

Oldham

Local Plan

**Draft Local Plan:
Communities (including
Local Environment)
Topic Paper**

December 2023



Oldham
Council

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1. Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1 This is the Communities Topic Paper and is one of ten topic papers produced to inform the consultation on the Oldham Local Plan: Draft Plan.
- 1.2 All of the papers can be found on the [Oldham Council website](#)¹.
- 1.3 The topic papers set out how the preferred option for each policy under the relevant Draft Local Plan ‘Chapter’ has been developed. As such, they support and complement the Draft Plan consultation document as they provide a detailed explanation of the basis for each preferred policy approach. The policies are presented in a consistent format in each paper with sufficient information to provide a comprehensive appreciation of the background to, and development of, the preferred option.
- 1.4 The topic papers set out the national, regional and local planning context and then for each policy, or group of policies where relevant, the topic paper details how comments received to the Issues and Options consultation and relevant evidence have helped to shape the proposed policy approach. Including how this has also been informed by the findings of the Integrated Assessment. There are also details of further work that may be required to inform the next stage of the plan-making process – the Regulation 19 Publication Plan.
- 1.5 The preparation of a Local Plan must be informed by consultation and engagement as well as statutory processes, such as Integrated assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment, and address the requirements of national planning policy. These important elements of plan-making have, therefore, informed development of the Draft Local Plan and helped to shape the proposed policy approach. These supporting documents are available to view on the [Oldham Council website](#).

2. Context

- 2.1 This section sets out the key national planning policies that relate to Communities and which have informed the policy approach taken. It also looks at the regional context – in the main this is the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, however there may be other policies and programme of relevance, and local policies and programmes in particular how the policy or policies will help to Create a Better Place.

National

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.2 [National Planning Policy Framework](#)²(2023) (NPPF) has a presumption in favour of sustainable development for both plan-making and decision-taking.

¹ Available at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201233/local_plan_review/3095/draft_local_plan

² This website can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/12-achieving-well-designed-places>

- 2.3 Paragraph 8 sets out the overarching objectives to achieving sustainable development – the social objective is to ‘support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being’.
- 2.4 Chapter 8 'Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities' states that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:
- promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other - for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;
 - are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion - for example through the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high-quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and
 - enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and wellbeing needs - for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.
- 2.5 This chapter also states that to deliver social, recreational and cultural facilities and services for the community, planning policies and decisions should:
- plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
 - take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all sections of the community;
 - guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
 - ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernize, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and
 - ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.
- 2.6 In relation to open space and sport and recreation, paragraph 102 states that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.

- 2.7 Paragraph 103 states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:
- an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
 - b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
 - c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.
- 2.8 Paragraph 104 sets out that planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks.
- 2.9 Paragraph 99 sets out that it is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:
- give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and
 - b) work with school promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.
- 2.10 To ensure faster delivery of other public service infrastructure such as further education colleges, hospitals and criminal justice accommodation, local planning authorities should also work proactively and positively with promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to plan for required facilities and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.
- 2.11 Chapter 9 sets out policy relating to sustainable transport. In terms of accessibility, paragraph 108 states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:
- a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;
 - b) opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;
 - c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;
 - d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and

- e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places.
- 2.12 Paragraph 109 sets out that the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health.
- 2.13 Paragraph 110 states that planning policies should support an appropriate mix of uses across an area, and within larger scale sites, to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities. In addition, paragraph 114 sets out that in assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location.

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.14 The Planning Practice Guidance includes a section on communities evidence bases in plan making and decision taking.

Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space (2014)

- 2.15 This guidance sets out that open space should be taken into account in planning for new development and considering proposals that may affect existing open space (see National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 96). Open space, which includes all open space of public value, can take many forms, from formal sports pitches to open areas within a development, linear corridors and country parks. It can provide health and recreation benefits to people living and working nearby; have an ecological value and contribute to green infrastructure, as well as being an important part of the landscape and setting of built development, and an important component in the achievement of sustainable development (see National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 7-9).
- 2.16 It is for local planning authorities to assess the need for open space and opportunities for new provision in their areas. It goes on to set out the requirements in terms of planning for sport and recreation provision, including the need to consult Sport England in terms of needs assessments and relevant planning applications.

Healthy and Safe Communities (2019)

- 2.17 This practice guidance sets out that the design and use of the built and natural environments, including green infrastructure are major determinants of health and wellbeing. Planning and health need to be considered together in two ways: in terms of creating environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles, and in terms of identifying and securing the facilities needed for primary, secondary and tertiary care, and the wider health and care system (taking into account the changing needs of the population).

- 2.18 It defines that a healthy place is one which supports and promotes healthy behaviours and environments and a reduction in health inequalities for people of all ages. It will provide the community with opportunities to improve their physical and mental health, and support community engagement and wellbeing.
- 2.19 In terms of hot food takeaways, the guidance states that local planning authorities can have a role by supporting opportunities for communities to access a wide range of healthier food production and consumption choices. Planning policies and supplementary planning documents can, where justified, seek to limit the proliferation of particular uses where evidence demonstrates this is appropriate (and where such uses require planning permission). Planning policies and proposals may need to have particular regard to the following issues:
- proximity to locations where children and young people congregate such as schools, community centres and playgrounds;
 - evidence indicating high levels of obesity, deprivation, health inequalities and general poor health in specific locations;
 - over-concentration of certain uses within a specified area;
 - odours and noise impact;
 - traffic impact; and
 - refuse and litter.
- 2.20 In terms of education and school places, the guidance sets out that plans should seek to meet the development needs of their area, including community facilities such as schools. They should, at the most appropriate level, allocate sufficient suitable land for schools to meet the need anticipated over the plan period, taking into account needs that may cross local authority boundaries. Plan-makers will need to work with local authorities with education responsibilities and developers to coordinate the phasing and delivery of housing growth with the delivery of new school places to ensure that sufficient school capacity is available at the right time.
- 2.21 Precise site allocation policies provide clarity and certainty by identifying the total amount of land required for education use. Master planning of large developments with multiple developers can help to inform decisions about the appropriate scale and siting of new or expanded schools

Localism Act (as amended), (HM Government, 2011)

- 2.22 The Localism Act, 2011 sets out a number of measures to produce a lasting shift in power, away from Central Government and towards Local Government and local people. The four key measures within The Act are:
- New freedoms and flexibilities for local government;
 - New rights and powers for communities and individuals;
 - Reform to make the planning system more democratic and more effective; and
 - Reform to ensure that decisions about housing are taken locally.
- 2.23 An important function introduced under this measure, is the 'Community Right to Build'. This function gives groups of people in the local community the power to build new community-based developments, including housing, businesses, shops, playgrounds or community halls, providing they meet certain criteria. This right aims

to ensure that benefits of the development, such as profits from letting homes, remain within the community and can go towards other community functions.

Promoting Healthy Cities, Royal Town Planning Institute (2014)

2.24 The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) published Promoting Healthy Cities, a document tackling the role of planning in creating healthy cities. The report calls for the UK to develop more integrated strategies for healthy place making, gather greater intelligence on the social and economic determinants of health and reform and strengthen institutions to ensure integration of health policies. This process should involve a range of professions and community stakeholders.

Everybody Active, Every Day (Public Health England, 2014)

2.25 Everybody Active, Every Day is the national physical activity framework for England. The aim of the framework is to bring about real and long-lasting change using a long term, evidence based approach to embed physical activity into the fabric of daily life, making it an easy, cost-effective and 'normal' choice in every community in England.

2.26 The priorities of the framework are:

- Active society - Making physical activity part of the daily routine;
- Moving professionals - Thoughtful urban design, understanding land use patterns and creating transportation systems that promote walking and cycling will help to create active, healthier and more liveable communities; and
- Active environment - Creating the right spaces, including healthy environments to support health, recreation and wellbeing and encouraging people to use green space, playground and cycle lanes.

Get Active: a strategy for the future of sport and physical activity (2023)

2.27 The Strategy builds on 'Sporting Future' (2015), the government's previous strategy for sport. It aims to tackle high levels of inactivity and make sure that sport and physical activity is accessible, inclusive and sustainable. The Strategy sets out how the government will work together with the sport sector to ensure these aims.

2.28 Central to the Strategy is ensuring that children establish a lifetime of engagement with sport and physical activity, with the introduction of national targets for participation.

Uniting the Movement, Sport England (2022)

2.29 This is a ten-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity. It sets out five key issues to tackle over the ten years, including:

- Recover and reinvent – providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of a generation;
- Connecting communities – focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make places better places to live;
- Positive experiences for children and young people – sport and physical activity as a foundation for a long and healthy life;

- Connecting with health and wellbeing – strengthening connections between sport, physical activity and health and wellbeing so more people can feel the benefits of an active life; and
- Active environments – creating and protecting places and spaces for sport and physical activity.

Sport England Active Design – Planning for health and wellbeing through sport and physical activity, (Sport England, NHS, Public Health England & Department of Health, 2023)

- 2.30 Active Design aims to encourage and promote sport and physical activity through the design and layout of our build environment to support a step change towards healthier and more active lifestyles. It is supported by Public Health England and is part of collaborative action to promote the principles set out in Public Health England’s ‘Everybody Active, Every Day’ strategy, to create active environments that make physical activity the easiest and most practical option in everyday life.
- 2.31 Three Key Active Design objectives of Accessibility, Amenity and Awareness, underpin Active Design Principles:
- Improving Accessibility – providing easy, safe and convenient access to a choice of opportunities for participating in sport and physical activity and active travel for the whole community;
 - Enhancing Amenity – promoting environmental quality in the design and layout of new sports and recreational facilities;
 - Increasing Awareness – raising the prominence and legibility of sports and recreational facilities and opportunities for physical activity through the design and layout of development.
- 2.32 Drawing from the three key objectives, ten Active Design Principles have been identified:
1. Activity for all;
 2. Walkable communities;
 3. Connected walking & cycling routes;
 4. Co-location of community facilities;
 5. Network of multifunctional open space;
 6. High-quality streets and spaces;
 7. Appropriate infrastructure;
 8. Active buildings;
 9. Management, maintenance, monitoring and evaluation; and
 10. Activity promotion & local champions.
- 2.33 Working with local communities and stakeholders, Active Design can be explicitly promoted through Local Plans and has an important role to play in plan making activity by:
- Contributing to the evidence base for plans;
 - The use of the model in planning policy;
 - Inspiring and informing planning policies to promote healthy communities;
 - Informing the approach to the use of the CIL; and

- Assisting in identifying relevant health and physical activity indicators to inform the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of planning policy.

Public Health in Planning: Good Practice Guide, (Town and Country Planning Association, 2015)

- 2.34 The Public Health in Planning: Good Practice Guide, which brings together existing guidance and best practice examples, aims to promote engagement between public health and planning professions to deliver the best outcomes for communities.
- 2.35 The guide states that there are several opportunities for public health to integrate into planning, including:
- Engaging public health on major planning applications;
 - Involve health in infrastructure planning;
 - Require Health Impact Assessments for certain planning applications;
 - Include the measuring of planning's influence on health and wellbeing in monitoring practices.
- 2.36 The guide sets out best practice examples of integrating public health into planning including measures such as, requiring developments to provide open spaces, community and recreational facilities, encourage walking and cycling; controlling location and access to unhealthy food outlets; promote food production; and tackle pollution and crime and disorder through good design.
- 2.37 Related to this guide, the TCPA also have supporting guidance on creating healthy environments through integrating public health with planning, including the 'Tackling obesity through planning and development' (2016) report and the 'Planning healthy weight environments' (2014) report. These reports set out six key themes where planning can have a positive impact on public health, and create healthy environments and communities, these are:
- Movement and access - Walking and cycling environments, local transport services;
 - Open space, recreation, sport and play facilities - Open spaces, natural environment, leisure, play and recreational spaces;
 - Food - Food retail (incl. production, supply and diversity), food growing facilities, public spaces;
 - Neighbourhood spaces - Community and social infrastructure, public spaces;
 - Building design - Energy provision, quality homes and other buildings;
 - Local economy - Town and local centres, high streets, employment opportunities and accessibility.

Securing developer contributions for Education, (Department for Education, 2019)

- 2.38 This document outlines the Government's aims to enable Local Education Authorities (LEA's) to request S106 monies in relation to development that may have an impact on education provision in the local area. The document notes that the Government have removed the 'pooling' restriction associated with CIL and that LEA's in conjunction with the respective local planning authority should develop robust charging schedules in order to mitigate the impact of new development. The note states that any contributions should be based upon the following principles:
- Housing development should mitigate its impact on community infrastructure, including schools;
 - Pupil yield factors should be based on up-to-date evidence from recent housing developments;
 - Developer contributions towards new school places should provide both funding for construction and land where applicable, subject to viability assessment when strategic plans are prepared and using up-to-date cost information;
 - The early delivery of new schools within strategic developments should be supported where it would not undermine the viability of the school, or of existing schools in the area.
- 2.39 The document notes that it is not intended to replace local approaches which often provide detail on:
- The approach to seeking contributions for education from affordable housing.
 - Types/ sizes of homes that will be excluded from calculations of developer contributions.
 - Education projects developer contributions may fund. The minimum viable size of new schools.
 - Assumptions about the schools children from a development will attend, when assessing available capacity in affected schools.
 - Minimum surplus capacity to allow for fluctuations in demand and parental choice, not counted as available when calculating developer contributions.
 - Contributions 'in kind' (land and/or construction).
 - Requirements on size and suitability of school sites, including checklists, exemplar layouts and facility specifications.
 - Standard planning obligation clauses.
- 2.40 As local approaches to securing developer contributions for education are reviewed, they should take account of updated National Planning Practice Guidance, this guidance, and the Department's national methodology for the calculation of pupil yields from housing development (which is set out within section 7 of this topic paper).

Regional

Greater Manchester Strategy 2021-2031

- 2.41 The Strategy³ is Greater Manchester's plan for all communities, neighbourhoods, towns and cities which make up the city-region. It is a plan for recovery and renewal following the pandemic.
- 2.42 The Strategy aims to achieve the shared vision of 'Good Lives for All: that Greater Manchester is a great place to grow up, get on and grow old; a great place to invest, do business, visit and study' and how this will be achieved.
- 2.43 The Strategy builds on the work undertaken by the Greater Manchester Strategy - Our People, Our Place (2017), by ensuring that all the people in Greater Manchester have access to safe, decent and affordable transport, accelerate plans towards carbon neutrality, creation of greener homes and communities and better jobs and skills.
- 2.44 The Strategy focuses on three key themes of:
- A greener Greater Manchester – focusing on tackling climate change and working toward our carbon neutral aim;
 - A fairer Greater Manchester – addressing inequality and levelling-up, from access to good jobs, to transport, health and housing.
 - A more prosperous Greater Manchester – delivering economic growth which is more equitable and socially responsible, bringing opportunities and prosperity to all.
- 2.45 Supporting and enabling communities is central to achieving the aims of the Strategy.

Places for Everyone (PfE)

- 2.46 The Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan Document (DPD)⁴, 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.
- 2.47 The most relevant PfE policies relating to Communities include:
- **Policy JP-P1 Sustainable Places** – which sets out that all development, where appropriate, should be socially inclusive, well-connected to other places, particularly by public transport and digital infrastructure enabling everyone to take advantage of the employment, cultural and leisure opportunities, incorporate high quality and well managed green infrastructure with opportunities for recreation and outdoor play; and be well-

³ Available at: <https://aboutgreatermanchester.com/the-greater-manchester-strategy-2021-2031/>

⁴ Available at: <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-housing/places-for-everyone/>

served by local shops, services and amenities, including education and health facilities;

- **Policy JP-P3 Cultural Facilities** – which sets out that PfE will proactively develop and support cultural businesses and attractions in our cities and towns through a range of measures including, protecting existing heritage, cultural and community venues, facilities and uses and supporting new cultural venues in town centres and places with good public transport connectivity;
- **Policy JP-P5 Education, Skills and Knowledge** – which sets out that significant enhancements in education, skills and knowledge to benefit existing and new residents will be promoted, including by, enabling the delivery of new and improved accessible facilities for all ages, such as early years, schools, further and higher education, and adult training to ensure our workforce is ready to benefit from new employment opportunities and ensuring the delivery of sufficient school places to respond to the demands from new housing, such as through requiring housing developments to make a financial contribution to the provision of additional school places and/or set aside land for a new school, proportionate to the additional demand that they would generate;
- **Policy JP-P6 Health** – which sets out that new development will be required, as far as practicable, to: maximise its positive contribution to health and wellbeing, whilst avoiding any potential negative impacts of new development; support healthy lifestyles, including through the use of active design principles; and be supported by a Health Impact Assessment. It also states that, where appropriate, the provision of new or improved health facilities be provided as part of new developments (that would significantly increase demand) proportionate to the additional demand that they would generate;
- **Policy JP-P7 Sport and Recreation** – which sets out that a network of high quality and accessible sports and recreation facilities will be protected and enhanced, including by: creating a public realm that provides opportunities for play; setting out more detailed recreational standards and standards for provision for designated play areas in district local plans; requiring new development to provide new and/or improved existing facilities commensurate with the demand they would generate; and locating and designing recreation facilities so that they are accessible to housing; and
- **Policy JP-C1 An Integrated Network** – which sets out that the plan will support the delivery of a pattern of development that minimises both the need to travel and the distance travelled by unsustainable modes to jobs, housing and other key services and increases the proportion of trips that can be made by active travel. Several other policies within the ‘Connected’ chapter also support accessibility.

Greater Manchester Moving in Action 2021-2023 (GMCA)

- 2.48 The document sets out Greater Manchester’s shared ambition to achieve a major increase in the number of people engaged in physical activity, in line with Sport

England's Strategy 'Towards an Active Nation'. To achieve this Greater Manchester will adopt system-wide changes to address health inequalities and build the resilience of local communities.

- 2.49 It notes that the increasing physical activity is key to fostering social inclusion, contributing to the Covid-19 recovery, reducing health and economic inequalities, and contributing to environmental sustainability. It states that the design and layout of places across Greater Manchester play a vital role in how active people are. In the future, planners, urban designers, developers, transport planners, housing associations and health professionals will help to design and create environments which help people get more active, more often.

Local

The Oldham Plan

- 2.50 The Oldham Plan '[Our Future Oldham - A shared vision for 2030](#)'⁵ prepared by the Oldham Partnership, sets the direction for the borough.
- 2.51 The main aim of the Oldham Partnership, through the Plan, is to 'uplift every resident'. This includes having a well-rounded, enriching, life-long education, timely access to vital services to keep people healthy and safe, a clean, green and healthy environment, opportunities to get together, with regular activities to boost physical and mental health and community spirit and a local area that meets people's needs and makes them proud.

Oldham Council Corporate Plan

- 2.52 The Oldham Council [Corporate Plan 2022-27](#)⁶ 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 better start and skills for life
 - Better jobs and dynamic businesses
 - Quality homes for everyone
 - A clean and green future
- 2.53 Delivering against these priorities means that the council can help residents and make Oldham the best place it can be.
- 2.54 The Corporate Plan specifically references the need for healthy, safe and well supported residents.
- 2.55 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.

⁵ Available at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7589/the_oldham_plan_-_our_future_oldham

⁶ Available at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200146/strategies_plans_and_policies/2888/corporate_plan

Creating a Better Place

- 2.56 Through delivering Oldham Council's bold vision for Oldham Town Centre and the wider borough and the ambitions of Creating a Better Place⁷ by 2030 Oldham we be a place where business and enterprise can thrive and where people will want to live, visit, relax and work.
- 2.57 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, in relation to communities:
- supporting Oldham's ambition to be the greenest borough, creating a connected and accessible green infrastructure network;
 - improving the life changes and the health and well-being of Oldham's residents and local communities by setting a policy approach that seeks to maximise the potential health gains from development proposals and ensures negative impacts are mitigated; and
 - providing opportunities to learn and gain new skills by facilitating the delivery of new and improved education facilities.

Oldham's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2022)

- 2.58 The [Green Infrastructure Strategy](#)⁸ provides an up-to-date assessment of current Green Infrastructure provision and identifies future enhancement opportunities. It identifies seven priority themes for Oldham's Green Infrastructure, such as:
- thriving wildlife for Oldham;
 - carbon neutral Oldham;
 - healthy and active communities;
 - green access for all;
 - distinctive landscapes;
 - slowing the flow and a quality water environment; and
 - sustainable growth and green jobs.
- 2.59 Utilising spatial data, the Strategy highlights place-based opportunities aligned to local need and each of the priority themes and can be used to guide development decisions. These are shown on the Green Infrastructure Network and Opportunity Maps⁹.
- 2.60 The Strategy also sets out a step-by-step guide as to how to implement the strategy when considering a development proposal.
- 2.61 As part of the Strategy, an Open Space Study¹⁰ was carried out which assessed current provision of open space, sport and recreation within the borough and

⁷ 'Creating a Better Place', more information is available at:

https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201248/creating_a_better_place

⁸ Oldham's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2022), available at:

https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2183/oldham_green_infrastructure_strategy

⁹ Available at:

https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2183/oldham_green_infrastructure_strategy

¹⁰ Oldham's Open Space Study (2022), available at:

https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2184/open_space_study_documents_2022

identified future needs related to each type of provision. Further information in regard to the Open Space Study is provided within the open space policy evidence base below (section 4).

Oldham's Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2025

- 2.62 The Strategy provides a framework for the maintenance and improvement of existing outdoor sports pitches and ancillary facilities between 2015 and 2025. The purpose in terms of planning, is to be an evidence base to shape local planning policy, guide planning decisions on development proposals affecting playing fields and when appropriate, direct open space contributions to where resources are limited. The strategy covers football, cricket, rugby and hockey pitches and tennis courts, bowling greens and athletics tracks.
- 2.63 The Strategy aims to protect existing supply where it is needed, enhance outdoor sports facilities through improving quality and maintenance, and provide new outdoor sports facilities where there is demand.
- 2.64 It states that future local planning policy should seek to protect facilities and the scope to legally safeguard long term use of strategically important sites to the community. It reinforces NPPF and Sport England's policy on playing fields/ pitches, including provision for replacing lost provision and creating new provision.
- 2.65 An update of the Playing Pitch Strategy is currently underway and will inform the open space policy, as appropriate, at Publication Plan stage.

Oldham Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2030

- 2.66 The vision is Oldham residents are happier and healthier, they feel safe, supported and hey thrive in this vibrant and diverse borough,
- 2.67 The ambition is that people lead longer, healthier, and happier lives, and the gap in health outcomes between different groups and communities in Oldham, and between Oldham and England, is reduced. A demonstrable difference will be made to the average life expectancy and average healthy life expectancy of residents, and inequalities will be reduced.
- 2.68 Goals are set within the strategy including:
- Infant mortality will decrease so that the rate in Oldham is the same as for England as a whole (the gap was 2.3% in 2018-20).
 - Oldham will have the same percentage of children achieve a good level of development at the end of reception as in England as a whole (the difference between Oldham and England was 3.7% in 2018/19).
 - The percentage of people reporting high levels of anxiety will be smaller than the England average (this affected 24.7% of people in Oldham, and 24.2% in England as a whole in 2020/21).
 - The percentage of people who feel lonely will be significantly smaller than the national average.
 - (19.5% of people in Oldham reported loneliness in 2019/20, and 22.3% in England).
 - Oldham will have the same percentage of physically active adults as England as a whole (the gap was 6.3% in 2022).

Oldham Education Provision Strategy (2020-2024)

2.69 The strategic document provides the context and policy for the provision of education places for children and young people, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

2. Consultation Feedback

Regulation 18 Notification Consultation

- 2.35. To begin preparation of the Local Plan the council carried out a 'Regulation 18' notification between July and August 2017, through which we asked what the local community and stakeholders thought:
- a. the Local Plan should contain and what the key planning issues are for Oldham; and
 - b. what, in broad terms, should be the main aims of the Local Plan.
- 2.36. In addition, we published our Integrated Assessment Scoping Report and invited the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England to comment on the scope of the Local Plan. This was also available for the local community and stakeholders to view and comment on if they wished.
- 2.37. The main messages that came out of the Regulation 18 Notification consultation regarding communities were:
- There is a need to provide safe open space, including recreation facilities;
 - There is a need to protect green areas in densely populated areas;
 - There should be robust consultation where open space is being proposed for development;
 - There is a need to promote the benefits of open space and green infrastructure in relation to health and wellbeing;
 - There are concerns around development impact on social infrastructure, such as school places, health care, leisure centres;
 - There is a need to provide adequate provision of education to deal with problems of school's being oversubscribed;
 - There is a need to safeguard and promote cultural activities and venues;
 - There are issues of obesity, mental health and well-being, loneliness and inequalities across the borough; and
 - Housing development needs to be in accessible locations and next to public transport.

Regulation 18 Issues and Options Consultation

- 2.38. The Oldham Local Plan: Issues & Options consultation in 2020 identified communities as one of the key themes for the new Local Plan to address.
- 2.39. As part of the consultation, we asked the following questions with regards to open space:

- In terms of developer contributions to open space provision, should this be in the form of onsite provision in the first instance and contributions to offsite provision if this is not possible, or should an alternative approach be taken?
- What type of open spaces should be provided for local areas?
- How can the Local Plan ensure access to the wider countryside is enhanced?
- Should sites be allocated for new open spaces and if so should they specify a use e.g. play space, natural space, outdoor sports?
- Do you think new housing developments over a certain threshold should provide space for food growing, and should sites be identified for food growing?

2.40. Other questions that we asked in relation to the Communities chapter were:

- How should the Local Plan support the creation of healthy places and spaces? Should it mandate the introduction of Health Impact Assessments? If so, should this be for:
 - all developments,
 - all major residential developments or,
 - all major residential, commercial and industrial applications?
- How can planning support education provision in Oldham, should we protect some suitable sites for potential future education facilities/ services?
- Should the definition of community facilities be expanded to include other uses, such as pubs? If so, why? Do you have any other suggestions as to what could constitute a community facility?
- In relation to community facilities, how should the council deal with the loss of such facilities. Should it:
 - restrict them wholesale;
 - restrict them where there is no other similar facility within a certain radius;
 - or
 - require the submission of a written statement justifying the loss of the facility and detailing the efforts to continue its current use.
- Should the council deal with the loss of community facilities on a borough wide basis, or focus any subsequent policy on specific locations, if yes, what locations would you suggest?
- Should community facilities in rural locations, be subject to Article 4 Directions to limit their change of use under current permitted development rules?
- A spatial option question was also asked in relation to Health and Wellbeing on the following:

Should there be a policy which restricts the location of hot food takeaways:

- a. within 400m of a school; or
- b. in areas with high levels of obesity; or
- c. both?

- 3.41 We have reviewed the responses and the main issues raised in relation to communities are summarised throughout the remainder of the paper

3. Communities and the Draft Local Plan

- 4.1 Key policy areas have been identified that are addressed in this topic paper. For each of these, further detail is provided in the sections below on how comments received to the Issues and Options consultation and relevant evidence have helped to shape the proposed policy approach and how this has also been informed by the findings of the Integrated Assessment. There are also details of further work that may be required to inform the next stage of the plan-making process – the Regulation 19 Publication Plan.

4. Policy CO1 Protection of Existing Open Spaces, Policy CO2 New and Enhanced Open Spaces and Policy CO3 Open Space Standards

- 5.1 Policies CO1, CO2 and CO3 sets out the approach to protecting existing open space, sport and recreation facilities (collectively referred to as 'open space') (policy CO1); ensuring the enhancement of existing open space and securing the provision of new open space (policy CO2); and identifies the required standards, in terms of accessibility, quality, quantity and value, that open spaces should aim to meet (policy CO3).

Feedback from Issues and Options consultation

- 5.2 The consultation responses at Issues and Options in relation to open space (policies CO1, CO2 and CO3) are summarised below.
- 5.3 There was general support for new housing developments having to contribute towards the improvement of existing open spaces or the development of new open spaces, however several respondents notes that this should be based on local evidence of open space provision, particularly ensuring that areas in need of new or improved provision are prioritised. Several respondents also noted that greenspaces within built-up areas should be protected as they serve an important purpose in these areas especially.
- 5.4 Some respondents suggested that contributions to open space provision could be pooled at a community level (rather than site level) and the spending of such contributions could be informed by consultation with the local community.
- 5.5 Several respondents noted that access to open space and the wider countryside needs to be improved, including through the enhancement of public rights of way and access by public transport. and that open spaces should enable a variety of activities and informal recreation/play.
- 5.6 It was also commented on that the results of open space assessments should inform standards and be developed into a clear strategy.

Issues to be addressed

- 5.7 In terms of policies CO1, CO2 and CO3, the issues that need to be addressed through the Local Plan are set out below.
- 5.8 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.

Health and Wellbeing

- 5.9 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.
- 5.10 There is a need to improve the life expectancy of Oldham's residents which is currently below the national average and there is inequality in life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas of the borough. In addition, unhealthy behaviours and the presence of multiply long-term conditions are overrepresented among Oldham's most disadvantaged communities.
- 5.11 Oldham has an ageing population. There are many benefits of older adults engaging in physical activity, including lower risk of developing a long-term health condition, reduced risk of mental illness/ cognitive decline, help maintain ability to carry out the tasks of daily life, reduced risk of falls, improved mood and self-esteem and fostering social interaction and countering loneliness¹¹. As such there is a need to support older people in terms of staying active, as such access to open space provision plays an important role in enabling this.
- 5.12 In addition, there are issues with child health within Oldham – including higher than average levels of obesity for year 6 age children. Improved access to high quality open spaces can lead to increased participation in sport and physical activity and in turn lead to increased activity and improved health and well-being.

Green Infrastructure

- 5.13 Protecting open spaces and improving the extent and quality of open spaces can have a direct positive impact on the wider green infrastructure network. Open spaces form a key component of the borough's green infrastructure network. Supporting the protection and improvement of the borough's green infrastructure network can have many multi-functional benefits for health and wellbeing, landscape, sense of place/ local pride and also climate change in terms of improving air quality, reducing flood risk (through increasing flood storage and resilience), and sequestering carbon.

Development Pressure

- 5.14 Oldham's population is expected to increase over the plan period. There is a need to meet local housing needs and provide employment land to support the future growth

¹¹ Greater Manchester Active Ageing Programme, available at:
<https://www.gmmoving.co.uk/commitments/people-families-and-communities/active-older-adults/active-ageing-programme#:~:text=The%20programme%20aimed%20to%20work,the%20tasks%20of%20daily%20living>

of the borough. In this context, open spaces may become under pressure for development, as suitable land for development becomes finite. As such there is a need to ensure that planning policies support the enhancement of open space under threat from increasing development pressures and decreasing maintenance budgets for open space provision, recognising their important contribution to health and wellbeing and the wider green infrastructure network.

Evidence Base

Oldham's Open Space Study (2022)

- 5.15 As set out in section 2, Oldham's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2022) is supported and informed by an Open Space Study. The Study updated the previous Open Space Study (2006,2010), carried out to inform the previous Local Plan (The Core Strategy and Joint DPD).
- 5.16 The updated Open Space Study (2022) comprised an assessment of the quantity, accessibility, quality and value of Oldham's open spaces¹². It also identified open space deficiencies based on current (2021) and anticipated future needs (2037)¹³ (based on population projections) and set out recommended standards for quantity, accessibility, quality and value, based on national benchmarks and guidance¹⁴, for provision of open space. In some instances, due to the nature and characteristics of some types of open space provision it was considered that it was not appropriate to set a standard.

Quantity of Open Space

- 5.17 The Study identified that there were 1,159 open space sites with a total area of 1,578 hectares (ha) within the borough. Figure 1 below shows the identified open spaces.
- 5.18 The current population of Oldham is estimated at 238,984 people (as of 2021), as such the amount of open space equates to 6.61ha per 1,000 population. In 2037, Oldham's population is projected to increase to 254,829 people.

¹² Appendix C of the Open Space Study (2022) provides the full breakdown of the open space site assessment data, available at:
https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2184/open_space_study_documents_2022

¹³ The study was finalised and published in 2022, however the assessment of open space for the Study was carried out in 2021, as such the baseline for data presented within the Study is 2021. At the time the Study was prepared the anticipated Local Plan period was up to 2037, in line with PfE (submitted PfE Publication Plan 2021), as such the data analysis is based on a period up to 2037. Despite the proposed modification to the PfE plan period to 2039 which the Local Plan plan period is now based upon, it is considered that the Study still provides a long-term assessment of open space needs as is required to inform policies within Oldham's Local Plan.

¹⁴ See section 7 'Setting Standards' of the Open Space Study (2022) for further information on the identification of the open space standards.

Table 1: Open space provision, by typology, within the borough¹⁶

Open Space Typology	Description	Number of sites	Current amount of provision (ha)
Allotments and Community Gardens	Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.	36	14.93
Amenity Greenspace	Most commonly but not exclusively found in housing areas. Includes informal recreation green spaces and village greens.	383	90.14
Cemeteries and Churchyards	Cemeteries and churchyards including disused churchyards and other burial grounds.	78	83.94
Civic Spaces	Hard surfaced areas usually located within town or city centres.	22	2.18
Green Corridors	Linear natural infrastructure, such as trees and plants, that link up other green and open spaces to form a green urban network.	26	38.07
Natural and Semi-natural Greenspace	Includes country parks, nature reserves, publicly accessible woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands, wetlands and wastelands.	217	667.97
Outdoor Sports Facilities	Usually in the form of pitches or other sports provision, such as football, rugby or cricket pitches as well as tennis courts or bowling greens.	253	478.81
Parks and Gardens	Includes urban parks and formal gardens. Parks usually contain a variety of facilities and may have one of more of the other types of open space within them.	49	192.52
Provision for Children and Young People	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, multi-use games areas and skateboard parks.	95	9.54
Total provision			1,578.09

¹⁶ Appendix F of the Open Space Study (2022) provides a breakdown of open space typologies borough-wide and by ward, available at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2184/open_space_study_documents_2022

- 5.20 In terms of the quantity of open space provision, the Study proposed a quantity standard based on a review of existing open space provision and using best practice guidance.
- 5.21 The Study then assessed the current levels of open space provision and expected future levels of provision, against the recommended standard to determine whether there were any open space deficiencies in terms of quantity occurring now or likely to occur in the future. Table 2¹⁷ sets out the levels of provision (current and future) against the recommended quantity standard.

Table 2: Quantity of Open Space provision compared to proposed standard

Open Space Typology	Existing provision (ha/1,000 population)	Proposed Quantity Standard (ha/1,000 population)	Current (2021) Surplus/ Deficiency (ha)	Future (2037) Surplus/ Deficiency (ha)
Allotments and Community Gardens	0.06	No standard	n/a	n/a
Amenity Greenspace	0.38	0.46	-0.08	-0.11
Cemeteries and Churchyards	0.35	No standard	n/a	n/a
Civic Spaces	0.01	No standard	n/a	n/a
Green Corridors	0.16	No standard	n/a	n/a
Natural and Semi-natural Greenspace	2.80	1.95	0.85	0.67
Outdoor Sports Facilities	2.00	1.35	0.65	0.53
Parks and Gardens	0.81	0.4	0.41	0.36
Provision for Children and Young People	0.04	0.25	-0.21	-0.21

- 5.22 It was found that there is a deficiency within the current and future quantity of open space provision for amenity greenspace and provision for children and young people. Indeed, there is expected to be a decrease in all types of provision per 1,000 population over the next 15 years, as population is expected to increase by around 6.36%.

¹⁷ Adapted from table 28 'Existing Quantity Provision against the Proposed Quantity Standard' and table 29 'Future Quantity Provision against the proposed standard', pages 61-62, Open Space Study (2022).

Accessibility to Open Space

5.23 The Study assessed access to open space and identified a proposed open space standard. The Study assessed that it was appropriate to retain the open space accessibility standard, as was proposed within the previous Open Space Study (2006,2010) (and set out within policy 23 of the Core Strategy and Joint DPD, 2012), as it was considered to still represent an appropriate measure and reflect the needs of the community.

5.24 The accessibility standard proposed is shown within table 3.

Table 3: Proposed Open Space Accessibility Standard

Open Space Typology	Proposed Accessibility Standard
Allotments and Community Gardens	No standard
Amenity Greenspace	720 metres (15 minute walk)
Cemeteries and Churchyards	No standard
Civic Spaces	No standard
Green Corridors	No standard
Natural and Semi-natural Greenspace	Natural and Semi-natural) - 720 metres (15 minute walk) Strategic Natural and Semi-Natural over 20ha - 7.85km (20 minute drive)
Outdoor Sports Facilities	Outdoor Sport Facilities (Excluding Golf Courses) - 720 metres (15 minute walk) Golf courses - 12.63km (20 minute drive)
Parks and Gardens	Local Parks and Gardens - 720 metres (15 minute walk) Strategic Parks and Gardens of 15ha and above - 7.85km (20 minute drive)
Provision for Children and Young People	480 metres (10 minute walk)

5.25 To assess the accessibility to the borough's current open space provision against the proposed standard, accessibility maps were produced for each typology of open

space. These are available to view online¹⁸. A full explanation of the findings of the accessibility assessment are provided within section 5 of the Open Space Study.

- 5.26 The maps identified that there was good access to amenity greenspace in general across the borough, however there were gaps in access to provision within parts of Shaw and Saddleworth North and South particularly.
- 5.27 In terms of access to parks and gardens the maps show that there is fair access across the borough, however there are particular gaps in parts of Coldhurst, Shaw, Medlock Vale, Failsworth East, Failsworth West, Saddleworth West and Lees, Saddleworth North and Saddleworth South.
- 5.28 In terms of provision for children and young people, the maps identified that there was generally less coverage of sites across the borough, with inner Oldham having greatest access and the outer wards, in particular Saddleworth North and South wards, having more limited access.
- 5.29 For access to outdoor sports facilities, there was generally good access across the borough, however there were gaps in provision for parts of Royton North, Shaw and Saddleworth North and South.
- 5.30 Similarly access to natural/ semi-natural space was generally good across the borough. There were less gaps in access to this type of provision compared to any other open space typology, however there were some smaller gaps in provision within Saddleworth North and South in particular.
- 5.31 In general, there is good access to open space across the borough, however some typologies are more accessible than others e.g. there are distinct gaps in provision for children and young people and parks and gardens, whilst there is extensive provision of outdoor sports facilities and natural/semi-natural spaces. This generally reflects that formal provision such as that for children and young people and parks and gardens is less common than more natural types of provision such as natural/ semi-natural. It also reflects the general size of provision, whereby outdoor sports facilities and natural/semi-natural spaces can be large in size compared to provision for children and young people.
- 5.32 The accessibility findings also reflects the topology and landscape of the borough as eastern and northern parts of Shaw and western and north parts of Saddleworth, and to a lesser extent northern parts of Royton North, southern parts of Medlock Vale and southern parts of Failsworth East and West, where there are distinct gaps in several typologies of open space provision, are areas which are more rural in nature, have extensive amounts of agricultural land, include open moorland and/or have undulating topography. In these areas, access to formal open space provision may be limited however generally these areas have better access to countryside sites (such as Tandle Hill, Crompton Moor and Daisy Nook) or open countryside and moorland (including the Peak District National Park) where there is an extensive Public Right of Way network.

¹⁸ Open Space Accessibility Maps (by typology):

https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2184/open_space_study_documents_2022

Quality of Open Space

- 5.33 The proposed quality standard for open space is based on the Green Flag Award criteria (used to complete the quality audits). There is 8 Green Flag Award Assessment criteria, however for the purposes of Oldham's Open Space Study, the criteria of 'A Welcoming Place', 'Healthy, Safe and Secure' and 'Well Maintained', were used to assess each site audited.
- 5.34 'A Welcoming Place' assesses the signage, accessibility for a wide range of visitors, entrance presentation and the maintenance and definition of boundaries. 'Healthy, Safe and Secure' takes into consideration the safety and security of facilities, shelter from the weather, lighting and clear sightlines. 'Well Maintained' considers the overall cleanliness of the site and the soft and hard landscaping features present.
- 5.35 The assessment bandings used were as follows:
- Excellent - 90% to 100%
 - Very Good - 80% to 89%
 - Good - 70% to 79%
 - Fair - 50% to 69%
 - Poor - 0% to 49%
- 5.36 The standard proposed that all open space typologies should meet a quality score of 70% and above (good). It was considered that due to the nature of provision, the quality standard was not appropriate to apply to allotments and community gardens, cemeteries and churchyards and civic space, however these sites were still assessed for quality, as improvements may still be beneficial.
- 5.37 A total of 455 sites were assessed for quality. A detailed explanation of the quality findings is provided within section 5 of the Open Space Study.
- 5.38 The Study found that the majority of the borough's open spaces (56.7%) met the proposed quality standard of 70% (8.55% scored 'excellent', 18.46% scored 'very good' and 29.67% scored 'good'). Table 4 sets out the quality assessment findings by open space typology.

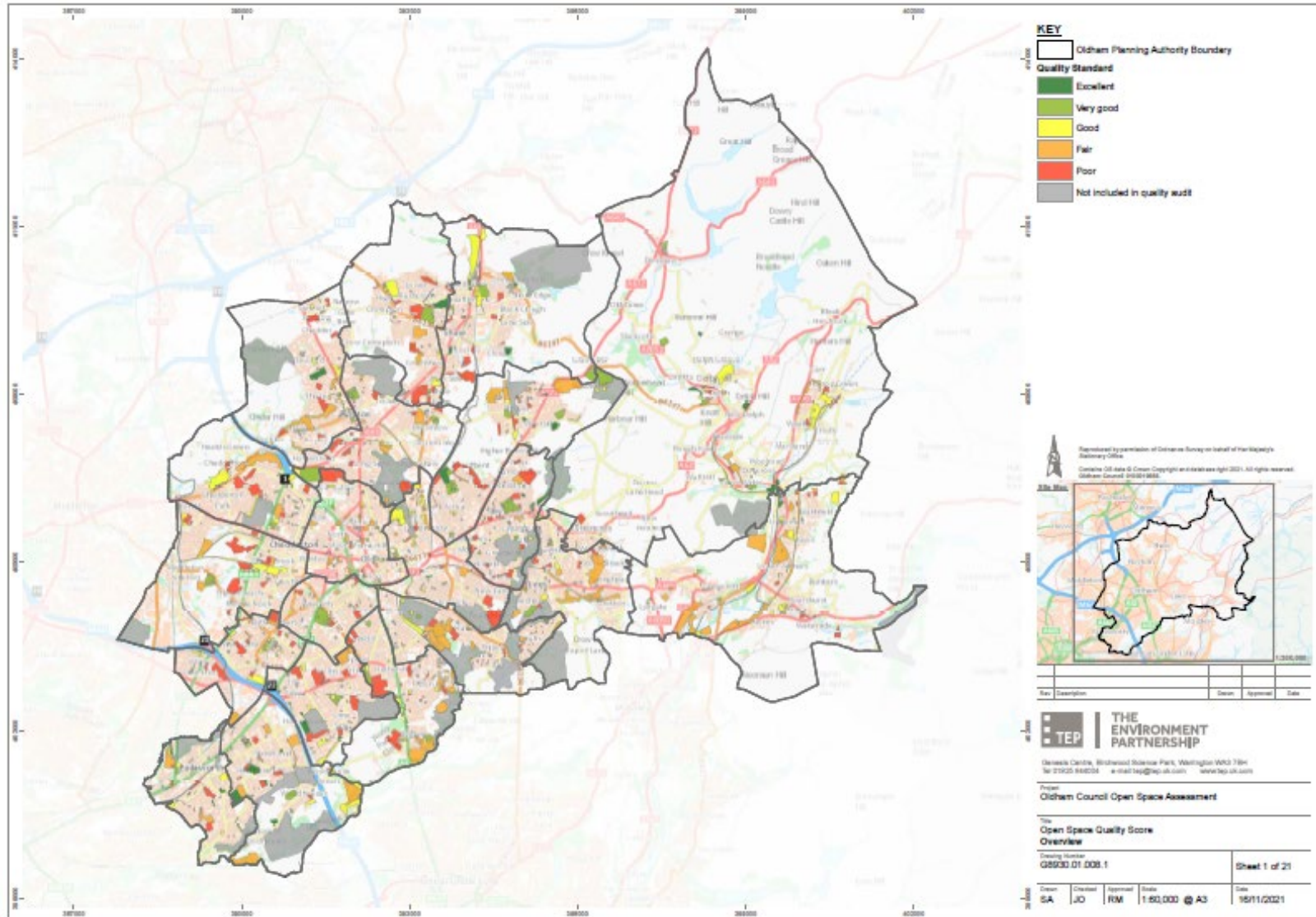
Table 4 Open Space Quality by Typology

Open Space Typology	Excellent Quality	Very Good Quality	Good Quality	Fair Quality	Poor Quality	Total Sites
Allotments and Community Gardens	0	0	2	0	0	2
Amenity Greenspace	7	29	43	45	5	129
Cemeteries and Churchyards	9	14	10	5	2	40

Open Space Typology	Excellent Quality	Very Good Quality	Good Quality	Fair Quality	Poor Quality	Total Sites
Civic Spaces	0	2	2	1	0	5
Green Corridors	0	1	1	16	2	20
Natural and Semi-natural Greenspace	8	7	29	72	20	136
Outdoor Sports Facilities	13	15	24	20	5	76
Parks and Gardens	1	9	21	2	1	34
Provision for Children and Young People	1	7	3	1	0	12
Total sites	39	84	135	162	35	455

- 5.39 As shown in table 4, the majority of open space provision is scored as good or fair quality. However, there are deficiencies in terms of quality, such as the majority of green corridors and natural/semi-natural open space does not meet the proposed quality standard (90% of green corridors are scored as fair or poor quality and 68% of natural/semi-natural spaces are scored as fair or poor quality).
- 5.40 Figure 2 shows the location of open spaces by their quality score. It shows that in many instances larger open spaces are not scored as highly in terms of quality compared to smaller open spaces. This could reflect that larger spaces require more budget to maintain compared to smaller sites, given their size or due to the type of maintenance/ investment required and the cost associated with it.

Figure 2: Open Spaces by Quality



Value of Open Space

- 5.41 An assessment of ‘value’ was also carried out on the borough’s open spaces as part of the Study. Open space value is closely linked to quality and is an additional measure of functionality and usage by communities.
- 5.42 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 assessment scored sites as ‘high (60-100%)’, ‘medium (40-59%)’ and ‘low (0-39%)’ based on the value criteria.
- 5.43 The Study recommended that a value standard of 60-100% (high value) be applied for destination or flagship sites¹⁹ and a standard of 40-50% (medium value) be applied for all other open space sites. The value standard ensures that 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.
- 5.44 Table 5 shows the value scores by typology. The value assessment found that 41.7% of sites were high value, 31.6% were medium value and 26.5% were low value. The greatest value scores range was for amenity greenspace.

Table 5: Open Space Value Scores by Typology

Open Space Typology	High	Medium	Low
Allotments and Community Gardens	0	0	2
Amenity Greenspace	35	36	58
Cemeteries and Churchyards	14	17	9
Civic Spaces	2	3	0
Green Corridors	12	8	0
Natural and Semi-natural Greenspace	68	41	27
Outdoor Sports Facilities	31	25	21
Parks and Gardens	23	9	2
Provision for Children and Young People	5	5	2
Total sites	190	144	121

¹⁹ As is explained in the following section, the council will advise in terms of identifying flagship/ destination sites, however in summary these are open space sites which could be of significant importance to the borough in terms of tourism or recreational use. They are open spaces which people may visit for an extended period of time. For Oldham, examples include: Alexandra Park, Waterhead Park or Westway in Shaw.

Proposed Policy Approach and Reasons

Policy CO1 Protection of Existing Open Spaces

5.45 The policy sets out that council will protect existing open spaces, including sport and recreation provision, in the borough. It states that the loss of open spaces²⁰ 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; 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 site²¹; 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.

5.46 It states that all new or improved provision should be provided in line with policies CO2 and CO3.

5.47 As the evidence and policy context has shown, 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. National policy sets out that open spaces should be protected from development. Open spaces may become under pressure from development. As such, the policy aims to ensure that the borough's existing open spaces are protected from development where appropriate, to ensure that the needs of the community can be met. It only allows for the loss of open spaces in exceptional circumstances and where provision would be replaced.

5.48 Therefore, the policy has been developed in line with national policy and local evidence, addressing the need to protect open spaces from development.

²⁰ Including strategic open spaces which will be identified on the policies map, and all other open spaces as identified in the Open Space Study 2022 and any subsequent update.

²¹ As identified by the accessibility standard and measured from the centre of the proposed development site and/or the site which would be lost.

Policy CO2 New and Enhanced Open Spaces

- 5.49 Policy CO2 sets out that 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.
- 5.40 It requires that 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 (having regard to the Green Infrastructure Opportunities identified within policy N3). It also states that 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.
- 5.51 Primarily, the policy requires that 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 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.
- 5.52 The reasoned justification of the policy provides further detail. In particular, it clarifies how the policy will ensure that new onsite open space provided as part of development should seek to improve open space deficiencies in the area in which the site is located. It also states that a developer calculator is being developed which will assist with the implementation of this policy, guiding 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.
- 5.53 The threshold of 'residential developments of 10 homes and above' as set out within the policy has been directly informed by national guidance, which sets out that major developments (defined as 10 homes and above by NPPF Annex 2 Glossary) can seek planning obligations for open space. It is considered that this threshold is appropriate to address local needs and meet identified open space deficiencies.
- 5.54 As such, the policy has been developed in line with national guidance and local evidence of open space needs, as is set out within the Open Space Study. It provides a clear strategy for seeking the provision of new and enhanced open spaces as part of major housing developments.

Policy CO3 Open Space Standards

- 5.55 Policy CO3 sets out the council's Open Space Standards which have been developed to ensure that open space provision is fit for purpose, of a high quality and contributes towards meeting local needs. Within the policy the standards for Quantity, Accessibility, Quality and Value are set out for each type of provision, based on the recommended standards proposed within the Open Space Study (as set out within the evidence base section for policies CO1, CO2 and CO3 above). The reasoned

justification of the policy provides further guidance as to how providers of open space should determine that proposed open space provision would meet the standards.

- 5.56 The policy has been directly informed by national guidance which sets out that local authorities should provide requirements in terms of planning for sport and recreation provision, and local evidence of need as is identified within the Open Space Study. As is set out within the Open Space Study, the standards ensure that open spaces are high-quality, fit for purpose and address local deficiencies in provision.

Integrated Assessment

- 5.57 Policies CO1, CO2 and CO3 scored either positive or neutral. No mitigation or enhancement was required to the policies as a result of the IA. The policies have not been screened in by the HRA.

6. Policy CO4 Cultural, Community and Health Facilities

Feedback from Issues and Options consultation

- 6.1 The consultation responses at Issues and Options in relation to cultural, community and health facilities are summarised below.
- The importance of protecting heritage assets and assets of community value was recognised with the view that the council should commit to maintaining the register of assets of community value.
 - In terms of the definition of community facilities there were mixed responses as to whether pubs should be included within the definition of community facilities. It was also considered that community facilities should also include churches, libraries and schools.

Issues to be addressed

- 6.2 There is the need for a policy framework to be in place that supports the provision of new cultural, community and health facilities and prevents the premature loss of such important local facilities.

Evidence Base

- 6.3 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. In terms of the Local Plan Policy CO4 is one way which the council's planning policy framework can positively contribute to this from a land-use perspective.

Proposed Policy Approach and Reasons

- 6.4 The policy outlines that the council will support the provision of new cultural, community and health facilities.
- 6.5 Policy CO4 does not define community facilities. Instead, the policy reverts to the definition in NPPF so as to remain consistent with the approach taken within national policy. These are defined in NPPF as including health, education and cultural

infrastructure (paragraph 20c)) as well as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship (paragraph 88d).

- 6.6 The policy sets out that loss of sites and premises used for cultural, community and health facilities will only be supported where:
- it is proved that the existing, and alternative use of a similar nature, is not economically viable or does have sufficient demand to support it's ongoing nature; or
 - where its loss is part of a wider proposal to improve service provision; or
 - where existing facilities nearby can adequately service identified needs.
- 6.7 Recognising that these are facilities and services which can play a vital role in our local communities 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.
- 6.8 Finally, the policy also reflects the need to ensure that the unmet need generated from future housing growth is met through the provision of new health facilities way appropriate, similar to providing for new education facilities.

Integrated Assessment

- 6.9 Policy CO4 scored a mixture of neutral, positives and significantly positive scores. There were 16 neutral scored and 10 positive or significantly positive. There were no enhancement or mitigation measures identified. The policies have not been screened in by the HRA.

7. Policy CO5 Education and Skills and Policy CO6 Securing Educational Places through New Residential Development

Feedback from Issues and Options consultation

- 7.2. There was support in general for policies that support delivering infrastructure to support new development – this could include new schools and training opportunities.

Issues to be addressed

- 7.3. 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.
- 7.4. 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.
- 7.5. There is a need to ensure the importance of ensuring access to high-quality education for all residents of Oldham. This could involve supporting the provision of schools, colleges, and other educational institutions that meet the needs of the community. There is also a need to ensure the availability of lifelong learning opportunities to enhance skills and promote continuous education. This could involve

supporting initiatives that provide education and training for residents at various stages of life.

- 7.6. Addressing the skills gap and promoting training programs that align with the needs of local industries could be a key aspect of this policy. It may aim to strengthen the connection between education and employment opportunities within the community.
- 7.7. With new residential developments, there is a potential increase in the local population. The Local Plan needs to address the challenge of ensuring that the educational infrastructure keeps pace with population growth to prevent overcrowded schools and inadequate educational facilities. There is a need for coordination between residential development planning and the provision of educational facilities. This will ensure that new communities have access to schools, colleges, and other educational resources from the outset.
- 7.8. By securing educational places through new residential development, the policy contributes to the overall well-being of the community. Accessible and well-planned educational facilities are essential for the development and growth of a community.

Evidence Base

- 7.4. Evidence for the provision of new facilities can be sourced by the [School Capacity Survey](#), guidance for which is given by the Department for Education.
- 7.5. With regards to securing educational funding through development 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.
- 7.6. The costs in the DfE scorecard ²²have 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
- 7.7. These costs will be reviewed and updated in-line with inflation through the lifetime of this Local Plan.

Proposed Policy Approach and Reasons

- 7.8. The overarching approach of Policy CO5 is to foster a community that values and prioritises education and skills development. This policy recognises the fundamental role education plays in personal development, employability, and community well-being. The approach is holistic, aiming to address the diverse needs of Oldham's residents across different age groups and educational levels.

²² This data can be found at: <https://department-for-education.shinyapps.io/la-school-places-scorecards/>

- 7.9. By emphasising the importance of education, the policy seeks to empower individuals within the community, providing them with the tools and knowledge needed for personal and professional growth. The policy recognises that a well-educated and skilled workforce is essential for economic growth. It aligns with the goal of enhancing the local economy by ensuring that residents have the necessary skills to participate in a rapidly evolving job market. CO5 aims to create an inclusive educational environment, addressing the diverse needs of the community. This inclusivity extends beyond traditional academic education to encompass lifelong learning opportunities for all residents.
- 7.10. The policy acknowledges the importance of aligning educational programs with the needs of local industries. This ensures that the workforce is equipped with skills that match the demands of the job market, fostering economic sustainability. Education is recognized as a key factor in building social cohesion. By providing accessible and high-quality educational opportunities, the policy aims to create a sense of unity and shared purpose within the community.
- 7.11. Policy CO6 takes a proactive approach to address the potential challenges associated with population growth due to new residential development. It recognises the importance of aligning housing development with the provision of adequate educational infrastructure. The approach involves strategic planning and coordination between the housing and education sectors to ensure that the community's educational needs are met.
- 7.12. With the development of new residential areas, there is an anticipation of an increase in the local population. CO6 acknowledges the need to plan for this growth and avoid potential strains on existing educational facilities. The policy underscores the importance of coordination between residential development planning and the expansion of educational facilities. This ensures that educational infrastructure keeps pace with the growing demand resulting from new housing developments.
- 7.13. CO6 aims to prevent overcrowding in existing schools by securing educational places in tandem with residential development. This proactive approach mitigates the risk of insufficient capacity and maintains a positive learning environment. Access to quality education enhances the overall liveability of a community. CO6 contributes to creating neighbourhoods that are not only desirable for residential purposes but also offer well-planned educational resources for residents.
- 7.14. By securing educational places in new residential developments, the policy supports the strategic location of educational facilities. This ensures that schools are conveniently situated within communities, promoting accessibility for all residents.

Integrated Assessment

- 7.15. The policies scored either positive or neutral. No mitigation or enhancement was required to the policies as a result of the IA. The policies have not been screened in by the HRA.

8. Policy CO7 Health Impact Assessments in New Development and Policy CO8 Hot Food Takeaways

Feedback from Issues and Options consultation

- 8.3. Feedback from the Issues and Options consultation was overwhelmingly positive. All comments received in relation to the introduction of Health Impact Assessments (HIA) agreed the proposed approach. However, both comments received suggested that all developments should be required to submit one.
- 8.4. Having considered the comments, it was considered not proportionate to introduce a requirement for all developments to submit a HIA.
- 8.5. With regards to a policy restricting the location of Hot Food Takeaways (HFT's), the responses were more nuanced. There was strong support from members of the community and parish councils for restricting the location of HFT's, however there was a strong response from industry against the proposal in relation to the suggestion of restricting them to areas 400m away from a primary school.

Issues to be addressed

- 8.6. Place and space have a significant impact on health and wellbeing. The ability of individuals to lead healthy lifestyles is deeply influenced by the environment in which they live. Good physical and mental health is related to good quality housing and developments, well designed street scenes, well laid out neighbourhoods, quality and efficiency in transport systems, opportunities to experience community, leisure and cultural services activities and access to green and open space.
- 8.7. National planning policy requires the development of strong, vibrant and healthy communities by providing a range of accessible services that reflect current and future needs and promoting healthy and safe communities.

Evidence Base

- 8.8. Oldham ranks as the 19th most deprived Local Authority in England it also has some of the highest levels of deprivation in England with 35% of areas in Oldham of areas among the 10% most deprived in England.
- 8.9. [The Oldham Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)²³ outlines a number of actions under five key priorities:
- To make sure that people in Oldham have the skills to look after their own health and wellbeing
 - To make sure that children in Oldham have the best start in life
 - To support people in Oldham to have better mental health and mental wellbeing

²³ This document can be accessed here:

<https://committees.oldham.gov.uk/documents/s136004/ITEM%2010%20-%20health%20and%20wellbeing%20strategy.pdf>

- To help more people in Oldham to stop smoking and prevent people from starting
 - To support people in Oldham to have more active lives
- 8.10. One of the key outputs of the [Oldham Health Inequalities Plan](#)²⁴ was to strengthen the use and outcomes of Health Impact Assessments for new development in Oldham. It is considered that the development of this policy is crucial to meeting this defined outcome of the Health Inequalities Plan.
- 8.11. There are significant inequalities in life expectancy in Oldham, Life expectancy is [12.0 years lower for men and 12.9](#)²⁵ years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Oldham than in the least deprived areas.
- 8.12. Cardio-vascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of death in England and Wales, accounting for almost a third of all deaths. Mortality rates from CVD have been falling in recent years due to a reduction in modifiable risk factors such as smoking. However, morbidity appears to be rising, costing the NHS an estimated £7,880 million in 2010.
- 8.13. People in certain parts of the country, and in certain parts of Oldham, are also more likely to have the condition than others, as it is strongly associated with low income and social deprivation. The under 75 CVD mortality rate in Oldham is [101.4 deaths per 100,000 compared to 92.8 in the North West and 76 in England](#)²⁶.
- 8.14. In Oldham, 31.9% of adults are classified as obese. This is higher than the Greater Manchester average (27.1%), the North West rate (27.5%), the England rate (25.9%). Oldham's rate of obesity is highest across Greater Manchester and average amongst its CIPFA neighbours. The latest Oldham rate of 31.9% is 34% higher than in 2015/16. Although there have also been increases regionally (+12.2%) and nationally (+14.6%), these have been considerably smaller.²⁷

²⁴ This document can be accessed here:

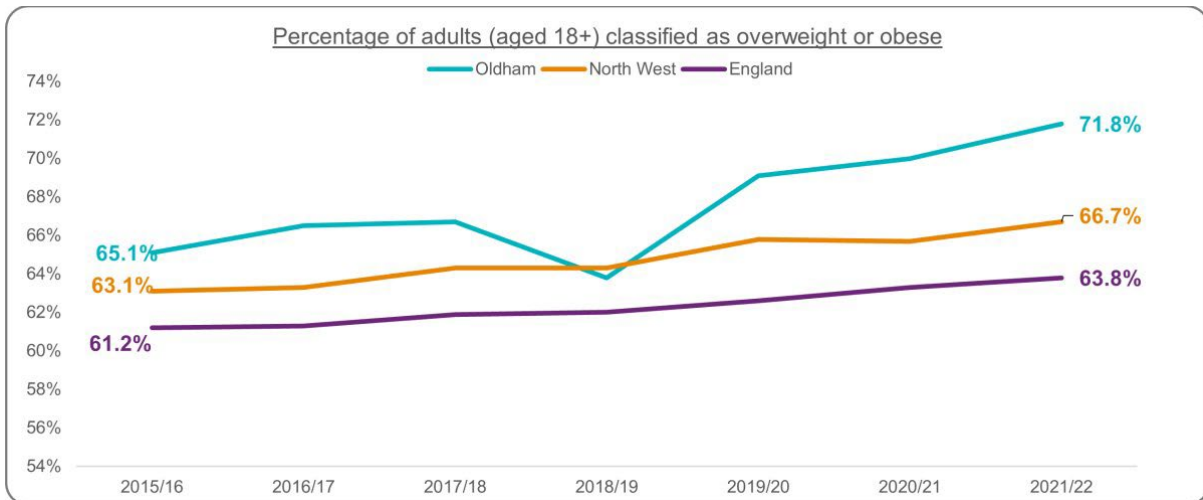
<https://committees.oldham.gov.uk/documents/s132898/HI%20Draft%20Plan%20-%20For%20HWB.pdf?nobdr=2>

²⁵ This data can be accessed here: <https://www.jsnaoldham.co.uk/>

²⁶ This data can be accessed here: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/data#page/1/gid/1938132701/pat/6/par/E12000002/ati/302/are/E08000004/yr/1/cid/4/tbm/1>

²⁷ This data can be accessed here: <https://www.jsnaoldham.co.uk/living-working-well/living-obesity/>

Figure 3: Percentage of adults classified as overweight or obese

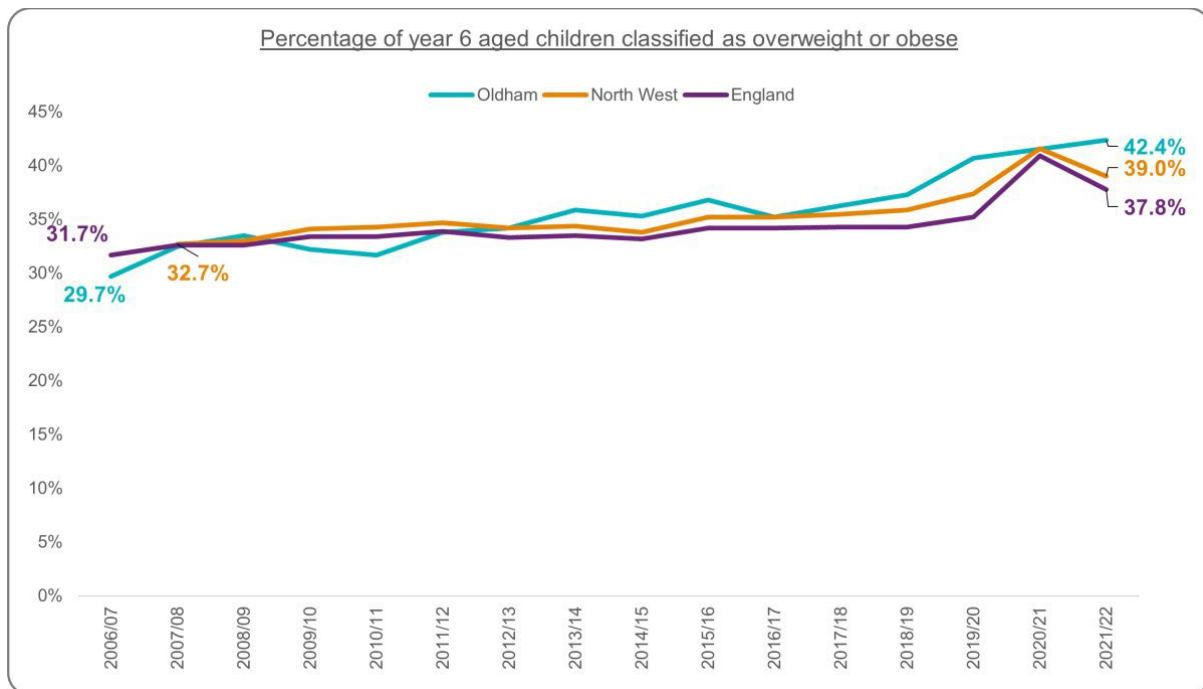


- 8.15. Latest data from the 2021/22 school year reveals 20.8% of reception aged children and 42.4% of year 6 aged children are classified as overweight or obese. For reception year, Oldham's prevalence falls lower than the Northwest (23.3%) and England (22.3%) averages. For year 6, Oldham's rate is higher than the Northwest (39%) and England (37.8%).²⁸
- 8.16. In 2021/22 the prevalence of overweight and obesity amongst Year 6 age children in Oldham was statistically higher than the Northwest and England rates. The prevalence of overweight and obesity in Year 6 aged children has been on an increasing trend since 2006/07 across Oldham, the Northwest and England. Between 2006/07 and 2021/22, the prevalence rate has increased by 42.8% in Oldham compared to increases of 19.3% both regionally and nationally²⁹.

²⁸ This data can be accessed here: <https://www.jsnaoldham.co.uk/starting/childhood-obesity/>

²⁹ This data can be accessed here: <https://www.jsnaoldham.co.uk/starting/childhood-obesity/>

Figure 4: Percentage of year 6 ages children classified as overweight or obese



- 8.17. Only 62.7%³⁰ of Oldham's adults are achieving the Chief Medical Officer's (CMO) recommended levels of moderate intensity physical activity. This is 150 minutes per week.
- 8.18. Physical inactivity is the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality and accounts for 6% of deaths. People who have a physically active lifestyle have a 20-35% lower risk of cardiovascular disease, coronary heart disease and stroke. Regular physical activity is also associated with a reduced risk of:
- diabetes;
 - obesity;
 - osteoporosis;
 - colon / breast cancer;
 - and improved mental health.
- 8.19. In older adults, physical activity is associated with increased functional capacities. The estimated direct cost of physical inactivity to the NHS across the UK is over £1.6 billion per year.
- 8.20. The CMO currently recommends that adults do 150 minutes (2.5 hours) of moderate activity per week. This should be done in bouts of 10 minutes or more. The overall amount of activity is more important than the type, intensity or frequency.

³⁰ This data can be accessed here: <https://www.jsnaoldham.co.uk/living-working-well/>

- 8.21. The information above demonstrates that there are particular issues around health inequality, over and above what one might find in the typical local authority area, that require decisive policy interventions.
- 8.22. The Planning Practice Guidance establishes that a health impact assessment is a useful tool to use where there are expected to be significant impacts (Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 005 Reference ID:53-005-20190722, Revision date: 22 07 2019).

Proposed Policy Approach and Reasons

- 8.23. Paragraph 92 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) promotes healthy, inclusive and safe communities by encouraging social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other. Neighbourhoods should be safe and accessible, to support the quality of life and community cohesion as well as enable and support healthy lifestyles, including the provision of safe and accessible sports facilities.
- 8.24. Planning Practice Guidance on creative Healthy and Safe Communities (PPG) refers to planning for an environment that supports people of all ages in making healthy choices, helps to promote active travel and physical activity, and promotes access to healthier food, high quality open spaces, green infrastructure, play, sport and recreation. The PPG confirms that planning can influence the built environment to improve health and promote healthy weight in local communities.
- 8.25. The PPG states that a health impact assessment is a useful tool to use where there are expected to be significant impacts.
- 8.26. It also has a specific section on using planning to create healthier food environment. It states that planning policies and supplementary planning documents can, where justified, seek to limit the proliferation of particular uses where evidence demonstrates this is appropriate (and where such uses require planning permission).
- 8.27. Policy CO7 prioritises public health by requiring a Health Impact Assessment for larger residential developments and those undergoing Equalities Impact Assessments. This proactive approach ensures that potential health risks are identified and mitigated early in the planning process. Larger residential developments can have a significant impact on community health. Requiring an HIA for such developments ensures a thorough examination of health implications, supporting the creation of developments that enhance the well-being of residents.
- 8.28. By mandating an HIA for developments requiring an Equalities Impact Assessment, the policy ensures a comprehensive examination of potential health disparities and impacts on marginalised communities. This aligns with principles of social equity and inclusivity.
- 8.29. The policy takes a strong stance by refusing proposals deemed to achieve negative health impacts overall. This approach demonstrates a commitment to preventing

developments that could have adverse effects on public health, aligning with the precautionary principle. However, recognising that health impacts may vary, the policy allows for a case-by-case assessment for other developments. This flexibility ensures that unique considerations are taken into account, contributing to a nuanced and responsive planning approach.

- 8.30. Requiring developers to align their proposals with wider health and well-being strategies ensures that developments are part of a larger, coordinated effort to promote community health. This approach integrates individual projects into a broader health framework.
- 8.31. With regards to policy CO8, the policy aims to strike a balance in town centres and shopping parades, allowing for the provision of hot food takeaways but limiting their concentration to preserve the diversity and character of commercial areas. The policy acknowledges the potential impact of hot food takeaways near schools and institutes conditions to mitigate any negative effects during school hours, emphasising the importance of a healthy environment for students.
- 8.32. By requiring demonstrations of no adverse impact on residential amenity, the policy safeguards the well-being of residents, addressing potential concerns related to noise, odours, traffic, and other disturbances. The policy considers a range of factors, including traffic, waste management, design, and potential impacts on crime and anti-social behaviour. This comprehensive approach ensures that hot food takeaways are integrated thoughtfully into their surroundings.

Integrated Assessment

- 8.33. Policies CO7 and CO8 scored either positive or neutral . No mitigation or enhancement was required to the policies as a result of the IA. The policies have not been screened in by the HRA.

9. Policy CO9 Creating Sustainable and Accessible Communities

Feedback from Issues and Options consultation

- 9.1 Comments received as part of the Issues and Options consultation included the suggestion that major developments should have access to all, or the majority of, services and that the level of public transport accessibility should be high.

Issues to be addressed

- 9.2 There is the need to promote accessible and sustainable transport choices and reduce the need to travel through ensuring new development is located in areas with access to local services and facilities.

Evidence Base

- 9.3 The policy provides further clarification on how we will create sustainable and accessible communities within the Draft Local Plan policies, in line with chapter 8 in NPPF on promoting safer and healthy communities, it is not addressed by any of the

standalone evidence documents. However, there are several pieces of evidence primarily related to the Homes and Transport Chapters which are relevant to this policy. The evidence is set out within the relevant topic papers.

Proposed Policy Approach and Reasons

- 9.4 The policy outlines that the council will support development proposals that are in sustainable and accessible locations. It states that major developments should achieve `Very High Public Transport Accessibility` or `High Public Transport Accessibility` and that in relation to residential development, be within 800m of at least three key services.
- 9.5 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.

Integrated Assessment

- 9.6 The policy scored either positive or neutral. No mitigation or enhancement was required to the policy as a result of the IA. The policy has not been screened in by the HRA.

10. Policy LE1 Noise Pollution and Vibration in New Development, Policy LE2 Ground Conditions and Contaminated Land and Policy LE3 Air Quality

Feedback from Issues and Options consultation

- 10.1 There was broad support in relation to local environment policies being dealt with on a separate basis.

Issues to be addressed

- 10.2 National planning policy requires development to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.

Evidence Base

- 10.3 These policies are not addressed by any of the standalone evidence documents. Site specific issues have been considered through the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, and the Sustainability Appraisal.

Proposed Policy Approach and Reasons

- 10.4 We propose that these policies will require that development does not lead to, or is subject to, significant adverse effects as a result of noise, vibration, odour and light pollution. It will detail how land contamination should be considered, to ensure that the land is suitable for the end use.
- 10.5 Proposals will need to be appropriate for the air quality in the area, but also address their impacts on air quality (including requiring Air Quality Management strategies to be prepared where appropriate).
- 10.6 Policies will apply appropriate protection to and from Hazardous Installations. Planning applications for the development of hazardous installations/ pipelines and development close to hazardous sites or pipelines will be referred to the Health and Safety Executive and/or the Environment Agency.

Integrated Assessment

- 10.7 Policy LE1 scored a mixture of neutral, positives and significantly positive scores. There were 15 neutral scored and 11 positive or significantly positive. Policy LE2 scored a mixture of neutral, positives and significantly positive scores. There were 18 neutral scored and 8 positive or significantly positive. Policy LE3 scored a mixture of neutral, positives and significantly positive scores. There were 17 neutral scored and 9 positive or significantly positive. No mitigation or enhancements to the policies were required as a result of the IA process. The policies were not screened in by the HRA.

11. Further Work & Next Steps

- 11.1 Following consultation on the Draft Local Plan, the council would review all representations received and consider whether any further changes should be made to the Our Centres and Oldham Town Centre policies.
- 11.2 Between the Draft Plan stage and Publication Plan stage further evidence will be provided which will inform the policies within this topic paper as appropriate, including:
- An update to Oldham's Playing Pitch Strategy, previously published in 2015, is currently being prepared. The updated Playing Pitch Strategy will provide the council with a clear evidence base and guide future provision and management of new and existing sports pitches in the borough in the context of national policy and local sports development criteria. The Strategy will inform planning policy within the Local Plan at Publication Plan stage.
- 11.3 In addition to the evidence listed above, a whole plan viability assessment will be carried out which will assess the policy requirements (and site allocations) within the plan, including those requirements identified within the community's chapter.