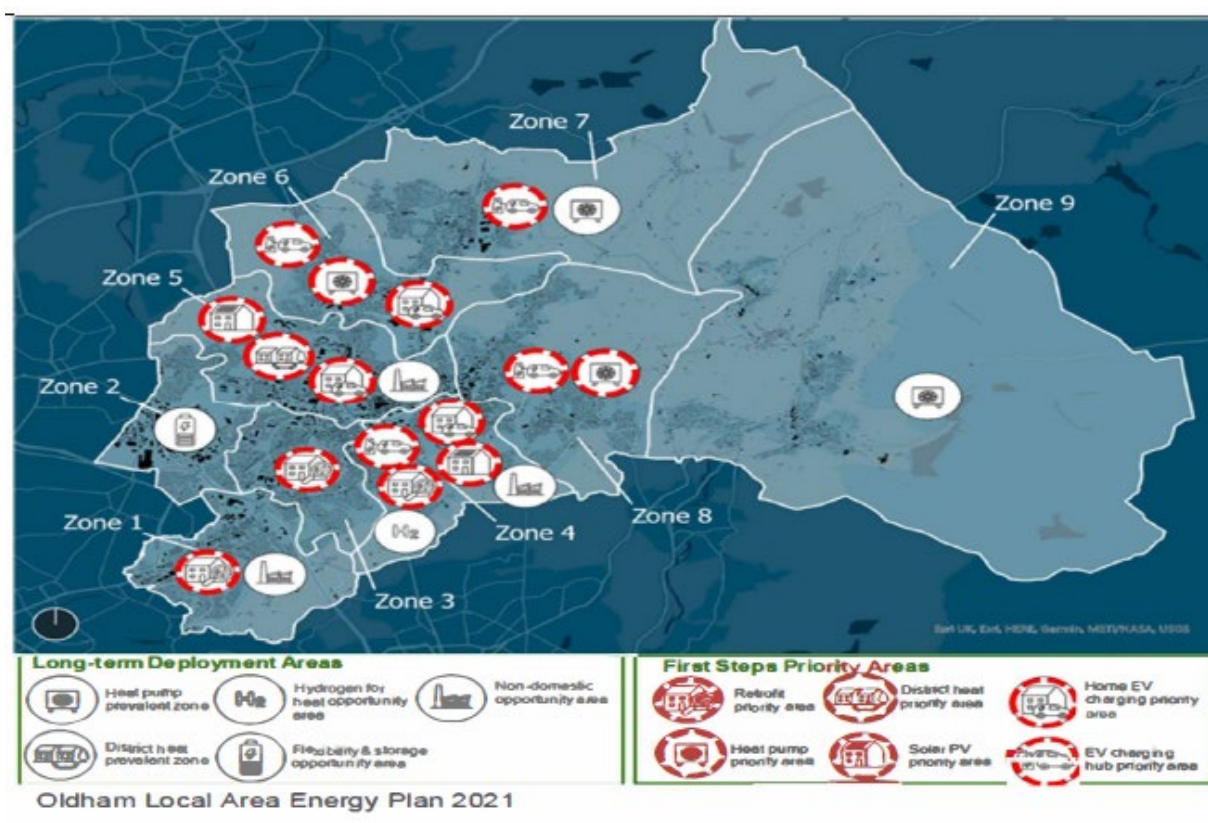


- 13.17 The council will support proposals for renewable energy providing that any adverse environmental, social, or economic aspects are addressed including for example, impacts on landscape, townscape, natural, historical, and cultural features, Green Belt, biodiversity, flood risk and areas of nature conservation interests. Proposals should also ensure that high quality design features are used to minimise the impacts on the amenity of the area in respect of visual intrusion, noise, dust and odour and traffic generation. Adverse impacts can often be avoided or reduced through mitigation measures.
- 13.18 Planning applications for hydropower should normally be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment. Early engagement with the council and the Environment Agency will be necessary to identify any potential planning issues which are likely to be specific to the location. The Environment Agency has published [advice](#) on environmental protection for new hydropower schemes<sup>72</sup>.
- 13.19 Most renewable and low carbon energy developments have a limited lifespan after which they will need to be decommissioned. Planning permissions for renewable energy proposals will be subject to a planning condition requiring the removal of infrastructure and reinstatement of the site should the development cease to be operational.

<sup>72</sup> This document can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-hydropower-scheme-apply-to-build-one>



Figure CC2: Oldham Local Area Energy Plan



## Wind Energy

- 13.20 National planning policy states that proposals for wind energy development should not be considered acceptable unless it is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in a development plan or a supplementary planning document (SPD) (wind turbines can also be permitted through Local Development Orders, Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders) and following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by the affected local community have been appropriately addressed and the proposal has community support.
- 13.21 Whilst specific sites have not been identified for wind energy the policy lays out constraints that need to be considered. As such, the local plan area is considered an area of search, except for within 400m of the South Pennine Moors SAC/ SPA due to Places for Everyone (PfE) Policy JP-G5 Uplands. The council may prepare a supplementary plan in future which identifies refined areas of search.
- 13.22 The acceptability of individual proposals will be subject to a detailed assessment demonstrating clearly how all the policy criteria has been addressed satisfactorily before granting planning permission.
- 13.23 Constraints such as Green Belt, Local Green Space, conservation areas, geodiversity sites and Minerals Safeguarding Areas will be shown on the policies map, along with some ecology designations. Other constraints such as ecology, flood risk, listed assets and source protection zones are shown on the Open Data Infrastructure Map on [Mapping GM](#) or on websites hosted by Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England. Greater Manchester Ecology unit also hold a database of information.
- 13.24 Within the Green Belt applications for energy are classed as inappropriate and will need to demonstrate very special circumstances.

- 13.25 The application should explain how the local community has been consulted and how any concerns have been appropriately addressed in finalising the proposal. Applicants should only progress an application for onshore wind where it can be clearly demonstrated that the proposal has community support.

Linked Local Plan Policies	OTC, CC1, IN2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-S2, JP-S3

## Flood Risk and Water Quality

- 13.26 Planning has a role to play when it comes to considering new development and assessing flood risk and water resources. There is a need to direct development away from areas of flood risk (looking at Flood Zones and other sources of flood risk), taking into account climate change, and to manage and mitigate flood risk.
- 13.27 National planning policy and its practice guidance sets out clear tests for assessing planning applications to ensure that development is focussed on sites with lower flood risk probability and that they can be made safe. Flood risk is also addressed in PfE, particularly Policy JP-S5.

### Policy CC3 - Managing Flood Risk

**Development proposals will be determined in line with national planning policy and guidance on Flood Risk, applying a sequential approach to all forms of current and future flood risk.**

**The functional floodplain (Flood Zone 3b) will be identified on the policies map. The functional flood plain will be used to store water and for Green Infrastructure benefits. No development shall take place in Flood Zone 3b unless in exceptional circumstances such as for essential infrastructure, which must still pass the Exception Test, or where development is water compatible.**

**Development must not impede the flow of water within Flood Zone 3b nor should it reduce the volume available for the storage of floodwater.**

**The council's preference is for new development proposals to be located outside of Flood Zones 2 and 3, taking into account latest climate change allowances. Development proposals outside of Flood Zone 1, which require a sequential test will apply an area of search, to be agreed with the local planning authority in advance of undertaking the search.**

**A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required where a site is:**

- 1. Within Flood Zone 3a or Flood Zone 2;**
- 2. Within Flood Zone 1 and 1 hectare or greater in size;**
- 3. At risk from surface water flooding or on land which has been identified by the Environment Agency as having critical drainage problems (i.e. within an Area with Critical Drainage Problems (ACDP));**

4. Over 0.5 hectares within a Critical Drainage Area (CDA);
5. Situated in an area currently benefiting from flood defences;
6. Land identified as being at increased flood risk in future;
7. At risk of flooding from other sources than fluvial, or at residual risk;
8. Subject to a change of use to a higher vulnerability classification, as set out in national planning guidance, which may be subject to other sources of flooding; or
9. Situated over a culverted watercourse or where development will require controlling the flow of any river or stream or the development could potentially change structures known to influence flood flow.

Where required, development proposals will be granted subject to a satisfactory site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) showing that:

10. The national planning policy and guidance have been adhered to together with appropriate consultation with the relevant local planning authority, Lead Local Flood Authority, the Environment Agency and United Utilities, where applicable;
11. The effects of climate change have been taken into account using the latest allowances developed by the Environment Agency;
12. There is no loss in floodplain storage resulting from the development;
13. The development will not increase flood risk elsewhere;
14. There is no adverse effect on the operational functions of any existing flood defence infrastructure;
15. Proposed resistance and resilience measures designed to deal with current and future risks are appropriate;
16. Appropriate sustainable drainage techniques, prioritising the use of natural flood management techniques that connect to the wider Green Infrastructure network, will be incorporated into the design of the site, where applicable;
17. Whether the development will be safe for its lifetime and has passed the Exception Test, if applicable; and
18. An appropriate Emergency Plan is included that accounts for the possibility of a flood event and shows the availability of safe access and egress points accessible during times of flood.

### Reasoned Justification

- 13.28 Flood Zone 3b, described as the functional flood plain, has been mapped as part of the Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Land falling within Flood Zone 3b will be safeguarded from development and forms part of the borough's Green Infrastructure network.

- 13.29 Where the sequential test is required an area of search must be agreed with council on a case by case basis and agreed through pre-application discussions.
- 13.30 Some developments are not subject to the sequential test, such as those on sites that have been allocated through the Local Plan for the type of development proposed, as these have already been tested. The exception to this is sites where the council has assumed conversion such as a mill conversion within an allocation and the application is contrary to that (i.e., involves demolition and redevelopment); or where the development proposal is different to the vulnerability of development that was tested when the site was allocated.
- 13.31 The sequential test is also not applicable to developments such as change of use (except for a change of use to a caravan, camping or chalet site, or to a mobile home or park home site); minor development such as householder development (except where a separate dwelling would be created within the curtilage or the subdivision of houses to flats); and alterations that do not increase the size of buildings. These developments may require a site-specific flood risk assessment, however.
- 13.32 Change of use applications need to consider how the vulnerability classification, as set out in national planning guidance, may change as a consequence of development and ensure that where required the site-specific flood risk assessment takes this into account to ensure the development can be designed to be safe, including access and egress.
- 13.33 Where the exception test is required and development is within higher flood risk areas after applying the sequential test development must be of exceptional quality, which includes design features that allow resilience to flood risk and climate change such as spaces for water to flow, locating the development to the lowest risk areas within the site boundary, considering resilient design, including internal fittings such as cupboard's and sockets located higher and the use of water resilient materials. Development should include multi-functional sustainable drainage.
- 13.34 When undertaking site-specific flood risk assessments regard should be had to the latest Environment Agency peak rainfall allowances in the climate change allowances: flood risk assessments. This is important to understand and manage the effects of climate change on surface water flood risk and informing the design of drainage systems for new development.
- 13.35 Areas with Critical Drainage Problems (ACDPs) may be designated where the Environment Agency is aware that development within a certain catchment / drainage area could have detrimental impacts on fluvial flood risk downstream, and / or where the Environment Agency has identified existing fluvial flood risk issues that could be exacerbated by upstream activities.
- 13.36 In these instances, the Environment Agency would work with the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and local planning authority to ensure that adequate surface water management measures are incorporated into new development to help mitigate fluvial flood risk. There are currently no ACDPs in Greater Manchester, however, the Environment Agency can designate areas.
- 13.37 This is different from CDAs usually identified through Strategic Flood Risk Assessments. CDAs are those identified from historical flood events and/ or modelled data as having a significant risk from surface water flooding and include drainage catchments for the sewer network. The CDAs were updated in 2023.
- 13.38 The borough also has a number of reservoirs, which form part of the historic environment and unique landscape of Oldham. Where applicable site-specific flood risk

assessments should also take into account any reservoir extents to take into account risk if the reservoir was breached.

- 13.39 Working with natural processes should be used, as far as practicable to mitigate flood risk and deliver multi-functional benefits. The SFRA identifies layers which can be used such as tree planting and run-off attenuation features. Other sources of information include the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Oldham's Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- 13.40 Early discussions should take place with the LLFA and where required the Environment Agency and United Utilities. The LLFA are a statutory consultee for major developments. Consultation with United Utilities should confirm:
- a) if there are any sewer surcharge levels at the point of connection that could influence site design;
  - b) whether there is an incident of sewer flooding at, or in the vicinity of, the proposed development site; and
  - c) if sewer modelling data indicates that existing sewers that pass through or near to the site present a modelled risk of sewer flooding.

Linked Local Plan Policies	CC4, N3
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-S5

## Foul and Surface Water

- 13.41 Surface water flood risk is a boroughwide issue and will affect most development sites to varying degrees. It is important that foul and surface water is managed appropriately and that opportunities to improve the current discharge of surface water on previously developed sites are implemented.

### Policy CC4 - Sustainable Drainage – Foul and Surface Water

**Applications must be supported by a strategy for foul and surface water management, where appropriate. Surface water must be discharged in the following order of the surface water hierarchy (moving from steps 1 to 4) of:**

- 1. An adequate soakaway or some other form of infiltration system.**
- 2. An attenuated discharge to a surface water body.**
- 3. An attenuated discharge to public surface water sewer, highway sewer or another drainage system.**
- 4. An attenuated discharge to public combined sewer.**

**Proposals should be designed to maximise the retention of surface water on-site and minimise the volume, and rate of, surface water discharge off-site.**

**Developments on greenfield sites are expected to achieve greenfield run off rates<sup>73</sup>.**

<sup>73</sup> See Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage for further advice on greenfield run off rates.

Developments on brownfield sites should aim to achieve greenfield run off rates, particularly within Critical Drainage Areas. A relaxation on outflow controls and/or the extent of attenuation storage will only be permitted with the agreement of the LLFA and LPA at an early stage of the project but should never exceed the rate of discharge from the development prior to redevelopment for that event. Applicants must submit clear evidence of existing operational connections from the site with associated calculations on rates of discharge to demonstrate any reduction that deviate from achieving greenfield runoff rates.

Applicants must consider site topography, naturally occurring flow paths, ephemeral watercourses (where watercourses may only flow temporarily) and any low-lying areas where water naturally accumulates. Applications will be required to consider exceedance / overland flow paths from existing and proposed drainage features and confirm ground levels, finished floor levels and drainage details. Resultant layouts must take account of such circumstances to ensure a flood resilient design is achieved and water is not deflected or constricted.

Applicants for major development must be supported by a sustainable drainage strategy and designed in accordance with the four pillars of sustainable drainage<sup>74</sup>, in preference to underground piped and tanked storage systems, unless there is clear evidence why such techniques are not possible. It should be integrated with the landscaped environment and the strategy for biodiversity net gain.

For any development proposal which is part of a wider development / allocation, foul and surface water strategies must be part of a holistic site-wide drainage strategy. Pumped drainage systems should be minimised and a proliferation of pumping stations on a phased development will not be acceptable.

Applications must be accompanied by drainage management and maintenance plans including a plan for any watercourse within the application site or an adjacent watercourse where the application site is afforded riparian rights.

### Reasoned Justification

- 13.42 Application of the hierarchy for managing surface water is a key requirement for development sites to reduce flood risk and the impact on the environment. Clear evidence must be submitted to demonstrate why alternative preferable options in the surface water hierarchy are not available.
- 13.43 Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs) have been mapped across Greater Manchester (2023) and are available on the councils' constraints and work is underway to add these to Mapping GM.
- 13.44 Foul and surface water drainage must be considered early in the design process. Sustainable drainage should be integrated with the landscaped environment and designed in accordance with the four pillars of sustainable drainage (water quantity, water quality, amenity and biodiversity). It should identify SuDS opportunities, including retrofit SuDS opportunities, such as green roofs; permeable surfacing; soakways; filter drainage; swales; bioretention tree pits; rain gardens; basins; ponds; reedbeds and wetlands. Any drainage should be designed in accordance with 'Ciria C753 The SuDS Manual', sewerage sector guidance, or any subsequent replacement guidance.

---

<sup>74</sup> The four pillars of sustainable drainage are referenced in Ciria SuDS Manual and planning practice guidance



- 13.45 Drainage details, ground levels and finished floor levels are critical to ensure the proposal is resilient to flood risk and climate change. It is good practice to ensure the external levels fall away from the ground floor level of the proposed buildings (following any regrade), to allow for safe overland flow routes within the development and minimise any associated flood risk from overland flows. In addition, where the ground level of the site is below the ground level at the point where the drainage connects to the public sewer, care must be taken to ensure that the proposed development is not at an increased risk of sewer surcharge. It is good practice for the finished floor levels and manhole cover levels (including those that serve private drainage runs) to be higher than the manhole cover level at the point of connection to the receiving sewer.
- 13.46 Holistic site-wide drainage strategies will be required to ensure a coordinated approach to drainage between phases, between developers, and over a number of years of construction. Applicants must demonstrate how the approach to drainage on any phase of development has regard to interconnecting phases within a larger site with infrastructure sized to accommodate interconnecting phases. When necessary, the holistic drainage strategy must be updated to reflect any changing circumstances between each phase(s). The strategy shall demonstrate communication with infrastructure providers and outline how each phase interacts with other phases.
- 13.47 Applicants are expected to provide information on their sustainable drainage proposals in the following documents:
- Completed SuDS Pro-forma which assists you in confirming your approach; and
  - Sustainable drainage strategy which takes account of the recommendations from the site-specific flood risk assessment where applicable; and where necessary
  - A site-specific flood risk assessment
- 13.48 Where a site-specific flood risk assessment is required, this can be combined with the drainage strategy.

Linked Local Plan Policies	CC3, N3, IN2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-S5

## Water Efficiency and Climate Change

- 13.49 Water is essential to life - to flora, fauna and the human population. It is vital that water resources are carefully managed to reduce water stress and scarcity. Pressures such as population, housing growth and climate change adds stress to water resources therefore we need to manage sustainable growth and resilience to climate change through policies which can help manage water supplies sustainably.

### Policy CC5 - Water Efficiency

**All new residential developments must achieve, as a minimum, the optional requirement set through Building Regulations Requirement G2: Water Efficiency or any future updates.**

**All major non-residential development shall incorporate water efficiency measures so that predicted per capita consumption does not exceed the levels set out in the applicable BREEAM 'Excellent' standard. Where the 'Excellent' Standard cannot be achieved, evidence must be submitted with an application to the satisfaction of the local planning authority. The BREEAM 'Very Good' standard must be met as a minimum.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 13.50 A tighter water efficiency standard in new development has multiple benefits including a reduction in water and energy use, as well as helping to reduce customer bills. Building Regulations currently includes a requirement for all new dwellings to achieve a water efficiency standard of 125 litres of water per person per day (l/p/d). In 2015 an 'optional' requirement of 110 l/p/d for new residential development was introduced.
- 13.51 The Local Plan proposes to use this higher standard, which ties in with our approach to be a greener borough and declaring a climate emergency and Greater Manchester declaring a biodiversity emergency. Pressures from water supply also affect the achievement of the Water Framework Directives through impacts on water quality, species and habitats. As such there are environmental reasons for addressing water efficiency as well as helping our residents achieve lower bills in new housing, reducing effects of deprivation.
- 13.52 Major non-residential development applies to developments over 1000sqm.
- 13.53 This is justified by evidence provided by Water Resources West, which is summarised in the supporting Topic Paper on flood risk.

Linked Local Plan Policies	n/a
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-S5



## Ground Water Source Protection Zones

- 13.54 The Environment Agency defines Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) and these are available on the Environment Agency's website and on the Open Data Infrastructure Map on [Mapping GM](#). These are areas that are often used for public drinking water supply purposes. Preventing pollution to drinking water is critical to ensure it is safe to use for public health.

### Policy CC6 Groundwater Source Protection Zones

**In consultation with the council and relevant statutory bodies, applicants must consider the potential impacts on water quality resulting from the design, construction and operation of proposed development. Where necessary, development proposals must include measures to reduce any risk to the water environment and aim to protect and improve water quality.**

**Development proposals within Groundwater Source Protection Zones must accord with the latest national guidance on Groundwater Protection and will be expected to conform to the following:**

- 1. Risk Assessment - a quantitative and qualitative risk assessment and mitigation strategy with respect to groundwater protection will be required to manage the risk of pollution to public water supply and the water environment;**
- 2. Masterplanning – is required to mitigate the risk of pollution to public water supply and the water environment; and**
- 3. Construction Management Plan – a Construction Management Plan will be required to identify the potential impacts from all construction activities on both groundwater, public water supply and surface water and identify the appropriate mitigation measures necessary to protect and prevent pollution of these waters.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 13.55 The SPZs are shown in Appendix 7 and are defined around large and public potable groundwater abstraction sites. The purpose of SPZs is to provide additional protection to safeguard drinking water quality through constraining the proximity of an activity that may impact upon a drinking water abstraction. This is part of an initial screening process in assessing impacts to groundwater resources. Zones around location sites are defined by groundwater travel time to an abstraction.

- 13.56 SPZs provide a visual representation of the increased risks as you get closer to the abstraction. The following subdivisions are defined within SPZs:

Zone 1: (Inner Protection Zone) - This zone is defined by a travel time of 50-days or less from any point within the zone at, or below, the water table. Additionally, the zone has as a minimum a 50-metre radius. It is based principally on biological decay criteria and is designed to protect against the transmission of toxic chemicals and water-borne disease.

Zone 2: (Outer Protection Zone) - This zone is defined by the 400-day travel time from a point below the water table. Additionally this zone has a minimum radius of 250 or 500 metres, depending on the size of the abstraction. The travel time is derived from consideration of the minimum time required to provide delay, dilution and attenuation of slowly degrading pollutants.

Zone 3: (Total catchment) - This zone is defined as the total area needed to support the abstraction or discharge from the protected groundwater source.

- 13.57 In Oldham, SPZs 1 and 2 have been defined and include parts of the wards of Shaw, Crompton and St James. New development should ideally seek to be located away from SPZs, especially Source Protection Zone 1.
- 13.58 Applicants should take note of ['The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection' position statement](#)<sup>75</sup>.
- 13.59 The risk assessment must be based on the source-pathway-receptor methodology. The risk assessment requires applicants to follow the source-pathway-receptor approach. This means thinking how activity from development may be a 'source' of pollution to groundwater (such as landfill), the 'pathways' that the pollution could take to reach groundwater from your site (such as engineered measures such as a landfilled lining system, or infiltration system), and the potential groundwater 'receptors' that could be affected by that pollution (such as abstraction boreholes, the ecosystem dependent on groundwater or the groundwater). It shall identify all possible contaminant sources and pathways for the life of the development and provide details of measures required to mitigate any risks to groundwater and public water supply during all phases of the development.
- 13.60 Subject to the outcome of the risk assessment, the mitigation measures may include the highest specification design for the new foul and surface water sewerage systems (pipework, trenches, manholes, pumping stations and attenuation features).
- 13.61 Within source protection zones careful masterplanning is required. For example, open space can be located so that it is closest to the boreholes in order to minimise the potential impact on groundwater with an appropriate management regime.

Linked Local Plan Policies	n/a
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-S5

Addressing Climate Change Chapter Plan Objectives	PO6, PO7, PO8
Addressing Climate Change Chapter Monitoring Indicators	24, 25, 26, 36

<sup>75</sup> This document can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/groundwater-protection-position-statements>

## 14. Natural Environment and Open Land

### Oldham's Open Land

- 14.1 The Peak District National Park (PDNP) is a protected landscape that falls within the borough of Oldham. It was designated in 1951 and was Britain's first National Park. The diverse landscape contrasts with Oldham's industrial and urban landscapes.
- 14.2 The purposes of designation for National Parks are to:
- conserve and enhance their natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage; and
  - promote public understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities.
- 14.3 National Parks protect landscapes and wildlife habitats, whilst also providing places where people live and work, and provide a focus for recreation and tourism. They also offer places of tranquillity.

#### Policy OL1 Consideration for the Peak District National Park

**Development within the planning boundary of Oldham Borough must ensure it does not conflict with the purposes of the Peak District National Park taking into account views into and out of the park and sensitive design into the wider landscape.**

**Development that is viewed as conflicting with the purposes of the national park will not be permitted.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 14.4 National planning policy applies great weight to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks and priority is given to the purpose of conservation.
- 14.5 The determination of planning applications within the part of Oldham falling within the Peak District National Park is undertaken by the Peak District National Park Authority. However, parts of Saddleworth may be considered to fall within its setting, although this is not defined within the Local Plan, and will be considered to contribute to the Peak District National Park's natural beauty. Therefore, the council has a duty to ensure care for the Peak District National Park.
- 14.6 Development proposals should, where relevant, also take into consideration the valued characteristics of the National Park, as referenced at paragraph 9.15 of the adopted core strategy ([Peak District National Park Core Strategy Development Plan Document, 2011](#)<sup>76</sup>), which link planning with the Peak Districts' Landscape Strategy.

Linked Local Plan Policies	n/a
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	n/a

<sup>76</sup> This document can be found at: <https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/planning/policies-and-guides/core-strategy>

## Oldham's Green Belt

14.7 The Green Belt is land which meets at least one of the following five purposes:

1. to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
2. to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
3. to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
4. to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
5. to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

14.8 Places for Everyone (PfE) proposes the revised Green Belt boundary for each of the nine Greater Manchester authorities included within the plan, including Oldham, and these will be incorporated into the Local Plan, following the adoption of PfE. The Local Plan does not address strategic Green Belt boundary revisions.

14.9 However, a 'tidy up' of minor boundaries of a technical mapping nature has been undertaken. The council is not proposing to allocate greenfield sites in the Green Belt for development within this plan. Appendix 8 sets out boundary revisions to the Green Belt proposed as part of this Local Plan. The revised Green Belt boundary will also be shown on the policies map.

### Policy OL2 Protecting and enhancing Oldham's Green Belt

**The openness and permanence of Oldham's Green Belt will be preserved.**

**Within the Green Belt, national planning policy will be applied including the refusal against inappropriate development except in very special circumstances.**

**Proposals for agricultural buildings constitutes appropriate development, however the council will have regard to the design, layout, and form of construction of any buildings to assess the suitability for agricultural purposes.**

**Proposals for the provision of appropriate facilities for uses including outdoor sports and recreation, as described in national planning policy, must preserve the openness of the Green Belt, and not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. Therefore, built development and associated infrastructure such as car parking, lighting and hardstanding must be kept to a minimum and be sensitively designed.**

**In assessing whether a proposed stable constitutes 'appropriate' development for sport and recreation in the Green Belt, the council will have regard to the design, layout, and form of construction of any buildings to assess the suitability for stabling purposes.**

**National planning policy allows for the limited infilling in villages within the Green Belt. Determining whether a proposed development is within a village will be assessed on a case-by-case basis having regard to the particular character, layout, and function of the settlement.**

**Similarly, whilst there is no set definition for 'infilling', the council would consider sites to comprise a small gap in an otherwise built-up frontage which consolidates**

**and relates well to the existing built form. The development of gaps which merge sites or buildings which are presently not spatially or visually well-related to the existing settlement would not be deemed to conform to the aim and purposes of the Green Belt.**

**The enhancement and positive use of Green Belt will be encouraged in line with national planning policy and PpE Policy JP-G10.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 14.10 National planning policy and supporting guidance sets out what types of development are not inappropriate within the Green Belt. These will be permitted where they also satisfy other relevant planning policies.
- 14.11 Inappropriate development is considered harmful to the Green Belt and will only be approved in 'Very Special Circumstances', which clearly demonstrate that the potential harm is outweighed by other considerations. 'Very Special Circumstances' will be judged on a case-by-case basis and whilst the council is sympathetic to personal circumstances care must be taken to ensure this test is passed. Applicants must clearly set out the level of harm including definitional harm, other harm to the Green Belt (openness, visual impact, Green Belt purposes), any other planning harm (such as highways or ecology). Any measures to reduce or mitigate the harm and the 'Very Special Circumstances' (i.e all the benefits) of the proposed development must also be clearly set out. The council will expect a detailed statement to be able to make an informed decision on whether the test is passed, and development permitted.
- 14.12 The General Permitted Development Order also allows some types of development without the need for planning permission. This applies to the Green Belt but does not usually apply where land within the Green Belt also falls within a conservation area.
- 14.13 The council will welcome proposals to enhance the Green Belt. Evidence has been gathered on Green Belt enhancement opportunities in relation to access; sport and recreation; biodiversity and wildlife corridors; and landscape and visual. These are set out in the Open Land Topic Paper however they do not cover the whole borough and they are not an exhaustive list. Examples of acceptable enhancements may focus on improving access and enjoyment of the Green Belt such as introducing local level Public Rights of Way to create linkages to recreation routes, upgrading public footpaths and the cycle network and promoting wildlife corridors and using the Green Belt to help mitigate flood risk. Oldham's Green Infrastructure Strategy also identifies enhancement opportunities.

Linked Local Plan Policies	OL2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-G10

## Policy OL3 Extensions and alterations to existing buildings within the Green Belt

**Extensions and alterations to existing buildings must not be disproportionate to the original building.**

**In considering whether extensions and/or alterations are disproportionate consideration will be given to the following:**

- 1. the size and scale of the extension / alteration should be subordinate to the original building. Where the building has previously been extended, the assessment will consider the cumulative impact of the existing and proposed extensions taken together;**
- 2. the design, including materials, colours and style must be sympathetic in keeping with the character of the original building, and as appropriate the surrounding vernacular; and**
- 3. where the individual or cumulative total volume exceeds more than 30% of the volume of the original building, approval is more unlikely to be granted.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 14.14 National planning policy allows for the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. The policy below is intended to help guide development proposals that require permission for extensions and alterations to existing buildings.
- 14.15 National planning policy defines original building as “A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was originally built.” Subordinate means of lesser importance / not equal to the original building.
- 14.16 The policy seeks to strike a balance between the needs of residents living in the Green Belt to adapt their properties, whilst protecting the purposes of the Green Belt around Oldham that give them their special character.
- 14.17 The council has previously informally used up to one third of the original building as a guide for what constitutes an acceptable extension / addition, and this may well be appropriate to most extensions / additions requiring permission. However, there have been proposals where permission has been granted within the borough which exceed one third and these have been found to be acceptable. Therefore, some flexibility has been built into the policy and anything that exceeds 30% would need to be justified to demonstrate that the proposals is proportionate or that very special circumstances apply.

Linked Local Plan Policies	OL1
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-G10

## Local Green Space

- 14.18 A number of areas have been identified as ‘Local Green Spaces’ (LGS) in line with national planning policy. Local Green Spaces are spaces that are important to local communities due to their proximity to the community and because they are demonstrably special and hold local significance due to beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, or richness of its wildlife.

### Policy OL4 Local Green Space

**The Local Green Spaces in Table OL1 will be identified on the Policies Map and will be protected from inappropriate development to ensure the significance of the Local Green Spaces can be protected and enhanced.**

**Table OL1: Local Green Spaces**

Local Green Spaces	
LGS 1 Royley Clough	LGS 2 Ferney Field Road
LGS 3 Foxdenton Hall Park	LGS 4 Crossley Bridge Playing Field
LGS 5 Moston Brook and Hole Bottom Clough	LGS 6 Simkin Way
LGS 7 Oldham Edge	LGS 8 Land at Greenacres
LGS 9 Thornley Brook	LGS 10 Stonebreaks
LGS 11 Dacres Hall	LGS 12 Wall Hill
LGS 13 Ryefields Drive	LGS 14 Stoneswood
LGS 15 Ainley Wood	LGS 16 Land at Summershades Lane
LGS 17 Rear of Elk Mill / Cotswold Drive	LGS 18 Sholver (Land between Pearly Bank and Longfellow Crescent)

**Development proposals will generally be deemed inappropriate. Exceptions to this include the following types of development, provided they do not substantially harm other qualities related to the Local Green Space:**



1. Small scale proposals that enhance recreational value such as appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation;
2. Appropriate facilities for cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments;
3. Proposals to enhance the historic significance, such as interpretation trails;
4. Buildings for agriculture and forestry;
5. The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
6. The replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
7. Engineering operations;
8. Local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Local Green Space location;
9. The re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;
10. Material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
11. Development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Inappropriate development will not be approved except in very special circumstances. When assessing development proposals, the council will consider the impact of development on the designated Local Green Space as a whole and its qualities which make it significant. There will be a presumption against development proposals that will substantially harm the significance of the Local Green Space.

### Reasoned Justification

- 14.19 The methodology and evidence for identifying LGS is set out in the [Local Green Space Assessment](#)<sup>77</sup>.
- 14.20 Most LGSs are currently designated Other Protected Open Land (OPOLs) in the adopted Joint DPD. OPOL is open land which is considered to be locally important because it helps preserve the distinctiveness of an area. As well as providing attractive settings, they provide other benefits, such as informal recreation and habitats for biodiversity, therefore helping to provide sustainable communities and help mitigate climate change. A review of OPOL has been undertaken against LGS criteria to ensure the policy approach is robust and up to date.

---

<sup>77</sup> This document can be found at:

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7043/local\\_green\\_space\\_assessment](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7043/local_green_space_assessment)



- 14.21 Some proposed LGS include boundary changes to the OPOL boundaries currently designated. A new LGS has been identified in Sholver. These were identified at Issues and Options stage. Appendix 9 shows the new LGS at Sholver and all of the existing OPOL boundaries to be either de-designated or designated as LGS, with or without boundary changes to date. Further, more detailed boundary changes may be made to ensure that boundaries are appropriate for the plan period.
- 14.22 Five OPOLs are proposed to be de-designated, meaning they would lose their status as protected open land under a Local Green Space policy / Other Protected Open Land policy. Three of these OPOLs (OPOL 9; OPOL 10 and OPOL 22) are proposed to be de-designated through Places for Everyone Joint DPD as they form part of strategic allocations for development and will form part of a masterplan for these sites overall (JP Allocation 14 Broadbent Moss; JP Allocation 12 Beal Valley and JP Allocation 16 Cowlshaw). Two OPOLs are proposed to be de-designated through the Local Plan (Rumbles Lane and Land South of Oaklands Road). Land South of Oaklands Road continues to be protected as a Green Corridor and Link under Policy N1.
- 14.23 Until such a time as PfE or the revised Local Plan is in place the OPOLs proposed for de-designation will continue to be designated as OPOL and protected through Policy 22 in the current adopted joint DPD.
- 14.24 Some enhancement opportunities have been identified in the review; however, these are not exhaustive. It should be noted that enhancement of LGS is not to be used to justify the harm caused to part of a LGS as a result of development proposals. Inappropriate development will only be permitted under very special circumstances consistent with national planning policy on Green Belt.
- 14.25 Planning applications must be supported by a statement explaining how the development proposal will impact on the significance of the LGS (i.e. the reason why it was designated), the level of harm and benefits that the proposal will deliver.
- 14.26 Harm will be assessed by determining the impact on the significance of the LGS. Substantial harm for example may include the loss of recreation facilities or the ability of people to use that recreation facility in the same way; the loss, reduction or severance of wildlife; and the reduction in the ability of the LGS to provide a tranquil space - for example because the site will become more urbanised. Less than substantial harm may involve minor developments, for example an extension to an existing building that does not affect the significance of the LGS.
- 14.27 The policy allows for small scale development to support the role of particular LGS, for example changing facilities for a cricket pitch.

Linked Local Plan Policies	N1
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JPA12, JPA14, JPA16

## Protecting Oldham's Dark Skies

- 14.28 The eastern part of the borough, particularly the area closest to the Peak District National Park, Kirklees and Calderdale are areas that currently offer darker skies within the borough. Dark skies contribute towards tranquillity and natural wildlife behaviour and is a key characteristic of the countryside.
- 14.29 Light pollution affects human health as well as wildlife through for example disturbing sleep patterns and is associated with poorer mental health. There is also little evidence that brightly lit areas reduce crime and road accidents.
- 14.30 CPRE, The Countryside Charity has produced interactive maps of light intrusion and dark skies and this is available on Mapping GM. As you would expect the denser the area in terms of development the brighter the level of night lights.

### Policy OL5 Protecting dark skies and tranquillity

**The borough's dark skies are an important part of Oldham's countryside character and will be protected. Development will be supported that protects existing dark skies, which will be shown on the policies map, and avoids light pollution:**

- 1. Within Dark Sky Category 1 there will be no permeant illumination;**
- 2. Within Dark Sky Category 2, external lighting will be strictly controlled; and**
- 3. Elsewhere good lighting management and design will be expected to minimise and where opportunities arise reduce light spillage and glare.**

**Proposals for any development involving outdoor lighting schemes will be expected to demonstrate as part of the planning application that:**

- a. The proposed lighting is the minimum required for security or working purposes;**
- b. Light spillage and glare are minimised, particularly in areas of open countryside or on the edge of settlements; and**
- c. There is no adverse impact on residential amenity, highway safety or to sites of nature conservation value.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 14.31 National planning policy states that decisions should ensure new development is appropriate for its location taking into account likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. Decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.
- 14.32 Oldham's dark skies (category 1 – blue areas) are the darkest parts of the borough. These areas also fall within important areas for nature conservation (South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation / Special Protection Area / Site of Biological

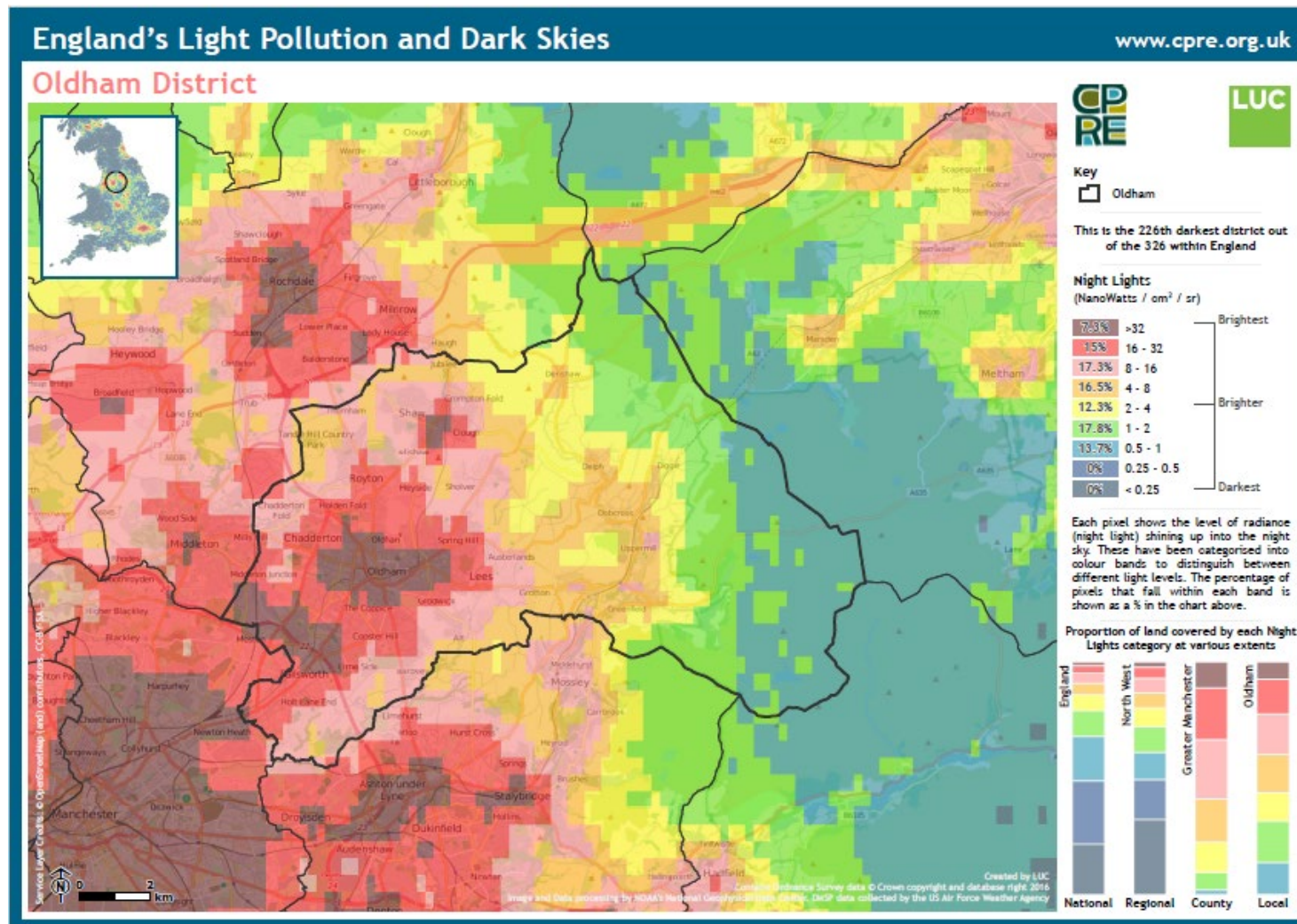
Interest), making the case for protection even more important. These dark skies should be protected, and opportunities taken across the borough to reduce light pollution.

14.33 The largest proportion of the borough falls within category 2 (green areas), which overlaps with Oldham's Green Belt and several nature designations. This area has limited light intrusion.

14.34 Opportunities should be taken to reduce light pollution, including for example considering the types of materials used and landscaping measures. Choosing appropriate street lighting can make a strong contribution to reducing light pollution and reducing energy consumption.

Linked Local Plan Policies	n/a
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	n/a

Figure OL1: Light Pollution and Dark Skies - Oldham<sup>78</sup>



<sup>78</sup> Source: Earth Observation Group, NOAA National Geophysical Data Center. Data processed by LUC on behalf of CPRE.

Natural Environment and Open Land Chapter Plan Objectives	PO5, PO6
Natural Environment and Open Land Chapter Monitoring Indicators	9, 15, 16

## 15. Addressing the Biodiversity Emergency

- 15.1 Across the country there has been a decline in land and freshwater based species since 1970 and a rapid change in the abundance of species and declines in key indicator species. These trends are likely to be mirrored in Greater Manchester and trends show that many bird species have declined, particularly red poll, skylarks, tree sparrows, snipe and grey partridge. There has been a significant decline in rabbits and red fox and regionally brown hare. There are likely to be declines in smaller insects and invertebrates.
- 15.2 This is caused by habitats being lost, destroyed, fragmented and becoming less diverse due to impact of development, climate change, pollution and invasive species.
- 15.3 We think about boosting the economy through providing land for employment, but nature also contributes in benefits to the economy and society, through its services that it provides such as flood risk mitigation, physical and mental health and air quality. An attractive green environment attracts and retains businesses.
- 15.4 The GMCA declared a biodiversity emergency in 2022, which will, like the climate emergency, ensure that biodiversity is taken seriously and both work streams complement one another.
- 15.5 For nature to recover, species need habitats that are larger, better connected and more complex. [The Greater Manchester pilot Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#)<sup>79</sup> (LNRS) looks at how we can reverse these declines and help nature to recover. The outcomes for nature in the strategy include woodlands, uplands, Urban Green Infrastructure, waterways and wetlands. Opportunity maps are available on Mapping GM. The Local Plan can help ensure opportunities are taken to help implement the LNRS. Biodiversity Net Gain is one key clear link as a delivery mechanism to implementing the LNRS but will not be the only tool.
- 15.6 Biodiversity Net Gain for new development is a key tool in halting and reversing the decline in nature in Greater Manchester, as recognised in the declaration of a biodiversity emergency in March 2022.

### Policy N1 Protecting Nature

**Sites designated for nature conservation and geodiversity will be protected from harm, in accordance with the following hierarchy, where the highest level of weight is given to international nature designations:**

- 1. Internationally designated sites including the South Pennine Moors Special Protection Areas for Birds (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and the Rochdale Canal SAC;**
- 2. Nationally designated sites including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) at Dark Peak, South Pennine Moors, Ladcastle and Den Quarries, Lowside Brickworks, Rochdale Canal and Standedge Road Cutting;**
- 3. Irreplaceable habitat including ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees and blanket bog;**

<sup>79</sup> This document can be found at: <https://gmgreencity.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/FINAL-Report-of-the-GM-LNRS-Pilot.pdf>

4. **Locally designated sites including Sites of Biological Importance (SBI's), taking into account their grade, Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites (RIGS) including at Glodwick Brickpit and Rocher Vale, Green Corridors and Local Nature Reserves including at Glodwick Lows; and**
5. **Sites that are not designated for nature but contain substantive nature conservation value of local significance including priority habitats and other protected species.**

**Avoiding harm includes protecting biodiversity on site, whilst also avoiding harmful impacts to biodiversity outside the development site from development.**

**Development will not be permitted if it would have an adverse impact on the protected species and habitats of the South Pennine Moors SAC, the Peak District Moors SPA and the South Pennine Moors Phase 2 SPA.**

**An ecological assessment must be submitted as part of the planning application where a site contains, adjoins or may impact on a site which contains nature as described in the above hierarchy.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 15.7 Where developers are required to assess the impact on an internationally designated site Natural England must be consulted and developers are encouraged to use Natural England's conservation advice for land-based protected sites.
- 15.8 Natural England is a statutory consultee on development proposals that might impact on SSSIs. Natural England has produced Impact Risk Zones, which can be viewed online, to give an initial indication of potential risks to SSSIs posed by development.
- 15.9 Irreplaceable habitat is defined in national planning policy as habitats which would be very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen. Some of these data sets such as ancient wood land and blanket bog can be seen on Mapping GM.
- 15.10 There are currently 38 Sites of Biological Importance within Oldham and the number and extent of SBIs has gradually increased since 1984. The existing SBIs within Oldham are shown on Mapping GM and a list of the current SBI's is shown in Appendix 10.
- 15.11 Where a new SBI, RIGS or Local Nature Reserve is proposed, the council will seek to designate these, where they do not conflict with other strategic objectives.
- 15.12 Green corridors are shown on the currently adopted policies map. The council is intending to review these feeding in the LNRS as it is prepared during 2024.
- 15.13 There can sometimes be an overlap between different levels of nature designations, for example Glodwick Lows Local Nature Reserve contains a SSSI and a RIGS. Proposals must ensure that they satisfy all relevant policy, with the highest level of nature designations taking priority.



- 15.14 Priority habitats are shown on Mapping GM and Natural England's Priority Habitats Inventory. Other protected species may be identified through the planning application process.
- 15.15 Mitigation measures can vary and will depend on the site and proposal. Mitigation measures may include setting appropriate buffer zones between development plots and biodiversity, the erection of screening barriers to protect from noise and dust, measures to reduce noise or light and managing recreational pressures. Buffer zones and other mitigation measures should seek to connect to the wider green infrastructure network.
- 15.16 Compensation may be secured through a planning condition or obligation covering the long-term management, monitoring and / or maintenance of the site.

Linked LP policies	N2
Relevant PfE Policies	JP-G5, JP-G9
Other relevant links	South Pennine Moors SAC/SPA Supplementary Planning Document (in preparation)

## Policy N2 Restoring Nature

**A net increase in biodiversity will be achieved across the borough and development will be expected to contribute towards this, as well as opportunities to implement the Local Nature Recovery Network.**

**Development, except where exempt, will only be permitted where a measurable Biodiversity Net Gain of a minimum of 10% is demonstrated, and secured for at least 30 years. Biodiversity net gain can be achieved on-site, off-site or through a combination of on-site and off-site measures.**

**In delivering this requirement, development proposals will be subject to the following principles:**

- 1. Use of the mitigation hierarchy – development proposals must demonstrate how they have adhered to the mitigation hierarchy and, specifically, how they have avoided and minimised loss, enhanced, and created biodiversity on the development site itself. Only then will compensation outside of the development site itself (in an off-site area) be acceptable.**
- 2. Quantification of biodiversity loss and gain – in applying the mitigation hierarchy, the latest [Defra metric<sup>80</sup>](#) must be used to quantify the biodiversity value of the development site pre-development (baseline), post-development and for any off-site areas proposed for compensation. The Biodiversity Metric will calculate the required minimum 10% uplift in biodiversity value, and a Biodiversity<sup>81</sup> Gain Plan and a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan must be submitted to set out the details of the proposed Biodiversity Net Gain and long-term management and monitoring of habitats.**

<sup>80</sup> This information can be found at:

<https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6049804846366720>

3. **Avoiding biodiversity loss that cannot be offset by compensation – development proposals must avoid impacts on irreplaceable biodiversity, which cannot be offset to achieve net gain.**

**Additionality – achieving off-site Biodiversity Net Gain is additional to other requirements relating to biodiversity.**

**In applying the above and where a development proposal is unable to deliver a net gain of at least 10% on the development site itself, the following principles apply to the selection off-site areas:**

- a. **Proximity to loss – there is an expectation that off-site areas will be located as close as possible to the development site, incentivised by the biodiversity metric's spatial risk multiplier, so that the area experiencing loss of biodiversity through development benefits from the compensation.**
- b. **Best biodiversity value – off-site areas should be chosen in line with local priorities for nature recovery, particularly those set out in the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy and in any plans for the local area.**
- c. **Legally secured - off-site areas will need to be legally secured for at least 30 years, either via Section 106 Agreements or Conservation Covenants.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 15.17 The [Greater Manchester 5 Year Environment Plan](#)<sup>82</sup> sets a priority to deliver net gain for all new development. Applicants should follow advice as set out in the [Greater Manchester BNG Guidance](#)<sup>83</sup> in addition to relevant regulations and legislation.
- 15.18 A flow diagram of how BNG could be applied across Greater Manchester is available on the council's website.
- 15.19 Planning applications for householders and change of use are currently not required to use the Biodiversity Metric to demonstrate net gain. Instead, applicants can provide a plan or statement for the measure(s) they will undertake. These measures could include nest boxes or the planting of a native tree species, should space allow. Alternatively, the applicant could consider donating to a third party to plant a tree such as the Woodland Trust, their local Wildlife Trust or City of Trees.
- 15.20 Should impacts on irreplaceable habitats be unavoidable, bespoke compensation for these impacts will need to be agreed with the LPA, outside of any BNG provision. Any mitigation and/or compensation requirements for "Habitats Sites", other statutory designated sites or irreplaceable habitats should be dealt with separately from biodiversity net gain provision.
- 15.21 The council is proactively working to ensure that there are options for off-site net gain to be delivered within Oldham close to where developments may be taking place, and

<sup>82</sup> This document can be found at: <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/five-year-environment-plan/>

<sup>83</sup> This document can be found at: [https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/4244/gmca-bng-guidance-update\\_250221-final-edited.pdf](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/4244/gmca-bng-guidance-update_250221-final-edited.pdf)

which may contribute towards the implementation of the Local Nature Recovery Network and enhancement of the Green Belt.

Linked LP policies	N1, IN2
Relevant PfE Policies	JP-G5, JP-G9

## Oldham's Green Infrastructure

- 15.22 Green Infrastructure is an umbrella term used to describe a range of assets such as open spaces, playing fields, woodland (including ancient woodland), residential gardens, sustainable drainage features, trees, green roofs and walls and 'blue infrastructure' such as river corridors, ponds and canals, which all offer habitats for biodiversity.
- 15.23 Over 75% of Oldham consists of Green Infrastructure. This includes agriculture (25%), semi-natural habitat (18%), private gardens (12%), deciduous woodland (6%) and amenity space (6%). Although Green Infrastructure is extensive, we need to manage it more effectively to better respond to the needs of people and nature, and ensure it is resilient to the changing climate.
- 15.24 The vision for Oldham's Green Infrastructure is that by 2037, Oldham will be a carbon neutral exemplar with a resilient, multifunctional Green Infrastructure network which brings multiple benefits to the natural and built environment and provides a solid foundation for the council's response to climate change. Oldham will be a greener and healthier place to live, work and visit.

### Policy N3 Enhancing Green Infrastructure through development

**New development must make an appropriate contribution to addressing local needs and opportunities for Green Infrastructure provision by retaining, enhancing and creating green spaces and corridors.**

**Applications for householder and changes of use are not required to meet the below criteria but must protect green infrastructure and should aim to enhance Green Infrastructure and incorporate measures to support biodiversity such as practical measures such as swift bricks, hedgehog highways, bat boxes or access tiles and living walls and provide a statement of the measures that will be incorporated.**

**Developments for 20 homes<sup>84</sup> or more or non-residential development of 1,000 square metres or more will be required to:**

- 1. enhance the landscape setting of the site by improving the character, appearance and condition of access corridors, gateways, settlement edges and landscape features, including historic environment assets where appropriate;**
- 2. enhance pedestrian and cycle connectivity between residential areas, town centres, schools and workplaces, outdoor sports, tourism and recreational**

<sup>84</sup> Developments of 20 homes and above or those of 1,000sqm and above are of an appropriate size and scale to accommodate meaningful green infrastructure as part of the development. A higher number of homes can justify the additional requirements for green infrastructure.

facilities, public transport services and the countryside around the site, as appropriate; and

3. provide for the production of food (e.g. allotments and community gardens) within residential or mixed use developments, where possible.

**Developments must:**

4. protect and improve the Green Infrastructure network, including the ecological network, on and around the site through providing or enhancing functional links or corridors between different Green Infrastructure assets;
5. provide new Green Infrastructure and/or introduce multifunctional use of existing green spaces in response to a site-specific assessment of need and Green Infrastructure opportunity;
6. demonstrate how existing trees and hedgerows and their health have been retained, wherever possible, through considerate careful siting and design, which avoids overshadowing of development;
7. aim for 20% tree cover, taking account of the retention of existing trees and the future canopy growth of trees to be planted as part of the landscape for the site. The exception to this is where the existing peatland habitat takes precedence or where sites already have 20% tree cover, which is being retained and on a case-by-case basis sites within centres;
8. use opportunities, where present, to create continuous and enlarged open space adjacent to the rivers and remove poor buildings that currently encroach up to the bank top of watercourses, where opportunities arise, providing ability to create a high-quality river corridor and Green Infrastructure asset; and
9. provide a long-term resourcing plan for the management and cyclical renewal of Green Infrastructure assets.

## Reasoned Justification

- 15.25 Development must have regard to the [Oldham Green Infrastructure Strategy](#)<sup>85</sup>, including the assessment of Green Infrastructure functions, needs and opportunities set out within the following seven priority themes:

1. thriving wildlife for Oldham;
2. carbon neutral Oldham;
3. healthy and active communities;
4. green access for all;
5. distinctive landscapes;
6. slowing the flow and a quality water environment; and
7. sustainable growth and green jobs.

---

<sup>85</sup> This document can be found at:

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2183/oldham\\_green\\_infrastructure\\_strategy](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2183/oldham_green_infrastructure_strategy)

- 15.26 Green Infrastructure assets can each serve one or more functions. Development should aim to incorporate Green Infrastructure assets that are multi-functional by supporting as many of the above themes as possible.
- 15.27 Development must take into consideration the policy relating to each of the above priority themes and place-based opportunities.
- 15.28 The Green Infrastructure Strategy provides an up-to-date assessment of current Green Infrastructure provision and opportunities using existing data sets. The spatial data sets produced within the Green Infrastructure Strategy, highlight opportunity areas aligned to local need and can be used to guide development decisions.
- 15.29 The Green Infrastructure Strategy proposes place-based opportunities including Nature Recovery Networks and these are shown on the [Green Infrastructure Network and Opportunity Map](#)<sup>86</sup>.
- 15.30 The Green Infrastructure Strategy sets out a step-by-step guide as to how to implement the strategy when considering a development proposal. An outline of the steps is set out below:

Step 1: List the GI opportunities and benefits that the proposed development could bring to Oldham

Step 2: Identify the GI assets within and near the proposed development.

Step 3a: Review the Local Plan and the evidence base.

Step 3b: Identify opportunities for meeting the GI Strategy Place Based Opportunities.

Step 4: Design for Green Infrastructure

Step 5: Carry out pre-application discussions with Oldham Council

Step 6: Submit planning application

- 15.31 Applicants must set out in a statement detail of how this policy has been incorporated into the design of proposals.
- 15.32 Development proposals must not sever the ecological network and must where possible extend or enhance this network.

---

<sup>86</sup> This map can be found at:

[https://maps.oldham.gov.uk/webmap/?initialDialog=layersDialog&mapName=Green\\_Infrastructure](https://maps.oldham.gov.uk/webmap/?initialDialog=layersDialog&mapName=Green_Infrastructure)

- 15.33 Where the scale of development would be too small to accommodate on-site Green Infrastructure provision, the council will, where reasonable, seek developer contributions either towards the improvement of existing green spaces or towards the provision of new Green Infrastructure in an area of need.
- 15.34 Where compensation is required for the loss of existing Green Infrastructure, then the provision of new or enhanced Green Infrastructure as required by the scale of the development should be in addition to the requirement for compensation.
- 15.35 The council will also seek developer contributions for the future management and maintenance of Green Infrastructure, where appropriate.
- 15.36 Development must aim for 20% canopy cover in accordance with the Canopy Cover of England's Towns and Cities.
- 15.37 Landscaping proposals including proposals for tree-lined streets should be integrated with the strategy for sustainable surface water management.
- 15.38 Planning applications must include an accurate survey of the location, size, condition and species of all trees on the site and whether the trees are used by bats or breeding birds. It is advised to not fell trees before the planning application is granted in order to fully consider the retention of trees and the policy aim.
- 15.39 Local authority consent must be obtained to carry out works to a tree with a TPO on it. Permission must also be obtained to fell or prune trees within conservation areas. Decisions are usually made within six weeks.
- 15.40 The council may take out Tree Preservation Orders on sites with significant tree cover as development proposals for sites emerge.
- 15.41 Where trees are to be retained on a development site, buildings must be located at a sufficient distance to preserve levels of amenity for future users of the property, particularly in the case of residential development, and rear gardens must not be unduly overshadowed. It will be a planning requirement, secured by condition, that adequate measures are taken to protect trees during construction.

Linked Local Plan Policies	N1, N2, N4, IN2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-G2, JP-G7, JP-G9

## Compensating Tree Loss

- 15.42 The National Tree Mapping dataset confirms that the average canopy cover across the borough is 13.4%. The Green Infrastructure Strategy recommends wards aim for 16% tree canopy cover. Therefore, it is important as well as planting new trees that existing trees are protected. Where they do need to be replaced this needs to contribute towards this target.

### Policy N4 Tree Replacement

The council will use a fixed number system, as has been used elsewhere to secure new trees in replacement for proposed tree removals. Tree replacement will only be acceptable where the council is satisfied that the applicant has demonstrated exception justification for their proposed tree removal(s). The number of replacement trees required will depend on the stem diameter of the tree proposed for removal as shown in Table N1 The requirement will apply to A and B category trees, category C trees will be replaced on a 1:1 basis.

**Table N1: A and B Category Tree Replacement Requirements**

Stem Diameter of tree proposed for removal	Number of replacement trees required
150-199mm	2
200-299mm	3
300-399mm	4
400-499mm	5
500-599mm	6
600-699mm	7
700-799mm	8
800mm+	9
Veteran/Ancient/Historic / Exceptional	CAVAT Evaluation

### Reasoned Justification

- 15.43 Where it is necessary to remove Veteran/Ancient/Historic or Exceptional trees a CAVAT (Capital Asset Valuation of Amenity Trees) valuation<sup>87</sup> will be applied, and that sum be paid as a commuted sum to the council for tree planting improvements across Oldham.
- 15.44 Exceptional trees could include rare, unusual, commemorative trees or trees with significant conservation or ecological value.

<sup>87</sup> <https://www.ltoa.org.uk/resources/cavat>



- 15.45 CAVAT provides a method for managing trees as public assets rather than liabilities. It is designed not only to be a strategic tool and aid to decision-making in relation to the tree stock as a whole, but also to be applicable to individual cases, where the value of a single tree needs to be expressed in monetary terms.
- 15.46 Section 4.5 of BS 5837:2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations' describes the different tree categories - Category A (trees of high quality); Category B (Trees of moderate quality); and Category C (Trees of low quality).
- 15.47 Replacement trees will be a minimum of 12-14cm girth trees (Containerised – bag-grown or root balled). Watering and maintenance must be included until trees are establishment in the landscape. Where replacement trees cannot be provided on site a contribution will need to be paid to the council. Trees will be planted and managed in accordance with BS8545 – Trees: form Nursery to Independence in the Landscape – Recommendations.
- 15.48 Species and locations for planting should be appropriate and agreed by the council's Arboricultural and Countryside Team.
- 15.49 Where an applicant has demonstrated that replacement trees cannot be accommodated within the development site the council will consider a monetary payment as part of a section 106 agreement so that the required trees can be planted on land nearby or where priorities are highest across Oldham. In these cases, the value per tree will be commensurate with the latest landscape institute figures for tree replacements (£412.00 – 2022).

Linked Local Plan Policies	N3, IN2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-G2, JP-G7, JP-G9

Addressing the Biodiversity Emergency Chapter Plan Objectives	PO5, PO6, PO7, PO8
Addressing the Biodiversity Emergency Chapter Monitoring Indicators	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9

## 16. Oldham's Historic Environment

- 16.1 Creating a Better Place seeks to ensure we are building quality homes; providing opportunities to learn and gain new skills; to grow local businesses and create jobs; and ensuring Oldham is the greenest borough. The historic environment can contribute towards each of these objectives.
- 16.2 Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to quality of life.
- 16.3 Oldham with its hugely significant industrial past is rich in history and heritage with both designated and non-designated assets. In particular, the clusters of mills contributing to Oldham's landscape character, giving the borough an exceptionally strong identity and sense of place.
- 16.4 The Local Plan sets out a positive strategy for heritage. Two areas that the Local Plan has focussed on is a strategy for the boroughs non-designated mills and an appraisal and management plan to enhance Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area with the aim of removing the conservation area from the 'at risk' register.
- 16.5 The borough of Oldham is characterised by rich and diverse heritage that plays an important part of Oldham's identity. Significant historic buildings, industrial townscapes, and landscapes amid the South Pennines, make up and provide a multitude of designated and non-designated heritage assets. Therefore, new development will be sought in a way that compliments and respects this rich history. Consisting of the historic buildings, conservation areas, parks and gardens, archaeology, waterways, areas of distinct local character and townscapes. The Local Plan seeks to proactively manage change and move forward, whilst reflecting the borough's capacity to preserve its irreplaceable heritage.

### Policy HE1 – The Historic Environment

**Development proposals that positively conserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their setting, will be supported by the council. In addition to fulfilling its statutory obligations, and working with partners we will:**

- 1. Secure the preservation and enhancement of Oldham's heritage assets;**
- 2. Promote and support heritage-led regeneration and development;**
- 3. Produce/update conservation area appraisals and management plans;**
- 4. Continue to enhance Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area with the aim of removing it from the 'at risk' register;**
- 5. Manage development proposals affecting conservation areas and ensure that elements which contribute to a conservation areas special character and appearance are preserved and enhanced;**
- 6. Seek to identify and acknowledge local/ non designated heritage assets;**
- 7. Work positively to help implement the Oldham Mills Strategy to safeguard the future of heritage assets at risk;**

- 8. Protect and enable restoration and appreciation of the canals; and**
- 9. Maximise opportunities to increase the understanding and interpretation of the borough's historic environment.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 16.6 As a result of Oldham's extensive and evolving past, the borough has a rich historic environment. Oldham's heritage can be traced back for nearly 10,000 years, with worked stone tools from the Mesolithic period found in the eastern part of the borough. The Bowl Barrow of Knarr Barn, provides important information on the diversity of beliefs and social organisations amongst early prehistoric communities, thus being worthy of protection as a scheduled monument. The further scheduled monument in Oldham is the Roman Fort of Castelshaw. This fort served as permanent bases for auxiliary units of the Roman Army and provides important information on the early occupation of the north of England.
- 16.7 Changes in the division of land in the 16<sup>th</sup> century resulted in the escalation of farming and their associated farm complexes, folds and workers cottages. However, over time land sizes thus profits reduced, pushing the production and sale of textiles. The emergence of independent yeoman clothiers saw the development of grander, wealthy clothier houses and by the mid 1700's rows of weavers' cottages to house the small communities of people dependent on the textile industry. Many significant examples of such are still seen across Saddleworth and are designated as listed buildings. Local market centres, such as Greenfield, Shaw and Delph were established and places such as Uppermill development on important trade routes. Many of which are now designated as conservation areas.
- 16.8 Through Industrialisation, a large number of water powered cotton and woollen mills were built on the rivers Irk and Irwell. With the development of steam power, resulting in large multi storey mills and associated terraced housing, to accommodate industrial workers, that had a major impact on the landscape across Oldham. Although many existing mills are designated heritage assets, the [Oldham Mills Strategy](#)<sup>88</sup> aims to safeguard the remaining mill stock that is non designated. The associated development of transport, such as canals and railways, had a significant impact on the industry and landscape of the district and are still evidenced across the borough. Including the listed Uppermill Viaduct and the historic canals. These assets should be protected, restored where needed and appreciated for the role they played.
- 16.9 In the late 1800's/ early 1900's Oldham Town Centre adopted a commercial and civic identity. A new market, civic buildings, banks, arcades, hotels and shops were built. However, the industry decline of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and economic depression led to unemployment and thus vacancy and degradation of these grand buildings.
- 16.10 Additionally, during Oldham's prosperity, middle class suburbs developed on the fringes of the historic core. Some of these around public parks with formal layouts, landscaping and structures such as the registered Alexandra Park and Garden and surrounding conservation area. Remaining large detached and semi-detached homes represent an early element of suburbanisation which helps to increase the understanding and interpretation of the borough's historic environment.

<sup>88</sup> This document can be found at:  
[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham\\_mills\\_strategy](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/2819/oldham_mills_strategy)

- 16.11 It is therefore essential that the most important elements of Oldham's historic environment are protected as positive assets whilst contributing to the ongoing growth of the borough. Therefore, change must come forward in a managed way and be informed by a proper understanding of the evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal significance of these heritage assets.
- 16.12 The [Planning \(Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas\) Act 1990](#)<sup>89</sup> sets out statutory duties and responsibilities in relation to designated heritage assets, their listing and protection. It also outlines the procedures for the designation and management of conservation areas. Part I deals with listed buildings and Part II deals with conservation areas. The act includes controls for the demolition, alteration or extension of buildings, objects, or structures of particular architectural or historic interest, as well as conservation areas.
- 16.13 In addition, the [Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979](#)<sup>90</sup> provides specific protection for monuments of national interest and [The Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953](#)<sup>91</sup> makes provision for the compilation of a register of gardens and other land (parks and gardens, and battlefields).
- 16.14 The Historic Environment Record (HER) is currently being updated and digitised by Greater Manchester Archaeology Advisory Service. Details of where this can be accessed will be added to the council's website when available.

Linked Local Plan Policies	HE2, HE3, HE4, HE5
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P2

## Policy HE2 Securing the Preservation and Enhancement of Oldham's Heritage Assets

**Development proposals will be supported which preserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings. The council will support opportunities to put heritage assets to viable sustainable uses consistent with their conservation and sensitive restoration.**

**Proposals will be assessed in line with national planning policy having regard to circumstances of the case. Proposals affecting a designated heritage asset (or an archaeological site of national importance) and its setting must identify the degree of harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset.**

**Any harm to designated heritage assets must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.**

**The council will take a proactive approach to secure the appropriate restoration or maintenance of heritage assets at risk, including enforcement action which includes compulsory purchase orders, urgent works notices, repair notices and dangerous structure notices, where appropriate.**

<sup>89</sup> This Act can be found at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/contents>

<sup>90</sup> This Act can be found at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1979/46/contents>

<sup>91</sup> This Act can be found at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Eliz2/1-2/49/contents>

**Development will be permitted where it is designed sympathetically having regard to the significance of the asset, its character, features and setting.**

**Development proposals affecting an archaeological site of less than national importance must conserve those elements which contribute to their significance in line with the importance of the remains. Where developments affecting such sites are acceptable in principle, the following approach must be followed:**

- 1. mitigation of damage will be ensured through the preservation of archaeological features in situ as a preferred solution; and**
- 2. in cases where the balanced judgement concludes preservation in situ is not justified and should not be pursued, it will be a requirement that they are appropriately excavated and recorded, before or during development. Subsequent analysis, publication and dissemination of the findings will be required to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and deposited with the Historic Environment Record.**

**Applications, which will affect an archaeological site of either less than national importance or of national importance, will require an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.**

**Proposals that would result in the total or partial loss of a heritage asset, will require the full recording of the heritage asset and the record and commentary deposited with the Local Planning Authority and the Historic Environment Record.**

**Applications affecting heritage assets and their setting should be fully justified and accompanied by full information necessary to assess the impact of the proposals on the heritage asset. Proposals that affect heritage assets will require the submission of a Heritage Statement (which may form part of a Design and Access Statement) proportionate to the asset's significance.**

**The statement should:**

- a. describe the significance of the asset, including its setting;**
- b. assess the impact / identified harm the proposal has on its significance; and**
- c. provide clear and convincing justification for the proposed works that outweigh any identified harm.**

## **Reasoned Justification**

16.15 The council will work supportively with applicants on proposals to ensure the continued use of heritage assets, particularly where they are 'at-risk' or vulnerable to ensure that Oldham's distinctive character is maintained, that heritage assets play a role in helping to meet our development needs and that heritage can be an asset for future generations to enjoy.

16.16 The council will take a proactive approach to secure the appropriate restoration or maintenance of heritage assets at risk, including enforcement action which includes compulsory purchase orders, urgent works notices, repair notices and dangerous structure notices, where appropriate. The owners of heritage assets are encouraged to be proactive in seeking grant funding opportunities.

- 16.17 The setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral. The council will support opportunities within new developments to enhance the setting of heritage assets for example removal or replacement of negative buildings with better design, introducing new views that add to public experience or improving public access to, or interpretation of, the asset and its setting. Applicants should follow guidance set out in [Historic England Good Practice Advice Planning Note 3 \(The Setting of Heritage Assets\)](#)<sup>92</sup>.
- 16.18 Significance is defined as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. The council recognises the valuable contributions that heritage assets make to the borough, therefore, a clear understanding of the significance of these assets should be presented as part of any planning application. [Historic England's Advice Note 12](#)<sup>93</sup> provides guidance on analysing significance in line with national planning policy.
- 16.19 National planning policy identifies the degree of harm (from a designated assets alteration, destruction, or from development within its setting) as either 'total loss', 'substantial harm' or 'less than substantial harm'. Within each category, the extent of harm may vary and must be clearly articulated and justified by the applicant. Appendix 11 expands further from the national planning policy to try and help towards a potential further understanding of the scale of harm that can be used to assess the degree of harm to an asset's significance.
- 16.20 In terms of public benefits these could be anything that flows from the proposed development and delivers economic, social and/or environmental objectives of a scale that would make a positive contribution to the local surrounding area in terms of tackling any local issues such as low income, health deprivation, skills attainment and employment levels as well as enhancement of the environment, having regard to strategic opportunities such as those identified in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy or the council's [Green Infrastructure Strategy](#)<sup>94</sup>.
- 16.21 A range of supporting evidence can be considered when considering heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. These can include Landscape Character Assessments, conservation area appraisals and management plans, urban design frameworks, masterplans and design codes.
- 16.22 When undertaking a Heritage Statement, the Historic Environment Record should be consulted as a minimum and the council would expect applicants to liaise with Greater Manchester Archaeology Advisory Service, in addition to any further available evidence and expertise. The council would expect to see which heritage assets and their settings are affected, a thorough understanding of the significance of the asset and its settings;

---

<sup>92</sup> This document can be found at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/>

<sup>93</sup> This document can be found at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/statements-heritage-significance-advice-note-12/>

<sup>94</sup> This document can be found at: [https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2183/oldham\\_green\\_infrastructure\\_strategy](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2183/oldham_green_infrastructure_strategy)

and how significance has been considered and reflected in any proposal to ensure harm is minimised and enhancement maximised.

- 16.23 Historic England maintains the Heritage at Risk register. The register identifies sites that are most at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development. The register is intended as a way to focus on the heritage assets that are at greatest risk and that offer the best opportunities for positive development.
- 16.24 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act provides the council with powers to intervene where heritage within the borough is at risk. Additionally, masterplans and development frameworks should look for opportunities to use vacant heritage assets and improve the condition where they are deteriorating.
- 16.25 Occasionally, a new, undesignated asset - usually archaeological - will be found in the course of investigating a site or preparing it for development. Further investigation is usually required to understand the significance of the heritage asset, particularly archaeological sites. Development proposals which may affect archaeological heritage assets shall be informed by sufficient evidence. Information on archaeology and the planning systems can be found in [Historic England's Advice Note 17 'Planning and Archaeology'](#)<sup>95</sup> (or any subsequent updates).
- 16.26 Where potential heritage assets have not been included on the HER, they will be assessed according to the criteria set out for local listing in Historic England's [Guidance Note 'Local Heritage Listing: Historic England Advice Note 7'](#)<sup>96</sup>, or subsequent national guidance.
- 16.27 Where proposals are likely to affect significant archaeological sites of known importance, or those that become apparent through the development management process, background research followed up by archaeological investigation will be required prior to their determination.

Linked Local Plan Policies	HE1, HE3, HE4, HE5
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P2

## Conservation Areas

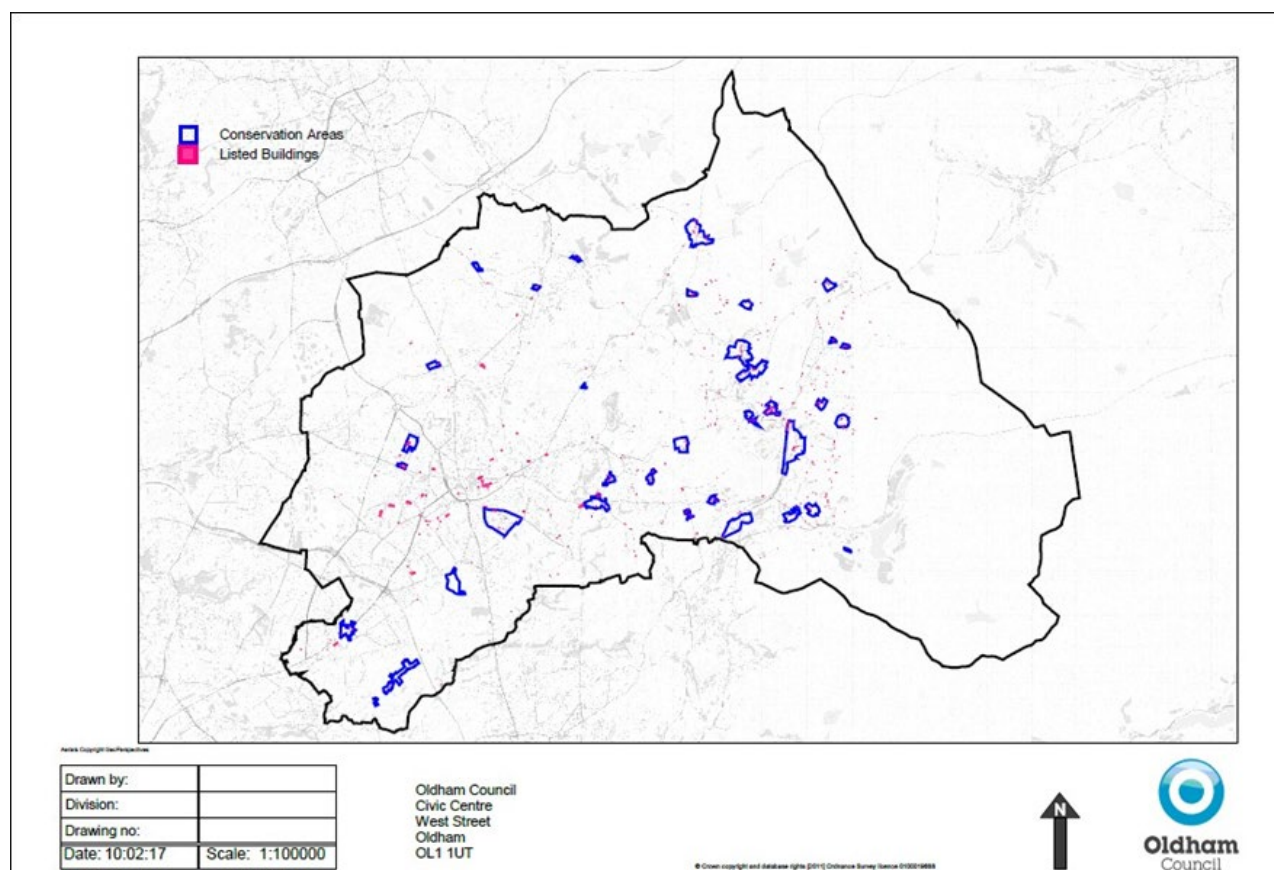
- 16.28 There are 36 conservation areas in the borough covering 250.79 hectares. The existing conservation areas were designated in the 1970s and 1980s and with the exception of Oldham Town Centre would benefit from updated appraisals and management plans, particularly as 20 conservation areas in the borough are 'vulnerable'. Management Plans will ensure that identified risks are appropriately managed to prevent further conservation areas from being identified on the 'at risk' register.
- 16.29 The existing conservation areas are shown on Figure HE1 below and will be shown on the policies map.

<sup>95</sup> This document can be found at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/planning-archaeology-advice-note-17>

<sup>96</sup> This document can be found at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7/>



Figure HE1: Oldham's Existing Conservation Areas



## Policy HE3 Development proposals affecting conservation areas

### Impact on conservation areas:

**Proposals affecting a conservation area should preserve or enhance those elements which contribute to its character and appearance especially any elements identified in Conservation Area Appraisals as making a positive contribution to the significance of that area.**

**Proposals that would result in the loss of a building or other element which make a positive contribution to the significance of the conservation area will be treated as substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) or less than substantial harm. Proposals leading to substantial harm will not be supported unless exceptional<sup>97</sup> circumstances apply. If the harm is less than substantial, this will be weighed against any public benefit that the same development might make.**

**Proposals within a conservation area or affecting the setting must:**

- 1. be of high quality, which respects and reflects the character and appearance of the conservation area and should be of appropriate scale, density, height, form, massing, layout, plot position, materials, colours, composition and detailed design. Imitation of earlier styles is not encouraged.**

<sup>97</sup> See national planning policy.

2. retain original building plots, where their relationship with the pattern of development and other plots makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area;
3. protect existing street patterns, open spaces, walls, railings, materials and other elements that are an integral part of the conservation area; and
4. carefully consider the consequent changes to a use of a building, including amongst others, delivery access, parking, and external services, such as condensing units. Changes that have a detrimental impact on the conservation area will not be permitted.

**Shopfronts, retail frontages and signage within conservation areas:**

5. New shopfronts must be in-keeping with the character and appearance of the host building and relate to the design of the upper parts of the facade;
6. New shopfronts within historic buildings must preserve those elements that contribute to the traditional character of the building including historic corbels, pilasters, fascias and stall risers, or seek to reinstate them where missing. Size, scale, elaborate or simple design and detailing, the use of correct materials and colour schemes must all be considered in making shopfronts acceptable;
7. Signage must be sensitively designed and integrated into the shopfront and streetscene;
8. Signage must not dominate the building façade and should relate to its character, scale and architectural features;
9. Proposals must avoid internally illuminated box fascia or projecting signs;
10. Shop signs must be located at fascia level and follow the pattern within the street;
11. The location of signage on non-retail buildings must be carefully considered so as to not harm the appearance of the building;
12. Opportunities must be taken to remove detracting elements of shopfronts and signage; and
13. Solid external security roller shutters will not be permitted unless the need for them can be robustly justified. Lattice grilles or internal roller shutters would be acceptable alternatives.

Applications affecting the character or appearance and / or the setting of a conservation area will be required to submit a Heritage Statement and have regard to any conservation area appraisals and management plans.

Applicants must take into account statutory provisions for the protection of trees.

## Reasoned Justification

- 16.30 The total loss of a building or element (for example open space) that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area would not be supported unless exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated, for example if the proposal allows an asset back into viable use or the loss of an asset that would better reveal or enhance another asset or the character, appearance and / or setting of the conservation area. A positive building or element may be listed or unlisted. Nearly all conservation areas within the borough have listed assets within them. Development proposals should seek to preserve the elements of the conservation area which make a positive contribution and should aim to enhance any neutral and negative contributions. There will be the presumption that only negative or neutral buildings or elements will be permitted for demolition where the public benefits outweigh the loss.
- 16.31 It is felt that some policies from the [Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Management Plan](#)<sup>98</sup> are applicable to many other conservation areas and therefore specific policies on shop fronts (for example a conservation area including a centre) and new development have been incorporated into the local plan. Solid external roller shutters will not be permitted unless the need for them can be robustly justified, for example through details of unreasonable increases in insurance costs.
- 16.32 Trees in conservation areas are covered by Section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act. Anyone wishing to carry out works to a tree in a conservation area must notify the local planning authority through a 'section 211 notice'. This may or may not result in a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) being made. Consent must be obtained, unless covered by exceptions, to carry out works to trees covered by a TPO from the council.
- 16.33 Development proposals should have regard to any future conservation areas appraisals and management plans.
- 16.34 The council may also designate further conservation areas, where justified by robust appraisals.

Linked Local Plan Policies	OTC2, HE1, HE2, HE4, HE5
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P2

## Oldham's Textile Mills

- 16.35 The Oldham Mills Strategy was commissioned by Oldham Council and Historic England in order to develop a positive strategy for the sustainable future of the textile mill stock across Oldham. This work complements Historic England's wider project Mills of the North.
- 16.36 The Oldham Mills Strategy identifies the non-designated mills across Oldham which are of particular landscape and heritage value and sets out a robust strategy to ensure their sustainable future, which considers their potential for future development focussing on residential and employment uses.

---

<sup>98</sup> This document can be found at:

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/1599/oldham\\_town\\_centre\\_conservation\\_area\\_appraisal\\_and\\_management\\_plan\\_caamp\\_supplementary\\_planning\\_document\\_spd](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/1599/oldham_town_centre_conservation_area_appraisal_and_management_plan_caamp_supplementary_planning_document_spd)

- 16.37 This is also part of our positive approach to making the most efficient use of brownfield land and existing buildings, reducing the need for additional pressure on greenfield sites and reducing our carbon footprint. The reuse of mills can add to local distinctiveness as part of place making, attract investment and help retain Oldham's strong identity and culture.

### Policy HE4 Oldham's Mills

**The council will proactively support, through planning decisions and in fulfilling its wider functions, proposals that establish a positive future for Oldham's Textile Mills through their reuse and repair. Development proposals affecting Oldham's mill stock will need to be supported by a robust assessment of viability, heritage significance and structural and building condition, in line with the findings of the Mill Strategy.**

**Proposals should retain those elements of the mill stock which contribute to the local identity and sense of place of Oldham and ensure they are appropriately conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Development proposals will be assessed having regard to the following criteria relevant to the identified level of priority and clusters contained within the Oldham Mills Strategy.**

#### High Priority Mills:

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

#### Medium Priority Mills:

**The council will actively encourage and support applications that include the retention and reuse of identified medium priority mills and associated buildings and structures. Development proposals that include the alteration, extension or demolition of any medium priority mills and their associated buildings will need to demonstrate with clear justification, in relation to the significance and setting of the asset and identified public benefits.**

#### Low Priority Mills:

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

**Table HE1: Mills Level of Priority**

Priority	Mills
High Priority Mills	<p>                     Ace Mill (Gorse Mill No.2);                      Bell Mill;                      Briar Mill;                      Cairo Mill;                      Earl Mill;                      Falcon Mill;                      Gorse Mill No.1;                      Heron Mill;                      Ivy Mill;                      Longrange Mill (Orme Mill);                      Majestic Mill (Lower Mill);                      Malta Mill;                      Marlborough (No.1) Mill;                      Osborne Mill;                      Ram Mill;                      Rasping Mill (Valley Mill);                      Raven Mill;                      Slackcote Mill;                      Swan Mill;                      Warth Mill (Wharf Mill); and                      Werneth Mill (Henley Street)                 </p>
Medium Priority Mills	<p>                     Adelaide Mill (Hartfold Old Works);                      Albert Mill;                      Austerlands Mill;                      Belgrave Mill;                      Delta Mill;                      Duke Mill;                      Elm Mill (Newby Mill);                      Fountain Mill;                      Gatehead Mill;                      Grape Mill;                      Greenfield Mills (Fletchers Mill);                      Haybottoms Mill;                      Jubilee Mill;                      Jubilee Mill (Fulling) (Woodbottom Mill); Knarr Mill;                      Lilac Mill;                      Lily Mill;                      Lumb Mill;                      Oak View Mills;                      Pingle Mill (Pringle Mill);                      Stockfield Mill;                      Thornham Mill;                      Vale Mill (Chamber Road);                      Vine Mill;                      Waterside Mill; and                      Wellington Mill (Knoll Mill)                 </p>
Low Priority Mills	<p>                     Alliance Mill;                      Bee Mill;                      Britannia Mill;                      Dob Lane End Mill;                 </p>

	Forge Mill; Greengate Mill; Kinders Lane Mill <sup>99</sup> ; Lane End Mill (Royton Lane Mill); Morton Mill; Paradise Mill; Prince of Wales Mill <sup>100</sup> ; Springfield Mill; Springfield Works; Vale Mill (Stockfield Road); Werneth Mill (Manchester Road); and Woodend Mill
--	---

### Mill Clusters:

The clustering of particular groups of mills provide a unique character to the local landscape and give Oldham an exceptionally strong sense of place and local distinctiveness. The council will support applications which retain mills and their associated buildings that have been identified as contributing to an identified cluster.

**Cluster 1 – Elm Mill, Lily Mill, Briar Mill, Lilac Mill and Duke Mill<sup>101</sup>;**

**Cluster 2 – Majestic Mill, Cairo Mill and Longrange Mill;**

**Cluster 3 – Manor Mill, Werneth Mill, Osborne Mill, Anchor Mill, Stockfield Mill and Hartford Works;**

**Cluster 4 – Chadderton Mill, Nile Mill, Raven Mill, Ace Mill, Gorse Mill and Ram Mill;**

**Cluster 5 – Vale Mill, Devon Mill, Heron Mill, Earl Mill and Bell Mill; and**

**Cluster 6 – Ivy Mill, Regent Mill and Marlborough Mill**

Development proposals which will detract or harm a mill cluster through demolition, interruption of key identified views or through inappropriate development by virtue of its design will not be supported unless there is a clear and convincing justification.

Proposals that would result in the total or partial loss of elements of Oldham's mill stock, will require the full recording of the heritage asset and the record and commentary deposited with the Local Planning Authority and the Historic Environment Record.

<sup>99</sup> Kinders Lane Mills scored medium on the heritage assessment and therefore planning applications for these mills must be accompanied by heritage statements proportionate to the heritage significance to provide clear justification for the proposed approach and applicants should consider incorporating social significance into the scheme.

<sup>100</sup> Prince of Wales Mill scored medium on the heritage assessment and therefore planning applications for this mill must be accompanied by a heritage statement proportionate to the heritage significance to provide clear justification for the proposed approach and applicants should consider incorporating social significance into the scheme.

<sup>101</sup> It is acknowledged that permission has been granted for the demolition of a number of mills within Cluster 1 and the latest position regarding this will be reflected at Publication Plan stage.



## Reasoned Justification

- 16.38 The non-designated mill stock forms a fundamental part of Oldham's historic environment and gives the landscape of the borough a clear distinctive character thereby contributing to local identity and sense of place. Proposals should retain those elements of the mill stock which contribute to the local identity and sense of place of Oldham and ensure they are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- 16.39 The Mills Strategy has provided the council and applicants with a policy framework, within which to assess proposals affecting textile mills. When valuing and assessing the viability of an individual mill for whatever purpose, it is essential to take into account market conditions prevailing at the date of assessment, location, individual physical characteristics, structural condition, tenure, planning restraints (if any) covenants and all other relevant factors. The appraisals and strategies contained within the Mills Strategy are, therefore, to be taken solely as a guide and each mill should be assessed individually on its own merits and on the market conditions at the time when decisions are being made about its future.
- 16.40 It should also be noted that many of the mills are in employment use and are likely to continue in employment use over the medium to long term. Therefore, proposals for alternative uses, whether this is conversion / refurbishment or redevelopment will need to ensure that policies relating to the loss of employment land are met.
- 16.41 The high priority mills are non-designated heritage assets. Planning applications relating to high priority mills must be accompanied by detailed Heritage Statements to provide clear justification for the approach adopted and should also consider how social significance of the mills could be incorporated into the scheme (for example this could include the delivery of public art within the scheme linked to the past use of the mill or reflecting the social significance of a mill within the public realm.). Proposals involving the full demolition or partial loss of important mill elements will need to be supported by robust evidence including detailed viability assessments and evidence of marketing to demonstrate the re-use of the mill for alternative uses is not viable. Building recording must be undertaken in connection with proposals involving the loss of key elements of high priority mill building fabric.
- 16.42 The medium priority mills are considered as non-designated heritage assets on a case by case basis as planning applications come forward for their redevelopment based upon their relative heritage and landscape value. Planning applications relating to medium priority mills must be accompanied by detailed Heritage Statements to provide clear justification for the approach adopted and should also consider how social significance of the mills could be incorporated into the scheme. The alteration, extension or demolition of any buildings contributing to the landscape or heritage interest will require clear justification in relation to the significance and setting of the asset. Building recording must undertaken in connection with proposals involving the loss of key elements of medium priority mill building fabric.
- 16.43 Low priority mills could be considered as non-designated heritage assets on a case by case basis as planning applications come forward for their redevelopment based upon their relative heritage and landscape value. Planning applications relating to low priority mills must be accompanied by Heritage Statements to provide justification for the approach taken. Building recording must be undertaken in connection with proposals involving the loss of key elements of low priority mill building fabric, where deemed appropriate.
- 16.44 The Landscape Overview highlights the contribution that the mill stock makes in defining the distinctive character of Oldham and demonstrates that Oldham's landscape character would be irreversibly changed if particular individual mills or



clusters of mills were demolished or significantly altered to the extent that the original mill character is permanently lost.

- 16.45 The mill names shown are as listed in the Public Gazetteer in the Mills Strategy. However, many people will know the mills by alternative mill names, and these are shown in brackets within the policy, where applicable. Sometimes a road name is also shown to clarify which mill this is where there are mills with the same name.
- 16.46 The policy focuses on non-designated mills, with the exception of the mill clusters. Mills that are listed (or in conservation areas) are already protected by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and covered by other planning policies.

Linked Local Plan Policies	E3, HE1, HE2, HE3, HE5
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P2

## Canals

- 16.47 The Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Rochdale Canal both pass through Oldham Borough. The canal network has played a significant part in the development and heritage of the settlements in Oldham since the 18th century. The conservation, development and improved access to Oldham's canal corridors will allow for the community and visitors to celebrate the unique industrial heritage of these historic manmade waterways. They also have recreational and ecological roles, contribute to the borough's local identity and enhance Oldham's tourism offer.

### Policy HE5 Canals

**The Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Rochdale Canal will be protected as non-designated heritage assets, which contribute to the borough's sense of place.**

**To ensure that the future restoration of the canals is enabled, development alongside the line of the canal and towpath shall not prevent its restoration, conservation and enhancement of the waterway's heritage and built environment. Green Infrastructure incorporating walking and cycling routes and heritage interpretation features along its line should be provided.**

**Proposed development that harms the setting or appearance of the canal will not be supported. Any new development should respect the canal frontage, ensuring active quality elevations, whilst respecting the unique character of the waterway and its associated heritage assets. Opportunities should be taken to improve the appearance and vitality of the canal side environment.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 16.48 The canal system of water transport played a vital role in the industrial revolution at a time when the road network was not able to transport mass goods from place to place.
- 16.49 This is especially evident at Failsworth Pole Conservation Area and Uppermill Conservation Area, where the Rochdale and Huddersfield Narrow canals respectively provide an important focal point alongside neighbouring historic former industrial buildings. The canals provide part of the setting, experience and communal value contributing to the sense of place for many of Oldham's textile mills. The canals contain

several heritage assets, including lock cottages, lock features, stone walls and bridges, some of which are designated.

16.50 As well as being important heritage assets, the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Rochdale Canal also yield other benefits to the borough, such as providing recreational routes for exercise and an associated tourism offer and ecological networks.

Linked Local Plan Policies	HE1
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P2

Oldham's Historic Environment Chapter Plan Objectives	PO6, PO9, PO10
Oldham's Historic Environment Chapter Monitoring Indicators	9, 10, 11, 12, 13

## 17. Creating a Better and Beautiful Oldham

- 17.1 National planning policy places great importance on design as a key aspect of sustainable development and an essential part of good planning. This is demonstrated through the [National Design Guide](#)<sup>102</sup> (NDG), and the [National Model Design Code](#)<sup>103</sup> (NMDC), which illustrate how well-designed places that are beautiful, healthy, greener, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.
- 17.2 The need for good design applies in all areas of the borough, whether in a sensitive village or countryside setting, on the periphery of Oldham, or within our town centres. Given the scale of development proposed in the borough – especially in and around Oldham Town Centre – greater emphasis needs to be placed on place-making, of which delivering high-quality design is an essential component.
- 17.3 Well-designed places have individual characteristics which work together to create their physical character and distinctiveness. The NDG identifies the following ten characteristics which contribute towards the cross-cutting themes for good design set out in national planning policy:
- **Context** – understanding the location of a development and how it relates to its surroundings.
  - **Identity** – that is attached to buildings and spaces which contributes to character and local distinctiveness.
  - **Built form** – the pattern of the built environment and how this contributes to local character and sense of place.
  - **Movement** – ensuring that places are accessible and easy to move around.
  - **Nature** – by ensuring that nature forms an integral part of well-designed places that contribute to quality of place and people's quality of life.
  - **Public spaces** – ensuring that these are safe, social and inclusive.
  - **Uses** – by creating sustainable places with a mix of uses that support everyday activities.
  - **Homes and Buildings** – by creating functional, healthy and sustainable homes and buildings.
  - **Resources** - The creation of efficient and resilient places and buildings that conserve natural resources, including land, water, energy and materials.
  - **Lifespan** – developments that are made to last and adaptable.
- 17.4 In line with national planning policy the council is committed to preparing The Oldham Code, which will be an innovative approach to delivering a borough-wide Design Code and Placemaking Guide. Once in place The Oldham Code will sit alongside the Local Plan to provide a local framework for design and clarity regarding what is expected in relation to the design-led approach set out within the policies within this chapter.
- 17.5 A design-led approach, emphasises the central role of design principles and considerations in shaping the development and regeneration of an area. It reflects a

---

<sup>102</sup> This document can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

<sup>103</sup> This document can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-model-design-code>

commitment to creating well-designed, attractive, and sustainable built environments. In relation to Oldham, the focus of this approach entails:

1. **Emphasis on Design Quality:** A design-led approach places a strong emphasis on the quality of the design of buildings, public spaces, and infrastructure. It encourages innovative and thoughtful design that enhances the overall aesthetics of an area.
2. **Community Engagement:** It often involves active engagement with local communities, stakeholders, and architects to gather input and ensure that development proposals align with the community's aspirations and needs.
3. **Sustainability:** Design-led policies frequently prioritise sustainability, encouraging the use of environmentally friendly materials, energy-efficient buildings, and green spaces. It promotes developments that are in harmony with the natural environment.
4. **Contextual Sensitivity:** The approach takes into account the local context, including architectural heritage, local culture, and urban character. New developments should fit harmoniously into the existing urban fabric.
5. **Place-Making:** A design-led approach seeks to create places, not just buildings. It focuses on creating attractive and functional public spaces that foster a sense of community and well-being.
6. **Innovation and Creativity:** It encourages innovative and creative design solutions that go beyond the minimum standards to create unique and memorable places.
7. **Flexibility and Adaptability:** Design-led policies may also promote flexibility and adaptability in design to accommodate future changes and growth in the community.
8. **Design Codes and Guidance:** Local authorities often provide design codes and design guidance to help developers and architects adhere to design-led principles. These documents outline the expectations for design quality and provide specific requirements and recommendations.
9. **Design Review Panels:** Some areas have design review panels consisting of experts who assess development proposals against design-led criteria and provide feedback to developers and planning authorities.

17.6 The goal of a design-led approach is to ensure that new development not only meets functional and regulatory requirements but also enhances the overall quality of life in a community. It aims to create places that are not only visually appealing but also sustainable, functional, and resilient, fostering a sense of identity and belonging among residents and visitors. This approach is important for shaping the physical and social fabric of urban and rural areas in England.

17.7 The design-led policies in this Local Plan, introduce a number of concepts and terms. For a brief definition of each concept and term please see the glossary.

## Policy D1 – A Design-Led Approach for Residential & Residential-Led Mixed-Use Development

### A design-led approach

**All residential and residential-led mixed-use development must make the best use of land by following a design led approach that optimises the capacity of sites.**

**As part of the design-led approach, applicants will be required to show how design has been considered as part of scheme development through the Design and Access Statement.**

**Development proposals, where applicable, should:**

#### **Layout, Orientation and Form**

- 1. deliver buildings and spaces that are appropriate, in terms of their form, massing and height, for the surrounding context and positively respond to local distinctiveness and character.**
- 2. encourage and facilitate active travel with convenient, safe and inclusive pedestrian and cycling routes.**
- 3. be based on a clear street hierarchy, with clearly defined public and private environments.**
- 4. ensure that site layout, orientation and design of individual dwellings and, where applicable, common spaces:**
  - a. provide privacy and adequate daylight for residents;**
  - b. are orientated to optimise opportunities for visual interest through a range of immediate and longer-range views;**
  - c. provide active frontages and positive relationships with the public realm to generate liveliness and interest;**
  - d. help reduce noise from common areas to individual dwellings; and**
  - e. help meet the challenges of a changing climate, by being orientated to take advantage of solar gain, for instance, wherever appropriate.**

#### **Quality and character**

- 5. respond to the existing character of a place by identifying the special and valued features and characteristics that are unique to the locality.**
- 6. be of high quality, with thorough consideration to the practicality of use, flexibility and building lifespan through the use of appropriate construction methods and attractive, robust materials.**

#### **Inclusive Design**

- 7. support the creation of inclusive neighbourhoods by embedding inclusive design principles within them.**

#### **Outside Space**

- 8. create communal outside amenity spaces for flats and maisonettes that:**
  - a. are designed to be easily accessed from all related dwellings;**
  - b. are located to be appreciated from the inside and provide natural surveillance;**

- c. are designed to support an appropriate balance of informal social activity and recreational opportunities for various age groups; and
  - d. meet the changing and diverse needs of different occupiers.
9. provide private amenity space for each dwelling that is usable with a balance of openness and protection, appropriate for its, orientation and the existing character of the area.
  10. ensure separation distances between dwellings are based upon a thorough analysis of the surrounding area and its character, with shorter distances in areas of higher density and a tight urban grain where appropriate.

### Usability and ongoing maintenance

11. ensure that:
  - a) footpaths, entrances and shared circulation spaces that are accessible and fit for purpose;
  - b) features are designed to allow for maintenance activities to be undertaken with ease; and
  - c) recycling and waste disposal, storage and any on site management facilities are convenient in their operation and location, and are designed to work effectively for residents, management and collection services.
12. ensure that where a single aspect dwelling is proposed, it should only be provided where it is considered a more appropriate design solution through the design-led approach than a dual aspect dwelling, and it can be demonstrated that it will have adequate passive ventilation, daylight and privacy, and avoid overheating.
13. in higher density development, ensure that the design of development provides sufficient daylight and sunlight to new and surrounding housing that is appropriate for its context, whilst avoiding overheating, minimising overshadowing and maximising the usability of outside amenity space.

### Reasoned Justification

- 17.8 The form and character of Oldham's buildings and spaces must be appropriate for their location, fit for purpose, respond to the changing needs of the people of Oldham, be inclusive, and make the best use the borough's finite supply of land. The efficient use of land requires the use of appropriate densities reflecting a sites location.
- 17.9 Adopting a design-led approach means ensuring that the development takes the most appropriate form for the site and that it is consistent with other relevant planning objectives and policies with a site's capacity based on an evaluation of the site's attributes, its surrounding context and its capacity for growth to determine the appropriate form of development for that site.

- 17.10 Developments that show a clear understanding of, and relationship with, the distinctive features of a place are more likely to be successful. These features include buildings, structures, open spaces, public realm and the underlying landscape. Development should be designed to respond to the special characteristics of these features. The council will provide further guidance on assessing and optimising site capacity through The Oldham Code.
- 17.11 With regards to separation distances between dwellings, developments that require a Design and Access Statement will be required to demonstrate an understanding of the existing area and its character. Enforcing a rigid approach to separation distances may result in harmful impacts on the character of existing areas and shorter distances could be acceptable in areas of existing high density or where higher density development is proposed. In all other aspects, separation distances should be based on a thorough understanding of the existing character of the area – for instance in areas where there is a tight urban grain (such as the many terraced streets in Oldham), it should not be expected that new dwellings should adopt a separation distance that is completely at odds with the character of the area.
- 17.12 Buildings should be of high-quality and enhance, activate and appropriately frame the public realm. Their massing, scale and layout should help make public spaces coherent and complement the existing streetscape and surrounding area. Creating a comfortable pedestrian environment with regards to levels of sunlight, shade, wind, and shelter from precipitation is important.
- 17.13 Maximising urban greening and creating open spaces provides attractive places for the people of Oldham to relax and play and helps make the borough more resilient to the effects of climate change. Landscaping and urban greening should be designed to ecologically enhance and, where possible, physically connect to the borough's Green Infrastructure network.
- 17.14 Development should create inclusive places that meet the needs of all potential users. Measures to design out crime and anti-social behaviour should be integral to development proposals and be considered early in the design process.
- 17.15 The design and layout of development should reduce the dominance of cars and support active travel (public transport, walking and cycling) and community interaction.
- 17.16 Shared and easily accessible storage space supporting separate collection of dry recyclables, food waste and other waste should be considered in the early design stages to help improve recycling rates, reduce smell, odour and vehicle movements, and improve street scene and community safety.
- 17.17 Areas should be sited and designed so that they can maintain an attractive street scene and protect visual amenity; and avoid creating an environmental nuisance or risk to human health. Reference should be made to [Buildings Regulations Approved Document H – Drainage and Waste Disposal \(section 6\)](#)<sup>104</sup> which sets out the minimum requirements. The council will also provide information relating to local arrangements for the collection of waste and recycling.
- 17.18 Buildings and spaces should be designed so that they can adapt to changing uses and demands now and in the future. Their lifespan and potential uses or requirements

---

<sup>104</sup> This [document can be found at:](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442889/BR_PDF_AD_H_2015.pdf)  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/442889/BR\\_PDF\\_AD\\_H\\_2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442889/BR_PDF_AD_H_2015.pdf)



should be carefully considered, creating buildings and spaces that are easy to maintain, and constructed of materials that are safe, robust and remain attractive over time.

Linked Local Plan Policies	D3, D4, D7, CO2, T2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-S2, JP-P1

## Policy D2 – A Design Led Approach to Non-Residential, Commercial and Employment Developments

### A design-led approach

**All non-residential, commercial and employment developments must make the best use of land by following a design led approach that optimises the capacity of sites.**

**As part of the design-led approach, applicants will be required to shown how design has been considered as part of scheme development through the Design & Access Statement.**

**Non-residential and commercial developments, including extensions and alterations to existing properties must be designed to be high quality, attractive, and make a positive contribution to the area in which they are located by meeting the following requirements, where appropriate:**

### Layout, Orientation and Form

- 1. promote accessibility and wayfinding for all travel modes through the layout of the movement network, landscape strategy and building design.**
- 2. ensure parking areas do not reduce building line continuity and/or create large gaps in street frontages to an unacceptable extent.**
- 3. reduce the scale of bulky buildings and bland elevations by breaking down building mass.**
- 4. provide privacy and adequate daylight for nearby residents.**

### Quality and character

- 5. be sympathetic to local character and/or the host property in terms of their layout, siting, height, massing, form, scale, detailing, materials and landscaping or, where appropriate, their heritage significance.**
- 6. meet functional requirements, whilst being architecturally appropriate, with interesting and visually attractive elevations which convey a sense of permanence.**
- 7. use high-quality materials and detailing for prominent and heavily used parts of the building.**

### Inclusive Design

- 8. should support the creation of inclusive neighbourhoods by embedding inclusive design principles within them.**

## Outside Space

9. locate parking, servicing and storage areas unobtrusively and reduce their visual impact through landscaping and boundary treatments.
10. be well landscaped, include provision of amenity areas for occupiers and visitors, and ensure good quality external works are coordinated across the site.

## Usability and ongoing maintenance

11. ensure that:
  - a) footpaths, entrances and shared circulation spaces are accessible and fit for purpose;
  - b) include features to support active travel and public transport, such as showers for staff and bike storage in accordance with Policy T3 and the Car Parking Standards in Appendix 12;
  - c) features are designed to allow maintenance activities, to be undertaken with ease;
  - d) recycling and waste disposal, storage and any on site management facilities are convenient in their operation and location, and designed to work effectively for business occupiers, management and collection services; and
  - e) there is no unacceptable negative effects upon the amenity of neighbouring land uses or the environment.

In addition, retail and commercial proposals will be supported where they:

12. respect, and where appropriate, enhance the character and setting of existing street frontages in terms of active frontage, plot widths, established building lines, shop-front proportion and rhythm.
13. consider advertisements, signage in accordance with Policy D5, and security measures so they are not overly prominent or dominant and contribute to the visual character and vitality of the streetscene.
14. ensure shop-fronts relate well to the building in which they are located in terms of proportion, elevation design, relationship to upper storeys, fascia height and width, mullion treatment, materials, and colour.
15. ensure that historic shopfronts are retained and/or restored unless their loss can be justified in accordance with Policy HE3.

## Reasoned Justification

- 17.19 This policy sets out specific design requirements in relation to non-residential and commercial developments, including, but not limited to, employment buildings, retail developments, leisure facilities, education facilities and community buildings. A designed approach to development will make an impact on the performance of the businesses and staff that occupy new commercial premises and support high quality development for buildings used by the public. It will send a strong message to those who visit or pass through Oldham how attractive a place it is to live, work and invest.
- 17.20 The form and character of Oldham's employment and business buildings and spaces must be appropriate for their location, fit for purpose, respond to the changing needs

of the people of Oldham, be inclusive, and make the best use the borough's finite supply of land.

- 17.21 Developments that show a clear understanding of, and relationship with, the distinctive features of a place are more likely to be successful. These features include buildings, structures, open spaces, public realm, and the underlying landscape. Development should be designed to respond to the special characteristics of these features. For instance, many of Oldham's existing employment sites reflect the historical nature of the borough by being located within existing residential areas, therefore new employment buildings should reflect the scale and character of the areas that they reside in and not impose utilitarian / industrial materials in areas where they are not prevalent.
- 17.22 Buildings should be of high-quality and enhance, activate and appropriately frame the public realm. Their massing, scale and layout should help make public spaces coherent and should complement the existing streetscape and surrounding area.
- 17.23 Maximising urban greening in new non-residential, commercial and industrial development will help provide attractive places for the people of Oldham to relax and helps make the borough more resilient to the effects of climate change. Landscaping and urban greening should be designed to ecologically enhance and, where possible, physically connect to the borough's green infrastructure network.
- 17.24 Development should create inclusive places that meet the needs of all potential users. Measures to design out crime and anti-social behaviour should be integral to development proposals and be considered early in the design process.
- 17.25 The design and layout of development of new non-residential, commercial and industrial development should reduce the dominance of cars and provide permeability to support active travel (public transport, walking and cycling) and community interaction.
- 17.26 Waste and recycling can cause amenity issues, particularly where adequate provision has not been made or where it has been poorly implemented. Provision of convenient space for storage of waste including recyclables and green waste awaiting collection, is essential.
- 17.27 Buildings and spaces should be designed so that they can adapt to changing uses and demands now and in the future. Their lifespan and potential uses or requirements should be carefully considered, creating buildings and spaces that are easy to maintain, and constructed of materials that are safe, robust and remain attractive over time.

Linked Local Plan Policies	HE1, HE3, D3, D4, CO2, T2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-S2, JP-P1

## Policy D3 - Design Scrutiny

**Applicants should make use of the design review process to assess and inform design options early in the planning process. Development proposals must have undergone at least one design review early on in their preparation before a planning application is made, or demonstrate that they have undergone a process of design scrutiny, if they:**

- 1. include a residential component that exceeds 50 dwellings (cumulatively or singularly); or**
- 2. have a density of 50 dwellings and above per hectare; or**
- 3. include a building that is more than 18m in height; or**
- 4. are a major development in a Conservation Area; or**
- 5. are a dwelling proposed under the exceptional design quality rule in national planning policy; or**
- 6. include the production of a site-wide urban design framework, masterplan and/or a design code.**

**The format of design reviews for any development should comply with the Design Council's<sup>105</sup> guidance on review principles, process and management.**

**In addition to the above, any development that includes 10 or more dwellings should use the Building for a Healthy Life tool at pre-application stage, submission stage and upon site completion, which will be secured via either a condition or where appropriate a requirement under a S106 Agreement.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 17.28 The requirements set out in Policy D3 will help ensure that good design is considered from the outset and with the local community.
- 17.29 There is a long established and independent Regional Design Review Panel that the council has used to test emerging proposals and to allow those promoting development to explain their design approach. The expert second opinion the Panel provides is invaluable and the conclusions it reaches are used to help inform officers' assessments of proposals and the Planning Committee in making decisions.
- 17.30 It is important that the Design Review process happens relatively early in the design process to help shape good quality proposals and avoid wasting time and money on poorly designed schemes.
- 17.31 Isolated dwellings located in the countryside under the "exceptional design quality" clause in national planning policy will also be expected to be submitted for Design Review in order to ensure that they deliver outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

---

<sup>105</sup> [Design Council - Guidance on Design Reviews, Principle & Practice](#)

Larger developments, or those of smaller scale but on a prominent site, will be referred to the Panel at the applicant's expense. The costs will be recovered through pre-application fees.

- 17.32 Community engagement and working with local people to drive design quality is an important part of the pre-application stage. As part of this process, the 'Building for a Healthy Life' toolkit is a useful tool for the council and local people to use to explore design options and assess development proposals.

Linked Local Plan Policies	HE3, D1, D2, D4, D7
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	n/a

### Policy D4 – Creating Better Views, Gateways and Taller Buildings

**Development that respects and improves the character, image and legibility of the borough will be supported, particularly along the main transport corridors and key gateway locations that are to be identified on the Policies Map.**

**There is to be an exceptional standard of design quality for buildings, spaces and environmental improvements at key gateway locations including, where appropriate, providing landmark or taller buildings and/or public art. Tall building designs must incorporate architectural and urban design principles that ensure visual harmony with the surrounding environment, taking into account local materials, building heights, and setbacks.**

**Tall and landmark buildings must be of outstanding and unique design quality and make a positive contribution to the skyline and image of Oldham.**

**The following criteria must be considered in the development of taller buildings in Oldham:**

- 1. Tall building developments must not obstruct or significantly impact important views, vistas, and panoramas. They should be designed in a way that respects and preserves the town's historical character and aesthetic qualities. Developments should not create a crowding effect around, obstruct, or appear too close, dominant or high in relation to, any significant heritage asset.**
- 2. Taller buildings should be located where there is good public transport accessibility and they will not harm the setting of heritage assets.**
- 3. Clusters of existing mill buildings with historical or cultural significance will be protected from any development that may adversely affect their character (in accordance with Policy HE4).**
- 4. In cases where new tall buildings are proposed within proximity to mill building clusters, design and architectural elements should be sympathetic to the surrounding historical context. The new developments should complement the existing structures and enhance the overall character of the area.**

- 5. Tall building developments should promote and facilitate the use of public transportation by providing convenient access to bus stops, tram stations, and railway stations.**
- 6. All tall buildings must adhere to sustainability standards and incorporate energy-efficient features, renewable energy sources, and green infrastructure to reduce environmental impact.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 17.33 This policy aims to retain and improve local character and create a legible, attractive, distinctive and successful built environment / townscape leaving visitors and residents with a positive experience of travelling in and around the borough. To help achieve this the council will support development of an exceptional quality and environmental improvements at higher profile locations.
- 17.34 The TCA and Capacity Study will establish important views, panoramas and vistas, particularly in relation to existing Mills, Mill Clusters (as outlined in the Mills Strategy) and other heritage assets in the borough. It will also establish areas where higher densities are appropriate, including maximum building heights.
- 17.35 It is also important to ensure that new development respects the existing historic character of the borough and key landmarks and views that help to make Oldham distinctive, this includes conserving and enhancing strategic views.
- 17.36 The Policies Map will show the main transport corridors, key gateway locations and strategic views, which will be informed by further evidence carried out to inform preparation of The Oldham Code, such as a townscape character assessment, and the Mills Strategy.
- 17.37 At a local level, views and vistas should be identified through a character and context appraisal and explained in an applicant's Design and Access Statement. Oldham historically has a relatively low-rise character, with the mills of Oldham, being the defining built characteristic, dominating the surrounding areas where they are located. The impact on heritage assets such as listed buildings, conservation areas and their settings will be important design considerations. The Oldham Townscape Character Assessment will look to identify locations that have the potential to accommodate taller, landmark buildings and these will be identified on the Policies Map. In all cases, applications for taller buildings must submit visual impact assessments, detailed photo-visualisations and, where appropriate, micro-climatic studies of the proposals. This helps to determine an appropriate height and allow the effects of the development to be properly assessed.

Linked Local Plan Policies	HE4
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	n/a

## Policy D5 – Improving the Quality of Advertisements and Signage in Oldham

**Advertisements and signage need to be well designed and managed to ensure they do not have a negative impact on buildings or their surroundings, quality of life or public safety. To ensure this, advertisements and signage will be supported where they:**

- 1. Are appropriate, having regard to character and appearance of the area, site and any architectural features of the host building, in terms of siting, location, design, size, scale, number, colour and method of illumination;**
- 2. would not be the dominant feature of any location, leading to an excessive, visually cluttered or overbearing appearance;**
- 3. do not contribute to an unsightly proliferation, commercialisation, or clutter of signage in the vicinity;**
- 4. do not interfere with footpath or highway safety, highway management regimes, block routes, cause light pollution or cause any other safety hazard;**
- 5. ensure they do not have a negative effect on the living conditions of nearby residents; and**
- 6. do not harm the significance of any listed buildings, conservation areas, or other designated heritage assets in accordance with the heritage policies.**

### Reasoned Justification

17.38 The policy aims to set clear criteria to enable adverts to be placed in the right places without detriment to the amenity of the surrounding area. The policy recognises the benefits of displaying advertisements whilst protecting the built and natural environment and public health and safety.

17.39 The borough has a mixture of different places from town centres to rural communities and countryside. The type of advertisements prevalent in these areas can vary greatly but often the concerns remain the same, to protect visual amenity and highway safety. However, there are also key differences between what may be accepted in a town centre and what will be appropriate in a rural settlement. Applicants should be aware of this when considering aspects such as scale and illumination.

17.40 Where advertisements are displayed on buildings, they should complement the facade and must not obscure architectural features. On buildings with heritage value this will be particularly critical where features contribute to heritage significance. Some commercial areas are set within places that contribute to the distinctive character of the borough, such as the predominantly Georgian townscape of Greenfield, Diggle, Delph and Uppermill and the historic character of Oldham Town Centre. The design of advertisements should not detract from the heritage value of these areas and where possible should be used as an opportunity to enhance their distinctive character and sense of place.

17.41 Applications for advertisements in areas where there are already a high number displayed will be considered in relation to existing advertisements, or signage for the



same business. Where the need for additional controls over advertisements in particular areas can be demonstrated, for example through conservation area appraisals or neighbourhood plans, the council may consider the introduction of Areas of Special Control of Advertisements, where appropriate.

Linked Local Plan Policies	C1, C4, OTC1, HE1, HE2, D2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	n/a

## Policy D6 – Creating a Better Public Realm in Oldham

**All development proposals that include the creation of new public realm should where applicable:**

- 1. ensure the public realm is well-designed, safe, accessible, inclusive, easy to understand, well-connected and related to the local and historic context;**
- 2. lighting, including for advertisements, should be carefully considered and well-designed in order to minimise intrusive lighting infrastructure and reduce light pollution;**
- 3. maximise the contribution that the public realm makes to encourage active travel and ensure its design discourages travel by car and excessive on-street parking. The priority modes of travel for the area should be identified and catered for, as appropriate. Desire lines for people walking and cycling should be a particular focus, including the placement of street crossings, which should be regular, convenient and accessible;**
- 4. be based on an understanding of how the public realm in an area functions and creates a sense of place, during different times of the day and night, days of the week and times of the year;**
- 5. an understanding of how people use the public realm, and the types, location and relationship between public spaces in an area, identifying where there are deficits for certain activities, or barriers to movement that create severance for pedestrians and cyclists;**
- 6. ensure buildings are of a design that activates and defines the public realm and provides natural surveillance;**
- 7. ensure appropriate management and maintenance arrangements are in place for the public realm;**
- 8. ensure that appropriate shade, shelter, seating and, where possible, areas of direct sunlight are provided, with other microclimatic considerations, including temperature and wind, taken into account in order to encourage people to spend time in a place;**
- 9. Avoid the introduction of unnecessary street furniture and ensure that its design and location complements the use and function of the space;**

- 10. create an engaging public realm for people of all ages, with opportunities for social activities, formal and informal play and social interaction during the daytime, evening and at night; and**
- 11. ensure that any on-street parking is designed so that it is not dominant or continuous, and that there is space for green infrastructure as well as cycle parking in the carriageway. Parking should not obstruct pedestrian desire lines.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 17.42 The public realm includes all the publicly accessible space between buildings, whether public or privately owned, from alleyways and streets to squares and open spaces.
- 17.43 Public realm has a significant influence on quality of life because it affects people's sense of place, security and belonging, as well as having an influence on a range of health and social factors. For this reason, the public realm, and the buildings that frame those spaces, should be attractive, accessible, designed for people and contribute to the highest possible standards of comfort, good acoustic design, security and ease of movement. Higher levels of comfort should be sought in places where people will wish to sit, play, relax, meet, and dwell outside compared to other parts of the public realm that are primarily used for movement.
- 17.44 The public realm should be seen as a series of connected routes and spaces that help to define the character of a place. The specific balance between the different functions of any one space, such as its place-based activities, its function to facilitate movement and its ability to accommodate different uses of the kerbside, should be at the heart of how the space is designed and managed. The Streets for All Approach explains how the design and management of streets can support a wide range of activities in the public realm as well as encourage and facilitate a shift to active travel.
- 17.45 Places should be distinctive, attractive and of the highest quality, allowing people to meet, congregate and socialise, as well as providing opportunity for quiet enjoyment. Public realm is valuable for Oldham's cultural activity, providing a stage for informal and everyday culture and for organised cultural activity. The opportunity to incorporate these uses should be identified and facilitated through community engagement, careful design and good acoustic design. Careful consideration is needed of the benefits of using the public realm for particular events and the impact of the events on the use and enjoyment of the space by the public.
- 17.46 Legibility and signposting make an important contribution to whether people feel comfortable in a place and are able to understand it and navigate their way around.
- 17.47 The effective management and ongoing maintenance of public realm should be a key consideration in its design and secured through the planning system where appropriate. Whether publicly or privately owned, public realm should be open, free to use and offer the highest level of public access. These spaces should only have rules restricting the behaviour of the public that are considered essential for safe management of the space.
- 17.48 The lighting of the public realm needs careful consideration to ensure it is appropriate to address safety and security issues and make night-time activity areas and access routes welcoming and safe, while also minimising light pollution.
- 17.49 Opportunities should be identified by applicants for the meanwhile (temporary) use of phased development sites to create attractive public realm. Parameters for any

meanwhile use, particularly its longevity and associated obligations, should be established from the outset and agreed by all parties. Whilst the creation of temporary public realm makes the best use of land and provides visual, environmental and health benefits to the local community, planning permission for more permanent uses is still required.

Linked Local Plan Policies	OTC3, T2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P1, JP-C4

## Policy D7 - Development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse

**Proposals within the residential curtilage of a dwellinghouse for extensions, alterations, new outbuildings or structures, annexe accommodation boundary treatments and hard surfacing, and which require planning permission, will only be supported where they meet the relevant criteria set out below.**

### Extensions, alterations and outbuildings/structures

**Extensions and alterations to existing dwellings, or the construction of ancillary outbuildings or structures within the residential curtilage will be supported only if, taking into account any previous development to the original building or within its curtilage, they meet all of the following criteria:**

- 1. the resulting development is in keeping with the character and appearance of, and is subordinate to, the original dwelling and surrounding properties, and the wider setting;**
- 2. the resulting development would not have a significantly adverse effect on the amenities of nearby residential properties, or the future occupiers of the dwellinghouse;**
- 3. suitable provision is included for access and parking; and**
- 4. where the building was originally constructed for a non-residential purpose e.g. agricultural, religious or industrial use, the resulting development would be of a limited scale consistent with the retention of the architectural and functional character of the original building.**

### Annexe accommodation

**The provision of, or change of use to, residential annexe accommodation will be supported where it is for occupation by a person dependent upon an occupant of the main dwellinghouse, and where all of the criteria for extensions, alterations and incidental outbuildings or structures, set out above, are met. Annexe accommodation must be closely related physically to, and functionally dependent upon, the main dwellinghouse.**

### Replacement Dwellings

**Proposals for replacement dwellings will be supported where all of the following criteria are met:**

1. the existing dwelling does not have recognised special architectural or historic value, or local character (by being nationally or locally listed);
2. the development will not adversely affect the existing amenities of nearby residential properties or the future occupiers of the dwellinghouse;
3. the replacement dwelling would not be significantly larger than the existing dwelling and is in keeping with the scale, character and appearance of its surroundings.

#### Boundary treatments and hard surfacing

**The provision of a fence, wall, gate or means of enclosure and hard surfaced areas will only be supported where the first three criteria for 'Extensions, alterations and outbuildings/structures', set out above, are met. Particular regard will be given to the loss of existing soft landscaping and the prevailing character of boundary treatments in assessing the impacts of the proposed development.**

### Reasoned Justification

17.50 Restricting the size of new development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse will help maintain the following:

- the character and appearance of the original buildings and their surroundings;
- the character of a variety of dwelling sizes; and
- a range of dwelling sizes and types to enable a diverse and inclusive community in the countryside.

17.51 As a general guide:

- subordinate and small-scale extensions/outbuildings should not increase the size of the original dwelling by more than 30% (notwithstanding permitted development rights); and
- replacement dwellings should not be significantly larger (i.e. more than 30%) than the existing dwelling.

17.52 The increase in size of the original or existing dwelling will generally be determined by assessing the net increase in floorspace (measured externally). In cases where the increase proposed involves an increase in the overall building height, the net increase in volume (measured externally), will also be taken in to account. This assessment will not include any allowance or credit from the demolition of existing detached buildings or structures. If planning permission is granted, planning obligations/conditions may be applied to remove permitted development rights where necessary.

17.53 For the purposes of this policy only, a dwellinghouse is a self-contained building used as a single unit of residential accommodation, usually housing a single household, and will include a house, bungalow or building previously converted into a single unit of residential accommodation. The 'original dwelling' is the dwelling as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after this date, as it was originally built. All outbuildings or structures within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse which are built after the construction of the original dwelling, will be treated as being an extension to the original building.

17.54 Residential annexes can provide suitable supported living accommodation that enables older people to retain a degree of independence, whilst still living in their family setting. Annexe accommodation can also support larger families where children live at home for longer resulting in a need for additional living accommodation associated with an existing dwelling. Annexe accommodation should only be provided for a person

dependant upon on an occupant of the main dwellinghouse, for example, a close relative who is elderly or has medical needs provided by the occupier of the main dwelling.

17.55 Annexe accommodation should be limited in size to provide for the basic needs of the dependant person, remain subordinate to the main dwelling, and normally include only one bedroom. It should be designed to be closely related physically to, and functionally dependant upon, the main dwellinghouse. Where the council approves annexe accommodation, a condition will normally be attached to a planning permission to restrict its use to ancillary accommodation. Where an annexe would comprise self-contained living accommodation which would otherwise conflict with the development plan, the council will require the applicant to enter into a Section 106 legal agreement under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, to prevent the severance of the annexe from the main dwelling, and/or limiting the occupation to dependent relative(s). This will prevent the sub-letting of either property and ensure that such accommodation is required to meet a genuine family need.

17.56 The assessment of whether a development is in keeping with the character and appearance of, and is subordinate to, the original dwelling and surrounding properties, and the wider setting, will have particular regard to the design, scale, height, massing, material finishes, visual appearance and character of buildings, and the prevailing layout and landscaping of the development.

Linked Local Plan Policies	D1
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	n/a
Creating a Better and Beautiful Oldham Chapter Plan Objectives	PO1, PO9
Creating a Better and Beautiful Oldham Chapter Monitoring Indicators	9, 14

## 18. Creating a Sustainable, Active, Accessible Network for Oldham

- 18.1 [Oldham's Transport Strategy and Delivery Plan](#)<sup>106</sup> sets the strategic direction for travel and mobility within Oldham, identifying transport requirements that align with our future growth needs and in response to changing travel technologies.
- 18.2 It reflects the [Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040](#)<sup>107</sup> which sets out the long-term vision for how the transport system needs to change across Greater Manchester and the key priorities for achieving this, including reference to:
- the “Right-Mix” ambition for at least 50% of all journeys to be made by active travel and public transport by 2040;
  - details of the Greater Manchester Mayor’s ‘Our Network’ plan to create an integrated, modern and accessible transport network;
  - an increased emphasis on the importance of cycling and walking; and
  - the climate emergency declared by GMCA and all ten councils; and the development of the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan.
- 18.3 As set out in Oldham’s Transport Strategy, planning for transport that is suitable for the future requires a balance of healthier travel behaviours and reducing harmful transport emissions. The Strategy is structured around six principal transport ambitions which have a focus on:
- Healthy Oldham: providing for healthier active travel choices through, for example, improving walking and cycling routes and facilities to enhance connections across our neighbourhood, the borough and beyond;
  - Safe Oldham: improving road and travel safety;
  - Thriving Oldham: supporting Greater Manchester’s ambitions to grow economically and connecting our communities to services and opportunities across the borough and beyond;
  - Clean Oldham: improving air quality and supporting Greater Manchester’s ambitions for becoming carbon neutral by 2038;
  - Connected Oldham: prioritising the maintenance of highways, footways and Public Rights of Way; and
  - Accessible Oldham: improving access to public transport and active travel reflecting its importance for reducing deprivation whilst supporting our communities.
- 18.4 The Oldham Local Plan will help deliver a transport system that enables and encourages sustainable and active travel choices, provides good accessibility for the borough’s population to jobs and services, and supports a healthy environment. In particular, through its policies the Local Plan will support delivery of the following priorities:
- Facilitating the delivery of the Bee Network, through:
    - the expansion and improvements to the Metrolink network;

---

<sup>106</sup> This document can be found at:

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7693/oldham\\_transport\\_strategy\\_and\\_delivery\\_plan](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7693/oldham_transport_strategy_and_delivery_plan)

<sup>107</sup> This document can be found at: <https://tfgm.com/2040-transport-strategy>

- In the form of active travel and associated cycle hire and infrastructure;
  - Bus Priority Measures and Improvements on the Key Route Network (KRN);
  - Creating more accessible and inclusive district and town centres for cyclists and pedestrians; and
  - Creating more accessible and inclusive employment areas for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Delivering maintenance and enhancement schemes that prioritise improvements to the Bee Network for active travel and public transport.
  - Continuing to support the efforts to deliver bus improvements and access improvements to existing Metrolink/Network Rail stations to ensure that they are more inclusive and accessible to all users now and in the future.
  - Safeguarding land for future strategic transport projects where appropriate, as identified, in the emerging Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and any subsequent updates.
- 18.5 Creating a better place means that in Oldham, everyone will be able to have the choice to travel by active modes of travel for journeys of less than 2km. For journeys further afield the council will continue to work with stakeholders and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) as the Bee Network expands to include buses and Metrolink in addition to the active travel modes. The continued delivery of the Bee Network will encourage much higher levels of both walking and cycling and help to address low levels of physical activity and promoting mental wellbeing.
- 18.6 The policies contained within this chapter are intended to promote the role of streets not as a highway, but as a place. TfGM are currently working on their Streets for All Strategy which will provide strategic guidance and design advice on how streets should be designed across Greater Manchester, depending on their role. The role of car parking on the design of streets is also important. As the density of areas increase, the need for car parking decreases, thus creating more walkable communities. The Oldham Code will provide more detailed guidance on street typologies and car parking as it develops in order to create better streets in Oldham.

### Policy T1 – Delivering Oldham’s Transport Priorities

**In order to ensure the Local Plan effectively supports delivery of the priorities set out in the Transport Strategy new development should:**

- 1. Facilitate and encourage walking and cycling to key points of interest, through protecting the amenity and safety of the public realm, avoiding street clutter and other unnecessary obstructions and structures, making specific provision for people with all disabilities, and maintaining and improving the Public Rights of Way network, in accordance with the Streets for All guidance.**
- 2. Deliver a co-ordinated approach, through new development design and retrospective modifications, to reduce road casualties, improve highway safety and address traffic congestion, including through the promotion of 20mph limits and zones where appropriate.**



3. **Require any necessary transport infrastructure, proposed as part of a development, to be in place before first occupation of that phase, or an agreed mechanism put in place to ensure that it will be delivered to the required standards and timescale agreed by the council and its partners; and**
4. **Seek developer contributions (where appropriate) and safeguarding land (including Standedge Tunnels, Diggle Station and any land required for future Quality Bus Transit and Metrolink expansion) towards the provision or improvement of highway and public transport schemes in accordance with identified council infrastructure priorities as in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).**

## Reasoned Justification

- 18.7 Transport planning and investment can play a significant role in delivering a healthy borough in three primary ways. Firstly, through encouraging active travel such as walking and cycling, with the significant direct health benefits that are derived from physical exercise; secondly, through making it easier for people to get to services they need for their personal well-being and the things that will help them live healthier lives; and thirdly, through designing a safer, more accessible and more environmentally sustainable transport system.
- 18.8 All of this will be an essential part of delivering sustainable development in Oldham, supporting economic growth and promoting social inclusion whilst minimising environmental impacts. In particular, the GM target of carbon neutrality by 2038 will only be achieved if there is a major reduction in emissions from the transport sector.
- 18.9 Oldham will continue to work with stakeholders and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) to remove barriers to active travel (walking and cycling) and encourage walking and cycling as sustainable and active modes. The continued delivery of the Bee Network will encourage much higher levels of both walking and cycling and help to address low levels of physical activity, which will in turn help to tackle increasing levels of obesity and obesity-related illnesses such as diabetes and heart disease. Active travel also promotes mental wellbeing and helps to address loneliness and social exclusion.
- 18.10 The design of transport infrastructure should be high-quality and appropriate to the location in terms of getting the right balance between place and movement, supporting the public realm, protecting the setting of historic assets and removing street clutter and barriers, thereby making it easier for people to move around.
- 18.11 A comprehensive network of frequent, affordable and accessible bus services is vital to ensuring access for many to the things that are essential for good physical and mental wellbeing - health services, healthy food, sport and leisure opportunities and green spaces.
- 18.12 Although Oldham has good strategic road and rail (Metrolink) infrastructure, these networks are already under significant pressure. Parts of the rail network are at capacity at peak times, such as the trans-Pennine route through the Standedge Tunnels. Furthermore, although many areas of the borough are well served by public transport, some areas have much more limited access, specifically the settlements within the Saddleworth area.
- 18.13 A key requirement of Oldham's sustainable transport network going forward is therefore that people are easily able to travel between neighbourhoods and that orbital connections between the principal settlements, and employment areas, of northern

Greater Manchester are improved. This will need to be by the most appropriate mode of transport (either walking, cycling, bus or Metrolink) and for the whole length of their journey. This requires an integrated, high quality, sustainable transport system, which the Bee Network will provide. People need sufficient travel choices so that they can conveniently travel to visit friends and relatives, community facilities, and key services, across Oldham and Greater Manchester.

Linked Local Plan Policies	T2, T5, IN2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P1, JP-C1, JP-C3, JP-C4, JP-C5, JP-C7

## Policy T2 – Creating Sustainable Streets

**Highway infrastructure created as part of any new development should be designed to promote the following hierarchy (highest priority listed first), in accordance with Manual for Streets, whilst ensuring appropriate access for emergency vehicles at all times and taking account of the needs of all users:**

- 1. Pedestrians**
- 2. Cyclists**
- 3. Public transport users**
- 4. Commercial deliveries and specialist service vehicles (e.g. waste collection, taxis/private hire vehicles)**
- 5. Other motor traffic**

**New developments and transport infrastructure schemes shall be required to support the creation of sustainable streets, Active Neighbourhoods and School Streets, having regard to their wider function, through:**

- a. Ensuring that the design of any streets are in accordance with TfGM's Streets for All design guidance and deliver enhancements to walking and cycling connections to local destinations, transport hubs and amenities in accordance with Policy JP-C4 of Places for Everyone;**
- b. Ensuring that walking and cycling routes are overlooked by adjacent development and well-lit so that they are comfortable to be used at night;**
- c. Including design features so as to prevent pavement parking and it's resulting detrimental impact on pedestrians and disabled persons;**
- d. Providing varied spaces for people to meet, linger and rest, and for children to play, enabling greater social interaction;**
- e. Incorporating high levels of green infrastructure designed to bring people closer to nature, enhance biodiversity, enable the movement of wildlife, soak up pollutants, reduce flood risk, and improve quality of life; and**
- f. Supporting local distinctiveness and identity through features and uses that provide visual interest and activity.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 18.14 The transport hierarchy is an important way in which more sustainable and socially inclusive modes of transport can be promoted. It provides a basis for ensuring that the needs of more vulnerable groups, such as pedestrians, cyclists, disabled people, people living with dementia and those with pushchairs, are taken into account.. This will help to support a modal shift within Oldham and improve overall accessibility and fairness. Evidence regarding how the development would implement the transport hierarchy should be included in the Design and Access Statement where relevant.
- 18.15 The impact of COVID-19 and the [Change a Region to Change a Nation](#)<sup>108</sup> (GMCA, 2021) report, highlighted the importance of ensuring that people are able to use footpaths and cycleways in order to access good quality green spaces. Enabling more active lifestyles could result in significant improvements to people's health in Greater Manchester for instance.
- 18.16 Developments will be expected to show how they incorporate the requirements of [Local Transport Note \(LTN\) 1/20](#)<sup>109</sup> which looks at cycle infrastructure design for instance, coupled with the Greater Manchester Streets for All Design Check (SADC). The council will also, where appropriate, support the introduction of Active Neighbourhoods. The purpose of Active Neighbourhoods is to make streets places for people rather than thoroughfares for traffic, this will entail certain streets being closed off to traffic (other than access for residents). Ideally, these will be located in areas which will improve access to greenspace for people and ensure that walking and cycling is the preferred mode of making journeys of less than 2km. School Streets are similar proposition, in that they allow for the closure of streets at school drop off and pick up times. Whilst the creation of School Streets themselves does not require planning permission, the supporting infrastructure in order to create them, may need planning permission, hence the support for the creation of them included in this policy.

Linked Local Plan Policies	T1
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P1, JP-C1, JP-C3, JP-C4, JP-C5

### Policy T3 – Car Parking Standards in Oldham

**New development will provide an appropriate amount of parking (in line with the parking standards set out in Appendix 12) that will:**

- 1. Ensure that the development is inclusive and accessible to all users;**
- 2. Support the efficient use of land;**
- 3. Reflect the type, mix and use of the development;**

<sup>108</sup> This document can be found at: [https://assets.ctfassets.net/xfhv954w443t/1BtOhooOFrD938D3JvvNSD/0035db2634e53de82329b5370b59e019/19-1950\\_Bee\\_Network\\_delivery\\_plan-style\\_-\\_website\\_version.pdf](https://assets.ctfassets.net/xfhv954w443t/1BtOhooOFrD938D3JvvNSD/0035db2634e53de82329b5370b59e019/19-1950_Bee_Network_delivery_plan-style_-_website_version.pdf)

<sup>109</sup> This document can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120>

4. Include design features to prevent pavement parking;
5. Not discourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport;
6. Not lead to a level of off-site car parking that would have an unacceptable impact on:
  - a. The safe and efficient operation of the highway network; or
  - b. The environmental quality or residential amenity of the local area.

Where development would be likely to lead to levels of off-site car parking that would have an adverse impact on the surrounding area, appropriate mitigation measures will be required. This could include, for example, developments funding, or contributing towards, resident parking schemes, public transport provision, on-street parking restrictions and their enforcement.

The need for car parking, drop-off points, taxi ranks and car club/car sharing bays within developments shall be considered through a transport assessment or statement. This shall consider all relevant evidence of likely demand, including knowledge of taxi operators and private hire associations where available.

### Reasoned Justification

- 18.17 Each development will be assessed on its merits but must take into account the car parking standards set out in Appendix 12. Consideration should also be given to the type, mix and uses proposed. Certain development will require the production of a Travel Plan which must include measures to significantly reduce the use of private car travel to and from the development. Finally, in relation to the location of development and as outlined in Appendix 12, those areas which benefit from higher levels of transport accessibility (generally those considered to be within 800m of a Metrolink and/or Quality Bus Transit corridor), will be required to provide a lower amount of car parking on site. GMAL may also be used
- 18.18 GMAL stands for Greater Manchester Accessibility Level, and is a detailed and accurate measure of the accessibility of a point to both the conventional public transport network (i.e. bus, Metrolink and rail) and Greater Manchester's Local Link (flexible transport service), taking into account walk access time and service availability. The method is essentially a way of measuring the density of the public transport provision at any location within the Greater Manchester. For the purposes of this policy it is used to define the areas that have high public transport accessibility and can therefore support higher densities. With higher densities comes a reduced demand for car parking and more walkable environments as outlined in Policy H3 (Density of New Housing).

Linked Local Plan Policies	H3, T1
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-C1, JP-C7

## Policy T4 – Providing for electric vehicle charging points

**New development shall make provision for electric vehicle charging infrastructure, using dedicated charge points specifically designed for charging all types of electric vehicle, in accordance with the following standards (unless superseded by higher standards in the Building Regulations):**

- 1. For dwellings with a garage or driveway, at least one dedicated charge point per dwelling**
- 2. For residential developments with shared parking areas and for non-residential developments, including a minimum of 20% of spaces with active charging facilities, with passive provision for all remaining spaces;**
- 3. For those developments where no car parking is provided, contributing to the expansion of the boroughs publicly accessible rapid charging and on-street charging network, especially where development is served by electric vehicles for taxis and deliveries and servicing.**

**These standards will be applied to the total amount of car parking provision that is proposed in the development in line with Policy T3. Additional car parking spaces should not be provided in order to meet them.**

**Shared active charging points should be located so that they can be accessed by the maximum number of parking spaces at the development.**

**Electric vehicle charging infrastructure within new development shall meet the minimum technical specification list published by the Office for Low Emission Vehicles.**

**A reduced requirement will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the specific characteristics of the development proposed would result in lower levels of demand for electric vehicle charging.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 18.19 The use of electric vehicles is an important measure in reducing emissions locally whilst providing people with a high level of mobility. The Government aspires that by 2035 every new car in the UK will be an ultra-low emission vehicle and is facilitating this through a range of measures. New development can make an important contribution to enabling the use of electric vehicles. Whilst it is acknowledged that there is potential for significant advances in low-emission technologies, electric vehicles are a key part of this, and it is therefore considered important that this plan supports the development of the electric vehicle infrastructure network.
- 18.20 It is envisaged that the majority of electric vehicle charging should take place overnight at home, after the daily peak in electricity demand. Ensuring that residential properties with garages and drives incorporate a charging point will help to facilitate home charging, and the additional cost of providing this infrastructure is considered to be minimal. Non-residential development can also have a significant role to play, for

example by providing dedicated charging points for a proportion of parking spaces to support workplace and visitor charging.

- 18.21 In July 2019, the government consulted on the creation of a new part to the building regulations which would require the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in new buildings and buildings undergoing a material change of use. The standards in this policy will therefore be superseded if any higher standards are introduced through the Building Regulations.

Linked Local Plan Policies	T1, T3
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-S2

### Policy T5 – Transport Statements, Assessments and Travel Plans in New Development

**A Transport Assessment (TA) or Transport Statement (TS) will be required for any new development where any proposal would be likely to result in a material increase in traffic movement on roads, whether adjacent to or remote from the site. Development that requires a TA will need to be accompanied by a Travel Plan (TP). Thresholds for the requirement of a TA, TS and TP are given in Appendix 13.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 18.22 The TA / TS should include information on all existing and proposed commercial and residential vehicular and pedestrian movements to and from the site. A TA will be required for developments likely to have significant transport impacts. A TS will be required when the development is expected to generate relatively low numbers of trips or traffic flows with minor traffic impacts. Loading areas and arrangements for manoeuvring, servicing, and parking of vehicles should also be clearly identified. The TA or TS should describe and analyse existing transport conditions, how the development would affect those conditions and any measures proposed to overcome any problems. It should also give details of proposed measures to improve access by public transport, walking and cycling, to reduce the need for parking associated with the proposal, and to mitigate transport impacts.
- 18.23 Where applications affect the Strategic Road Network (SRN), applicants should provide confirmation from Highways England that the scope and detail of the Transport Statement and Travel Plan is sufficient for the purposes of assessing the application within the statutory timescales. Also, where proposals include work being undertaken within the highway boundary, Highways England confirmation is required that the proposals are acceptable in principle combined with an agreed Stage 1 Road Safety Audit.

Linked Local Plan Policies	T1
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-C1, JP-C7

Creating a Sustainable, Active, Accessible Network for Oldham Chapter Plan Objectives	PO7, PO10
---	-----------

Creating a Sustainable, Active, Accessible Network for Oldham Chapter Monitoring Indicators	28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35
---	--------------------------------



## 19. Communities

### Open Space, Sport and Recreation

- 19.1 Open space is an important part of the borough's green infrastructure network. It has a key role to play in the protection of the environment, enhancing the biodiversity of the borough and mitigating against climate change. Access to quality open space is essential to the health and well-being of communities, enabling increased physical activity, opportunities for social interaction and inclusion and contributing to improved mental health.
- 19.2 Open spaces, include allotments and community gardens, amenity greenspaces, churchyards and cemeteries, green corridors, natural and semi-natural greenspace, outdoor sports facilities, parks and gardens and play spaces<sup>110</sup>.

#### Policy CO1 - Protection of Existing Open Spaces

**The council will protect existing open spaces, including sport and recreation provision, in the borough.**

**The loss of open spaces<sup>111</sup> through development or part-development will only be acceptable in the following circumstances:**

- 1. The development is for alternative open space, sport or recreation provision, where the need for a change in typology can be clearly demonstrated based on local evidence<sup>112</sup>; or**
- 2. Based on local evidence the council consider that the open space is surplus to local needs and the land is not required to meet deficiencies in other open space typologies within an accessible distance to the development site<sup>113</sup>; or**
- 3. A small-scale loss of part of the open space is required to enable development on adjacent land which would not prejudice the overall open space function of the site; and**
- 4. The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by at least equivalent or improved open space (in terms of the open space standards) either onsite in a different part of the proposed development, or offsite in a suitable location, determined by the identified deficiencies and accessibility standard. All new or improved provision should be provided in line with policies CO2 and CO3.**

<sup>110</sup> Also known as open space typologies.

<sup>111</sup> Including strategic open spaces which will be identified on the policies map, and all other open spaces as identified in the Open Space Study.

<sup>112</sup> Oldham's Open Space Study 2022, or any subsequent update.

<sup>113</sup> As identified by the accessibility standard and measured from the centre or the proposed development site and/or the site which would be lost.

## Reasoned Justification

- 19.3 Open space generally refers to several types of spaces which are available to the public, from formal sports pitches to allotments and community gardens to open areas within developments. Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities and facilitate social interaction and inclusion.
- 19.4 Oldham has several strategic open spaces defined as sites over 15ha, these will be identified on the Policies Map and the Green Infrastructure Network and Opportunity Map. All other identified open spaces, as identified in the Open Space Study 2022, are mapped on the Green Infrastructure Network and Opportunity Map. Together all open spaces make up a significant part of Oldham's Green Infrastructure Network.
- 19.5 As such, it is important to ensure that open spaces are protected from development. The policy sets out that the loss of, or part-development of open spaces will only be considered acceptable in specific circumstances and where any lost provision would be replaced in line with Policy CO2 and Policy CO3. The council will consider whether a particular development would comply with the circumstances listed above on a case-by-case basis and based on the information provided as part of the application.

Linked Local Plan Policies	CO2, CO3, IN2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P1, JP-P6, JP-P7

### Policy CO2 - New and Enhanced Open Spaces

**The council will enhance, and improve access to, existing open spaces in the borough and will support new high quality open spaces, which meet the Open Space Standards as set out in Policy CO3.**

**Proposals should also have regard to the Green Infrastructure Strategy, including the identified Green Infrastructure Opportunities, as set out within Policy N3. New open spaces should be of a high-quality design, well connected to the existing green infrastructure network and able to provide multi-functional benefits, where appropriate.**

**Proposals for built sports facilities and formal sports provision will be supported where they are in accordance with other Local Plan policies, national planning policy and Sport England guidance<sup>114</sup>.**

#### Development Requirements

**Residential developments of 10 homes and above will be required to provide sufficient public open space onsite, the typology of which will be determined by identified open space deficiencies and accessibility to existing provision.**

**Where it is not possible to provide onsite provision, by exception, a contribution to new or existing offsite public open space will be sought. This will be calculated in**

<sup>114</sup> This guidance can be found at: <https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/planning-sport>.

**accordance with identified open space deficiencies and accessibility to existing provision, based on the number of persons and bedspaces proposed in the development.**

**Where appropriate, contributions to new or improved open space provision will be secured through planning obligations or conditions, as necessary. Further detail is provided within Policy IN2.**

## Reasoned Justification

### New Open Spaces

- 19.6 Residential developments of 10 homes and above will be required to provide sufficient public open space onsite determined by identified open space deficiencies and accessibility to existing provision. New onsite open spaces provided as part of development should seek to improve open space deficiencies in the area in which the site is located. For example, where a development site is not currently accessible to a particular typology of open space (as identified by the [Open Space Accessibility Maps](#)<sup>115</sup>) the new space should include provision of the deficient typology. Where a site is accessible to all forms of open space, the development should seek to provide appropriate onsite open space which is in line with the Quantity, Quality and Value Standards set out in Policy CO3.
- 19.7 Where it is not possible to provide onsite open space, or the amount proposed would still result in a shortfall in terms of the required amount of open space set out Quantity standard, the remaining shortfall should be addressed through a financial contribution towards offsite provision in line with identified deficiencies (in terms of accessibility, quantity, quality and value, as identified in the [Open Space Study](#)<sup>116</sup>).
- 19.8 When determining the type of new open space that should be provided, proposals should have regard to the identified deficiencies within the ward in which the development is located, as set out in Appendix F of the Open Space Study. The council will also use this evidence to identify an appropriate site to spend developer contributions towards offsite open space provision.
- 19.9 A developer calculator is being developed which will assist with the implementation of this policy. The calculator will guide the council and developers in providing appropriate open space provision and in determining appropriate open space contributions towards offsite provision, based on the evidence set out within the Open Space Study.
- 19.10 Contributions to new or improved open space provision will be sought through planning obligations or conditions, as necessary<sup>117</sup>, in line with Policy IN2 'Planning Obligations'.

### Playing Pitches

- 19.11 Proposals for new outdoor sports facilities and formal sports provision will be supported where they are in accordance with national planning policy and [Sport England](#)

---

<sup>115</sup> The Open Space Accessibility Buffers are also available to view interactively at: [https://maps.oldham.gov.uk/webmap/?initialDialog=layersDialog&mapName=Green\\_Infrastructure](https://maps.oldham.gov.uk/webmap/?initialDialog=layersDialog&mapName=Green_Infrastructure)

<sup>116</sup> This document can be found at: [https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2184/open\\_space\\_study\\_documents\\_2022](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2184/open_space_study_documents_2022)

<sup>117</sup> A developer calculator has been developed to guide offsite provision contributions, based on the evidence set out in the Open Space Study and the indicative costs for types of provision.

[guidance](#)<sup>118</sup>. A Playing Pitch Strategy is being developed and will be used to inform this policy as appropriate at Publication Plan stage.

Linked Local Plan Policies	N3, CO1, CO3, IN2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P1, JP-P6, JP-P7

## Policy CO3 - Open Space Standards

**Open Space Standards** have been developed to ensure that open space provision is fit for purpose, of a high quality and contributes towards meeting local needs.

**Table CO1** sets out the council's Open Space Standards. Open Space provision in the borough has been assessed against the Standards – Quantity, Quality, Accessibility and Value - to identify deficiencies in provision.

**Table CO1: Current Open Space Standards**

Type of Open Space	Quantity Standard (the number of hectares required per 1,000 population)	Quality Standard	Accessibility Standard
Allotments and Community Gardens	No standard	At least 70%	No standard
Amenity Greenspace	0.46	At least 70%	720 metres (15-minute walk)
Cemeteries and Churchyards	No standard	At least 70%	No standard
Civic Spaces	No standard	At least 70%	No standard
Green Corridors	No standard	At least 70%	No standard
Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace	1.95	At least 70%	Natural and Semi-Natural - 720 metres (15-minute walk)  Strategic Natural and Semi-Natural over 20ha - 7.85km (20-minute drive time)
Outdoor Sports Facilities (excluding Golf Courses)	1.35	At least 70%	720 metres (15-minute walk)
Parks and Gardens	0.40	At least 70%	Local Parks and Gardens - 720 metres (15-minute walk)  Strategic Parks and

<sup>118</sup> This guidance can be found at: <https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/planning-sport>

Type of Open Space	Quantity Standard (the number of hectares required per 1,000 population)	Quality Standard	Accessibility Standard
			Gardens of 15ha and above - 7.85km (20-minute drive)
Provision for Children and Young People	0.25	At least 70%	480 metres (10 minute walk)

### Value Standard

In addition to the table above, a value standard has also been introduced to ensure the borough's open spaces are meaningful and beneficial to the local community. It ensures locally important, or flagship open spaces, are protected and that investment towards existing provision is focused where it is most needed.

Proposals for new open spaces are required to demonstrate (through a value audit) that they meet the following value standards:

1. Destination or flagship sites should achieve a high value score (60-100%)
2. All other open space sites should achieve a medium value score (40-59%)

Further guidance on the value standard and how value should be audited is provided below and in the Open Space Study (2022).

### Reasoned Justification

19.12 As is required by Policy CO2, new and enhanced open space provision must be provided in line with the identified Open Space Standards. The standards have been devised as part of the councils Open Space Study (2022). The Study assessed the current (at 2021) and predicted future (at 2037) levels of open space provision and population-based demand against these standards to identify current deficiencies and where they are expected to arise over the plan period, and therefore where new or improved open spaces will be most needed. The Open Space Study identifies the open space deficiencies by ward.

19.13 The Open Space Standards of Accessibility, Quantity, Quality and Value are set out within the policy. These are explained in turn below.

#### Accessibility

19.14 The accessibility standard is a measure of distance which reflects the accessibility needs of potential users of that type of open space provision. In general, smaller, local types of open spaces such as Children's Play Areas, Amenity Greenspaces, smaller Natural and Semi-Natural spaces and Outdoor Sports Pitches (playing fields etc) should be accessible within a short 10-to-15-minute walk time. Larger spaces, such as Golf Courses, large scale strategic Natural and Semi-Natural spaces (such as Oldham Edge and Strinsedale Country Park) and large-scale strategic Parks and Gardens (such as Alexandra Park and Tandle Hill) are often considered to be 'destination

locations' that might be visited for the day or an extended period of time and should be accessible within a 20-minute drive.

- 19.15 Due to the characteristics of the type of provision, accessibility standards have not been set for Allotments and Community Gardens, Cemeteries and Churchyards, Civic Spaces and Green Corridors. The council will continue to ensure that any new spaces provided within these typologies are sustainably located where appropriate.
- 19.16 Open Space Accessibility buffers are available to view interactively on the [Green Infrastructure Network and Opportunity Map](#) or are available as maps within the [Local Plan Evidence Base](#).

### Quantity

- 19.17 Quantity is a measure of how much open space is available against a measure of population (the number of hectares required per 1,000 population). The quantity standard has been determined based on the premise of protecting existing open space as much as possible and securing new open space, where appropriate, ensuring that new residential development does not adversely impact upon or place pressure on existing open space provision.
- 19.18 Due to the characteristics of the type of provision, quantity standards have not been set for Cemeteries and Churchyards, Civic Spaces and Green Corridors. The council will continue to ensure this type of provision is protected and enhanced where appropriate, in line with Policy CO1 and other local plan policies. Cemeteries, churchyards and green corridors also form a significant part of the borough's green infrastructure network which are protected under Policy N1 and Policy N3.

### Quality

- 19.19 Quality is a measure of how the site performs against specific criteria, based on the Green Flag Award criteria<sup>119</sup>, including indicators related to 'welcoming place', 'healthy, safe and secure' and 'well maintained and clean'. The borough's open space sites were scored in quality bandings of 'excellent – 90% to 100%', 'very good – 80% to 89%', 'good – 70% to 79%', 'fair – 50% to 69%' and 'poor 0% to 49%'. The Open Space Study recommended that a standard of 70% should be introduced to ensure that all of the borough's open spaces aim for at least good standard and as such provide a positive benefit to the local community and the environment.
- 19.20 Quality is closely linked to value and together the standards can be a useful guide for investment, for example some high value sites may be poor quality and as such contributions could be spent improving these spaces to enhance and support community use.

### Value

- 19.21 Open space value is a measure of functionality and usage by communities. The value standard is based on '[Assessing needs and opportunities: a companion guide to PPG17](#)'<sup>120</sup> and was developed as part of the council's Open Space Study 2022. As part of the Study, sites were assessed against several value criteria including, context, historical/ heritage, contribution to Local Amenity, Vitality and Sense of Place, recreation, play, ecological and biodiversity. The Open Space Study scored sites as 'high (60-100%)', 'medium (40-59%)' and 'low (0-39%)' based on the value criteria. The Study recommended that a value standard of 60-100% (high value) be applied for

---

<sup>119</sup> Open Space Study (main document), Chapter 3, Table 2.

<sup>120</sup> This document can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/assessing-needs-and-opportunities-a-companion-guide-to-planning-policy-guidance-17>

destination or flagship sites and a standard of 40-50% (medium value) be applied for all other open space sites.

- 19.22 Where new open spaces are proposed, the provider must demonstrate through a 'value audit' that the proposed provision meets the relevant value standard set out within the policy. The audit should be proportionate to the size and typology of provision that is proposed and be completed by a competent person, using the criteria and scoring set out within the Open Space Study<sup>121</sup>. The council will advise in terms of identifying flagship sites. Examples include Alexandra Park, Waterhead Park and Westway in Shaw.
- 19.23 In most cases, financial contributions towards existing offsite open space should go towards those spaces assessed with either a low or medium value score (low value – 0-39%; medium value – 40-59%) and a low or fair quality score (low quality – 0-49%; fair quality – 50-69%). In some instances, to improve provision, it may be appropriate for contributions to go towards sites which are high quality but low value, or vice versa.
- 19.24 Adding value to open space is important as it enables them to provide multi-functional benefits, maximising the positive impacts of open space for communities. Providers can add value to open spaces in various ways, including, for example, adding street furniture, planting, improving signage and accessibility, and promoting spaces for events or sports use, to promote or improve their contextual, heritage, local amenity, sense of place, recreation, play and ecological value.

Linked Local Plan Policies	CO1, CO2, N1, N2, N3, IN2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P1, JP-P7

---

<sup>121</sup> Open Space Study (main document), Chapter 3, pages 24-26.



## Policy CO4 Cultural, Community and Health Facilities

**To maintain and improve access to a range of cultural, community (as defined in national planning policy) and health facilities in the borough, proposals will be supported that:**

- 1. Retain or enhance existing services and facilities; and/or**
- 2. Provide new services and facilities, including, where appropriate, those that are for mixed-use and multi-purpose.**

**Good quality cultural and community facilities will be supported that meet the needs of local communities and are accessible by walking, cycling or public transport.**

**The loss of sites and premises used for cultural, community and health facilities will only be supported where:**

- a. It is proved the existing use and proposals for alternative cultural and/or community uses on the site are not economically viable, and there is insufficient demand to support them; or**
- b. The loss is part of a wider proposal to improve service provision in the locality; or**
- c. Existing facilities nearby can adequately serve identified needs, in an equally accessible manner.**

**The views of the local community, including existing users, and relevant parish councils will be important to establish the significance of, and demand for, individual facilities and to develop solutions to enable their retention.**

**Where the demand resulting from a major residential development will create, or exacerbate, a shortfall in health provision the council will seek the provision of new or improved health facilities to address the unmet need generated by the development as appropriate.**

## Reasoned Justification

19.25 The purpose of this policy is to allow for new cultural, community and health facilities and services in sustainable locations and to prevent the premature loss of important local facilities where their continued use is considered to remain a reasonable prospect.

19.26 Cultural and community facilities within the borough provide for the health and wellbeing, social, educational, spiritual, recreational and leisure and cultural needs of the community. Some of these serve a local community (e.g., post office), while others serve a wider area. These facilities and services help create supportive communities by meeting day to day needs of residents and businesses.

19.27 New and enhanced community services and facilities will be supported where they are well related to the communities they serve. Facilities should be easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.

- 19.28 Oldham Council is committed to place-based integration where public services work collaboratively in place to provide timely and effective support to our residents and communities. Through this policy and the Local Plan the establishment of Family Hubs across Oldham as a network of integrated health and community resources will be supported. These hubs will enable and support people in the local community to live independently and to access support at the earliest opportunity as part of the Oldham prevention framework to improve health and well-being, and reduce escalation of demand within the public sector.
- 19.29 The council will seek to minimise the loss of land and buildings that are being used as cultural and community facilities. A loss of facility will only be supported where it meets one of the criteria a to c above.
- 19.30 Proposals for the redevelopment of a local facility will therefore be carefully assessed and, where there is no alternative provision planned, applications for redevelopment or change of use will need to be justified, including in the case of commercial uses, through viability testing and an appropriate marketing assessment for a minimum period of 12 months.
- 19.31 The [Localism Act 2011](#)<sup>122</sup> allows local groups within a community (including Parish Councils) the right to identify and protect facilities that are important to them from immediate disposal. Communities can nominate a building or an area of land to be listed as an 'Asset of Community Value'. An asset can be privately or publicly owned and can vary from local shops and pubs, through to parks, open space areas and community centres.
- 19.32 Once listed, the process allows community organisations the opportunity to bid to buy listed assets under the 'Community Right to Bid' process. However, there is no obligation for owners to sell their asset to a community organisation and there is no control over who takes ownership.
- 19.33 The impact of a development proposal on a registered Asset of Community Value is a material planning consideration.

Linked Local Plan Policies	OTC1, TM1, IN2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P3

<sup>122</sup> This Act can be found at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>

## Policy CO5: Education and Skills

**Development proposals for early years, schools and post-16 facilities shall be supported where they are:**

- 1. located within the community it is intended to serve and is accessible by public transport, walking and cycling;**
- 2. of high-quality design and provide a safe environment, including appropriate private and secure outdoor space;**
- 3. located, designed and managed to minimise the impacts of associated traffic and car parking on the surrounding area, including the safe provision of drop-offs and pick-ups so as to avoid congestion; and**
- 4. providing high-quality indoor and outdoor facilities suitable for the intended number, and age range, of students.**

**Where opportunities arise through new built development and change of use, the shared use of facilities will be supported through planning conditions or planning obligations as appropriate and where such usage can be accommodated without compromising the quality and accessibility for existing users.**

**Land and buildings in educational use will be protected and proposals that result in the net loss of educational facilities will be resisted unless it can be robustly demonstrated by the local education authority that there is no current or future need.**

**The council will work with the local education authority to identify suitable sites for educational use where a need has been identified.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 19.34 National policy requires local planning authorities to take a proactive, positive, and collaborative approach to ensure that there is a sufficient choice of school places available to meet the needs of existing and new communities.
- 19.35 The council is committed to ensuring that all young people get the education that they deserve and that there is a good school within reach of every child in the borough. This requires an assessment in collaboration with education partners of the current capacity of schools and their ability to cater for new growth together with determining where and how the additional capacity to support new growth should be provided.
- 19.36 Access to adequate, affordable, and high-quality childcare (pre-school and school-age) provisions can play a key role in children's development. Where it enables increased parental employment rates of low-income households, it may also help to reduce income inequalities. Childcare facilities should be safe, accessible for all, and provide both indoor and outdoor learning opportunities.
- 19.37 The council will support improvements to the education and skills of the borough's population by working with a range of education partners, including the University Campus Oldham, Oldham College and Oldham Sixth-Form College and with developer contributions to facilitate the development of new and improved education facilities.

Linked Local Plan Policies	CO6
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P5

### Policy CO6: Securing Educational Places through New Residential Development

**For major development of 10 dwellings or more, where demand resulting from a residential development will create or exacerbate a shortfall in the number of local school places, the council will seek to secure new and/or improved education facilities. This is to address the unmet need, proportionate to the number of people aged 0-19, that the development is likely to accommodate.**

**Such provision will typically be secured through a financial contribution in agreement with the local education authority. Where it is not practicable or desirable to meet the unmet demand in this way on-site provision may be required and the council will negotiate with developers to secure the setting aside of land to accommodate the additional education provision. Any land to be set aside for education provision will be required to meet Policy CO5 Education and Skills (criteria 1 to 4).**

**For each relevant type of education provision, the scale of any financial contribution will be calculated using the following formula:**

$$\text{Pupil yield factor} \times \text{Cost per pupil place} = \text{Financial contribution}$$

**In all cases, residential development shall be phased to ensure that the additional education provision is secured and in place before demand exceeds existing capacity.**

### Reasoned Justification

19.38 The council has a statutory duty under the Education and Inspections Act 1996 to ensure that there are sufficient school places available within the borough to meet the educational needs of the population. Within such provision, parental choice, diversity, and fair access are promoted.

19.39 Whilst the Government provides funding to local authorities for the provision of new school places, the funding is reduced to take account of developer contributions to avoid double funding of school places. DfE therefore, expects local authorities to seek developer contributions towards school places that are created to meet the need arising from housing development.

19.40 It is important that the impacts of new residential development are addressed including:

- The education needs arising from a new development, based on an up-to-date pupil yield factor;
- The capacity of the existing schools that would serve the development; and
- The extent to which developer contributions are required and the degree of certainty that these will be secured at the appropriate time.

- 19.41 The council will seek to secure new and/or improved education facilities and provision through S106 developer contributions where the existing provision is unable to accommodate the additional demands arising from a new residential development.
- 19.42 Where it is demonstrated that the number of pupils generated by a development is greater than the number of school places available, the council may require a contribution to fund the provision of the additional school places including 0-19, special educational needs (which could involve greater travel distance) and both temporary and permanent needs where relevant (such as school transport costs and temporary school provision before a permanent new school opens).
- 19.43 Financial contributions are calculated based upon expected pupil yields resulting from the proposed development, as informed by local evidence, and identified costs per school place to accommodate expansion of provision. The Department for Education (DfE) are currently preparing a detailed methodology for calculating pupil yields from housing development (including assessment of available capacity in existing schools), which will be published in due course. The guidance sets out that local approaches to calculating pupil yield are still valid.
- 19.44 At present, Oldham intends to use a local approach to determining pupil yield from new housing development. Currently, 1 dwelling, proposed as part of a new residential development, will yield 0.462 of a primary school place and 0.289 of a secondary school place. These yields are informed by local evidence and existing DfE guidance, recognising that the precise mix of age groups is not known before a development is built and occupied.
- 19.45 The costs in the DfE scorecard <sup>123</sup> have now been adjusted and our costs (as of October 2023) are now shown as:
- Primary: £19,424.75 per place
  - Secondary: £26,716.74 per place
- 19.46 These costs will be reviewed and updated in-line with inflation through the lifetime of this Local Plan.
- 19.47 The identified yield will need to be accommodated through either the existing provision, or where it is found that there is insufficient capacity of school place provision in the area, through developer contributions towards new provision. This will be determined at application or pre-application stage.

Linked Local Plan Policies	CO5, IN2
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P5

<sup>123</sup> Data source: <https://department-for-education.shinyapps.io/la-school-places-scorecards/>

## Policy CO7 – Health Impact Assessments in New Development

**Residential development of 100 dwellings and above and all developments requiring an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) must be supported by a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to demonstrate that full consideration has been given to health and wellbeing impacts of a proposal. Proposals which are deemed to achieve negative health impacts overall will be refused.**

**A HIA may be required for other developments where significant health implications are identified. The council will make a decision on a case-by-case basis.**

**As part of preparing the HIA, developers are required to consider wider regional/local health and wellbeing strategies, as appropriate, and set out how the proposed development will contribute to the aims and objectives of those strategies, where relevant.**

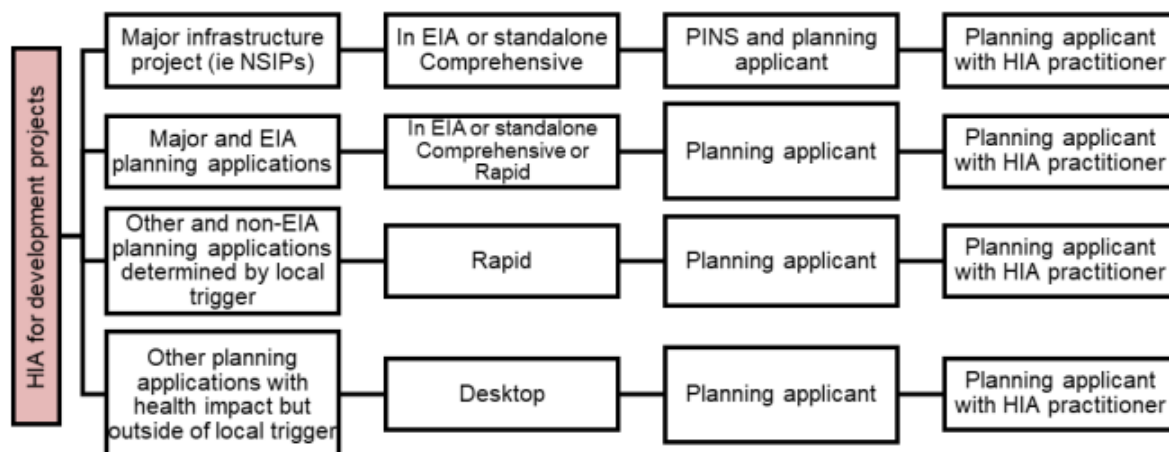
### Reasoned Justification

- 19.48 Developers have the potential to positively influence health and wellbeing through maximising the health benefits of a proposal, minimising the potential harm, and reducing inequalities.
- 19.49 Health Impact Assessment (HIA)<sup>124</sup> is an objective assessment tool for addressing the barriers and enablers for creating healthy places. It identifies the positive and negative impacts of development on the health of different groups in the population to enhance the benefits and minimise health risks. When applied in the planning system an HIA puts people at the heart of the process.
- 19.50 To ensure that new developments have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of new and existing residents, the council will require a HIA for development proposals to a level of detail appropriate to its scale and nature, to be agreed with the local planning authority.
- 19.51 The HIA should draw together the health benefits of the proposal, incorporating all issues included in other application submission documents including, for example, the Design and Access Statement, Design Code, Transport Assessment and Travel Plan. This will enable schemes to be modified to maximise positive effects on health and well-being.
- 19.52 It is recognised that HIAs are most effective for large scale developments. However, the most appropriate type of HIA depends on the focus, scale and scope of the development proposal. Figure CO1 below indicates the type of HIA that may be appropriate for different types of application:

---

<sup>124</sup> [Health Impact Assessment in spatial planning - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/health-impact-assessment-in-spatial-planning)

Figure CO1: Type of Health Impact Assessment that may be appropriate for different types of application



19.53 Applicants are advised to seek advice from the council before carrying out a HIA to ensure that the correct level of HIA is being prepared and that it is proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed.

Linked Local Plan Policies	n/a
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P6

## Policy CO8 Hot Food Takeaways

**Planning permission for Hot Food Takeaways will be granted within Oldham town centre and the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores (Huddersfield Road), Lees, Royton, Shaw, Uppermill and shopping parades, provided it is demonstrated it would not result in an unacceptable concentration of uses with no more than 10% of units in the defined centre, or shopping parade, being hot food takeaways.**

**Outside the designated centres listed above, proposals for hot food takeaways within 400m of the principal entry point to a secondary school or sixth form college, either within or outside the control of the local education authority, will only be granted permission if it would not result in a proliferation of said uses. The granting of planning permission would be subject to a condition that the premises are not open to the public before 5pm (Monday to Friday, except Bank Holidays), with no ‘over-counter’ sales before that time.**

**Proposals for hot food takeaways, both within and outside the designated centres listed above, must demonstrate that:**

- 1. There would be no adverse impact on residential amenity in terms of noise, customer activity, vibrations, odours, traffic disturbance and litter;**
- 2. The hours of operation are appropriate for its location;**



3. **Traffic and parking implications are satisfactorily addressed and there would be no adverse implications for highway safety;**
4. **Appropriately designed and sited fume extraction systems and/or noise insulation are provided;**
5. **An appropriate location for commercial trade waste including recycling facilities has been identified. Litter bins must be contained within the curtilage of the premises and should be stored to avoid odour nuisance, be convenient for refuse collection and be screened to protect visual amenity. Any litter bin provision should be retained in perpetuity; and**
6. **It would not increase the potential for crime and anti-social behaviour in the area.**

**Applications for hot food takeaways must be supported by a Health Impact Assessment (HIA). Where an unacceptable adverse impact on health is established, planning permission will not be granted.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 19.54 Government advice encourages planning authorities to support local strategies to improve health and wellbeing and to maximise the role of the planning system to create a healthier built environment. Planning can influence the built environment to improve health, including the creation of a healthier food environment.
- 19.55 There is a growing body of evidence on the association between exposure to fast food outlets and obesity. There are also concerns about the effect fast food consumption is having on children's diets and eating behaviour, with health problems such as obesity starting to develop at primary school age and behaviour that's established early in life following through to adulthood.
- 19.56 High levels of deprivation in Oldham coincide with a high prevalence of unhealthy weight and high numbers of fast-food outlets. This mirrors the position nationally, where increased access to fast food outlets in the most deprived areas has been shown to adversely impact unhealthy weight and health inequalities.
- 19.57 The council recognises that unhealthy food sources can be found in convenience shops, cafes and restaurants and not just hot food takeaways. Poor health and excessive weight cannot be fully addressed using a single intervention and a planning policy restricting the development of Hot Food Takeaways will not solve the problem of obesity in the borough on its own. The council can, however, coordinate initiatives across various organisations and introduce measures to ensure it assists in improving access to healthier food production and consumption choices. Together with a collaborative suite of planning policies aimed at creating opportunities for a healthier lifestyle, it will form part of a coordinated approach to tackle the problem.
- 19.58 Seeking to limit the proliferation of hot food takeaways, having regard to such issues as the proximity to locations where children and young people congregate; evidence indicating high levels of obesity and health inequalities; the over-concentration of certain uses within a specified area; and other issues such as odours and noise impact, refuse and litter will both help maintain the economic vitality and viability of town and local centres and promote healthy lifestyles.

19.59 See Policy CO7 (Health Impact Assessments for New Developments), for further details regarding what is required as part of a HIA and how to ensure the assessment is proportionate to the scale and nature to development proposed.

Linked Local Plan Policies	C4, CO7
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P6

### Policy CO9 Creating Sustainable and Accessible Communities

**The council will support development proposals that are in sustainable and accessible locations and that promote and encourage use of public transport, walking and cycling.**

**All development, particularly that which is likely to generate a large number of journeys, should be accessible by active travel and public transport.**

**With regards to major developments, they should:**

- a. achieve `Very High Public Transport Accessibility` or `High Public Transport Accessibility`.**
- b. in relation to residential development, be within 800m of at least three key services.**

**Public transport accessibility is defined below<sup>125</sup>.**

**Very High Accessibility: within approximately 400m of a frequent bus route and approximately 800m of a rail station or Metrolink stop.**

**High Accessibility: within approximately 400m of a frequent bus route or approximately 800m of a rail station or Metrolink stop.**

**In all cases distances should be measured from the centre of the application site.**

**Requirements a and b should be met unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant that this is neither appropriate nor practicable or the development provides exceptional benefits to the surrounding environment and community.**

### Reasoned Justification

19.60 It is important to ensure that new development locations are in sustainable locations and accessible by a choice of active travel modes, including public transport, walking and cycling. This will help reduce the need for people to travel and contribute towards reducing congestion and meeting climate change reduction targets. It also links with the need to improve people's health by creating more opportunities for people to walk or cycle rather than use the car. Public transport accessibility and key services will be regularly monitored and updated, as necessary, over the life of the Local Plan.

19.61 It is acknowledged that the type of services which a development should have access to may vary much on the nature and circumstances of the proposed development. For example, older persons may look for good access to health-related facilities and our

<sup>125</sup> This will be monitored and reviewed over the lifetime of the Local Plan

town centres. Whereas families may look for good access to education provision and community uses. The policy enables the particular nature and circumstances of the development to be taken into account when address policy requirements a) and b), stating that these should be met unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant that this is neither appropriate nor practicable or where the development provides exceptional benefits to the surrounding environment and community.

Linked Local Plan Policies	H1, T1
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-P1, JP-C1
Communities Chapter Plan Objectives	PO1, PO4, PO5, PO8, PO9, PO10
Communities Chapter Monitoring Indicators	6, 7, 8, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 43, 46, 47, 48, 49

## 20. Protecting Our Local Environment

- 20.1 Quality of life is affected by the local environment. Addressing amenity and tackling pollution will have impacts on health and wellbeing and the environment. The purpose of these policies is to maintain, protect and enhance living and working conditions that will maintain a high standard of amenity for all users and occupiers.

### Policy LE1 - Noise Pollution and Vibration in New Development

**All developments will be expected to provide and maintain a high standard of protection from light and noise pollution and vibration for all users and occupiers, including both future occupants and users of the proposed development as well as existing occupants and users of neighbouring land and buildings. This should be achieved and maintained without preventing, or unreasonably restricting, the continued operation of established authorised uses and activities on adjacent sites.**

**Proposals will be required to demonstrate where applicable that the following matters have been considered in relation to both the construction and operational life of the development:**

- 1. there are no adverse impacts in terms of noise and vibration (particularly with regards to noise-sensitive uses), including internal and external levels, timing, duration and character; and**
- 2. there are no unacceptable traffic movements to, from, and within, the site including car parking and arrangements for deliveries.**

**The council will not support proposals where new residents would be likely to raise complaints about neighbouring existing uses. Where new developments could be affected by an existing operation or business in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') is required to provide suitable mitigation agreed with the council.**

**Depending on the scale and nature of the development proposed, a detailed assessment may be required to address criteria 1 and 2 above and will need to be submitted to the council for approval.**

### Reasoned Justification

- 20.2 A key role of the planning system is to ensure that new development does not have an adverse impact on the amenity<sup>126</sup> of existing properties and that adequate levels of amenity will be enjoyed by future occupiers of the proposed development.
- 20.3 All development (including minor developments and extensions) can cause a disturbance to nearby residents or users of land and buildings resulting in the quality of their amenity being impacted. However, the continuance of established existing businesses should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them because of the

---

<sup>126</sup> . For the purposes of this policy, 'amenity' is defined as those desirable features of a place that ought to be protected in the public interest.

introduction of new and incompatible land uses. Such matters are an important planning consideration in relation to amenity.

- 20.4 Noise generating development should, wherever possible, be located away from noise-sensitive development (e.g., housing). Conversely noise-sensitive development will not be supported in the vicinity of established noise-generating uses unless appropriate measures are taken to ensure that the noise does not adversely affect levels of amenity. Considerations will include the internal and external levels, timing, duration, and character of noise.
- 20.5 Where noise-sensitive uses are proposed close to an existing noise source, or when noise-generating uses are proposed, the council will require noise impact assessments and/or vibration surveys to accompany a planning application. The remit and methodology should be agreed in advance with the council and should be undertaken in accordance with the most relevant national guidance and industry codes of practice.
- 20.6 Traffic and parking provision can have a significant impact on the amenity of occupiers and users in relation to vehicle movements to and from the destination. The resulting disturbance from the noise and vibration of passing vehicles can have a significant impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties – especially if it involves Heavy Goods Vehicles.
- 20.7 The council will give considerable weight to ensuring that any negative effects on amenity arising from development proposals are fully assessed. The nature of assessment required will be dependent on the scale and type of the proposed development.

Linked Local Plan Policies	n/a
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	n/a

## Policy LE2 - Ground Conditions and Contaminated Land

**Planning permission will only be granted for development proposals on contaminated land, or land which may have been subject to previous industrial activity or affected by landfill gas (or where there is reason to suspect contamination), for a sensitive end use, where appropriate measures can be taken to remediate and/or satisfactorily mitigate the risk of contamination and/or existing ground conditions.**

**Planning applications for proposals on land that is potentially unstable or contaminated shall be accompanied by an appropriate Coal Mining Risk Assessment or Contaminated Land Assessment carried out by a qualified professional showing:**

- 1. The nature and extent of contamination or instability issues and the potential effects this may have on the development and its future users; and**
- 2. The measures needed to allow the development to go ahead safely considering the potential end users.**

**Where remedial measures are required to allow the development to go ahead safely, these will be secured by a condition of planning permission.**

## Reasoned Justification

- 20.8 Activities associated with industrial/commercial and agricultural processes can result in adverse ground conditions which can pose a risk to development, future site users and the environment. Oldham has a rich industrial heritage and previous manufacturing; engineering and industrial processes has resulted in the potential for contaminated land across the borough. Typical causes of land contamination include industrial or commercial usage, mining, and landfilling. Contamination can also occur naturally due to certain types of minerals being present in rocks and soils.
- 20.9 Where contamination is known or suspected, applicants should ensure that any potential issues are identified and discussed with the council as early as possible in the development process. Development proposals will be expected to seek sustainable solutions to the remediation of contaminated land.
- 20.10 To ensure that a sufficient and proportionate level of information is provided, a Contaminated Land Assessment will need to be submitted with all new development proposals where contamination is suspected or known on the site (or adjacent land) and/or where the proposed development for a sensitive end use would be particularly vulnerable to the presence of contamination, for example, residential schemes, care homes, holiday lets, allotments etc.
- 20.11 A Coal Mining Risk Assessment will need to be submitted with all new development proposals where the site lies within an area that is known to be at risk of historical mine workings.
- 20.12 Remediation will need to remove unacceptable risks and make the site suitable for its new use. As a minimum, after carrying out the development and commencement of the new use, the land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under the [Environmental Protection Act \(1990\)](#).<sup>127</sup>

Linked Local Plan Policies	n/a
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-S5

### Policy LE3 - Air Quality

**The council will seek to protect and improve air quality within the borough and contribute towards the achievement of national air quality objectives.**

**Development will be supported that:**

- 1. does not lead to a significant impact on, and deterioration of, local air quality resulting in unacceptable effects on human health, local amenity or the natural environment;**
- 2. does not impede the achievement of any air quality objective(s), particularly in locations declared as Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) or Clean Air Zones or any successor terms in relation to air quality;**
- 3. does not introduce a significant new source of any air pollutant, including odour, fumes, smoke, dust and other sources;**

<sup>127</sup> This Act can be found at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/43/contents>

4. does not increase exposure to poor air quality, particularly where vulnerable people are located (such as health care facilities, care homes or schools); and
5. is supported by an Air Quality Assessment, where necessary.

Air Quality Assessments will be required to support planning applications for the following:

6. Residential development of over 100 dwellings
7. Development involving more than 10,000m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace
8. Developments which introduce new exposure into an area of existing poor air quality (e.g., an AQMA)

Depending on the scale and nature of the development proposed, Air Quality Assessments may be required to support other applications including industrial processes where there are direct emissions to the air, as well as proposals with significant vehicle movements and significant changes to highways infrastructure.

Development that is likely to produce an odour, should demonstrate that there is no negative impact on residential amenity by providing an Odour Impact Assessment.

## Reasoned Justification

- 20.13 Air pollution can arise from many sources and activities, including traffic and transport, industrial processes, commercial premises, energy generation, agriculture, waste storage treatment and construction sites. Older people, the young and those with existing lung or other health conditions, for example, asthma, are particularly at risk, with the potential for reduced life expectancy. Increasing temperatures can heighten the impact of air pollutants, and so climate change further raises the importance of addressing air quality issues.
- 20.14 This policy relates to air pollution from all potential sources in any potential form and includes dust, fumes, and odour.
- 20.15 The [Greater Manchester Air Quality Action Plan \(GM AQMA\) 2016-2021](#)<sup>128</sup> sets out that Greater Manchester authorities will adopt the most recent Institute of [Air Quality Management and Environmental Protection UK \(IAQM/EPUK\)](#)<sup>129</sup> guidance for air quality assessment as best practice to ensure that planning applications consider potential local air quality impacts and opportunities to improve air quality are realised. Where a Key Priority Area<sup>130</sup> is significantly adversely affected by a proposed scheme, a high level of mitigation control will be requested. The IAQM/EPUK guidance will also be used to screen and assess industrial sources, such as boilers or large stationary engines. There are several areas in Oldham where, due to road traffic, the levels of the annual average of Nitrogen Dioxide are above 40 micrograms per metre cubed of air, i.e., above the air quality objective. GM Local authorities are to recommend mitigation controls in accordance with the most recent guidance and other actions in the GM

<sup>128</sup> This document can be found at: <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/1272/air-quality-action-plan-2016-21.pdf>

<sup>129</sup> This document can be found at: <https://www.the-ies.org/sites/default/files/reports/air-quality-planning-guidance.pdf>

<sup>130</sup> Key Priority Areas are defined as areas exceeding the UK air quality objective and tend to be adjacent to major roads and areas near the M60.



AQMA for new developments that contribute to the deterioration of air quality in AQMAs.

- 20.16 Good practice for air quality should be applied to all developments. Development should be designed to minimise public exposure to pollution sources for example by locating habitable rooms away from busy roads, or directing combustion generated pollutants through well sited vents.
- 20.17 In accordance with Policy T5 (Transport Assessments, Statements and Travel Plans), where development generates significant additional traffic, the provision of a detailed Travel Plan (with provision to measure its implementation and effect) which sets out measures to encourage sustainable means of transport (public, cycling and walking) via subsidised or free-ticketing, improved links to bus stops, improved infrastructure and layouts to improve accessibility and safety will be required. The provision of a Travel Plan should include measures to help reduce the impact of transport related emissions which are likely to have an impact on air quality (such as the provision of cycle parking and changing facilities).
- 20.18 Some developments may require an Air Quality Assessment where there is the risk of a significant air quality effect, either from a new development causing an air quality impact or creating exposure to high concentrations of pollutants for new residents. Where an Air Quality Assessment is triggered, it should show the likely changes in air quality or exposure to air pollutants as a result of the proposed development, including a review of monitoring data. Where monitoring is not currently undertaken, it may be requested to inform the application or to confirm the effects. The purpose of the assessment will be to determine the predicted impact of a development on local air quality, public health and/or the local environment, to help determine the appropriate level of mitigation from a development.
- 20.19 It is recommended that developers contact the council's Environmental Health team to confirm whether an Air Quality Assessment is likely to be needed in support of a future planning application. Air Quality Assessments will need to be proportionate to the nature and scale of development proposed and the potential impacts (considering existing air quality conditions), and because of this are likely to be location specific.
- 20.20 Where proposals have the potential to release significant odours or where a sensitive use is being proposed close to a wastewater treatment works or other sources of odour, applicants will be required to provide an Odour Impact Assessment. The Assessment must be carried out in consultation with the relevant statutory undertaker to confirm that there are no adverse amenity impacts on future occupiers or that the adverse impacts can be appropriately mitigated.
- 20.21 Odour can arise from activities such as wastewater treatment works, intensive livestock farming and some industrial processes. An Odour Impact Assessment will be required to accompany any proposal that would introduce new sources of odour close to sensitive receptors, or the development of sensitive uses close to existing sources of odour. The Odour Impact Assessment will be required to be undertaken by a suitably qualified person in accordance with good practice guidance and consultation with the relevant statutory undertaker.

Linked Local Plan Policies	T1, T5
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-S6

Protecting Our Local Environment Chapter Plan Objectives	PO6, PO8, PO9
---	---------------

Protecting Our Local Environment Chapter Monitoring Indicators	27, 28, 29, 30
---	----------------

## 21. Infrastructure and Delivery in Oldham

### Digital Infrastructure

- 21.1 In order to facilitate residents demand to access services digitally, Oldham Council are implementing a digital strategy, so that where possible and there is resident demand, end-to-end digital services are available. Much of the strategy focuses on what the council can do to improve its digital presence. However, for the digital infrastructure to be a success, there is a need for Oldham's digital fibre infrastructure to be strengthened so that homes and businesses can access digital connections that reflect current and future demand.

### Planning Obligations

- 21.2 Planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), commonly known as s106 agreements, are a mechanism which make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms, that would not otherwise be acceptable. They are focused on site specific mitigation of the impact of development. S106 agreements are often referred to as 'developer contributions' along with highway contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- 21.3 The common uses of planning obligations are to secure affordable housing, and to specify the type and timing of this housing; and to secure financial contributions to provide infrastructure or affordable housing. However these are not the only uses for a s106 obligation. A s106 obligation can:
1. restrict the development or use of the land in any specified way
  2. require specified operations or activities to be carried out in, on, under or over the land
  3. require the land to be used in any specified way; or
  4. require a sum or sums to be paid to the authority (or, to the Greater London Authority) on a specified date or dates or periodically.
- 21.4 A planning obligation can be subject to conditions, it can specify restrictions definitely or indefinitely, and in terms of payments the timing of these can be specified in the obligation.
- 21.5 If the s106 is not complied with, it is enforceable against the person that entered into the obligation and any subsequent owner. The s106 can be enforced by injunction.
- 21.6 In case of a breach of the obligation the authority can take direct action and recover expenses.
- 21.7 The planning obligation is a formal document, a deed, which states that it is an obligation for planning purposes, identifies the relevant land, the person entering the obligation and their interest and the relevant local authority that would enforce the obligation. The obligation can be a unitary obligation or multi party agreement.

## Policy IN1 Digital Infrastructure and Telecommunications

The council will support the provision of infrastructure that extends and improves digital connectivity across the borough, particularly where it provides access to 5G and gigabit-capable full fibre technology.

Where new telecommunication sites are proposed, including those for prior approval, proposals will be considered in accordance with the relevant Government guidance.

New masts or telecommunications equipment will be permitted provided that:

1. it has been demonstrated that there are no reasonable opportunities for sharing a site, mast or facility with existing telecommunications infrastructure in the area before new sites are considered;
2. the siting, height and design of the equipment will not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area in which is located, including the significance and setting of historic assets;
3. any building-mounted installations would be located and designed to minimise the appearance on the host building;
4. it can be demonstrated that the equipment will not cause any interference with other electrical equipment or air traffic services;
5. the development does not impact on the movement of pedestrians or cyclists or highway safety; and
6. provision is made for the removal of the structures and reinstatement of the site as soon as reasonably practicable after it is no longer required for telecommunication purposes.

All new residential and employment developments should enable Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) broadband infrastructure. Where it is demonstrated that FTTP is not viable, proposals should ensure that new development is broadband ready through the installation of appropriate ducting and equipment. Where no broadband provision is included, developers will be required to demonstrate through consultation with broadband providers those connections are not deliverable or viable.

### Reasoned Justification

- 21.8 The purpose of this policy is to improve digital connectivity across the borough. The council is committed to securing a high-quality communication infrastructure that is essential for growing a sustainable economy and for social wellbeing. Access to high quality digital infrastructure supports productivity and new business opportunities. It can also facilitate social inclusion, enable home working, diversify the rural economy, enhance educational and social opportunities, as well as improve access to a wide range of services that are increasingly provided online. It can also help to mitigate air quality impacts by reducing the need to travel. As technology advances the demand for new telecommunications infrastructure will continue to grow.

- 21.9 Fast and reliable broadband connections are critical to the economy and to our quality of life. The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the crucial role that connectivity plays in our lives, supporting huge increases in online interaction, remote working, and entertainment.
- 21.10 The government is committed to extending mobile geographical coverage across the UK and providing uninterrupted mobile signal on all major roads, and to be a global leader in 5G. [Part 16 of the General Permitted Development Order \(1995\)](#)<sup>131</sup> (as amended) allows telecommunications operators to install and replace certain types of telecommunications equipment, provided certain criteria are met without the need for planning permission.
- 21.11 Some smaller scale masts fall within 'permitted development' but require the 'Prior Approval' of the local planning authority. In these instances, the council can exercise control over the siting and appearance of telecommunications equipment in the interests of protecting amenity. Appearance of a mast includes its materials, colour and design, and consideration of siting will involve its impact on the ecological value of the site, the wider landscape and its proximity to buildings and housing and the availability of alternative infrastructure in the area. The criteria in the policy will be applied in these cases and for those more significant radio and telecommunications infrastructure that do not constitute permitted development.
- 21.12 Maximising the use of existing infrastructure and facilities will be prioritised, especially where new provision may result in adverse impacts such as landscape and visual considerations. because of the height and massing of masts and equipment. It is essential that the proliferation of new telecommunications structures is controlled, their visual impact appropriately mitigated, and opportunities for the rationalisation or screening of equipment already installed on existing masts, buildings and associated street cabinets provided.
- 21.13 Planning applications must be accompanied by detailed supplementary information which provides the technical justification for the proposed development, details of any consultation undertaken, the proposed structure and measures to minimise its visual impact.
- 21.14 The provision of gigabit-capable connectivity to new build developments is a crucial element of meeting the Government's ambitious broadband targets. These are fibre-based networks and certain advanced wireless networks capable of delivering reliable high speeds. The Government has therefore secured commitments from network operators, outlining their commitment to work with housing developers on providing gigabit-capable connections to all new build developments across the UK. These commitments alongside the amendments to the Building Regulations 2010 to require all new build developments to have gigabit broadband will ensure that 99% of all new homes will be able to be built with gigabit-capable broadband.
- 21.15 It is important that new developments must be 'future-proofed' with appropriate digital infrastructure that will meet existing and future communication needs. New sites (residential and non-residential) should be provided with in-built broadband infrastructure to enable the delivery of high-speed broadband services. It is essential that the council works with developers to make sure that the appropriate digital infrastructure is incorporated, including 5G networks (or future technologies as they become available).

Linked Local Plan Policies	n/a
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	JP-C2

<sup>131</sup> This can be found at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/596/schedule/2/part/16/made>

## Policy IN2 – Planning Obligations

Where developments would increase the need or demand for infrastructure, services and facilities, beyond the capacity of existing provision, new provision and/or contributions towards enhancing existing provision will be required.

Planning obligations will also be sought to secure the ongoing maintenance and management of provision where necessary.

Where a site is in multiple ownership it will be ensured that all developers make a proportionate contribution to any planning obligations required to enable the delivery of the whole site, as well as those obligations specific to their individual development parcel.

In some circumstances, it may be more appropriate for planning obligations to go towards new or enhanced provision off-site. For large-scale development or strategic sites subject to phasing it may also be appropriate to pool S106 monies raised from planning obligations, to contribute towards a piece of infrastructure or project that will support delivery of the whole site and its comprehensive development. The council will work with developers to facilitate the delivery of provision as appropriate.

Developers are encouraged to enter into early discussions with the council to discuss planning obligations and requirements.

Further information and detailed guidance in respect of planning obligations and requirements can be found in the policies listed in Table IN1 below. Please note, this is not an exhaustive list and other site-specific requirements may be necessary depending on the scale, nature and location of the proposed development.

### Viability

In some cases, a site-specific viability assessment may be submitted where the need for such is evidenced by a change in circumstance which could not have been evident in the whole plan Viability Assessment (that is to be prepared).

Where the site-specific viability assessment provides evidence to demonstrate that it is not financially viable to provide the level of planning obligations proposed, reduced planning obligations will only be permitted where:

1. The value of the planning obligations has been maximised having regard to likely viability;
2. A clawback mechanism has been incorporated into a legal agreement, where appropriate, to ensure that additional mitigation is provided if final development viability is better than anticipated in the initial viability assessment; and
3. The benefits of the development outweigh the lack of full mitigation for its impacts, having regard to other material considerations.

The viability assessment of any such application will be independently verified by the council, at the expense of the applicant.

## Reasoned Justification

- 21.16 New development should make a positive contribution to local communities and should not place unnecessary pressure on existing services, facilities, infrastructure and open spaces. As such, new development will be expected to contribute to new, and/or enhance existing, provision of services and facilities to ensure sustainable development.
- 21.17 Planning obligations, or developer contributions, are legal obligations attached to the land/ development and are secured by a planning agreement under section 106 of the [Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#).<sup>132</sup> The council will use planning obligations to mitigate any negative impact of new development on the wider community where they are a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; b) directly related to the development; and c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind.
- 21.18 Table IN1 details the policies in the Plan that may require the use of planning obligations. This is not an exhaustive list and other site-specific requirements may be necessary depending on the scale, nature and location of the proposed development.

Table IN1: Policies in the Plan that may require the use of planning obligations

Policy Number	Planning Obligation
H4, H5, H7	Specialist housing provision and affordable housing
N2, N3	Green Infrastructure
N4	Tree Replacement
CO1, CO2, CO3	Open Space, Sport and Recreation
N2	Biodiversity Net Gain
IN3	Social Value
CO6	Education Provision/ School Places
CO4	Cultural, Community and Health Facilities
T1, OTC3	Highways
CC2, CC4, T1, IN1	Infrastructure

- 21.19 In some cases, such as in terms of delivering particular types of affordable housing, it may be more appropriate to secure provision through planning conditions rather than planning obligations. This is set out where applicable in the relevant policy.

### Viability

- 21.20 A whole plan Viability Assessment will be carried out as part of the Local Plan and findings will inform preparation of the next stage Publication Plan. The assessment will

---

<sup>132</sup> The Act can be found at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/contents>



test all local plan policy requirements alongside anticipated development costs, to ensure that the local and national planning policy requirements are realistic, both individually and cumulatively, and accordingly do not undermine the delivery of the Local Plan.

- 21.21 It will be the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate whether circumstances justify the need for a site-specific viability assessment at the application stage.
- 21.22 Any such site-specific viability assessment should be proportionate, comply with national planning guidance and should refer to the methodology and approach set out within the whole plan Viability Assessment that is to be prepared. All assessments will be made publicly available as part of the planning application process, ensuring transparency in line with national planning policy.
- 21.23 The price paid for land is not a relevant justification for failing to accord with relevant policy requirements in the Local Plan. Landowners and site purchasers should consider this when agreeing land transactions.
- 21.24 The weight to be given to any such site-specific viability assessment is a matter for the council as the decision maker on a case-by-case basis, having regard to all the circumstances in the case, including whether the plan and the underpinning evidence remains up to date and any change in circumstances since the adoption of the plan.
- 21.25 Following the outcomes of the individual site-specific viability assessment, if the council is satisfied that there are overriding viability issues which prevent full compliance with policy requirements, it may be necessary to forgo a particular policy requirement to deliver another. Decisions in this respect will be made based the identified local needs and priorities, including but not limited to:
- a. the existing levels of affordable housing in a defined area;
  - b. the need for a particular type of open space to address a deficiency; and
  - c. and the delivery of a local scheme/ project.
- 21.26 Where development is permitted which does not fully comply with policy requirements on the grounds of viability a clawback mechanism will be incorporated into the legal agreement so as to enable the review of viability over the course of development, or after planning permission is granted, and to ensure that additional mitigation is secured where viability has been improved. This will ensure the fullest possible compliance with the Local Plan is secured.

Linked Local Plan Policies	H4, H5, H7, OTC3, CC2, CC4, N2, N3, N4, CO1, CO2, CO3, CO4, CO6, T1, IN1, IN3
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	n/a

## Policy IN3 - Delivering Social Value and Inclusion

**All development shall be located, designed, constructed and operated so as to maximise its social value and contribution to making Oldham more socially inclusive reflecting the Oldham Partnership's ambition of 'Uplifting Every Resident'.**

**All planning applications for major developments shall be supported by a Social Value Strategy.**

**A condition will be included on all relevant planning permissions to ensure the implementation of any approved Social Value Strategy, including requiring compliance with the relevant parts of the strategy to be confirmed prior to the commencement and occupation of the development as appropriate.**

**The Social Value Strategy shall identify how the development will support and deliver social value and inclusion, including demonstrating how the development will maximise its positive contribution as may be relevant, to:**

- 1. Reducing inequalities in Oldham and their adverse impacts on residents;**
- 2. The ability of local residents and vulnerable groups to fully participate in society;**
- 3. Create inclusive places through design, in accordance with Policy D1 and Policy D2;**
- 4. Economic inclusion, with positive consideration given to:**
  - a) Ensuring that access arrangements cater for all needs, including maximising opportunities for walking and cycling;**
  - b) Promoting on-site employment opportunities to Oldham residents;**
  - c) Providing training opportunities for Oldham residents;**
  - d) Utilising local supply chains; and**
  - e) Signing up to Greater Manchester's Good Employment Charter; and**
  - f) Good mental and physical health.**

**Further guidance on delivering social value may be developed through a supplementary planning document (SPD).**

## Reasoned Justification

- 21.27 Oldham Partnership's ambition for Our Future Oldham is to uplift every resident. What people need looks different in different parts of the borough, and there's no desire to make every part of Oldham look and feel the same. But as a resident of Oldham, the least you should expect are the basics of a fulfilling life, as well as some of the things that make life joyful. Ensuring new major development coming forward has regard to social value through the completion and implementation of their Social Value Strategy

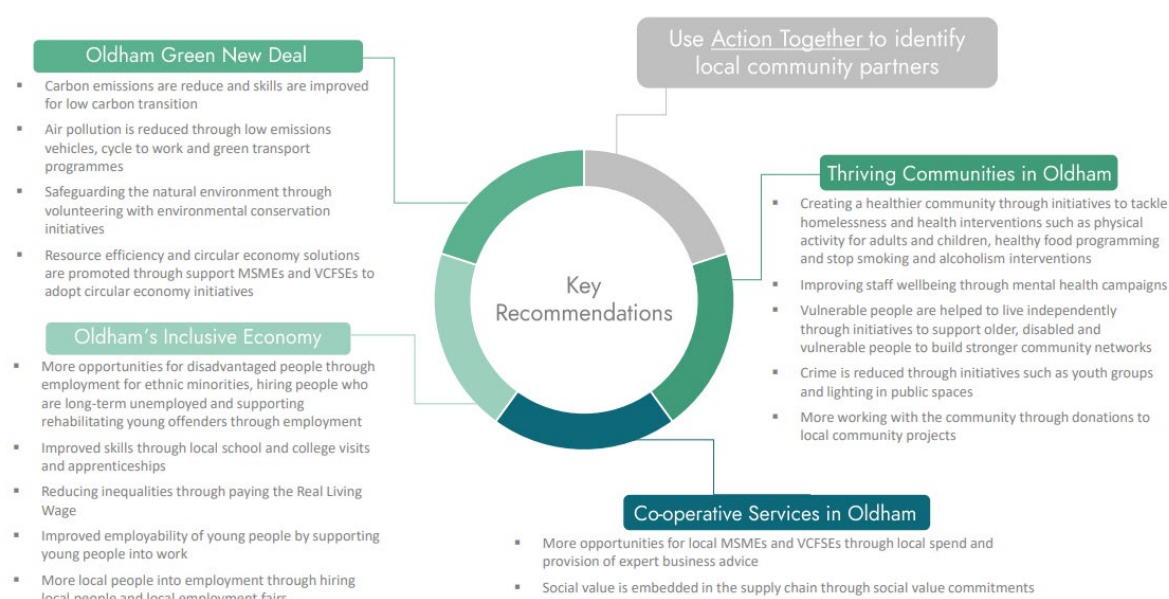
is a key part of how, through planning, we can help to deliver these ambitions and priorities.

- 21.28 A [Local Needs Analysis](#)<sup>133</sup> was carried out by the Social Value Portal on behalf of the council in 2022 with the aim to provide guidance of stakeholder, suppliers, developers, contractors and others working in Oldham to develop robust social value strategies. As part of developing a council-wide Social Value Policy an updated local needs analysis is being prepared. The updated analysis and findings will help to inform our approach to delivering social value through the Local Plan and the planning system. In the meantime, the recommendations coming out of the 2020 local needs analysis as shown below at Figure IN1 illustrate the importance of social value and the role that planning can play in achieving it.

---

<sup>133</sup> This document can be found at:  
<https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200195/business/1901/procurement>

Figure IN1: Recommendations from the Local Needs Analysis



21.29 As a Co-operative borough we want to build a fair and prosperous local economy where everyone does their bit and everybody benefits. We believe that fair employment is central to our ambitions for Oldham and will help to create thriving business with proud and committed staff. As part of demonstrating economic inclusion in the Social Value Strategy applicants are encouraged to be part of and sign up to [Greater Manchester's Good Employment Charter](#), a voluntary membership and assessment scheme that aims to raise employment standards across GM, for all organisations of any size, sector or geography.

21.30 Further guidance on what to include within a social value strategy and the type of measures that could be used to assist developers in identifying how development can maximise its social value may be developed through an SPD.

Linked Local Plan Policies	n/a
Relevant Planning for Everyone Policies	n/a

Infrastructure and Delivery in Oldham Chapter Plan Objectives	PO1, PO2, PO3, PO5, PO6, PO8, PO10
Infrastructure and Delivery in Oldham Chapter Monitoring Indicators	17

## 22. Monitoring

- 22.1 National planning guidance states that 'Local planning authorities must publish information at least annually that shows progress with local plan preparation, reports any activity relating to the duty to cooperate, any information collected which relates to indicators in the plan, and any policies which are not being implemented'.
- 22.2 As part of reviewing the Local Plan, the council will identify a series of local indicators that will be monitored to ensure effective implementation of the plan. These indicators will be monitored so as to identify a when a future review may be required.
- 22.3 As part of the Integrated Assessment (IA) of the Local Plan several proposed IA Objectives have been identified along with corresponding indicators. More information on the methodology used to identify these can be found in the Integrated Assessment of the Local Plan Review: Scoping Report Update 2.
- 22.4 Minerals and Waste indicators have been included for completeness, however they monitor the Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan Document (adopted April 2012) and the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan Document (adopted April 2013).
- 22.5 The 64 indicators identified are:
1. Single data list 160-00 Proportion of local sites where positive conservation management is being or has been implemented (IA1)
  2. Change in areas of biodiversity designations (i.e. SBI updates) (IA1)\*
  3. Reporting on delivery of BNG (IA1)\*
  4. Number of offsite BNG habitat created in the borough (on council owned land) (IA1)\*
  5. Percentage of tree cover (IA1, IA9, IA13)\*
  6. Number of planning applications that result in the gain or loss of identified open space (IA2, IA8)\*
  7. Quantity of identified open space per 1000 population (IA2, IA8)\*
  8. Accessibility to open space in the borough by typology (IA2, IA8, IA13)\*
  9. Number of major developments refused on landscape grounds (IA3)\*
  10. Number of heritage assets on the National Heritage List for England (IA4)
  11. Number of entries on the English Heritage 'Heritage at Risk Register' (IA4)
  12. Number/ extent of Conservation Areas (IA4)
  13. Number of listed buildings and number of buildings in conservation areas lost through new development proposals (IA4)
  14. Number of planning applications that have been given nine greens and above under Building for a Healthy Life (IA5)
  15. Number and type of developments permitted in the Green Belt (IA6, IA11)
  16. Number and type of developments permitted in Local Green Spaces (IA2, IA6)
  17. Infrastructure Funding: Total amount of money received secured through s106; Total amount of s106 receipts collected before the reported year but which have not been allocated; and Total amount of s106 expenditure for the reported year (including transferring it to another person to spend) (IA7)\*
  18. Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) remaining at 65 (IA8)
  19. Life expectancy at birth (IA8)
  20. Sports and Physical Activity Levels (Adults 16+) (IA8)
  21. Childhood obesity rates (IA8)

22. The number of new hot food takeaways approved within 400 metres of a principal entry point of a secondary school. (IA8, IA15)\*
23. Self-reported loneliness (IA8)\*
24. Number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flood risk and water quality grounds (IA9, IA10, IA13)
25. Number of new developments where agreed with the council incorporating Sustainable Drainage System (SUDS) to Ciria standard (IA1, IA7, IA9, IA10, IA13)
26. Water Framework Directive status of all waterbodies in the borough (IA10)
27. Number of planning applications with conditions attached relating to contaminated land (IA11)
28. Number of days in Greater Manchester where air pollution was moderate or higher (IA14, IA15)
29. Annual mean nitrogen dioxide (IA14, IA15)
30. Per capita emission estimates, industry, domestic and transport sectors (IA14, IA15, IA16, IA17)
31. Number of pedestrian or cycling casualties per year (IA5, IA15)\*
32. Travel Diary Survey: Main Mode all trips and Main Mode commute trips (IA16)\*
33. Percentage increase of adults cycling for 3 days a week (IA16)\*
34. Number of travel plans secured as a condition of planning permission (IA16)
35. Access to key services (IA6, IA8, IA14, IA16, IA17, IA18)\*
36. Proportion of fuel poverty poor (IA12)
37. Total amount of additional floorspace (office, industry and warehousing) by type square metres (sqm) gross (IA18, IA19)
38. Total Amount of employment floorspace (gross) on previously developed land by type (IA6, IA18, IA19)
39. Employment land available by type hectares (ha) (IA18, IA19)
40. Land developed for business and industry (IA18, IA19)
41. 'Health' of town centres (to be determined by assessing the uses and vacancies within each centre) (IA20)\*
42. Number of homes completed within the borough's centres (IA20)\*
43. Number of new cultural and leisure facilities permitted (IA21)
44. Indices of Deprivation (IA8, IA18, IA19)\*
45. Unemployment rate (IA18, IA19)
46. Percentage of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) (IA18, IA19, IA22)
47. State funded primary and secondary school capacity and forecasts (IA7, IA22)
48. Number of education related developments started and/or completed (IA7, IA22)
49. Qualification levels (aged 16-64) (IA18, IA19, IA22)
50. Plan period and housing targets; Net additional dwellings - in previous years; Net additional dwellings - for the reporting year; Net additional dwellings - in future years; and Managed delivery target (IA23)
51. Total completions on housing allocations and non-allocated sites (IA23)\*
52. New and converted dwellings – on previously developed land (IA6, IA11, IA23)
53. Development density in schemes of 10 dwellings or more (IA6, IA23)\*
54. Total housing completions by size and type on major sites (IA23, IA25)\*
55. Affordable housing completions by type and size (IA23, IA25)\*
56. Total completions of specialist housing provision (including older persons housing and housing for disabled people) (IA23)\*
57. Total completions for C2 housing uses (IA23)\*

- 58. Number of planning applications approved for Homes in Multiple Occupation (IA23)\*
- 59. Number of self-build, custom-build or community housebuilding plots delivered as part of development sites (IA23)\*
- 60. Number of vacant properties (IA6)\*
- 61. Net additional pitches (Gypsy and Traveller) (IA23, IA25)
- 62. Production of primary land won aggregates by mineral planning authority (IA24)
- 63. Production of secondary and recycled aggregates by mineral planning authority (IA24)
- 64. Local Authority Collected Waste (LACW) (IA25)



## 23. Glossary

**Accessible, Accessibility** – The terms 'accessible' and 'accessibility', as used in this document in relation to transport and other services, refer to the proximity of services and to the ability of all sectors of the community to use those services.

**Affordable Housing** - National Planning Policy Annex 2 defines affordable housing as housing that meets one of the following definitions:

- a. Affordable housing for rent – including Social and Affordable Rent (including Build-to-Rent or Affordable Private Rent). Rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy or is at least 20% below local market rent;
- b. Starter Homes (now replaced by First Homes) – homes for first-time buyers;
- c. Discounted Market Sales Housing – housing sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value; and
- d. Other affordable routes to home ownership – including shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low-cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy.

**Air Quality Management Areas** - Areas designated by local authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines.

**Amenity** - desirable features of a place that ought to be protected in the public interest.

**Ancient Woodland** - An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

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

**Biodiversity Net Gain** – a tool to contribute to the recovery of nature while developing land. It is making sure the habitat for wildlife is in a better state than it was before development.

**Care Leaver** - defined by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 as someone aged 16 or 17 who has been looked after by a local authority for a prescribed period, or periods amounting in all to a prescribed period, which began after they reached a prescribed age and ended after he reached the age of 16.

**Climate Change** - A change of climate, which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.

**Community facilities** – listed in national planning policy are uses such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

**Community Right to Build Order** - An Order made by the local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that grants planning permission for a site-specific development proposal or classes of development.

**Comparison Retailing** - The provision of items not purchased on a frequent basis, such as clothing, footwear and household goods.

**Conservation Areas** - Areas designated by the local planning authority which are considered of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

**Contaminated Land** - Defined in The Environment Protection Act Part IIA, Section 78A(2) as 'any land which appears to the local authority in whose area it is situated to be in such a condition, by reason of substances in, on or under the land, that: significant harm is being caused or there is a significant possibility of such harm being caused, or; pollution of controlled waters is being, or is likely to be, caused.'

**Convenience Retailing** - The provision of everyday essential items, such as food, drinks and newspapers.

**Deliverable** – National planning policy says to be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. In particular:

- a. sites which do not involve major development and have planning permission, and all sites with detailed planning permission, should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that homes will not be delivered within five years (for example because they are no longer viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans).
- b. where a site has outline planning permission for major development, has been allocated in a development plan, has a grant of permission in principle, or is identified on a brownfield register, it should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years.

**Derelict Land** - Land damaged by industrial or other development that cannot be put to beneficial use without prior treatment.

### **Design concepts and terms –**

- Character - relates to the distinct and recognisable features and qualities of an area, neighbourhood, or place. It includes the architectural style, historic significance, and visual and functional attributes that make a place unique.
- Form - relates to the shape, size, and overall design of buildings and developments. It encompasses the architectural style, massing, and overall aesthetic qualities of structures.
- Inclusive design - aims to create environments that are welcoming, accessible, and usable by everyone, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. It's a crucial aspect of creating an equitable and socially inclusive built environment, and it helps ensure that public spaces and facilities are designed to be enjoyed and utilized by a diverse range of people.
- Layout - the way in which buildings, open spaces, roads, and other elements are arranged within a development or site. It includes the organization and distribution of various components in a coordinated and efficient manner.
- Ongoing maintenance - the regular care, repair, and management required to keep buildings, infrastructure, and public spaces in good working order. It ensures that the built environment remains safe, attractive, and functional over time.
- Orientation - the positioning of buildings or structures in relation to the sun, wind, and surrounding context. It involves the direction in which a building faces and how it interacts with its environment.

- **Outside space** - areas of land that are not enclosed within a building but are instead open to the external environment. Outside space can include a variety of open areas, such as gardens, courtyards, public parks, plazas, playgrounds, and other outdoor spaces. These spaces play a significant role in urban and rural planning and development, as they contribute to the quality of life, environmental sustainability, and overall well-being of communities.
- **Quality** - in the context of planning, refers to the standard of design, construction, and materials used in a development. It assesses the overall excellence of the design and how well the development meets established design and sustainability criteria.
- **Usability** - the degree to which a building, infrastructure, or space can be easily and efficiently used for its intended purposes. It assesses how well a development or facility meets the needs of its users.

**Design Code** - A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.

**Designated heritage asset** - A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

**Employment Land** - Land allocated in Development Plans for business, industrial and storage/distribution uses.

**Farm Diversification** - The development of a variety of economic activities linked to working farms, designed to support farm income and use surplus land, e.g. forestry, leisure, tourism.

**Flood Risk Assessment** - An assessment of the likelihood of flooding in a particular area so that development needs and mitigation measures can be carefully considered.

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

**Green Belt** - Areas of land where development is particularly tightly controlled. The purposes of Green Belt are to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; to prevent neighbouring towns from merging; to safeguard the countryside from encroachment; to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and to aid urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

**Greenfield Land** - Land which has not been previously developed. It can include land which used to have built development on it but where little development remains; land where the development on it is limited by a planning condition which requires the land to be restored to its original pre-development condition when its useful life ends (i.e. a quarry); and land where development has been used for forestry or agriculture and that development is no longer needed for that purpose.

**Green Infrastructure** – A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

**Heritage asset** - A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage

interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

**Historic Environment** - All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

**Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)** - A ward-level index made up from six indicators (income; employment; health deprivation and disability; education; skills and training; housing; and geographical access to services). IMD can help to identify areas for regeneration.

**Infrastructure** - Services necessary to serve development, such as roads and footpaths, electricity, water, sewerage.

**Irreplaceable habitat** - defined in national planning policy as habitats which would be very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. The list currently includes ancient woodland; ancient and veteran trees; blanket bog; limestone pavements; coastal sand dunes; spartina saltmarsh swards; Mediterranean saltmarsh scrub; and lowland fens.

**Landscape Character Assessments** - A tool to identify and understand the factors that give character to the landscape and to help inform policy and decisions about how the landscape may change in the future.

**Local Green Space** - Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities.

**Local Housing Need** - The number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning guidance (or, in the context of preparing strategic policies only, this may be calculated using a justified alternative approach as provided for in paragraph 60 NPPF).

**Local Nature Reserves** - Sites designated under terms of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and owned, leased or managed under agreement by local authorities.

**Main town centre uses** - defined in national planning policy as retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

**Nature Conservation** - The protection, management and promotion of wildlife habitat for the benefit of wild species, as well as the communities that use and enjoy them.

**Nature Recovery Network** - An expanding, increasingly connected, network of wildlife rich habitats supporting species recovery, alongside wider benefits such as carbon capture, water quality improvements, natural flood risk management and recreation. It includes the existing network of protected sites and other wildlife rich habitats as well as and landscape or catchment scale recovery areas where there is coordinated action for species and habitats.

**Open Space** – All open space of public value which can offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

**Original building** – defined in national planning policy defines as “A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was originally built.”

**Peak District National Park** – As a designation was founded in 1951. The Peak District National Park Authority oversees the planning function of the Park. The statutory purposes of the Authority (as defined by the Environment Act 1995) are:

- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park;
- to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park by the public.

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

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

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

**Previously Developed Land** (often referred to as brownfield land) - Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.

**Provision that is suitable for older people** - set out in Planning Practice Guidance and includes Age-restricted general market housing, Extra Care Housing, Sheltered Housing/ Assisted Living and Nursing and Care Homes.

**Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites (RIGS)** - non-statutory sites selected to protect the most important places for geology, geomorphology and soils, complementing the network of legally protected Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). RIGS are selected for their scientific, educational, historical and aesthetic features.

**Renewable and low-carbon energy** - Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

**Self-build and Custom-build Housing** - Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purpose of

applying the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), is contained in section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act.

**Significance (in relation to heritage)** - the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

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

**Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's)** – Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. SSSI are the finest sites for wildlife and natural features in England, supporting many characteristic, rare and endangered species, habitats and natural features.

**Special Areas of Conservation** - Areas defined by regulation 3 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been given special protection as important conservation sites.

**Special Protection Areas** - Areas classified under regulation 15 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds.

**Strategic environmental assessment** - A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

**Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)** - Assessments carried out by local authorities which support the delivery of sufficient land for housing to meet the community's need for homes. These assessments are required by national planning policy.

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** – Documents which add further detail to the policies in the development plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

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

**Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)** - A range of techniques used to control surface water run-off as close as possible to its origin before it enters a watercourse. They are designed to improve the rate and manner of absorption by water of hard and soft surfaces, in order to reduce the total amount, flow and rate of surface water that runs directly to rivers through stormwater systems.

**Travel Plan** - A Travel Plan is a document that lays out the strategy for managing travel to and from a site and improving accessibility, particularly by sustainable modes, to reduce the impact of a site on the surrounding road network and to manage the use of local car parking capacity.