

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Environmental Services
PO Box 30
Oldham
Lancashire
OL1 1UQ

Our ref: SO/2006/000014/AP-
01/IS1-L01
Your ref:

Date: 06 July 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

Saddleworth Neighbourhood Development Plan – Regulation 16 consultation

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the submitted Saddleworth Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Environment Agency position

The preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan is welcomed, and the effort undertaken by Saddleworth Parish Council to engage with local communities and stakeholders is acknowledged.

- Drawing up a neighbourhood plan is a fantastic opportunity to build community resilience to climate change and make the local natural environment better. Opportunities include:
- New green spaces and improvements to public space through new development. This could include planting trees, creating rainwater gardens or enhancing local waterways for water quality and biodiversity.
- Recognising the value of certain environmental features within a plan area, e.g. a floodplain, wetland habitat or rivers. Identify these features and outline how you intend to protect them and improve them.
- Helping a community to manage and adapt to the risk of flooding and climate change by incorporating natural features and green space to manage and store water and supporting the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).

- Promoting energy and water efficiency measures for new builds. These measures will reduce the cost of construction for developers and help to reduce utility bills for future occupiers. This will also help reduce unsustainable water consumption and carbon emissions.

We also recommend your Plan takes account of relevant Local Planning Authority's policies, plans and strategies including Local Planning Authority's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, flood risk strategies (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/flood-risk-management-current-schemes-and-strategies>), and your local River Basin Management Plan (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/river-basin-management-plans-updated-2022>) as appropriate.

The information below explains the key issues we would consider in reviewing your Plan. We aim to reduce flood risk, while protecting and enhancing the water environment.

Infrastructure Delivery

We recommend that environmental infrastructure, including habitat enhancements, water storage areas, and green space, is considered if the Plan looks to fund local infrastructure.

Flood risk

Development must be safe and should not increase the risk of flooding.

Neighbourhood Plans should conform to national and local policies on flood risk: If a Neighbourhood Plan is proposing sites for development, please check whether there are any areas of Flood Zones 2 or 3 within the proposed site allocations. You can view a site's flood zone on the Flood Map for Planning on our website: <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>

If the proposed allocation is located within Flood Zone 2 or 3 you should consult the Flood Risk and Coastal Change pages of the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG): <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change/>.

Here you can determine whether the flood risk vulnerability of the proposed development and the flood zone are compatible. In accordance with national planning policy the Sequential Test should be undertaken to ensure development is directed to the areas of lowest flood risk taking into account climate change. This should be informed by the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning and the Local Planning Authority's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), if they have one. We recommend you contact the Local Planning Authority to discuss this requirement further.

If the Neighbourhood Plan proposes development in flood risk areas, any Strategic Environmental Assessment should include baseline information about the flood risks and include it as a key sustainability issue and as an objective. We would have concerns if development is allocated in this high-risk flood zone without the Sequential Test being undertaken. It is important that your Plan also considers whether the flood risk issues associated with these sites can be safely managed to ensure development can come forward. We can provide any flooding information which we have available – such as predicted flood levels and historical flood data. Please note that there may be a charge for this information. Please contact our Customers and Engagement Team at inforequests.gmmc@environment-agency.gov.uk for further details. In addition to the

above you should also check with the Local Planning Authority's Neighbourhood Planning team with regards to other sources of flooding (such as surface water, groundwater, sewers and historic flooding) as detailed in their Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), now has responsibility for local flood risk management and may hold flooding information that is not identified on

Please notify me of the Council's decision regarding the making of the Saddleworth Neighbourhood Plan.

Yours faithfully

Mrs SYLVIA WHITTINGHAM
Planning Advisor

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