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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Unitary Development Plan (or UDP for short) is a land-use planning document which the Council is required by law to prepare and keep under review.

1.2 Its main role is to guide the future use and development of land and buildings. It sets out a framework of policies to:
   - Control the location and quality of new development;
   - Encourage and stimulate new development, where appropriate;
   - Protect and improve the environment; and
   - Safeguard the Borough’s most important natural and built assets.

1.3 As such it is the main document against which planning applications are judged, through reference to the relevant policies of the plan and any other material considerations. **THIS PLAN MUST, THEREFORE, BE READ AS A WHOLE AND ALL RELEVANT POLICIES SHOULD BE TAKEN IN ACCOUNT.** The Council is obliged to make planning decisions in accordance with the plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. However, it also has an important role in integrating land use and transport planning, co-ordinating public and private investment and providing a policy framework to support bids for funding.

THE REVIEW PROCESS

1.4 The first Unitary Development Plan for Rochdale Borough was adopted in March 1999, at which time it superseded all previous local development plans, and looked ahead to 2001. Maintaining an up to date and relevant development plan is important if the planning system is to be dynamic and effective, and its policies are to be able to respond to changing circumstances. The Plan was therefore reviewed leading to the adoption in June 2006 of this replacement Unitary Development Plan that looks ahead to 2016.

1.5 The replacement Plan acknowledges that a significant number of the policies in the previous UDP (adopted in 1999) are still relevant and are working well, but that other policies and proposals have been already been implemented, or have been over taken by events. The Plan also takes account of National planning policy guidance which has continued to evolve, especially in terms of sustainability, urban regeneration and transport, and Draft Regional Guidance for the North West which set out a regional framework to guide UDPs and other strategic plans across the region. Also, Rochdale Borough’s own problems, opportunities and priorities have been changing and the replacement Plan has sought to reflect these.

1.6 Changes to the development plan system introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 mean that the plan’s policies will need to be incorporated into, or replaced by, the Local Development Framework (LDF) over the next few years.

1.7 The Local Development Framework will comprise Local Development Documents, to replace parts of the UDP over time in accordance with the Council’s published programme – the Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS will outline the content and timetable for the production of LDF documents to be prepared over the next 3-4 years. The LDS is available on the Council’s website at www.rochdale.gov.uk
CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION CARRIED OUT

1.8 To fulfil its purpose, the UDP must reflect the needs of the local community and consider the views of businesses, landowners and development interests. To inform the plan preparation, and in line with Government advice, the Council carried out pre-deposit consultations based around key issues. An Issues Paper was published by the Council in January 2000, summarising those factors influencing the review, the issues to be tackled and the policy approaches that need to be considered for tackling those issues. The Council took account of the comments made in response to the ‘Issues’ consultation together with other representations and views received in preparing the First Draft of the Plan.

1.9 The First Draft of the Replacement UDP was placed ‘on deposit’ for formal public consultation from 17 June to 29 July 2002. (The Council published with the First Draft, a statement of ‘pre-deposit’ consultation and public participation together with a Sustainability Appraisal of the Plan.) The Plan attracted 1162 formal representations, comprising 849 objections and 313 expressions of support for policies and proposals within the Plan. The Council took account of the representations and made changes that were incorporated in a second draft version of the Plan.

1.10 The Revised Deposit Draft (or second Draft) was placed on deposit for formal public consultation from 28 April to 9 June 2003. The Council received 1,429 formal representations, made up of 1,065 objections and 364 supporting representations.

1.11 The objections were considered by an independent Government inspector at a Public Local Inquiry, held between 16 March 2004 and 29 September 2004. At the close of the Inquiry there were 905 outstanding objections that had been considered by the Inspector. The Inspector’s report was received in June 2005 and, following the necessary statutory procedures for considering and making modifications to the plan to comply with the Inspector’s recommendations, the plan was adopted in June 2006.

FORM AND CONTENT OF THE PLAN

1.12 It is a legal requirement that the UDP is split into two parts.

1.13 Part One, which follows this introductory chapter, is a Written Statement of the Plan’s Strategy. This includes the background to the Strategy, and the Plan’s Aim, Key Objectives and general Spatial Policies. Other general and strategic (Part One) policies are contained in the Part Two topic chapters. This is so the strategic and general policy approaches can be seen against the more detailed policies and proposals. They are clearly distinguished from the Part Two Policies.

1.14 Part Two contains policies grouped by topic chapters. The Council’s Part Two detailed policies contain detailed proposals for the use and development of land, and in particular those which will form the basis for deciding planning applications. A reasoned justification or other supporting text follows each policy. (Throughout Part Two, the policies are distinguished by use of bold typeface, and have a unique policy title and number.) Part Two is completed by the Proposals Map (a map of the whole Borough) which shows the areas of land to which the policies and proposals relate. Other maps are included in the Written Statement but these are illustrative only and do not have the same status as the Proposals Map.

1.15 In the reasoned justification to some policies, reference is made to existing or proposed Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes. Under the new planning system these are called Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), and are intended to provide detailed guidance for developers and others to supplement the Plan’s policies. They are not part of the UDP, but do form part of the Local Development Framework, and where they have been prepared and approved by the Council following consultation they will be an important material consideration in making decisions on planning applications.
FURTHER INFORMATION

1.16 Further information about the UDP and its current status, and its replacement the Local Development Framework, can be obtained from the address on the back cover or from the Council's web site www.rochdale.gov.uk.
CHAPTER 2

RESOURCES AND IMPLEMENTATION

2.1 The Council cannot implement the Plan solely using its own powers and resources. The Council recognises that over the Plan period and beyond, it will continue to be faced with financial constraints and that it must make use of its limited financial resources together with external funding and grant assistance in a co-ordinated and prioritised manner. Increasingly, the successful implementation of the Plan’s objectives and policies depends on the participation of the private sector, the government and public agencies, other organisations and the voluntary sector in partnership with the Council and each other. In drawing up the Plan, the Council has sought to make specific and realistic proposals which are capable of being implemented during the Plan period and which make the best use of available resources.

2.2 One of the primary functions of the Plan is to provide a degree of certainty over where and what type of development will and will not be acceptable. This is essential to provide a stable background and confidence for statutory undertakers, public utility companies, businesses, organisations, developers and private individuals to make investment and development decisions.

2.3 The UDP sets out policies and proposals for specific sites and areas, for example allocations for new housing, employment, shopping and other uses. The successful implementation of these sites will depend on the actions of private businesses, and other agencies, organisations and institutions. The private sector is expected to be the major provider of houses, employment opportunities, shopping etc over the lifetime of the Plan. Other public, private and voluntary agencies will be responsible for, or will be able to assist the Council, in providing health, recreation, community and public transport facilities, and environmental improvements.

2.4 The Council recognises that in order to ensure that private sector development fully contributes to achieving the Plan’s objectives, the Plan must promote and stimulate investment as well as guide and control it. To do this the Council will involve the Rochdale Partnership and other agencies e.g. Rochdale Development Agency, Oldham & Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder to assist the development process, and tackle regeneration through their activities and access to funding opportunities. The Plan must also give clear guidance on where physical regeneration and land-use change should be concentrated and prioritised in order to guide development and investment and ensure the commitment and co-ordinated involvement of all implementing agencies. The Plan’s Spatial Objectives identify the broad approach in terms of areas of development potential and constraint, and the priority areas for regeneration, whilst more detailed policies indicate preferred uses and planning requirements. As well as including firm allocations for individual uses, the Plan also identifies opportunities for mixed-use development in order to provide flexibility for investors and developers. The Council will prepare supplementary planning documents and planning briefs to assist developers, use its own resources to acquire land and property and secure physical and infrastructure improvements to initiate and promote development.

2.5 The Council will take account of the UDP when co-ordinating and prioritising its own spending programmes and when making decisions on its own land and property holdings. The Plan will also be used to underpin bids (either by the Council or the other agencies involved) to secure grants or other forms of funding where these are needed to enable the successful implementation of UDP proposals. The Plan will also be used to lobby and influence other agencies to invest their resources in the Borough.

2.6 The Council’s most direct means of controlling and guiding development is through its powers to grant or refuse planning permission. These powers enable the Council to control both the location of new development and its quality. The Government has clearly stated that development plans should set out the
main considerations on which planning applications are decided and thus the Plan’s policies will provide a firm basis for rational and consistent decision-making having regard to both local circumstances and national policy guidance. In applying policies aimed at regulating development, expert advice may be sought from statutory undertakers and external agencies responsible for such matters as heritage conservation, nature conservation, rivers and flood risk and pollution. In granting planning permission, the Council may attach planning conditions or obligations to secure the provision of facilities or other improvements needed in connection with the proposed development. This might, for example, include the provision of open space, play equipment, affordable housing, highway or other public transport improvements.

2.7 Many of the policies' justifications provide information about how the policy is to be achieved or the proposal implemented.
CHAPTER 3

BACKGROUND TO THE STRATEGY

BACKGROUND

3.1 An effective Plan Strategy must take full account of the local context (the characteristics of the area) and the policy context (the national, regional and local policies that are relevant).

LOCAL CONTEXT

ROCHDALE BOROUGH AND THE WIDER REGION

3.2 Rochdale Borough is one of 10 districts in Greater Manchester and is the second largest with 159 square kilometres but with 205,400 people (2001 Census)) it has the second smallest population. Two thirds of the Borough is countryside, most of which is Green Belt.

3.3 The Borough shares a boundary with three of the other Greater Manchester districts: Oldham to the south, Manchester to the south-west and Bury to the west. Manchester city-centre is 12 miles to the south west of Rochdale and is widely regarded as the Regional Centre for the North West of England. It is a major attraction for residents of the Borough for shopping, leisure and employment, although for some there is now a rival attraction for shopping at the Trafford Centre to the west of the city.

3.4 To the north and east the Borough is enclosed by the South Pennine moors. From the hills the landscape is characterised by the valleys of the Rivers Roch, Spodden, Beal and Irk which feed into the Irwell in Bury and ultimately, the Mersey. The river valleys define the traditional settlement patterns and lines of communication.

3.5 Northwards is the Lancashire district of Rossendale within which Bacup, Rawtenstall and Haslingden are the main towns. Eastwards is the West Yorkshire district of Calderdale which includes the towns of Todmorden, Hebden Bridge and Halifax.

THE TOWNSHIPS

3.6 Rochdale itself is the largest town in the Borough with nearly half of the total population (97,400) and is the main centre for shopping, services and employment. The neighbouring towns of Bury and Oldham are of a similar size and are similarly important within their Boroughs. Accordingly, they limit the significance of Rochdale in those directions but its influence does extend north and eastwards to the closest parts of Rossendale and Calderdale districts. The largest concentration of employment uses outside the town centre is to west of the town near Castleton. Rochdale is the focus of significant regeneration activity, including housing market renewal.

3.7 Middleton is located half way between Rochdale and Manchester and is closely related economically and socially to Manchester. It is approximately half the size of Rochdale with 45,700 residents. The town centre includes a relatively modern indoor shopping centre but needs new development to draw back trade lost to surrounding areas. Employment is concentrated in and around the town centre, in east Middleton and at Stakehill Industrial Park, a major site to the north east of the town. The town contains a large social housing estate at Langley which suffers from a poor residential environment and a mismatch of type and tenure to meet future demand.
3.8 Heywood (29,200) is located midway between - and only three miles from - Rochdale and Bury and looks to both towns and Boroughs for employment, shopping and leisure opportunities. However, new retail development has boosted the town centre and Heywood Distribution Park is a major business location to the south of the town. Heywood is the only town surrounded by Green Belt and an attractive rural landscape with river valleys (eg. Roch Valley, Ashworth and Cheesden Valleys), moorland to the north, and flat farmland to the south. The extension of the East Lancashire Railway from Bury into Heywood offers new opportunities for leisure and tourism and related development. New regeneration strategies are being prepared for Heywood and the town centre.

3.9 Pennines Township (33,000) in the east of the Borough includes the smaller town of Littleborough and the villages of Milnrow, Newhey, Smithy Bridge and Wardle. Only Wardle is physically separate from the main urban area although there are a small number of hamlets eg Rakewood and Ogden. Littleborough has the largest town centre which is also largely a Conservation Area. The main employment areas are in Littleborough, Milnrow and Newhey. Pennines contains extensive areas of countryside to the north and east which include hills, moorland reservoirs and wooded valleys, and important natural habitats. Hollingworth Lake near Littleborough is a major visitor attraction for informal leisure and water sports. Watergrove Reservoir near Wardle is also a visitor attraction for nature conservation and informal recreation. Both areas give access to the South Pennine moors including stretches of the both the Pennine Way and Pennine Bridleway.

COMMUNICATIONS

3.10 In transport terms the Borough is strategically located on main Trans Pennine routes, not least the M62 Motorway between the Humber Ports, Leeds, Manchester and Liverpool including the Mersey Docks. There are three junctions on the M62 serving the Borough plus the intersection with the M60 and M66 Motorways near Middleton. The M60 Manchester Orbital Motorway passes along the Borough boundary with Manchester immediately to the south of Middleton and two junctions serve the town. Manchester Airport to the south of Manchester is accessible from the M60. The M66 Motorway northwards between Heywood and Bury connects Lancashire with Greater Manchester. Two junctions serve Heywood and one further north serves a route into Rochdale. Other than the motorways, main roads connect and go through the main centres.

3.11 The main railway station is to the south of Rochdale town centre with good rail links with Manchester city-centre, Oldham and Calderdale, Bradford and Leeds. Other stations are at Littleborough, Smithy Bridge, Milnrow, Newhey, Castleton and Mills Hill to the east of Middleton. There is a commitment to develop the Oldham line including Milnrow and Newhey stations as part of the Greater Manchester Metrolink tram system, with new stations at Newbold and along an extension into Rochdale town centre.

POPULATION

3.12 The population of the Borough is about 205,400. This is expected to increase to about 217,250 by 2021 with more marked increases in the elderly and South Asian populations. The vast majority of Borough's population is located within the urban area. A very small rural population is scattered between farms, some small hamlets and the river valleys

3.13 The number of households overall, and one and two person households in particular, are projected to increase over the next fifteen years.

THE LOCAL ECONOMY

3.14 Following the recessions of the 1980’s and 1990’s the Borough has benefited from growth and stability in the national economy. The local economy has continued to restructure and grow with companies exploiting the Borough's advantageous location, especially on the motorway network. However, the legacy of the Borough’s reliance on declining traditional industries means there are still major problems with the local economy in terms of its strength and diversity.
Background to the Strategy

3.15 Compared to the UK, the local economy has an over-representation of manufacturing with an under representation of financial and business services. This represents a double problem for the local economy because the trend nationally is for employment in manufacturing to fall, with growth concentrated within service sectors such as financial, business services and public administration.

3.16 Over 50% of the businesses, comprising 72% of employment, are in medium sized businesses (between 25 and 100 employees). 35% of manufacturing businesses are involved in exports making them vulnerable to international trade fluctuations. Business survival rates are slightly lower than the UK and North-West rates.

3.17 In terms of Department of Trade & Industry (DTI) competitiveness indicators, which provide a way of comparing the local economy to the regional and national situation and include the average rate of growth, average hourly earnings and business survival rates, the Borough under performs compared to the North-West and UK.

3.18 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita growth in the North-West and the Borough has failed to keep pace with that of the European Union or the UK. The NWDA’s Regional Strategy sets a target, supported by Regional Planning Guidance (RPG), to raise the level of GDP per capita to within 92% of the UK average by 2006.

3.19 Rural economic activities are not a major source of employment in the Borough and farming in particular (which is predominantly a part time low-income occupation) has declined in recent years. Mineral extraction, tourism, sport, recreation, and forestry are all low-key, and traditional industrial activities are changing and contracting. More farm diversification and the creation of new business opportunities, especially relating to tourism, are needed to maintain incomes and support the infrastructure and the natural and built assets on which a thriving countryside depends. Appropriate diversification and essential development should not be unduly constrained by Green Belt policies.

3.20 Rochdale’s economy is under-performing, and needs to expand, modernise and diversify in order to generate wealth locally and assist regeneration. (See Key Objective KO/1).

WORKFORCE AND EMPLOYMENT

3.21 Rochdale Metropolitan Borough has a working age population (16-59 women and 16-64 men) of 127,300. The average age of the population will fall between 2001 and 2011. However, projections indicate that the size of the resident labour force will stay at about 97,500 between 2001 & 2011.

3.22 Employment in the Borough has risen from 62,400 employees in 1991, the low point of 1990’s recession, to 84,900 (employees) and 95,800 (employees and self-employed people) in 2006.

3.23 The changing structure of the local economy, from manufacturing to service industries, is also changing the type of employment. Participation in the labour market is changing away from full time male employment, to part time female employment. Activity rates are increasing substantially among women, although they are still lower than those for men.

3.24 In comparison with the average for Greater Manchester, Rochdale has a lower proportion of people employed in professional, managerial and technical occupations but a higher proportion of semi-skilled and unskilled workforce. The lower skill levels of the workforce and the lower proportion of quality jobs are reflected in the generally lower levels of pay within the Borough. In 2006, the average gross weekly earnings in the Borough were £398.20 compared with the North West average of £409.7 and the England & Wales average of £447.50

3.25 Improvement of the skill levels in the Borough is strongly related to educational attainment and training. In 2001, 5.8% left school with no qualifications at all compared with a national average of 5.5%. Although this gap has narrowed, education and training need to focus on equipping people with skills they can take from one job to the next. Progress towards achieving national targets has been limited.
Background to the Strategy

3.26 Unemployment has continued to drop, from 8.9% (8524) in October 1994 to 3.4% (4368) in June 2006, however it is still consistently above both the national (2.5%) and Greater Manchester averages (2.8%). The level of unemployment varies considerably across the Borough with particularly high rates in the older inner area wards (10.2% in Central & Falinge in April 2006), compared with the lowest rate of 0.9% in Norden and Bamford. Some of the highest rates are found amongst residents of Asian origin. The Borough has a below average long term unemployed rate due to the increasing numbers of local temporary jobs.

3.27 Agriculture is the primary source of rural employment with over 250 farm holdings. These are mostly small scale, often part-time, operations based on sheep/beef, dairying with some pig and poultry rearing. Low incomes and in some cases a lack of family succession may result in longer-term uncertainty for many farm operations. Employment levels at some long-established industrial complexes in the Green Belt may decline unless these businesses are able to re-invest in buildings and infrastructure, expand or redevelop. Tourism, recreation, and landscape management are likely to be the main expanding areas for future employment.

3.28 The range and quality of employment opportunities, and access to jobs, therefore needs to be improved (See Key Objective KO/1)

HOUSING

3.29 Within the Borough 39% of the housing stock is terraced housing. A very high proportion of these properties are within the inner urban areas, which currently have an oversupply. Although some terraced housing remains popular, 29% of terraced houses are unfit, according to the 2003 Housing Stock Condition Survey, and prices for these properties remain lower than the rest of the region. The Survey also found that 5.1% of dwellings in the private sector were unfit for human habitation with a further 16.2% seriously defective. Although at present demand for social housing across the Borough is strong there is still a need on some estates to achieve more balanced housing market areas by providing wider choice in terms of housing type and tenure. The Housing Market Renewal Initiative and Heywood New Deal for Communities will provide a great opportunity to tackle these and other issues across the Borough. House price data shows that housing in the Borough is cheaper than the average for Greater Manchester. However, there are still a number of people who can not afford to buy or rent on the open market. It will be important therefore to improve the quality, choice and affordability of housing. (See Key Objective KO/2)

HEALTH

3.30 The Borough’s population suffers from generally poor health as indicated by the Standard Mortality Ratio (SMR). The SMR for the Borough is 119 (the national average is 100) compared with 110 for the North-West. As with the other social indicators there are great variances within the Borough ranging from 96 to 157. The UDP is limited in its ability to address health issues but overall its policies can assist in creating a cleaner, healthier environment. (See Key Objective KO/2)

DEPRIVATION

3.31 All of the above problems, in relation to the economy, employment, income, education, housing and health, have an adverse impact on levels of deprivation across the Borough. The 2004 Indices of Deprivation (ID 2004) show that the Borough ranks as one of the most deprived districts in England. In the ID 2004 Rochdale Borough ranks between 12th & 46th most deprived Local Authority in England out of a total of 354 Local Authority districts. The Indices used indicators across a wide range of topics topics including Income, Employment, Health Deprivation and Disability, Education, Skills and Training, Barriers to Housing and Services, Crime and the Living Environment. The geographical areas used for the ID 2004 are Super Output Areas (SOAs) which are areas containing on average around 1500 people. Of the 135 SOAs which make up the Borough, 35 are in the 10% most deprived SOAs in England and are spread across the Borough. There is therefore a need to promote the regeneration of those areas and communities that are the most deprived or in greatest need. (See Key Objective KO/2)
Background to the Strategy

ROCHDALE'S ENVIRONMENT

3.32 The appearance of older urban areas have suffered in a number of places from the effects of the decline of traditional industries, from deteriorating housing, and from general lack of maintenance and investment. Whilst area improvement programmes have dealt with both housing and environmental conditions in particular neighbourhoods, some older or disadvantaged housing areas still suffer from poor visual environments and from their proximity to industrial areas or activities.

3.33 Many older industrial areas have been the subject of regeneration activities but within most areas there are buildings of poor fabric with limited potential for modern uses to encourage investment and re-use. Town centres and those areas on the fringe of town centres also require continued investment and environmental improvement. Although the borough has relatively little derelict land, there are a significant number of degraded vacant or underused sites, within both urban and rural areas. The redevelopment or re-use of these is often difficult due to physical constraints (e.g. contamination), or for economic reasons.

3.34 Within rural areas, past activities, e.g. mineral-working, industrial activities, unsympathetic farm diversification and a general lack of investment and low incomes have left their mark on the landscape (e.g., dereliction and poor land management). Important issues for the plan include: the regeneration of rural landscapes and rural buildings; the future of developed sites and mill complexes in rural areas; and how rural uses and new rural enterprises can assist the protection and enhancement of the rural landscape as well as the rural economy.

3.35 Traffic congestion and its effects is also a problem in some parts of the borough although less so than in parts of the conurbation core. Poor air quality is an issue along the M62/60 motorway corridor and the A58 corridor (where emissions of nitrogen dioxide and fine particles are expected to exceed government targets if appropriate measures are not taken). An Air Quality Management Area has been declared as a first step in addressing this issue but the UDP will have a role to play in tackling air quality issues in general through its land-use and transport policies. In general, however, air quality in the Borough has improved in recent years as a result of regulating industry and the tightening of emissions standards for vehicles.

3.36 The quality and accessibility of recreational and natural open spaces within all of the borough's towns is currently an issue. Whilst the borough boasts attractive town parks and gardens and corridors or wedges of open land linking town and country, there is scope to improve the potential of theses areas and to establish good quality local spaces and recreational facilities in areas of deficiency.

3.37 Continuing to improve environmental quality through new development, better design, conservation and enhancement is vital not only to achieve a more attractive and healthier environment but also to also achieve regeneration and revitalise the economy. (See Key Objective KO/3)

PHYSICAL RESOURCES

3.38 Land is the Borough's most important physical resource. It is important for its development potential and its value for agriculture, biodiversity, recreation and the resources it contains e.g. soils, minerals and water. Although part of the Greater Manchester conurbation, more than two thirds of the Borough is open countryside. Most of the countryside is Green Belt and this includes agricultural land, woodland, natural landscape features areas of ecological value, mineral deposits, water catchment areas and reservoirs, and areas of heritage value.

3.39 Land available for development is limited, given the physical structure and topography of the area, the constraints of the Green Belt and the need to protect the countryside. Consequently, the Council believes that the developed area of the borough cannot increase significantly without harming the surrounding countryside or retaining the character of individual towns. Equally, however, it recognises the importance of catering for the development needs of the Borough's population. The Plan therefore needs to strike a balance between the two. To do this it needs to make the most effective use of urban land and property and focus attention on the re-use of derelict, vacant and underused land and buildings.
3.40 The Borough contains significant mineral resources which are a valuable raw material for many industries including construction. The main mineral deposits include sandstone and gritstone, sand and gravel, and workable resources need to be protected from development.

3.41 Soil quality in the Borough is generally poor in comparison to the most productive agricultural areas in the country. There is no grade 1 or 2 agricultural land which is the highest quality resource and approximately 8.9% of land is of grade 3 standard, which is primarily located in a relatively small area lying between Rochdale, Heywood and Middleton. Whilst the borough’s agricultural land is an important resource for grazing, equestrian use and limited crop growing, it is also important for helping to maintain the character and quality of the landscape, and biodiversity. Within the inner urban areas and in parts of the urban fringe, allotment sites are quite widespread.

3.42 Water is an important resource in the Borough for domestic and business supplies, biodiversity, water sports and countryside recreation and as a key feature of the landscape and industrial heritage e.g., river valleys and upland reservoirs. The principal rivers in the Borough are the Roch, Beal, Irk and Spodden. There is a significant legacy of pollution in many of the main watercourses but due to measures to reduce pollution discharges and clean up existing problems, water quality is generally improving. The Rochdale Canal runs through the Borough and is an important and valuable asset with respect to the recreational opportunities it offers, the focus it provides for urban regeneration and as an internationally important site for nature conservation.

3.43 The Borough has a range of natural assets that provide a potential resource for renewable energy technologies. Many parts of the Borough’s uplands are sufficiently windy to have potential for wind power generation, in particular the South Pennine uplands. There may also be potential to utilise water bodies for hydro-electric power, and to develop other technologies.

3.44 The borough has a diversity of landscape character and habitats. The South Pennine fringes to the north and east of the borough contain high moorland and upland farm enclosures. Scattered farms and in many areas, reservoirs and other water features are prominent in the landscape. River valleys extend into the core of the urban areas. To the south and west the landscape is at a lower altitude and consists of predominantly rolling farmscapes running between the towns of Rochdale, Heywood and Middleton and along the M60 Motorway corridor. The countryside around towns is important in separating and providing a setting for towns but also in providing a resource for the urban population to enjoy. However some areas need enhancement, better management and positive policies to encourage appropriate use.

3.45 The Borough has a rich natural heritage with a diversity of landscape character and habitats. Woodland cover is low amounting to only 2.5% of the land area but it remains an important feature of the landscape, in particular in the river valleys.

3.46 There are currently 3 Local Nature Reserves in the Borough and many other sites e.g. Watergrove Reservoir are actively managed for their nature conservation interest. There are currently 43 Sites of Biological Importance ranging from small urban sites to extensive areas of moorland. The South Pennine Moors on the eastern fringe of the borough also includes a part of the South Pennine Moors SSSI, Special Protection Area and Special Area for Conservation (SAC) based on its value for moorland birds. The Rochdale Canal is a SBI, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area for Conservation. In addition there are many sites and features of interest in both town and country such as rivers and streams, hedgerows, woodlands, ponds and meadows which create a mosaic of interest and a series of wildlife corridors throughout the borough.

3.47 With regard to the built heritage, there are currently 332 listed buildings in the borough, 3 scheduled ancient monuments and 16 conservation areas. Just over half the listed buildings are in rural areas, and slightly more than half the conservation areas are in urban areas. A quarter of the borough's listed buildings are at risk through lack of occupancy or structural decline and new uses and investment is essential if those buildings are to survive.
3.48 It is important that these physical resources are prudently used, protected or managed through a sustainable approach to development and land-use. (see Key Objective KO/4)

POLICY CONTEXT

3.49 In preparing this Plan the Council has taken into account national and regional planning policy issued by the Government, and relevant local strategies prepared by the Council and its partners.

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POLICY

3.50 The Council has taken account of national planning policy as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs). Where relevant, the reasoned justifications to individual policies make reference to the PPGs that have influenced them.

3.51 The Plan has been prepared in conformity with Regional Planning Guidance for the North-West (RPG 13) as revised in March 2003. This provides a development framework for the North-West up to 2016 but will be replaced by the Regional Spatial Strategy in 2007. The primary aims of RPG are to: promote the regeneration of the conurbation; increase the attractiveness of major cities and towns for new development; and improve the transport infrastructure to make urban areas more accessible, especially by public transport, walking and cycling.

3.52 RPG identifies Rochdale Borough as part of the Mersey Belt. The Mersey Belt is targeted as a Regeneration Priority Area and a significant proportion of development and urban renaissance resources will be concentrated in the conurbations of Greater Manchester and Merseyside.

3.53 Pending the revision of RPG the ten Greater Manchester councils have prepared a Strategic Planning Framework for the County. Rochdale Council has endorsed this Framework and used it to guide the UDP Review.

3.54 Account has also been taken of the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan. The UDP’s land use and accessibility policies are compatible with LTP objectives, and specific allocations have been included in the UDP in support of LTP priorities.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – THE KEY PRIORITY

3.55 The Government expects that the planning system will make a substantial contribution to the achievement of ‘sustainable development’. Sustainable development is described as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs". In order to achieve sustainable development, four priorities have been identified which need to be met at the same time, in the UK and the world as a whole:

- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment;
- Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
- Effective protection of the environment; and
- Prudent use of natural resources.

3.56 The Government expects to see Plans appraised for their ‘sustainability’ and that such appraisals are published with the Plan. Such an appraisal has been carried out in parallel with this first deposit plan and published with it.

THE COMMUNITY PLAN AND OTHER LOCAL STRATEGIES

3.57 The Council has prepared a Community Plan ‘Pride of Place’ in partnership with local residents, the business community and a wide range of public and voluntary organisations. Looking ahead to 2021, it sets out a vision for the future, and provides a partnership framework for promoting and improving the economic,
Background to the Strategy

social and environmental wellbeing of the Borough. As such, it sets the strategic context and key priorities for all other Council strategies and plans, including the UDP Review.

3.58 The Community Plan has 12 aims:

- Well maintained and accessible parks, open spaces and countryside;
- Personal safety and freedom from crime, drug abuse and neighbourhood problems;
- Safe, clean and well maintained roads and streets;
- Reduced impact on the local and global environment by cutting pollution and waste, and saving energy and water;
- More and better-paid jobs, and businesses that are competitive, diverse and dynamic;
- Better lifelong education and training;
- A narrower health gap between the Borough and the rest of the UK;
- To influence the provision of housing in order to meet needs and demand, and ensure that all homes are warm, safe and secure;
- Good access to shops, leisure and arts facilities;
- To celebrate our ethnic and cultural diversity, ensure good race relations, and respect and maintain our heritage;
- High quality transport links to the whole of the country, especially by public transport, and well-developed electronic and business links;
- Active local citizens who have a say in their future – to be a national model for partnerships between local people and organisations.

3.59 The UDP provides the strategic land-use planning framework through which these aims will be pursued.

3.60 Other local strategies and initiatives that have influenced the UDP Review include:

- The Rochdale Borough Renaissance Masterplan
- Township Regeneration Strategies and Plans
- Local Agenda 21 Strategy
- Housing Strategy
- Waste Minimisation and Recycling Strategy
- Sport and Recreation Strategies
- Woodlands Strategy
- Housing Market Renewal
CHAPTER 4

THE PLAN STRATEGY

THE AIM OF THE PLAN

THE AIM OF THE PLAN IS TO PROMOTE THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL WELL BEING AND REGENERATION OF ROCHDALE BOROUGH.

THE STRATEGY

4.1 Underpinning the Aim of the Plan are four Key Objectives:

- To strengthen the local economy
- To foster social inclusion
- To enhance the environment
- To use resources prudently

4.2 These are derived from the four priorities in the Government’s strategy for sustainable development, but modified to reflect the needs of Rochdale Borough and the development plan process. While the Key Objectives are broadly mutually supportive, there is also the potential for some conflict between them. The Plan aims to achieve a reasonable balance between the Key Objectives. However, the broad priority is to strengthen the local economy and regenerate the urban area in order to foster social inclusion and an enhanced environment, whilst protecting resources and the countryside.

4.3 The Plan’s Spatial Strategy, which follows, sets out the Council’s approach to the distribution of development (i.e. the locational priorities for new development and land uses, and areas of constraint) having regard to the geography of the Borough, and the needs and opportunities in specific areas.

4.4 The Key Objectives, along with the Spatial Strategy, provide the basis for the formulation and assessment of all other policies in the Plan.

THE KEY OBJECTIVES

KO/1 IS “TO STRENGTHEN THE LOCAL ECONOMY”

4.5 Rochdale Borough has an economy that has for many years relatively under performed. A healthy economy is fundamental to maintaining and improving all aspects of the quality of life of the Borough’s residents and workforce.

4.6 The plan, therefore, seeks to expand, modernise and diversify the local economy in a manner that improves the range and quality of employment opportunities, reduces local unemployment, generates wealth locally, assists urban and rural regeneration, and that does not damage the environment and that benefits the local population.

4.7 The plan seeks to achieve this objective by:-

- Protecting and enhancing existing employment areas and identifying an adequate and varied land supply for employment uses (G/EC/1)
- Encouraging the provision of an attractive and varied housing stock (G/H/1)
The Plan Strategy

- Promoting the role of town centres as the focal points for shopping commercial, entertainment and social facilities (G/S/1 & G/S/2)
- Ensuring accessibility to jobs for all and improving the transport infrastructure (G/A/1)
- Encouraging appropriate tourism and leisure development (G/LT/1)
- Promoting an attractive physical environment, to make the Borough an attractive place to live and work, and hence support and encourage new investment (G/BE/1 & G/EM/1)
- Ensuring that an adequate supply of minerals and waste management facilities is available (G/M/1 & G/W/1)
- Encouraging the diversification of the rural economy (G/RE/1)

KO/2 IS “TO FOSTER SOCIAL INCLUSION”

4.8 There are many communities in Rochdale Borough that experience social exclusion through social and economic deprivation. Promoting social inclusion through planning policies is a priority in the Borough. Everybody should be able to access the kind of everyday opportunities that most people take for granted. Issues to be addressed include poverty, health, housing, education, crime and access to jobs and services.

4.9 The Plan seeks to achieve this objective by:
- Promoting the economic, social and cultural regeneration of those areas and communities that are the most deprived or in greatest need (G/SP/3, G/R/1)
- Increasing the range and quality of job opportunities which are accessible to the local workforce (G/EC/1)
- Improving the quality, choice and affordability of housing (G/H/1)
- Improving safety and security and designing out crime (G/BE/1)
- Improving accessibility to education, shopping, recreation, cultural and other community facilities and services (G/S/1, G/LT/1, G/CF/1, G/A/1)

KO/3 IS “TO ENHANCE THE ENVIRONMENT”

4.10 Rochdale Borough has the legacy of an environment damaged by the industrial revolution. However, it also has many attractive areas and offers many opportunities for improvement. Improving the quality of the physical environment in the Borough for the benefit of existing and future generations is an important objective for sustainable development.

4.11 The plan aims to create a cleaner, healthier, safer and more attractive place for people to live, work and spend their leisure time which will encourage new investment, the strengthening of the local economy and the regeneration of areas of need.

4.12 The Plan seeks to achieve this objective by:
- Improving the quality of new development, imposing controls and seeking measures to mitigate the adverse impacts of new development (G/BE/1, G/EM/1)
- Conserving and enhancing urban and rural landscapes and the natural environment, including biodiversity (G/BE/9, G/NE/1, G/RE/1)
- Conserving the built heritage (G/BE/9)
- Promoting development and activities that remove dereliction and enhance degraded environments (G/SP/1, G/R/1)
- Helping to improve air, water and soil quality through development control and positive action (G/EM/1)
- Ensuring that new development can be accessed by means other than the car and that land use patterns help to reduce the need to travel (G/A/1)
- Focussing and encouraging environmental improvements within regeneration areas. (G/R/1)
4.13 Rochdale Borough has a finite supply of land and other resources. The prudent use of resources is essential to the economic, social and environmental well being of future generations and the delivery of sustainable development.

4.14 The Plan seeks to achieve this objective by:
- Meeting development needs through the re-use of previously developed land and buildings (G/SP/1)
- Constraining the development of open and undeveloped land (G/SP/1, G/SP/2)
- Promoting land use patterns that reduce the need to travel, reduce the use of the car, and increasing the roles of walking, cycling and public transport in meeting transport needs. (G/SP/3, G/H/1, G/S/1, G/A/1)
- Encouraging energy efficiency and promoting renewable energy (G/EM/12)
- Controlling the disposal of waste through waste minimisation, and encouraging re-use and recovery of waste produced (G/W/1)
- Protecting important agricultural land, flood plains and mineral resources from development (G/M/1, G/EM/1, G/RE/1)

THE SPATIAL STRATEGY

4.15 The Plan’s overall approach to the spatial distribution of development is set out in the three Part One Spatial Policies below. They represent the Plan’s ‘Spatial Strategy’ and provide the spatial framework for achieving the above Key Objectives and for formulating, assessing and implementing all the other policies in the plan. The broad urban and rural policy areas, and major transport networks and nodes affecting accessibility are shown on the Spatial Strategy Map at the end of this chapter.

G/SP/1 (PART ONE POLICY) URBAN CONCENTRATION AND REGENERATION

THE PROMOTION OF URBAN REGENERATION WILL BE ACHIEVED THROUGH THE CONCENTRATION OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE URBAN AREA, THROUGH A SEQUENTIAL APPROACH TO ALLOCATIONS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT. APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS (IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY G/SP/3) FOR EACH TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE IDENTIFIED WITHIN THE URBAN AREA FIRSTLY, BASED ON THE FOLLOWING PRIORITY ORDER:

A) VACANT OR UNDERUSED BUILDINGS WITHIN URBAN AREAS;
B) PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED SITES, ESPECIALLY IN DESIGNATED PRIORITY AREAS AND TOWN AND OTHER CENTRES;
C) OTHER VACANT LAND WITHIN THE URBAN AREAS (INCLUDING GREENFIELD SITES) WHERE THE DEVELOPMENT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO URBAN REGENERATION OR IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT;

FOR EACH OF THE ABOVE, LOCATIONS THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE (I.E. IN OR ADJACENT TO TOWN CENTRES, PUBLIC TRANSPORT CORRIDORS OR TRANSPORT NODES) WILL BE THE FIRST PRIORITY FOR ALL DEVELOPMENT BUT ESPECIALLY HIGH DENSITY EMPLOYMENT, RETAIL SERVICE AND LEISURE USES AND HIGH DENSITY HOUSING.

4.16 The Government and the Council are committed to the physical, social and economic regeneration of urban areas. In order to achieve this, future development should, as far as possible, be concentrated within existing urban areas. The emphasis will be on regenerating older run down housing and employment areas and town centres. Whilst the Council will seek to promote regeneration in its widest sense, some aspects of regeneration are beyond the scope of land use planning.
In addition to the application of this policy, the Plan promotes urban concentration and regeneration by:

- Seeking to accommodate at least 80% of new dwellings provided in the plan period on previously developed land or in existing buildings. (G/H/1)
- Encouraging higher density development in locations in and around town centres and close to main transport corridors. (G/H/1)
- Pursuing opportunities to accommodate more housing in town centres, through conversions and possibly as part of mixed-use developments and regeneration schemes. (G/H/1)
- Influencing the distribution, accessibility and quality of recreational and amenity open space in order to increase the attractiveness of the urban area for development investment and as a place to live. (G/G/1)
- Concentrating development on land and buildings within existing employment areas in the urban area, in locations that are attractive to investors and easily accessible to the local workforce. (G/EC/1)
- Permitting employment development on greenfield sites only if they are allocated in the plan because they will contribute significantly to economic regeneration of the Borough and are accessible to the workforce. (G/EC/1)
- Focusing development for shopping, commercial, leisure and entertainment, cultural and community facilities in town centres, and to a lesser extent in district, local and neighbourhood centres in order to meet local needs. (G/S/1, G/S/2)
- Working towards land use patterns that are sustainable in travel terms by encouraging the efficient, appropriate use of land and buildings within the higher frequency public transport corridors and transport nodes. (G/A/1)
- Identifying safe, attractive and convenient networks and routes for pedestrians and cyclists. (G/A/1)

The Borough’s countryside is an important resource to be protected, enhanced and utilised more effectively. It provides an attractive setting for the Borough’s towns, contains important habitats and wildlife, offers opportunities for recreation and tourism close to centres of population, and for suitable forms of renewable energy. It also contains degraded buildings and environments which it is desirable to enhance and regenerate.
4.19 The rural economy is important to the economy of the borough as a whole and, whilst farming must remain a viable entity and a key land management instrument for protecting countryside character, agricultural diversification and new businesses are vital to maintain jobs and regenerate the rural area.

4.20 Nearly all areas of countryside fall within the Green Belt which plays a strong role, especially in preventing neighbouring towns from merging into one another. Although the Green Belt is a significant constraint on new built development, opportunities do exist to modernise, convert and, in some cases to redevelop, existing developed sites.

4.21 Rural protection and regeneration will be achieved through:
- Protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land. (G/RE/1)
- Supporting, in principle, farm diversification enterprises. (G/RE/1)
- Encouraging new rural businesses that are appropriate to a rural area, and encouraging the re-use of existing buildings for such uses. (G/RE/1)
- Supporting limited infilling or redevelopment of identified major existing developed sites in the Green Belt. (G/D/2)
- Supporting recreation and sport appropriate to a rural area, provided activities are or can be made accessible by sustainable means. (G/G/1, G/RE/1)
- Encouraging tourism that helps to promote and enhance existing features and attractions. (G/LT/1)
- Supporting renewable energy developments, including wind power, provided they are sensitive to their surroundings. (G/EM/13)
- Protecting mineral resources. (G/M/1)
- Protecting and enhancing locally distinctive landscapes and areas of ecological value. (G/BE/10, G/NE/1, G/NE/5)
- Identifying opportunities to improve other landscapes through positive measures and as part of new development proposals. (G/BE/1, G/NE/1, G/NE/5)

G/SP/3 (PART ONE POLICY) MEETING THE NEEDS OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES

THE IDENTIFICATION OF SUITABLE LOCATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVITIES, THROUGH THE ALLOCATION OF LAND IN THE PLAN FOR PARTICULAR USES AND THROUGH GENERAL POLICIES WHERE APPROPRIATE, WILL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT (IN ADDITION TO SPATIAL POLICIES G/SP/1 AND G/SP/2):

A) THE NEEDS OF, AND ISSUES AFFECTING, THE LOCAL AND WIDER COMMUNITY AROUND THE SITE, CONSIDERED AGAINST THE PLANS KEY OBJECTIVES AND OTHER PART ONE POLICIES;

B) THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT MEETS THE ABOVE NEEDS AND ADDRESSES THE ABOVE ISSUES;

C) WHETHER THERE ARE MORE APPROPRIATE USES FOR THE SITE IN QUESTION;

D) WHETHER THE PROPOSAL IS CONTRIBUTING TO URBAN OR RURAL REGENERATION;

E) THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE LOCATION ESPECIALLY BY SUSTAINABLE MEANS OF TRANSPORT AND THE NEED TO MINIMISE TRIP GENERATION.

4.22 The Plan seeks to achieve the most appropriate distribution of land uses to meet the needs of both local communities and the whole Borough. The Borough has a diversity of communities with different areas having their own physical, social and environmental characteristics and each having different development pressures, needs, problems and opportunities.

4.23 However, it is not practicable to define all of these local communities in the Plan. Therefore, the four administrative Townships of Rochdale, Middleton, Heywood and Pennines are used to represent the four broad local communities that exist in the Borough. Whilst some problems and pressures are common to all the Townships, there are differences between the townships in terms of their nature and degree.
Consequently, whilst strategic planning issues must be tackled on a Borough-wide basis, some local issues need to be tackled in a way that meets the particular needs, character and circumstances of each township.

4.24 Examples of how the Plan seeks to meet local needs in each of the Townships are.

**In Heywood:**
- Continuing the physical regeneration and revitalisation of Heywood Town Centre, to maintain its role as an effective local centre. (G/S/1 & G/S/2)
- Making best use of the opportunities Heywood offers for attracting employment development, such as its good supply of employment land, including major sites, and easy access to the motorway system. (G/EC/1)
- Ensuring that new employment development is not just in the distribution industry. (G/EC/1 & EC/8)
- Utilising the opportunities that completion of the East Lancashire Railway brings for tourism development. (A/20 & R/4(h))
- Making best use of the countryside around Heywood, especially in Ashworth Valley and along the River Roch. (G/RE/1)
- Regenerating housing areas, that suffer high levels of social deprivation, such as Darnhill, inner Heywood and Back o’ th’ Moss. (R/1 & H/8 & H/9)
- Providing more recreation areas within the urban area. (G/4 & G5)

**In Middleton:**
- The physical regeneration and revitalisation of Middleton town centre through major redevelopment proposals. (S/12 & R/4(g))
- Addressing problems of high unemployment and social deprivation by providing new job opportunities. (EC/8)
- Access needs to be improved, for the low skilled and unemployed in Middleton, to jobs in Manchester, Rochdale (especially Kingsway), Heywood and Stakehill. (G/A/1)
- Making best use of the opportunities that the completion of the M60 offers for attracting development that could aid regeneration.
- Promoting the regeneration of Langley as a priority. (R/2)
- Making best use of the opportunities that Bowlee, Alkrington Woods, the Middleton Conservation Area and the re-opening of the Rochdale Canal offer for recreation and tourism and improving the image of Middleton. (G/3, & LT/7)

**In Pennines:**
- Ensuring a suitable balance between the provision of new housing and local employment opportunities. (H/2 & H/3)
- Addressing problems with commuter traffic by restricting sites allocated for housing development. (H/2)
- Addressing localised problems of social and economic deprivation by protecting existing employment sites. (EC/2 & EC/4)
- Protecting the character and qualities of greenspace corridors, including river valleys, and the open countryside to the north and east of the Borough. (G/8 & NE/6)
- Promoting tourism within the Pennine edge to assist the local economy and to safeguard historic and cultural assets. (RE/2 & LT/3)
- Taking opportunities to maximise the potential of the restoration of the Rochdale Canal for recreation, tourism and the regeneration of adjoining sites. (R/4(a), R/4(b), LT/7, NE/2 & NE/4)
- Establishing countryside gateway sites and visitor facilities to promote access to the South Pennines e.g., Hollingworth Lake. (RE/8)
- Recognising that the development of Kingsway Business Park will impact on the local economy and may lead to demand for various types of development elsewhere in the township. (EC/2 to EC/6)
In Rochdale:

- Regenerating Rochdale Town Centre, to maintain its role as the principal retail centre in the Borough, and improve its attractiveness. (G/S/1 & G/S/2)
- Encouraging new uses and quality facilities in the town centre, and the regeneration or redevelopment of key sites and areas. (R/3, R/4(e))
- Ensuring that the development of Metrolink and its future role in relation to the regeneration of Rochdale is maximised. (A/18, R/3, R/4(e))
- Targeting regeneration initiatives in those areas with high levels of social and economic deprivation (G/R/1)
- Promoting the redevelopment and regeneration of the large employment site off Rooley Moor Road for mixed-use (R/4(j))
- Maximising the contribution of the restoration of the Rochdale Canal to local regeneration. (R/4(f), R/4(i), LT/7, NE/2 & NE/4)
- Recognition that the development of the Kingsway Business Park will have a major impact offering considerable opportunities for related new development in Rochdale Township in particular. (EC/2 to EC/6, EC/8 & EC/9)
- The enhancement of greenspace corridors (e.g. Roch Valley), leisure provision and play areas for children. (G/4 & G/8)
- Supporting the provision of healthcare facilities, including the expansion of the Rochdale Hospital. (CF/3)
CHAPTER 5
MONITORING AND REVIEW

MONITORING

5.1 Local Planning Authorities are required to monitor the effectiveness of their development plans. 'Monitoring' is the process of testing the performance of the Plan over time and in the light of changing circumstances. It is fundamental to keeping the plan up-to-date and relevant. Monitoring involves the regular collection and analysis of data. Some of this will be specific to Rochdale Borough, for example how much housing, industrial or retail development is taking place. The Council will also collect other, nationally derived statistics such as national social and economic trends, demographic and household projections that can have implications at the local level. An Annual Monitoring Report will be prepared to assess how policies are being implemented in the context of changing circumstances.

5.2 Some aspects of the Plan will be easier to monitor than others. The Council's development control and building control process will, for example, be used to monitor progress on sites allocated in the Plan as and when they are granted planning permission and developed. Other policies can be monitored easily because they are expressed or can be measured in quantitative terms. For example, housing policies will be measured in terms of the number, tenure, size and type of new dwellings provided as required by PPG 3 'Housing'. This detailed monitoring of housing provision and changes to the dwelling stock is an essential element in adopting the 'Plan, Monitor and manage' approach, as outlined in PPG 3. Housing completions and land availability, the take up of land for employment uses and changes affecting the viability and vitality of town centres will also be the subject of separate monitoring reports. The Council will monitor demographic, economic, social and environmental changes within the Borough.

5.3 Key environmental assets and features of the natural and built environment will also need to be monitored, including reductions or increases in, for example, the number of open spaces, areas of nature conservation interest, and listed buildings.

5.4 Other policies deal with more qualitative issues and are consequently more difficult to measure, for example standards of design in new developments, reductions in crime, and changes in air quality. Even where qualitative changes can be measured, it may not always be possible to establish how much to attribute to the success of the plan policies as opposed to other factors, for example, the effect of plan policies on air quality. However, the Council will continue to monitor all policies as fully as possible through an annual monitoring report.

5.5 Indicators to be used to measure the performance of the Plan in meeting its objectives and policies are identified in the table below. Some indicators are derived from national and planning guidance and from indicators used at national, regional and sub regional level e.g. those for monitoring performance against Government policy and Regional Planning Guidance. Information on measuring performance against indicators / targets will be collected at local level, from AGMA policy research units, NWRA, and other local Agencies. Performance on the extent to which planning proposals meet development control criteria in policies will be assessed from statistics generated from the monitoring of decisions and appeals. Specific targets are also set out for many of the indicators. It is possible that these indicators and targets may themselves need to be reviewed over time.

REVIEW AND THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

5.6 The results of this monitoring work will inform the decision as to when the policies of the Replacement Plan need to be reviewed through the new Local Development Framework (LDF) process. Many Replacement
Plan policies are likely to be saved for at least three years under the new LDF arrangements although some policies will be replaced through the production of early Development Plan Documents prepared under the LDF. The Annual Monitoring Report will inform the need to review policies in response to changes to Government/Regional policy or local circumstances/priorities, and the Council’s Local Development Scheme will identify the programme of preparation of such development plan documents and will identify all those policies and supplementary documents that comprise the LDF.

**PERFORMANCE AND KEY MONITORING INDICATORS**

These indicators will be used to measure the performance of the Plan in meeting its Objectives and to regularly monitor the effectiveness of key policies.

*(Indicators in italics are especially subject to influences outside the scope of the UDP)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Relevant Objectives</th>
<th>Relevant Policies</th>
<th>Targets</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GREEN BELT AND OPEN LAND</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Protected open land outside the Defined Urban Area, including Green Belt land, lost to development and contrary to policies</td>
<td>KO/4, G/SP/1¹, G/SP/2</td>
<td>D/1-10</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redevelopment / regeneration / infilling of existing developed sites in the Green Belt which bring about environmental improvements and are consistent with policies</td>
<td>KO/1², KO/3, G/SP/2</td>
<td>D/5-6</td>
<td>Sites identified in policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMPLOYMENT AND THE ECONOMY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate in Borough and in target regeneration areas</td>
<td>KO/1, KO/2, All EC</td>
<td>% decrease higher/increase lower than GM average</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of jobs in Borough</td>
<td>KO/1, KO/2, All EC</td>
<td>% growth higher/decrease lower than GM average</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial land take up per annum</td>
<td>KO/1, All EC</td>
<td>10 hectares per annum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of development in Employment Zones and industrial allocations</td>
<td>KO/1, EC/2 &amp; EC/3, EC/7 - EC/9</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development proceeding/planning applications submitted on allocated sites</td>
<td>KO/1, EC/7 - EC/9</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number / Proportion of new jobs created by new development in Use Classes B1, B2 and B8</td>
<td>KO/1, KO/2, All EC</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HOUSING</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of net completions per annum in compared to UDP requirement</td>
<td>KO/2, H/1-2</td>
<td>290 net per annum to 2011</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Number and proportion of dwellings completed on previously developed land</td>
<td>KO/4, G/SP/1, G/SP/2</td>
<td>H/1-2</td>
<td>65%+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average density of developments on large sites</td>
<td>KO/4, G/SP/1, G/SP/2</td>
<td>H/5</td>
<td>&gt; 30 per hectare</td>
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<td>Number of affordable homes granted planning permission</td>
<td>KO/2, H/7</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of developments where affordable housing has been secured on-site or where a financial contribution towards off-site provision has been secured</td>
<td>KO/2, H/7</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in the number and floorspace of retail premises (both convenience and comparison) in town, district and local centres.</td>
<td>KO/1, KO/2, G/SP/1, G/SP/3</td>
<td>S/3 - 6</td>
<td>No loss</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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¹ G/SP prefix relates to the General Spatial Policies found in the Plan Strategy
² KO prefix relates to the Key Objectives found in the Plan Strategy
### Monitoring and Review

#### LEISURE AND TOURISM

**Number of visitors to the Borough and visitor spend**
- Relevant Objectives: KO/1, LT/3-4
- Targets: Increase in key sectors

**Number and type of built leisure, cultural and tourism facilities within or adjacent to town and district centres, or in compliance with other policies/allocations**
- Relevant Policies: KO/1, G/SP/1, G/SP/3
- Targets: No overall loss & Increase in areas of deficiency

**Supply of overnight accommodation (number and range - urban and rural)**
- Relevant Objectives: KO/1, KO/3, G/SP/1, G/SP/2
- Targets: No decrease

**Length of Canalside with public access**
- Relevant Policies: KO/3, G/SP/3
- Targets: Increase

**Canal related tourism/leisure proposals approved / committed**
- Relevant Objectives: KO/1, KO/3, G/SP/1, G/SP/2
- Targets: Increase

#### REGENERATION

**Area of new development within the Rochdale Canal waterfront**
- Relevant Policies: KO/1, G/SP/1
- Targets: Various

**Area of derelict / unused urban land / property restored to beneficial use**
- Relevant Policies: KO/1, KO/3, KO/4, G/SP/1, G/SP/2
- Targets: Increase in line with sports pitch strategy

**Development / investment within Physical Regeneration Areas and Areas of Opportunity**
- Relevant Policies: KO/1, G/SP/1
- Targets: Reduction in area of derelict / unused land / property

#### COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES

None

#### GREENSPACE

**Area of protected urban recreational open space**
- Relevant Policies: KO/3, KO/4, G/SP/3
- Targets: Various

**Open space improved, provided to NEAP / LEAP standard**
- Relevant Policies: KO/3, G/SP/3
- Targets: Various

**Number of pitches available for formal sports**
- Relevant Policies: G/SP/3
- Targets: Various

**Additional areas of informal recreational open space secured**
- Relevant Policies: KO/3, KO/4, G/SP/3
- Targets: Various

**Recreational open space / financial contributions to off-site provision secured through new housing developments**
- Relevant Policies: KO/2, KO/3, G/SP/3
- Targets: Various

**Area protected as Greenspace Corridors and improvements implemented / committed**
- Relevant Policies: KO/3, KO/4
- Targets: Various

**Schemes involving improved access to sites**
- Relevant Policies: G/SP/3
- Targets: Various

#### COUNTRYSIDE AND THE RURAL ECONOMY

**Area of farmland of grade 3a lost due to new development**
- Relevant Policies: KO/4, G/SP/2
- Targets: Various

**Number of approvals for new or expanded businesses in rural areas**
- Relevant Policies: KO/1, G/SP/2
- Targets: Various

**Extent of new / improved countryside routes for walkers, cyclists and horseriders**
- Relevant Policies: G/SP/2, G/SP/3
- Targets: Various

**Progress on provision of visitor facilities and progress on recreational enhancements within recreational management areas**
- Relevant Policies: G/SP/2, KO/3
- Targets: Various

#### MINERALS

**Loss of known mineral reserves to development**
- Relevant Policies: KO/4
- Targets: Various
## Monitoring and Review

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<th>Relevant Objectives</th>
<th>Relevant Policies</th>
<th>Targets</th>
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<td>Restoration of sites to beneficial use</td>
<td>KO/3, KO/4</td>
<td>M/5</td>
<td>Increase</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of secondary aggregate facilities</td>
<td>KO/4</td>
<td>M/7</td>
<td>Increase</td>
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### WASTE

| Number of existing and permitted waste facilities | G/SP/3, G/SP/3 | W/1, W/2, W/6 | Increase in number and/or improved facilities |

### ACCESSIBILITY

| Extent of cycling route network established / improved | KO/2 | A/4, A/14 | - |
| Priority improvements to Strategic Highway Network implemented | KO/1 | A/24 | as listed in policy |
| Number of Travel Plans secured | KO/3, KO/4 | A/12 | - |
| Proposed improvements to bus interchange facilities carried out | KO/2 | A/5, A/15-17 | - |
| Proposed improvements to rail passenger services and facilities implemented | KO/2 | A/19-21 | as defined in policy |
| New rail stations / Metrolink provided | KO/1, KO/2 | A/18-20 | as defined in policy |
| Levels of parking provision in association with employment, retail and commercial development in relation to standards expressed as maximum | G/SP/3 | A/10, A/22-23 | as defined in policy and parking standards |

### DESIGN AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

| Number of Listed Buildings/Ancient Monuments | KO/3 | BE/11-15 | No loss |
| Number of Listed Buildings at Risk / identified | KO/3 | BE/11-15 | Reduction of Number at risk |
| Number and extent of Conservation Areas | KO/3 | BE/18 | No loss |

### ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

| Measures of air quality against national / local standards and targets | KO/3 | EM/2 | Targets in Air Quality Action Plan |
| Length of watercourses of good or fair quality | KO/3 | EM/8 | - |
| Area of contaminated land treated and brought back into use / treated | KO/3, KO/4 | EM/4 | Increase |
| Area of derelict land brought back into use / reclaimed | KO/3, KO/4 | EM/10 | Increase |
| New development on land liable to flood | EM/7 | - |
| Number of sustainable energy schemes | KO/4 | EM/14-16 | Increase |

### THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

| Changes (additions, deletions and grades) in areas with protected status | KO/3 | NE/2 | Increase in area, grade / status of sites |
| Changes in number of regionally/locally distinctive species and habitats | KO/3 | NE/2-4 | Consolidation of local species and increased local biodiversity |
| Significant new habitats established through new development management programme or planning agreement | KO/3 | NE/2-4 | Consolidation of local species and increased local biodiversity |
| Area of woodland cover | KO/3, G/SP/2 | NE/9-10 | Increase in line with Pennine Edge Forest Action Plan targets |
| Numbers and extent of sites upon which commitments have been secured to secure new woodland planting and management / improvement | KO/3, G/SP/2 | NE/9-10 | Increase in line with Pennine Edge Forest Action Plan targets |
## CHAPTER 6

### SCHEDULE OF PLAN POLICIES

**NOTE: PART ONE POLICIES ARE SHOWN IN BOLD TYPE**

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CHAPTER 7

DEFINED URBAN AREA, GREEN BELT AND PROTECTED OPEN LAND

G/D/1 (PART ONE POLICY) DEFINED URBAN AREA

THE BOUNDARY OF THE URBAN AREA IS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP. OUTSIDE THIS AREA, ONLY DEVELOPMENT THAT IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE POLICIES IN THIS CHAPTER WILL BE ACCEPTABLE.

THE DEFINED URBAN AREA INCORPORATES ONE MINOR BOUNDARY CHANGE FROM THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN, AT HAUGH FOLD, NEWHEY. (SEE PROPOSAL D/3 BELOW)

7.1 In line with the Plan's Objectives and Spatial Strategy, the Council wishes to ensure that new development, wherever possible and appropriate, is concentrated within the urban area in order to support urban regeneration and to protect the countryside. Policies relating to housing, shopping, employment uses which are specifically intended to control development within the urban context require the urban areas to be defined in order for such policies to be interpreted and applied.

7.2 This approach is reflected in Green Belt, countryside and recreation policies which limit the scale and nature of uses to be permitted outside the Defined Urban Area. Policy D/10 'Protected Open Land' sets out the Council's policy for land between the Green Belt and the Defined Urban Area, or between the Green Belt and the Borough boundary as shown on the Proposals Map.

G/D/2 (PART ONE POLICY) GREEN BELT

THE GREEN BELT BOUNDARY IS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP. THE GREEN BELT WILL BE PROTECTED FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT IN ORDER TO SATISFY THE PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES FOR GREEN BELT SET OUT IN PPG 2, AND IN PARTICULAR TO MAINTAIN THE FRAMEWORK OF OPEN LAND SEPARATING AND SURROUNDING THE URBAN AREAS OF THE BOROUGH.

THE GREEN BELT BOUNDARY INCORPORATES ONE MINOR CHANGE FROM THE PREVIOUS DEVELOPMENT PLAN AT HAUGH FOLD, NEWHEY. (SEE PROPOSAL D/3 BELOW)

7.3 Few changes to the Green Belt boundary have been made since it was established in the Greater Manchester Green Belt Local Plan in 1986. The previous Rochdale Unitary Development Plan adopted in March 1999 made one significant boundary change:- the exclusion of land at Hareshill Road, Heywood and this UDP incorporates a minor change to exclude land and buildings at Haugh Fold, Newhey (and its inclusion within the Defined Urban Area.

7.4 The fundamental aim of Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and its most important attribute is its openness. The primary objective of Green Belt policies is to strictly control development and to apply a general presumption against built development except that which falls within special categories so as not to prejudice the Green Belt's purposes and objectives.
7.5 In PPG 2, the Government recommends that Green Belts should be considered long term and only altered in exceptional circumstances. Maintaining the extent of the Green Belt up to 2011 is supported by both Regional Planning Guidance for the North West issued in 1996 and by Draft RPG which was published in 2000, neither of which sees a need to undertake a strategic review before then.

7.6 The Council wishes to maintain an effective Green Belt which satisfies the purposes of including land in Green Belts set out in PPG 2; especially in terms of the strong role of the Green Belt in Rochdale in preventing neighbouring towns from merging into one another, and assisting urban regeneration by encouraging the optimum use of urban land. The Green Belt is therefore carried forward from the adopted UDP virtually in its entirety, and the general presumption against inappropriate development will ensure that these areas are kept open.

7.7 The Council's detailed policies for the Green Belt recognise the need to support the diversification of the rural economy, to promote uses which satisfy the objectives for the use of land in Green Belt, and to enhance visual amenity and landscape character. In particular, the Council wishes to promote appropriate uses and activities in the Green Belt which play a positive role in helping to provide opportunities for recreation and nature conservation, landscape enhancement, the improvement of damaged and derelict land and the retention of land in farming and related uses.

**D/3 BOUNDARY CHANGE TO THE GREEN BELT AND DEFINED URBAN AREA**

Land and buildings at Haugh Fold, Newhey are excluded from the Green Belt and included within the Defined Urban Area.

7.8 Exceptional circumstances justify a change in the Haugh Fold Area shown on the supplementary map. This area forms a well defined built enclave comprising 5 dwellings with access from a central square, connected to and visible from the main urban area of Newhey. It is not visible from the wider Green Belt. The area is not ‘open’ and does not perform a Green Belt role. Consequently, it should be excluded from the Green Belt and included within the Defined Urban Area.

**D/4 CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE GREEN BELT - GENERAL**

Within the Green Belt approval will not be given, except in very special circumstances, for the erection of new buildings unless it is for the following purposes:

a) agriculture and forestry;

b) essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, for cemeteries and other uses which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it;

c) the limited extension, alteration, or replacement of an existing dwelling in accordance with Policies D/7 and D/8; and

d) Limited infilling or redevelopment of major, existing developed sites identified under, and in accordance with, Policy D/5.

Proposed development falling within these categories will be acceptable only where it can be shown that it would not prejudice, by reason of its scale, siting, or design, the primary purposes and visual amenity of the Green Belt.

7.9 In order to maintain the openness of the Green Belt and to satisfy the Green Belt purposes, there is a need for strict controls over new development. Within the Green Belt, there is a presumption against all but a few, limited forms of development and particularly against most new building. In addition, its visual amenity should not be injured by proposals for development within or conspicuous from the Green Belt which,
Policy D/3 Boundary change to the Green Belt and Defined Urban Area: Land and Buildings at Haugh Fold, Newhey.
although they would not prejudice the purposes of including land within the Green Belt, might be detrimental by reason of their siting, materials and design.

7.10 However, the policy recognises that development is acceptable in certain circumstances. Clarification on the suitability of some uses is given below.

**Public Services**

7.11 The operational requirements of statutory undertakers and other bodies providing essential public services are important simply because such services are essential. However development to meet such requirements is not appropriate in the Green Belt, and would therefore not be in accordance with this Plan, unless it would maintain openness and would not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. Where inappropriate development is proposed, it will be for the applicant to show why permission should be granted.

**Mineral Extraction and Waste Disposal**

7.12 Mineral extraction and waste disposal operations need not be incompatible with Green Belt objectives, although in particular cases, there may be other good reasons for not granting permission. High environmental standards would need to be maintained and the site well restored.

**Agricultural Dwellings**

7.13 In any proposal which involves the provision of a dwelling house which it is stated is needed in connection with an agricultural use, the applicant will be expected to show a clear justification for the dwelling. The application must be accompanied by a technical appraisal in accordance with the provisions of Annex E of PPG 7, setting out the details of the agricultural enterprise, including area, tenure, farming system, existing buildings, business plan, number of workers, existing residential accommodation and the necessity for the dwellinghouse on the farm. In cases where the evidence supporting such an application is inconclusive, permission may be granted for a limited period for the provision of a caravan or other temporary accommodation on the site, to allow time for the prospects of the enterprise to be clarified.

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**D/5 INFILLING AT MAJOR EXISTING DEVELOPED SITES IN THE GREEN BELT**

Limited infilling within the major existing developed sites within the Green Belt identified below and identified on the Proposals Map, will be permitted provided that the development:

a) is related to the continuing use of the site;

b) is contained within the boundary shown on the Proposal Map;

c) has no greater impact upon the purposes of including land in the Green Belt than the existing development;

d) does not lead to a major increase in the developed proportion of the site; and

e) does not exceed the height of the existing buildings on site.

The sites for the purposes of this policy (shown on the Proposals Map) are:

i. Hopwood Hall College Campus, Middleton (see also Policy CF/4);

ii. Birch Industrial Estate, Whittle Lane, Heywood;

iii. Hooley Bridge Industrial Estate, Bamford Road, Heywood; and

iv. Crimble Mill, Crimble Lane, Heywood;

v. Tack Lea Works, Heywood

vi. Birtle Bleach Works, Heywood;

vii. Birch Motorway Service Area, Heywood;
Defined Urban Area, Green Belt and Protected Open Land

viii. Simpson Clough Mill, Heywood;
ix. Buckley Hall Prison, Buckley Lane, Rochdale;
 x. Rydings Mill, Rydings Road, Rochdale;
 xi. Sladen Mill, Halifax Road, Littleborough; and
 xii. Ogden Mill, Ogden Lane, Newhey.

7.14 These sites are identified solely for their opportunity for limited infilling as they are in continuing use, are suitable for such use, and are expected to remain so over the Plan period. The sites are substantial in size with building curtilages ranging from 1.3ha to 14.5ha. As most of the sites are in employment use, this will help secure jobs and prosperity without further prejudicing the Green Belt. The site at Hopwood Hall College is subject to proposals involving the improvement and additions to educational facilities at the college campus. (see Policy CF/4 ) Within this site, proposals involving the change of use of listed buildings (e.g. Hopwood Hall and Chapel) for non educational uses will be considered against criteria (b) to (e) above and Policy D/9 'Re-use and Adaptation of Buildings in Rural Areas'. Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 ‘Green Belts’, Annex C provides further guidance on the infilling and redevelopment of major developed sites in the Green Belt and proposals will be required to have regard to that guidance.

D/6 REDEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION OF MAJOR, EXISTING DEVELOPED SITES IN THE GREEN BELT FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Proposals for the redevelopment or re-use of the following sites for housing and associated environmental improvements will be permitted subject to the criteria set out in (a) to (e) below.

A. Healey Hall Mills, Dell Road, Rochdale, (redevelopment / conversion of land and buildings east of Dell Road); and
B. Rainshore Mills, Overtown Lane, Norden (redevelopment of land and buildings)

Development will be permitted provided that it:

a) has no greater impact than the existing development on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it, and where possible has less;
b) does not exceed the height of the existing buildings;
c) does not occupy a larger area of the site than the existing buildings (unless this would achieve a reduction in height which would benefit visual amenity);
d) contributes to the achievement of the objectives for the use of land in the Green Belts, in particular the protection and enhancement of:-
   i. the local landscape,
   ii. its nature conservation interest,
   iii. the retention or enhancement of public rights of way; and
   e) incorporates suitable access and off site highway and junction improvements.

The Council may seek to enter into a legal agreement with the developers under Section 106 of the 1990 Act to secure off site infrastructure improvements, and the appropriate treatment of land as part of a development scheme.

7.15 The Council’s intention is to encourage investment in those significant developed sites identified in Policy D/5 for their current use and employment value provided the future development of those sites does not have a greater negative impact on the Green Belt. However, the Council acknowledges that the above sites are in poor condition, are no longer suitable or viable for employment purposes, are greatly underused, and, due to the type and nature of their operations over the years, detract from the visual amenity of the Green Belt, the character and qualities of the surrounding countryside and the local environment. Also because of
the nature and condition of the buildings, opportunities for their refurbishment and conversion are limited. The Council considers that development proposals that involve a sensitive and constrained redevelopment, the conversion of buildings where practicable, and related environmental improvements, would offer the best opportunity for regenerating these sites and their important settings without adding to their impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it. Both sites adjoin ‘Designated Sites of Ecological and Geological/Geomorphological Importance’ – protected under Policy NE/2 – and therefore proposals will need to be assessed against the provisions of that policy. The sites are reasonably accessible to urban facilities and transport routes. The Policy is consistent with the approach set out in Spatial Policy G/SP/1, G/SP/2 and G/SP/3.

7.16 This policy reflects the provisions in Annex C of PPG 2 which allows Local Planning Authorities to identify and include policies for the redevelopment of major existing developed sites. The requirements a) to d) of the policy reflect the key requirements a) to d) set out in paragraph C4 of PPG 2 although applications will also be assessed against the detailed guidance notes relating to redevelopment in Annex C.

7.17 The relevant area for purposes of (c) above is the aggregate ground floor area of the existing buildings, excluding any temporary buildings and areas of hardstanding. Planning applications must be accompanied by a comprehensive long term plan for the site as a whole together with sufficient information to assess compliance with the above criteria. There is evidence of contamination on both sites and the Council will require a survey to be carried out in support of proposals in accordance with Policy EM/4 of the Plan to assess risks and identify necessary remedial treatment. Applicants are advised to submit a landscape plan and strategy for the restoration of despoiled land in support of d) i of the policy and a Design Statement to explain how the design of the development has regard to the character, constraints and opportunities within and adjoining the site. In accordance with criterion d) ii, proposals should also be accompanied by a survey and assessment of ecological value of the site and the potential impact of development on the surrounding land in line (as both sites adjoin designated areas of ecological importance). Applicants should also carry out a transport assessment to assess traffic impact and the need for suitable access and highway improvements (see criterion e)).

Healey Hall Mills

7.18 Healey Hall Mills comprises a substantial but declining industrial complex within the valley of the River Spodden, close to the built up area, and within a Recreational Management Area. The complex is divided by the river into two parcels, 1.1 ha on the eastern bank, and 1.3 ha on the western bank. The site adjoins Healey Dell Nature Reserve and partly falls within a Site of Biological Importance. The main industrial activities (e.g. car repairs, manufacturing, stonemasons and storage activities) are concentrated on the eastern side of the river. However collectively, these uses are not appropriate to the valley setting, the adjoining uses (a day nursery and information centre for Healey Dell Local Nature Reserve), and the buildings are not suited to modern industrial activity and traffic. The opportunity exists to refurbish and convert the former mill building and redevelop other buildings for housing.

7.19 The western bank contains a number of buildings, many of which are vacant and in poor condition. The site has largely revegetated over the years and falls within the Site of Biological Importance. New development within this western area would not be appropriate unless it was small-scale development connected with the recreational or ecological role of the wider valley.

7.20 Proposals for the redevelopment of the eastern bank (1.1 ha) should be accompanied by proposals for the removal or sensitive treatment of redundant buildings on the western bank. This will help to reduce the extent of the developed area, enhance the openness of the Green Belt and increase the nature conservation value of that part of the site within the Site of Biological Importance. A Design Statement should demonstrate how the development can be successfully integrated into this sensitive setting through attention to siting, mass, materials and access. The site will not be suitable for a modern urban housing estate layout. Flats or apartments comprising a single development of local stone would be considered more in keeping with existing buildings and the character of the area. A landscape plan should provide details of landscape treatment and the protection of trees. Any removal or treatment of land and buildings on the western bank of the river should take account of the impact on naturally revegetated areas and developing
Defined Urban Area, Green Belt and Protected Open Land

ecological value. The developer will be expected to carry out off-site highway improvements, to the unadopted section of Dell Road.

7.21 Development proposals must not compromise the ecological value or integrity of the Nature Reserve / SBI (currently a grade A SBI) and should seek to enhance nature conservation interest.

Rainshore Mills

7.22 This former textile treatment works is the largest upland industrial site in the Borough. It lies within an attractive area of landscape to the north of Norden and shares a boundary with a Site of Biological Importance and Greenbooth Reservoir. The buildings are generally large scale, old, semi derelict, unattractive, randomly distributed, cannot easily be divided into smaller parcels and are not suited to modern processes. They are mostly vacant or underused with storage as the predominant use. In land use terms the site is no longer suited to continued industrial/business use. The previous activities have resulted in some ground contamination and degradation of the immediate landscape.

7.23 The opportunity exists to redevelop the site for housing and to design a scheme which resembles an upland hamlet of traditional local character and materials and which respects the character of the local landscape. The aim should be to reduce the density of buildings and reduce the height of the buildings. New housing development should be contained within the footprint of the existing building complex but should include proposals for the treatment of the wider site. Proposals should aim to improve the visual amenity of the Green Belt, assist in securing landscape improvements and the nature conservation value of the site, remove contamination, provide better access to open countryside through the establishment of footpath and other recreational links. The developer will be expected to carry out off-site highway improvements to facilitate safe access at the junction of Edenfield Road and Overtown Lane. Also, Overtown Lane itself will need to be improved and partially widened to provide safe access for vehicles and pedestrians to the Council's satisfaction.

D/7 EXTENSIONS TO RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

In determining planning applications for extensions to existing dwellings (including garages and ancillary domestic buildings within the existing curtilage) in the Green Belt, the Council will wish to be satisfied that:

a) The extension is of a scale and character which does not conflict with the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it; and

b) The extension does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building and is not visually detrimental by reason of its siting, materials or design.

7.24 The presumption against development in the Green Belt has not been operated generally to prevent small extensions to existing properties that are compatible in scale and design with the original dwelling. The Council is concerned, however, about large extensions, which, in the relatively undeveloped appearance of the Green Belt, can be as visually prominent in the landscape as a new building. This policy is intended to ensure that the extensions may be accommodated without detriment to the scale and character of the original building and the purposes, open character, and visual amenity of the Green Belt. For the avoidance of doubt, “original” means in relation to a building existing on July 1st 1948, as existing on that date and, in relation to a building on or after July 1st 1948, as so built. Additions in this context mean all extensions to the original building as defined, and the Council will consider the cumulative impact of such additions.

7.25 Proposals for extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt may also need to be judged against other policies of the Plan. One policy which will be relevant in all cases is Policy H/11 which sets out the Council’s general design requirements for residential extensions.
REPLACEMENT OF DWELLINGS IN THE GREEN BELT

The replacement of existing dwellings in the Green Belt need not be inappropriate, provided that proposals meet all the following criteria:

a) The existing dwelling is in use as a dwelling, or capable of re-use without planning permission being required, and is of permanent and substantial construction;

b) The proposed dwelling is not materially larger in volume or floorspace than the dwelling it replaces nor occupies a larger area of the site than the existing dwelling;

c) The proposed dwelling is not higher than the dwelling it replaces;

d) The proposed dwelling is served by the same access as the previous dwelling;

e) The curtilage of the proposed dwelling is no larger than that of the previous dwelling and bears the same relationship;

f) The proposed dwelling has no greater impact than the existing dwelling on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it and, where possible, has less impact; and

g) The siting, design and materials of the proposed dwelling are in keeping with the surroundings.

PPG2 ‘Green Belts’ acknowledges that the replacement of existing dwellings need not be inappropriate in Green Belts provided the new dwelling is not materially larger than the dwelling it replaces. This policy reflects that position and in line with advice in the PPG, sets out the approach the Council will take and the circumstances under which replacement dwellings may be acceptable. The criteria which must be satisfied are intended to ensure that replacement does not detract from the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it, and the visual amenity of the area.

For the avoidance of doubt, the relevant area for the purpose of (b) is the aggregate floor area of the existing buildings (i.e. the footprint), excluding temporary buildings and areas of hardstanding.

RE-USE AND ADAPTATION OF BUILDINGS IN RURAL AREAS

The re-use and adaptation of buildings outside the defined urban area will be permitted provided that all of the following criteria are met:

a) Where the site is within the Green Belt, the re-use or adaptation does not have a materially greater impact than the previous use on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it;

b) The application building is of a permanent and substantial construction and is capable of conversion to a new use without major or complete reconstruction;

c) The building is large enough for the proposed use without the need for extensions of a size and design that would alter the basic character and appearance of the building or its contribution to the landscape;

d) The building can be capable of being provided with satisfactory means of access, services and ancillary facilities, such as hardstandings, gardens, fences, walls etc., without a significant impact on landscape character, the setting of the building or, where it falls within the Green Belt, the openness and visual amenity of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it; and

e) The proposed use is compatible with adjacent land-uses and other policies/proposals of the Plan.

The policy reflects both PPG 2 (Revised) and paragraph 17 of PPS 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, and seeks to encourage the re-use of buildings in rural areas, having regard to their suitability for re-use and potential impact. The Government attaches great importance to the need to prevent dereliction and
to provide employment opportunities in rural areas through the re-use of such land and buildings. The Council wishes particularly to encourage the retention of buildings of architectural or historic note, or which have an intrinsic value to the locality. These buildings contribute to the character and visual amenity of the countryside and, where they are no longer required for their original purpose, their sympathetic conversion to alternative uses will be preferable to dilapidation and dereliction. The re-use of rural buildings may provide an opportunity for business uses that may help to diversify the rural economy and supplement farm incomes. It is important though (in the interest of maintaining the character, amenity, and integrity of the Green Belt) that some safeguards are imposed to control the character, scale and impact of such changes of use together with any renovations, extensions, ancillary buildings or additional service provision. It will assist applicants if details of proposed alterations and conversion works are submitted as part of the application and these details should include all existing and proposed window and door openings, existing and proposed internal layout and the use of materials.

D/10 PROTECTED OPEN LAND

Within the areas of Protected Open Land defined on the Proposals Map, development proposals will be permitted that fall within one or more of the following categories:

a) development which would be acceptable were it in the Green Belt; or

b) limited infilling within an established pocket of housing or industry where this is in scale with the area and will not adversely affect its character or surroundings; or

c) a limited extension to an existing building which:

i. forms part of an existing source of employment; or

ii. is necessary for the establishment of a new enterprise or business which satisfies other policies of the Plan; and

iii. is sited within the existing curtilage of the business concerned, and will not adversely affect the character of the surrounding land and its openness.

Where new buildings are permitted, they should be sited to form a group with existing buildings. Where this is not possible, buildings, car parking areas and other new structures, should be sited where they will be well screened and unobtrusive in the landscape. All buildings and extensions should be of a high standard of design, using materials that are compatible with the landscape, and should not detract from the visual amenity and environment of adjacent Green Belt.

7.29 Not all peripheral open land is designated Green Belt. However, it is a general principle of national policy that development outside the main urban areas should be restricted. This supports the Council’s efforts to achieve urban regeneration. Areas of open land between the Green Belt and the urban area also perform a valuable role in:

- providing a sense of relief from large scale urban development;
- contributing to the character or identity of a specific part of the urban edge;
- protecting the visual amenity of adjacent Green Belt; and
- generally projecting an attractive image of the Borough (which is important to help attract new investment and revitalise the local economy).

7.30 Clearly, some areas of such open land will also have a particular value for agriculture, wildlife and recreation and these will be the subject of other overlapping general or site specific policies.

7.31 Areas of Open Land between the Green belt and the Defined Urban Area and subject to this policy are shown on the Proposals Map. The larger areas include:

- land west and south of Middleton;
- land north of Langley/Hollins, Middleton;
• Canal and Whit Brook Corridor, Boarshaw, Middleton;
• River Roch Valley, Heywood to Rochdale town centre;
• River Roch Valley, Rochdale to Littleborough; and
• Land straddling A627M corridor between Castleton and Kirkholt.

7.32 The policy recognises that some forms of development are acceptable because they are small-scale, or help to support new or existing businesses, including farm diversification. However, particular regard will be had to the impact of the development on the character and qualities of the open land and the potential for enhancement in line with Policy RE/2 "Countryside Around Towns".
CHAPTER 8
EMPLOYMENT AND THE ECONOMY

G/EC/1 (PART ONE POLICY) EMPLOYMENT LAND SUPPLY

THE PROVISION OF AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF LAND AND PREMISES FOR EMPLOYMENT GENERATING USES, THAT MEETS LOCAL NEEDS AND CONTRIBUTES TO MEETING REGIONAL NEEDS, WILL BE ENSURED THROUGH:

A) THE PROTECTION OF EXISTING INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL LAND AND PREMISES FOR CONTINUED EMPLOYMENT USE;

B) THE CARRYING FORWARD OF EMPLOYMENT LAND ALLOCATIONS IN THE PREVIOUS UDP AND LAND WITH PLANNING PERMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT USE. THIS INCLUDES KINGSWAY BUSINESS PARK, ROCHDALE (POLICY EC/7, 100 HA NET DEVELOPABLE FOR B1-B8 USES);

C) THE IDENTIFICATION OF LAND THAT IS AVAILABLE FOR INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT WITHIN DESIGNATED EMPLOYMENT ZONES.

INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS OUTSIDE ALLOCATED EMPLOYMENT SITES AND AREAS WILL BE SUPPORTED IN LOCATIONS THAT COMPLY WITH THE PLAN’S PART ONE SPATIAL POLICIES AND ARE ACCEPTABLE IN TERMS OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.

THE ADEQUACY OF THE SUPPLY WILL BE REGULARLY REVIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF MARKET DEMAND AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS.

8.1 In order to address the problems in the local economy (outlined in Chapter 4) the achievement of sustainable economic growth, which will contribute to social progress and not compromise the environment and prudent use of natural resources, is a priority for the UDP. To achieve this, as well as restructuring the local economy, it is important to ensure an adequate supply of land, in terms of size, location and market potential so that it is not a constraint on employment development. The employment development referred to in this chapter is primarily office, manufacturing, warehousing and distribution development in Use Classes B1, B2 and B8 in the urban area. The exception is in Mixed Employment Areas where a wider range of employment generating uses is permitted. However, it is recognised that other types of development such as leisure and retailing, and developments within rural areas, also create employment and play an important role in the local economy and these are supported by policies in Chapters 10, 11 and 15 respectively.

8.2 An employment land supply (primarily for B1 – B8 uses) is required that:
- Will assist in the expansion, modernisation and diversification of the local economy;
- Complements the region’s sectoral priorities;
- Meets the needs of local businesses and communities;
- Supports existing employment sectors and assists the expansion of existing firms;
- Attracts new and growth sector industries and services, such as knowledge based and high technology industries;
- Promotes the clustering of existing and new economic activities; and
- Provides a wider range of better paid jobs in accessible locations for the local workforce.

8.3 Economic growth needs to lead not only to an increase in the total number of jobs, but also to more jobs in modern and expanding industries. Without such modernisation, the Borough will continue to be over reliant on the low waged, low skilled jobs synonymous with traditional manufacturing industry. Diversification of the local economy is also essential if it is to be made more resilient to periodic downturns in the national economy.
8.4 Employment must also be made accessible to as many residents as possible, but particularly to those suffering the greatest economic disadvantage, e.g. the unemployed, unskilled, ethnic minorities, women and disabled people.

8.5 An employment land supply is therefore required that offers a sufficient number and variety of sites in terms of quality, size and location, to meet the varied needs of businesses that may wish to locate in the Borough. In identifying land and drafting policies for industrial and business developments, the Council has therefore taken the following factors into account:

- The differing locational needs of the full range of modern employment uses;
- The suitability of the land or premises for employment use;
- Maximising the use of land within the urban area, particularly derelict land;
- The need for proximity to the workforce and especially areas of high unemployment;
- Ease of access by both public and private transport;
- The capacity of the highway network to safely accommodate increased traffic volumes, including commercial vehicles; and
- Protection of land of agricultural, landscape, ecological or recreational importance or potential from development.

8.6 Developments that are unsightly, or that result in other environmental problems such as traffic congestion, will not only reduce the quality of life of local residents, but will also jeopardise the attraction of new investment into the local economy.

8.7 Similarly, major expansion into open countryside should be avoided, as the open areas surrounding Rochdale’s various towns play an important role in projecting an attractive image of the Borough. Developments in peripheral locations can also lead to increased and lengthier journeys to work, thus exacerbating the adverse environmental impact of car-borne pollution. This negative impact must, however, be weighed against the benefits of keeping industrial traffic away from heavily built up areas.

8.8 The UDP, therefore, firstly seeks to:

- Protect and enhance the best existing employment areas entirely for employment uses (policy EC/2 ‘Primary Employment Zones’ – total area 342.6 ha);
- Protect and enhance secondary employment areas for employment and commercial mixed uses, but allow other uses in some areas where it could support regeneration, (policy EC/3 ‘Mixed Employment Zones’ – total area 251.5 ha); and
- Protect existing employment sites outside the above areas for employment uses but, where appropriate, allow change to other uses (policy EC/4 ‘Change of Use of Employment Land Outside Designated Employment Areas’).

Protecting and maximising existing employment areas and sites for industrial and commercial uses and development can bring a number of benefits including:

- Ensuring an adequate supply of employment land and premises;
- Aiding urban regeneration through redevelopment of underused areas and sites for employment use;
- Providing opportunities for further development without significant new highways or public transport expenditure, on sites that are easily accessible from residential areas;
- Retaining employment locations that are accessible by public transport and on foot, that can help reduce reliance on the car for journeys to work, thereby alleviating traffic congestion;
- Retaining employment locations that have easy access also benefits people without the use of a car, particularly those on low incomes;
- Contributing to the prudent use of resources;
- Limiting the amount of Greenfield land that has to be taken for new development.

Allowing redevelopment to new uses where appropriate, can also bring a number of benefits including:

- Aiding urban regeneration;
- Reducing the number of under utilised sites and premises;
- Meeting other land use, social and economic needs.
8.9 The UDP secondly seeks to utilise the locational advantages that the Borough has for industry by carrying forward existing allocations and by identifying and allocating additional land for employment uses. The Borough is an attractive location for business because of its good location on the national road and rail network and its being part of the Greater Manchester conurbation with a large and varied workforce, major financial and educational facilities and an international airport. The opening of the M60 motorway, linked with the expansion of Manchester Airport, has further enhanced Rochdale’s attractiveness as a business location.

8.10 The Kingsway Business Park (EC/7) and some smaller sites (EC/8), which were allocated in the previous UDP and have planning permission, have been carried forward in the new UDP in order to confirm the Council’s continued commitment to their development and to guide future development proposals. Kingsway will not only meet the Borough’s need for strategic sites in the long term but is also expected to make a major contribution to the modernisation and revitalisation of the regional economy.

8.11 The plan identifies the sites that are available for development in the protected employment zones, under policy EC/8, and allocates one further site outside these areas at Sandbrook Park under policy EC/9.

8.12 In addition eight Areas of Opportunity are identified in policies R/4(a),(c),(d),(f),(g),(h),(i) & (j) where mixed use development is proposed that may involve an element of employment development that is appropriate to a mixed use/residential area. The area of land likely to be available for employment use is uncertain and so these areas are not included in the industrial land supply indicated below.

8.13 Government guidance PPG4 ‘Industrial and Commercial Development and Small firms’ and Draft Regional Planning Guidance 13 do not specify any target for, or method for determining, the total amount of employment land that should be provided within the Borough. This is because the varying needs of industry and its demand for land and premises is difficult to forecast with any degree of precision. Instead it is accepted that supply has to be based on local economic need and has to be responsive to patterns of demand and availability as revealed by regular monitoring at the local level.

8.14 The plan identifies 159.7 hectares of land as being potentially available for industrial and commercial development or redevelopment through existing planning permissions, site allocations and premises as well as new allocations as outlined above. This scale of land supply is identified in order to achieve one of the key objectives of the plan which is “to strengthen the local economy” (KO/1). It is considered to be realistic because, based on an annual take up rate of 12 ha per annum which has been achieved in the past, as much as 156 hectares could be developed over the plan period up to 2016. If an urgent need is identified, through monitoring, for this aspect of the plan to be reviewed then this can potentially be done outside the timetable for the review of the whole plan. One of the key issues, in considering the need for any additional allocations of employment land, will be whether the objective of strengthening the local economy has been largely achieved. The land supply is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy No</th>
<th>Site/Policy</th>
<th>Type of Site / Comments</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EC/7</td>
<td>Kingsway Business Park</td>
<td>Strategic greenfield site (Note: area shown is the approx. area likely to be available for B1-B8 uses)</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8</td>
<td>Development Sites in designated Primary Employment Zones (EC/2)</td>
<td>Generally larger, greenfield and brownfield sites</td>
<td>51.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8</td>
<td>Development Sites in designated Mixed Employment Zones (EC/3)</td>
<td>Smaller brownfield sites</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/9</td>
<td>Sandbrook Park</td>
<td>Brownfield sites outside designated Employment Zones</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R/4</td>
<td>Areas of Opportunity R/4(a),(c),(d),(f),(g),(h),(i) &amp; (j)</td>
<td>Mixed use developments proposed involving an element of B1 employment uses</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>159.7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See schedule of Employment Land Supply in Appendix A
Chapter 8

Employment and the Economy

8.15 The land supply identified will provide the number and variety of sites, in terms of quality and size, necessary to attract new businesses to the Borough. They range from large strategic sites, for quality business park developments, to small estates catering for the needs of new and expanding local firms and are widely distributed across the Borough, providing maximum accessibility and minimising the length of journeys to work for the local workforce.

8.16 Some sites are not readily available due to physical constraints such as dereliction, poor access or lack of services, whilst others have ownership constraints. The Council will play its part in bringing these sites forward for development by using its powers of land acquisition, directing highways expenditure to improving access, and by making maximum use of grant aid.

8.17 The UDP, however, is only one element of the Council’s activities aimed at fostering economic regeneration. As a land use policy document the UDP alone cannot tackle all these issues. Success in modernising and diversifying the local economy also depends on the Council working in partnership with the private and voluntary sectors to promote the Borough as a place in which to invest, train the local workforce in the necessary skills, and encourage local initiatives. The Council is working in partnership with the private sector to achieve economic regeneration, and has close links with a number of private and voluntary organisations. These include the Rochdale Development Agency which has the responsibility for promoting and implementing the economic regeneration of the Borough.

EC/2 PRIMARY EMPLOYMENT ZONES

Within Primary Employment Zones development and change of use, for industrial, business and warehouse uses (Use Classes B1, B2 and B8) will be permitted where proposals:

a) Are of an appropriate scale and character to the area;

b) Will cause no unacceptable environmental or amenity problems in the employment area or adjoining areas; and

c) Will cause no unacceptable traffic problems and have adequate on-site provision for parking, servicing and manouevring.

Other uses will not be permitted unless it can be shown that they are ancillary and complementary (both in terms of size and function) to the industrial and business nature of the employment area.

8.18 The Primary Employment Zones identified on the proposal map are the major industrial areas and estates that are predominantly in employment uses in Use Classes B1, B2 and B8, along with sites that have planning permission for these employment uses but are not yet developed. They are generally on the edge of the urban area with good transport links and easy access to the primary highway network and contain new and older industrial premises suited to continued employment use and / or sites suitable for redevelopment for industrial use. These areas offer some of the best locations for industrial, warehouse and business development in the Borough and it is important, for the future prosperity of the area, that they be protected from encroachment by other uses. The aim of this policy is, therefore, to protect and enhance Primary Employment Zones for the retention and expansion of existing firms and to attract new industrial and business enterprises.

8.19 The policy is, however, flexible enough to allow the provision of appropriate ancillary and complementary uses such as small-scale shops, cafes, banks and nurseries to serve the needs of the local workforce.

8.20 In considering development proposals, the Council will take into account their impact on the amenity of businesses within the employment zone and adjoining residential areas. The policy, therefore, requires that any development is appropriate in scale and character to the local area and that environmental mitigation measures, such as landscaped buffer zones, are provided where appropriate. Policy EC/8 “Development Sites in Employment Zones” sets out specific requirements for some sites.
Within Mixed Employment Zones development and change of use will be permitted for the following employment generating uses (Use Classes Order in brackets):

a) Business uses (B1);

b) General industry (B2);

c) Warehousing and distribution (B8), builders’ and plumbers merchants, timber suppliers, plant hire depots and other outlets providing a service to the trade, subject to conditions regulating the goods sold and the hours of opening;

d) ‘Sui generis’ uses such as the motor trade, including car and caravan showrooms, petrol filling stations, tyres and exhaust centres and car washes;

e) Entertainment, leisure and tourism uses, that if they are major will also have to comply with policy LT/4 “Major Built Leisure and Tourism Developments”.

f) Retail uses that comply with policy S/9 “Shops in Industrial Premises”.

Other uses will not be permitted unless it can be shown that they are:

i. Ancillary and complementary (both in terms of size and function) to the industrial and business nature of the employment area; or

ii. The development forms part of a wider regeneration proposal supported by the Council, within the regeneration priority areas defined by policy G/R/1, and a use other than those permitted above would be more appropriate to achieving the local and strategic objectives of the regeneration programme.

8.21 The Mixed Employment Zones identified on the proposal map are within the older urban area, often adjoining residential areas, with old industrial premises and infrastructure, vacant buildings and sites with constraints on redevelopment due to past use. They contain a wide variety of uses which, whilst not industrial, are commercial and employment generating activities and are compatible with industrial activity. Such uses can assist with the redevelopment of sites and premises, urban regeneration and the creation of employment and could not be so appropriately located elsewhere and, therefore, such uses will be encouraged in Mixed Employment Zones. However, developments will not be permitted if they are likely to cause nuisance or disruption to existing uses within the area. The aim of this policy is to protect and enhance Mixed Employment Zones for a variety of industrial, business and commercial uses to enable the retention and expansion of existing firms and attract new employment uses.

8.22 Major retail development will not be permitted even though it is employment generating, because it would conflict with the plan’s retail policies. However, limited retail development will be permitted where it complies with policy S/9 “Shops in Industrial Premises”. This is to enable and assist the development and diversification of existing businesses with uses such as factory shops and trade and wholesale counters.

8.23 Many of the zones are located very close to existing residential areas and full account has to be taken of the amenity of local residents when assessing proposals for new development. The policy, therefore, requires that any development is appropriate in scale and character to the local area and that it can be accommodated without harming local living conditions. Policy EC/8 “Development Sites in Employment Zones” sets out specific requirements for some sites to minimise their environmental impact. Residential development is not permitted within the employment zones because it is not employment generating and is likely to conflict with other uses in the area.

8.24 Rochdale is a Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder authority and a major regeneration programme is proposed. This may involve the redevelopment of Mixed Employment Areas to other uses in order to achieve a better overall distribution of land uses. The policy therefore allows flexibility in the uses permitted in the MEZ’s, within the priority areas defined by policy G/R/1, where a development proposal is part of a Council supported regeneration programme or initiative.
Change of use of employment land outside designated employment areas

Change of use or development of land and premises currently or last in employment use (Use Classes B1-B8), outside the employment areas covered by Policies EC/2 and EC/3, to uses other than those in Use Classes B1-B8 will only be permitted if one of the following criteria can be clearly demonstrated to apply:

a) There is no future demand for the premises/site for employment use and a change of use will not result in a shortage of employment land / premises;

b) The premises/site is no longer suited in land use terms to continued employment use;

c) A change of use from employment use will remove or remediate a substantial environmental problem;

d) A new use is the only practical means of retaining a building of architectural or historic significance;

e) The redevelopment of part of the site or premises for a new use will enable the upgrading, modernisation or redevelopment of the majority of the site or premises to ensure its retention in employment use;

f) The site forms part of a wider regeneration proposal supported by the Council and an alternative use would be more appropriate.

If any of the above criteria apply, consideration will be given to alternative development providing it would not detract from the use of any adjacent employment premises and complies with other policies.

8.25 There are a number of sites and premises currently or last in employment use (Use Classes B1 – B8) that are not included in designated employment areas, under Policies EC/2 and EC/3, because the sites are either too small or they contain only one business. These sites, however, may be an important source of employment and may be appropriate for continued industrial use.

8.26 Therefore, the policy seeks to protect those sites that are still suited to industrial use but accepts the loss of sites that are considered inappropriate or where redevelopment could assist urban or economic regeneration. In order to justify a proposed change of use the applicant will be required to provide evidence to the Council to demonstrate how one of the criteria in the policy may apply.

8.27 Where the suitability of the site/premises for continued employment use is the issue the requirements of modern industry and current expectations in terms of the environmental impact of industry will be taken into account with reference in particular to policy EC/5 “Employment Developments and Extensions outside Allocated Areas”.

8.28 Where redevelopment to a new use is permitted in order to obtain other benefits (particularly under criteria (c) to (e) above), the Council will impose planning conditions, or seek a legal agreement, to ensure that the intended benefits arise.

EC/5 EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENTS AND EXTENSIONS OUTSIDE ALLOCATED AREAS

Proposals for industrial, business or warehouse development (Use Classes B1, B2 and B8), including changes of use and extensions to existing premises, will be permitted outside the allocated employment areas provided that the following criteria are satisfied:

a) In the case of new development within or adjoining primarily residential areas the development is within Use Class B1 and will, therefore, by definition have no unacceptable impact on the
environment or amenity of surrounding land uses by reason of visual appearance, noise, vibration, odour, atmospheric pollution or other nuisance;

b) In the case of extensions to existing premises in Use Class B2 or B8 within or adjoining primarily residential areas the design will include measures to ensure that the impact of the development is the same as that required for a B1 development;

c) In all cases the scale and form of the development is sympathetic to the character, and protects the amenity, of surrounding land uses;

d) Satisfactory vehicular access can be provided and adequate on-site provision is made for car parking, servicing and manoeuvring;

e) The surrounding highway network is capable either as existing or as proposed to be upgraded (including by the developer as a result of a proposal), of accommodating any additional vehicular traffic generated by the proposal without damage to amenity or road safety; and

f) For new development (excluding extensions) the site is, or is capable of being, adequately served by public transport.

8.29 The Council recognises that, in addition to the sites and employment areas allocated in the plan, other appropriate sites outside these areas may come forward within the Plan period, either through redevelopment or the reclamation of derelict land. In such cases industrial and business developments will be supported by the Council, as a means of further expanding the local economic base, provided the locational and environmental criteria identified in the above policy can be satisfied and the proposals comply with other policies of the Plan. In particular, proposals will not be permitted outside the Defined Urban Area (except in areas designated under Policy D/5 ‘Infilling at Major Existing Developed Sites in the Green Belt’), on land allocated for other uses, or in areas of ecological or recreational value.

8.30 The existence of sources of employment close to and within residential areas can bring benefits to the local workforce in terms of accessible employment. Government planning guidance recognises that certain industrial and commercial activities can be carried out within residential areas without detriment to the local environment or residential amenity (these uses are defined within Class B1 of the 1987 Use Classes Order), and the policy permits such uses provided the other criteria in the policy are also met.

8.31 Problems of incompatible industrial uses within residential areas can be found in many of the older parts of the Borough where a number of long established general industrial and warehouse (B2 and B8) premises can be found in close proximity to housing. In particular if a use becomes too large it can undermine the basic residential nature of the area. The expansion or redevelopment of existing uses in residential areas will only be permitted if the Council is satisfied that criteria (b) to (e) can be met to ensure that the scale and nature of the development can be accommodated without loss of residential amenity.

EC/6 OFFICE DEVELOPMENT

Major office developments will only be permitted outside town and district centres, and sites allocated for employment development, where:

a) The applicant has demonstrated that there are no sequentially preferable suitable sites or buildings available, or likely to become available within a reasonable period of time, within or on the edge of town and district centres or within sites allocated for employment;

b) The site is on the strategic route network, is well served by public transport and is readily accessible by foot and cycle;

c) They are of a scale and design appropriate to the area in which they are located; and

d) They will not create unacceptable environmental, amenity or traffic problems.
Employment and the Economy

8.32 Major office developments (over 1000sq m in Use Class B1) will be encouraged to locate firstly within and secondly, if no sites are available, on the edge of established town and district centres in order to maintain the prosperity and vitality of those centres and to maximise the use of public transport for journeys to work. However, it is recognised that there may be a lack of suitable sites in town and district centres. Therefore, major office development will also be allowed on sites allocated for employment outside town and district centres. They will only be permitted in other locations if there are no suitable sequentially preferable sites available and the development will be easily accessible, particularly by public transport, and can be accommodated without damage to the amenity or environment of surrounding areas.

8.33 This policy does not apply to small scale office development (below 1000 sq m) or office development that is ancillary to other uses such as manufacturing and warehousing.

EC/7 KINGSWAY BUSINESS PARK

Land, between the A664 Kingsway, M62 Motorway, B6194 Broad Lane and the Rochdale–Oldham railway line, is allocated and has outline planning permission for high quality general and light industry, offices, distribution and storage, research and development, and associated and complementary uses. The Council will strictly apply the following criteria to the development of the site (to be known as the Kingsway Business Park):

a) A high quality of built development in an attractive landscape setting, designed to be in sympathy with the topography and location of the site;

b) Retention, wherever possible, of those features which provide the site with its existing character, such as trees, hedges and watercourses;

c) A high standard of extensive landscaping within and around the site, including “buffer zones” between the surrounding residential areas and development in the site;

d) The creation of new, and extension of existing, public open space and informal recreation areas, including the extension and improvement of Stanney Brook Corridor and Park under policy UG/9;

e) The enhancement of the recreational and leisure potential of the site, including the Canal and any new open water areas that may be created as part of the development;

f) The protection and enhancement of the Stanney Brook Site of Biological Importance (in line with Policy NE/2 – Designated Sites of Ecological and Geological / Geomorphological Importance);

g) The retention of existing ‘rights of way’ for pedestrian and cycle use. In order to enable development the diversion of ‘rights of way’ may be necessary, however their closure will only be allowed as a last resort;

h) The preservation and continued productive use, wherever possible, of buildings of architectural or historical interest and their local settings;

i) The protection, wherever possible, of existing property rights within and around the site, commensurate with the proposal;

j) Vehicular access to the site to be from the A664 Kingsway and from Junction 21 of the M62 Motorway only. Significant improvements to the geometric layout of M62 junction 21 will be necessary;

k) The site to be served by a main distributor road linking the A664 and Junction 21, which should avoid, wherever possible, important natural features and buildings and minimise its impact on surrounding areas;

l) Adequate provision for public transport to and within the site;

m) Small scale retail, financial and other office services will be allowed to serve the needs of employees in the Business Park;
n) The preservation and enhancement or creation of other sites/features of ecological importance (e.g. habitats) wherever possible;

o) Limited residential development may be acceptable provided it is appropriate in scale, location, access and design.

8.34 The principle of this Business Park development has already been established by its inclusion as an allocation in the South Rochdale Local Plan (adopted in June 1989) and in the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (adopted in March 1999). Outline and, in parts, full planning permission has been granted for a comprehensive development scheme in compliance with the UDP policy. Due to the size and complexity of the project development may take several years to complete. Therefore, the previous UDP’s policy, with only minor modifications, has been carried forward in the new UDP in order to confirm the Council’s commitment to the development and to guide future development.

8.35 The site, covering some 170 ha (420 acres) of which 114.6 ha is developable, has many physical and locational qualities to commend it as a strategic location for high quality business and industrial development, not just in Rochdale and the Greater Manchester conurbation but the whole of the North West. It is a very large site, offering the opportunity to provide a supply of large, commercially attractive sites for a wide range of business development within a high quality, well landscaped setting. It is situated immediately adjacent to the M62 motorway and is capable of being accessed directly from junction 21 of that motorway and has the opportunity of having its own stop on the Rochdale to Manchester Metrolink line (see policy A/18 Metrolink). It is within the Greater Manchester conurbation and is easily accessible to a large workforce, which has pockets of high unemployment, and all the services and facilities available in the conurbation such as financial services, higher education institutions and Manchester Airport. The development may take between 10-25 years to complete and the Business Park represents the Council’s primary opportunity to provide a large supply of strategic sites to attract major, modern industries to the Borough and region into the foreseeable future. Due to the above characteristics it is expected to contribute to the economic regeneration not just of Rochdale and adjoining areas but the whole of the North West region. Consequently, in the North West Development Agency’s economic regeneration strategy “England’s North West, A Strategy Towards 2020” (published in 1999) Kingsway is included in a list of large regional sites to be developed to assist the regeneration of the region. Kingsway is also likely to be identified in the revised RPG 13 as a committed Regional Investment Site supported by the NWDA and the NWRA.

8.36 A main distributor road linking the A664 and Junction 21 of the M62 motorway is required. This link is an essential part of any development proposal in order to ensure that the site can fulfil its potential as a major strategic business site. Significant improvements to the geometric layout of junction 21 of the M62 will be required and a scheme has been agreed with the Department of Transport. The site will also be accessed from the A664 (Kingsway), which is one of the Borough’s primary roads and bus routes, making it readily accessible to the local workforce. Additional land may be needed outside the allocation boundary to facilitate the provision of a satisfactory vehicular access from Kingsway. In order to minimise traffic generation from the development planning applications for major developments will have to be accompanied by a Travel Plan as required by policy A/12 ‘New Development – Travel Plans and School Travel Plans’.

8.37 The site adjoins the Inner Rochdale Physical Regeneration Area, defined under policy G/R/1 ‘Physical Regeneration’, which contains a workforce that suffers unemployment levels well above the Borough average.

8.38 The fundamental design principle for the Business Park is that any built development must be of a high quality set in an attractive landscape setting at a density and of a design appropriate to the proposed use and the topography, character and location of the particular site consistent with other policies in the plan.

8.39 A further important aspect of the proposal is the opportunity it presents for opening up the site for other uses. About 114.6 hectares is developable for industry and other permitted uses, the other 30 hectares remaining as open land or used for a variety of low intensity, informal recreational activities. The site also adjoins the Rochdale Canal, which is an SSSI and SAC and protected under policy NE/2 Designated Sites of Ecological Importance. The canal also offers considerable potential for the development of recreation
uses in an attractive environment and reference should be made to policy LT/7 Rochdale Canal. Features that provide the site with its special character, such as trees, hedges, footpaths, streams and buildings of architectural or historic value, will be retained wherever possible. The Stanney Brook Corridor and Park will also be protected and enhanced for both its nature conservation and informal recreational value in line with policies NE/2 ‘Designated Sites of Ecological and Geological / Geomorphological Importance’ and UG/9 ‘Stanney Brook Corridor and Park’.

8.40 Development of the site is likely to be phased and it is essential that any development is compatible with the overall objective of a strategic business park and does not constrain a comprehensive overall development that meets all the criteria set out in the policy. Any development within the site will therefore be expected to accord substantially with an approved Master Plan for the comprehensive development of the whole site; and in any event to:

i. Be compatible with the overall objectives of a strategic business park development, which are primarily to attract major inward investment to the Region and sub region to support economic regeneration;

ii. Comply with, or allow and enable an overall scheme to comply with, all the criteria in this policy;

iii. Not constrain a comprehensive and satisfactory overall development of the entire site;

iv. Not hinder the provision of a satisfactory highway link between the A664 and Junction 21 of the M62; and

v. Contribute to the total cost of all on and off site infrastructure works, including highways and services, necessary for the development of the entire site. Such contributions will be secured though planning conditions or other legal agreements.

EC/8 DEVELOPMENT SITES IN EMPLOYMENT ZONES

The following sites, which are located in either Primary or Mixed employment Zones (Policies EC/2 and EC/3), are available for employment development. The type of development that will be supported is determined by the type of employment zone the site is in. Any special requirements for the development of each site are indicated below.

Sites within Primary Employment Zones (Policy EC/2):

a) Waterfold Farm, Heap Bridge, Heywood (3.8 ha) (Greenfield site allocated in the adopted UDP with full planning permission):

- Landscape buffer zone required on river frontage.

b) Hareshill Road, Heywood (13.7 ha) (Greenfield site allocated in the adopted UDP with outline planning permission):

- B8 uses will not be permitted on this site;
- Landscape buffer zones are to be provided between development in the site and surrounding residential areas;
- Existing public rights of way to be retained; and
- Landscape features of nature conservation interest (pond and hedgerows) should be retained /enhanced where possible.

c) Land at Cowm Top, north of Cripplegate Lane, Castleton (7.3 ha) (Greenfield site allocated in the previous UDP with full planning permission):

- Access to be via Queensway / Cowm Top Lane
- Boundary landscape screening will be required between the development and adjoining residential properties.

d) Site at Buckley Road /Buckley Brook Street, Rochdale (0.4 ha)

e) Site at Buckley Road, Rochdale (0.3 ha):
Employment and the Economy

f) Land north of Oldham Road, Middleton (5.2 ha):
   • Revised access arrangements will be required to Oldham Road plus possible off-site junction improvements.

g) Site on Heywood Distribution Park, Pilsworth Road, Heywood (5.4 ha)
h) Site on Heywood Distribution Park, Pilsworth Road, Heywood (7.7 ha)
i) Site on Smallbridge Business Park, Rochdale (0.5 ha)
j) Site on Smallbridge Business Park, Rochdale (2.4 ha)
k) Site on Pilsworth Road, Heywood (4.4 ha)

Sites within Mixed Employment Zones (Policy EC/3):
l) Land at Sparthbottoms, Rochdale (0.5 ha)
m) Land at Roeacre Street/Bradshaw Street, Heywood (0.9 ha):
   • An off site junction improvement will be required at the corner of Bradshaw Street/Rochdale Road East.

n) Site on Belfield Road, Rochdale (1 ha)
o) Site on Belfield Road/Mayfield Street, Rochdale (0.8 ha)
p) Site of former Rex Mill, north of Middleton Road, Middleton (1.5 ha)
q) Land adjoining Eagle Technology Park, Queensway, Rochdale (0.8 ha)

Sites EC/9 (b,c,d,e,g,h,j,m,o) above either adjoin or are within the catchment area of watercourses and the requirements of policy EM/7 should be taken into account in any development.

8.41 The principle of employment development on the above sites has been established by either their allocation in the previous UDP or through granting planning permission. They are protected for employment use by their inclusion in an Employment Zone under either policy EC/2 or EC/3. The sites are identified in this policy in order to:
   • indicate the amount of land that is potentially available within the Employment Zones for development and where;
   • indicate the type, size and variety of sites available;
   • direct appropriate development industry interest to the available sites;
   • ensure the application of any conditions considered appropriate to the development of these sites as outlined above; and
   • make clear the appropriate future use of these sites should their existing planning permissions expire.

8.42 The sites identified as potentially available for development or redevelopment range in size from 0.3 ha. to 13.7 ha and offer a total land supply of 56.6 ha of which 51.1 ha is in Primary Employment Zones and 5.5 ha is in Mixed Employment Zones. In addition to the above sites it is expected that further sites will become available within the Employment Zone’s for redevelopment for employment use during the plan period due to restructuring in the economy and property market.

8.43 The type of development that will be supported on each site is determined by the Employment Zone policy under which the site is listed. The sites are all in accessible locations close to the local workforce. It is expected that they will be appropriate for a wide range of business and industrial activity, including traditional manufacturing and warehousing, and will be particularly important in providing for the needs of small and medium sized local businesses.
Most of the sites are either vacant or greenfield and are available for development without the need for property acquisition or clearance, however they may still require significant infrastructure works. Some of the sites, although they may be occupied, are identified as having potential for redevelopment because of their current under use and problems such as dilapidated buildings and land. Where significant investment is required to overcome physical constraints and bring sites forward for development maximum use will be made of grant aid where available. Where off-site highway improvement works have been identified as a pre-requisite to development, appropriate developer contributions will be required. Some of the sites are in the catchment of watercourses that have flooding problems in the downstream reaches, and some adjoin watercourses and may be at risk of flooding. Development needs to be in accordance with Policy EM/7 to ensure that for sites EC/8 (d,e,m,o) flood risk to development is minimised and there is adequate access to the watercourses for maintenance, and for EC/8 (b, c, g, h) surface water run off is limited.

**EC/9 SANDBROOK PARK**

This 3.1 ha site at Sandbrook Park is allocated for B1 business development. A Transport Assessment will be required for any major office development at the site.

This site is not within a defined Employment Zone but it is within the urban area in a highly accessible location with direct access to the primary highway network and good access to the motorway network. It is a brownfield site and offers development opportunities for B1 uses seeking a highly accessible location.

A Transport Assessment, and consultation with the Highways Agency, will be required for any major office development on this site because of its potential impact on the trunk road network.

### OTHER ISSUES

**Catering for the Needs of the Workforce**

True economic revitalisation and urban regeneration cannot be achieved solely by increasing the number of jobs available in the Borough. In addition, these jobs must be made available to as many local residents as possible. The need to combat disadvantage in the labour market is one of the three basic aims of the Council’s Economic Strategy, and was also an issue raised during public consultation on the UDP Review Issues Paper. Appropriate local recruitment and training initiatives will be vital to ensure that local residents benefit fully from new employment developments. The Council, therefore, is already working closely with relevant local agencies to provide recruitment and training packages aimed at increasing employment opportunities for local residents, particularly the unemployed, ethnic minorities, disabled people and women and will encourage business to participate in such schemes.

In addition, the provision of crèches and nurseries within the workplace would widen women’s job opportunities and provide employers with a larger pool of labour. The Council will, therefore, seek to encourage the provision of workplace nursery and crèche facilities in any major new industrial and business developments.

**Tourism**

The importance of tourism in providing employment, broadening the local economic base, and as an aid to economic regeneration is emphasised in Strategic Guidance and in the Council’s own ‘Economic Strategy’. Whilst the Council is aware of the limitations of Rochdale as a tourism destination in its own right, there is clearly some potential which could be developed for day visitors, short-break and specialist holidays, and business tourism. Thus, the UDP seeks to help consolidate and develop the Borough’s tourism base, and specific policies are contained in the Chapter 11 ‘Leisure and Tourism’ including policies to improve hotel provision.
The Rural Economy

8.50 A large proportion of the borough’s land area is rural in character consequently the rural economy is an important element in the local economy and has, in parts of the borough, strong linkages with the urban economy. The relevant policies dealing with the rural economy are contained in the Chapter 15 ‘Countryside and the Rural Economy’.
A supply of housing will be maintained which takes account of regional planning guidance and allows for replacement of dwellings lost through clearance and demolition. To achieve this the plan makes provision of land for a net increase of 240 dwellings per annum in the period 2002 to 2016.

In providing for new housing, emphasis will be placed on making efficient use of previously developed sites and existing buildings within the urban area. This will include promoting higher densities in sustainable locations and maintaining the quality of the residential environment through good design. The plan will also ensure the provision of a variety of housing in terms of type, size and affordability to meet the needs of all sectors of the local community.

The existing housing stock and residential environment will be improved by a targeted renewal programme in areas of public and older private housing.

9.1 Access to a decent home is fundamental to a person’s quality of life. It is therefore vital to ensure sufficient housing in areas which meet the needs of local people. This provision is guided by the requirement laid down in Regional Planning Guidance (RPG 13). This requirement is expressed as an annual average rate of provision to be applied up to 2006. However, where new plans extend beyond 2006 they should continue to provide for additional dwellings at the same annual average rate until such time as any different rate is adopted following review of RPG 13. Within the Borough this requirement will be met in the following ways:

a) Existing housing commitments;
b) Conversions and re-use of existing buildings;
c) The allocation of new sites for housing;
d) Identified elements of housing within proposed mixed use areas;
e) Allowances for completions on small sites and large brownfield windfalls; and
f) Allowance for new dwellings on clearance sites.

9.2 The supply of homes will be regularly monitored over the plan period in accordance with the Government’s ‘plan, monitor and manage’ approach to housing provision. This more flexible approach, including the undertaking of regular urban capacity studies, will enable variations in demand to be taken into account and ensure that urban regeneration is not undermined.

9.3 Within the overall supply emphasis will be placed on making the most efficient use of land and property within the urban area, particularly in the most sustainable locations e.g. in and around town centres. This reflects the sequential approach laid down in policy G/SP/1 of the Plan Strategy. There will be a focus on brownfield provision in order to meet the target laid down within RPG 13 that at least 80% of all housing should be provided on previously developed land or through the conversion and re-use of existing buildings. The proportion of dwellings provided on brownfield sites is also a Best Value indicator that is monitored on a regular basis. The release of greenfield sites will be assessed against their sustainability and the availability of brownfield alternatives. All the housing allocations within the Plan have been assessed in terms of their
accessibility to public transport to reduce trips by car and ensure that all residents have access to jobs and services.

9.4 The Plan will aim to ensure that an appropriate mix of dwellings is provided in new developments which meet local people’s needs in terms of size, type and affordability. It is important to recognise changing needs and aspirations, particularly given the cultural changes taking place within the Borough. This is also intended to help foster mixed and balanced communities and thus promote social inclusion, which reflects a key objective of the Plan Strategy. In addition, the Plan will aim to encourage high quality in terms of the design and layout of new housing developments. Good design can provide safer environments and enable higher densities to be achieved without a reduction in the quality of the residential environment.

9.5 New dwellings make up only a small proportion of the overall housing within the Borough. Therefore, the Plan recognises the importance of maintaining and improving the existing dwelling stock and the surrounding residential environment. As well as improving the quality of life for residents, regeneration and renewal within existing housing areas can reduce the need to provide new sites by making better use of the existing housing stock. Such improvement also offers the opportunity to tackle problems of low demand, high turnover and weakening housing markets, which are evident in some parts of the Borough.

EXPLANATION OF THE HOUSING FIGURES

9.6 Regional Planning Guidance for the North West (RPG) sets out a net annual average rate of provision of additional dwellings for each Metropolitan District and County. For Rochdale the figure is 240 per annum in the period 2002 to 2016. This figure was arrived at by taking into account a number of factors, including the 1996-based household projections, the overall spatial approach within RPG and the availability of urban brownfield sites. As this requirement relates to additional dwellings it is necessary to consider the number of dwellings needed to replace those lost through clearance and demolition.

9.7 Taking account of Housing Market Renewal (HMR) and recent clearance rates a figure of 140 per annum is considered appropriate. Therefore, the gross average rate of provision over the Plan period is 380 dwellings per annum. However, in taking account of this clearance it is necessary to consider what proportion of this housing can be accommodated back on the clearance site and what is displaced elsewhere. Given the fact that a significant proportion of the dwellings to be cleared are likely to be older, terraced properties, building back on a ‘one for one basis is unlikely. The average clearance replacement rate considered appropriate by the Council is 60% i.e. if 100 dwellings are cleared on a site 60 can be built back. An allowance for build back on cleared sites is therefore included within the Housing Land Supply table below. Although an annual figure for clearance and replacement is assumed for the purposes of calculating a supply, significant annual fluctuations are likely over the plan period. Clearly, the fact that dwellings cannot be built back until a clearance site has been assembled means that the number of dwellings coming forward may be lower early in the plan period. Clearance and clearance replacement will be monitored as part of the regular monitoring process.

9.8 There are a number of sources of new dwellings which have been taken account of in the Plan. Firstly, there are current commitments on large sites (i.e. over 0.4 ha), which include dwellings to be completed on sites under construction and sites with planning permission. Secondly, there are the allowances for as yet unidentified potential i.e. ‘windfalls’. PPG3 advises that plans need to make an allowance for windfalls on large brownfield sites and this figure has been calculated based on past trends. Dwellings expected to come forward from small sites also have to be taken into account and again this is based on past trends. As noted above, an allowance has also been made for ‘build-back’ on cleared sites. No allowance has been made for dwellings coming forward from conversions as completions are very erratic over time and there is difficulty in recording actual numbers. Finally, there is a contribution from those sites which have been allocated for housing within the Plan. This includes sites which are to be developed solely for housing and housing which will come forward as part of a mixed use development.
9.8 The following table shows how the Council intends to make provision for new housing over the Plan period.

**Housing Land Supply, April 2002 to March 2016**

*Large sites (0.4ha or more):*
- a) Under construction: 743
- b) With planning permission: 817
- c) Allowance for windfall supply on large brownfield sites\(^1\): 1250
- d) UDP Housing Allocations: 155
- e) Housing contributions from Areas of Opportunity: 325

*Other sites:*
- f) Allowance for small sites\(^2\): 980
- g) Allowance for new dwellings on cleared sites\(^3\): 1050

**TOTAL**: 5320 (380 per annum)

**Notes**
- \(^1\) Assumed contribution of 100 dwellings per year, based on past trends. However, to avoid double-counting with commitments, have assumed 0 for year 1 and 50 for year 2.
- \(^2\) Assumed contribution of 70 dwellings per year, based on past trends.
- \(^3\) Assumed contribution based on a ‘build-back’ rate of 60% (84 per annum). However, to avoid double-counting with commitments, have assumed 0 for year 1 and 42 for year 2.

9.9 The level of supply reflects the Council’s wish to promote the regeneration of a number of previously developed sites through redevelopment for housing or mixed uses including an element of housing. The proportion of the overall current supply that is on brownfield sites is 84%, with the only greenfield supply coming forward being that which is already committed. The Council does not anticipate the need for further greenfield land release during the life of the Plan. Greenfield sites will only be released if the if there is insufficient supply to meet the requirements of RPG or there are exceptional circumstances where other material planning considerations outweigh the need to retain a greenfield site. Regular monitoring will be undertaken to ensure that we are meeting the RPG requirement and that the assumptions made in the table remain valid.

9.10 RPG 13 makes reference to how a reduction in vacant properties may help to reduce the need to allocate new land for housing. As at April 2002 there were approximately 4,800 vacant properties within the Borough, representing 5.4% of the total dwelling stock. Of the 3,500 vacant private sector properties, around 1,900 had been vacant for over six months. It is hoped that initiatives within the Empty Property Strategy and targeted housing renewal will help to reduce the number of vacant properties. However, because of the uncertainty regarding changes in the number of vacant dwellings it would be inappropriate at this stage to make assumptions on how this would affect the overall level of new dwellings required. Instead, changes in the number of vacant dwellings will be considered as part of the regular housing monitoring.

**H/2 LAND PROVIDED FOR NEW HOUSING**

The following sites have been allocated for housing on the Proposal map to accommodate approximately 155 dwellings between mid-2002 and mid-2016.

- a) Former Nook Mill, Gale Street, Rochdale (0.69 ha approx.):
  - Estimated capacity about 21 dwellings;
  - Vehicular access from Gale Street;
Housing

- Any existing rights of way/desire lines between Gale Street and Joy Street to be accommodated in any development.

b) Dale Mill / Site of former Arkwright Mill, Rochdale (1.8 ha approx.):

- Estimated capacity 54 dwellings;
- All vehicular access from Roch Street;
- Pedestrian phases within the existing signalised junction of Roch Street/Albert Royds Street may be required;
- Traffic calming of streets bounded by Roch Street, Cannon Street, Cook Street, Albert Royds Street and Halifax Road may be required;
- Proposals will need to address the parking needs of existing properties on Roch Street;
- The site is adjacent to the River Roch and should therefore satisfy the provisions of Policy EM/7 'Development and Flood Risk'. In particular, any development should consider the need to provide adequate access to the watercourse for maintenance.

c) Rainshore Mill, Norden (1.99ha approx.):

- Estimated capacity 40 dwellings;
- The junction of Overtown Lane and Edenfield Road must be improved to the Council’s satisfaction;
- Overtown Lane must be improved to an adoptable standard;
- Proposals will need to satisfy policy D/6 ‘Redevelopment and Regeneration of Existing Developed Sites in the Green Belt for Other Purposes’;
- The site is bisected by a culverted watercourse and should therefore satisfy the provisions of policy EM/7 ‘Development and Flood Risk’. In particular, any development should consider the need to provide adequate access to the watercourse for maintenance.

In addition to these specific housing allocations, further housing contributions of approximately 325 dwellings are expected to come forward through the redevelopment of the following Areas of Opportunity.

d) Healey Hall Mills, Healey (1.1ha approx.):

- Estimated capacity 40 dwellings;
- Proposals will be expected to include off-site highway improvements to the unadopted section of Dell Road;
- Proposals will need to satisfy policy D/6 ‘Redevelopment and Regeneration of Major Existing Developed Sites in the Green Belt for Other Purposes’.

In addition to these specific housing allocations, further housing contributions of approximately 325 dwellings are expected to come forward through the redevelopment of the following Areas of Opportunity which are identified in Chapter 12- Regeneration.

Durn Area of Opportunity, Littleborough – R/4(b) (2.95 ha approx.):

- Estimated capacity 40 dwellings.

Two Bridges Road Area of Opportunity, Newhey – R/4(c) (4.64 ha approx.):

- Estimated capacity 45 dwellings.

Birch Hill Hospital Area of Opportunity, Rochdale – R/4(d) (12.77 ha approx.):

- Estimated capacity 240 dwellings
9.11 The development of the above sites for housing offers the opportunity to:
   a) Provide housing in areas of high demand;
   b) Redevelop underused, derelict and vacant sites
   c) Promote urban regeneration; and
   d) Eradicate environmentally damaging land and buildings.

9.12 The capacities for all of these sites are only indicative based on the area of the site and the type of
development anticipated. A specific capacity has been estimated in order to inform the calculations on the
current supply. For sites a) and b) a density of 30 per hectare has been assumed, as this is the minimum
density allowed under policy H/5 'Residential Density'. For site c) the capacity reflects the expected nature
of the development where the intention is to design the development to recreate an upland hamlet.
Therefore, a lower density may be appropriate in order to achieve this.

9.13 These three Areas of Opportunity have been included under policy H/2 as the redevelopment of these sites
must include an element of housing. The capacities for these mixed use sites relates to an estimated
proportion of the site coming forward for housing, and are therefore liable to vary when a final scheme is
developed. Further detail regarding these sites is given under policies R/4(b), R/4(c) and R/4(d)
respectively.

9.14 It is anticipated that a majority of these sites will come forward in the early years of the plan. Given that
there are so few sites and they are all brownfield, it is unnecessary to hold any of them back for release later
in the Plan period. To restrict when any of these sites come forward would undermine the regeneration
objectives of the Plan outlined in the Strategy.

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<th>H/3</th>
<th>RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS OUTSIDE ALLOCATED AREAS</th>
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Proposals for housing development on sites not allocated for housing or any other use in the plan
will be permitted provided that:
   a) The site is on previously developed land;
   b) The site is well located in terms of access to jobs, shops and services by modes of transport
       other than the car;
   c) The development provides a mix of dwellings in terms of type and size;
   d) The proposed development is compatible with the Plan’s policies dealing with flood risk,
       unstable land, contaminated land and landfill gas; and
   e) The proposed development is compatible with surrounding uses, including highways, both in
terms of its impact upon those uses and the impact of surrounding uses upon the amenity of
future residents.

The release of greenfield sites will only be permitted if the supply of housing land falls below 5
years, as defined by the projected annualised rate and the sites in question satisfy the requirements
of the Part One policies G/SP/1, G/SP/2 and G/SP/3.

9.15 A significant proportion of the housing provided in the Borough has been on sites not identified within the
plan i.e. windfall sites. It is therefore important that such development takes place in sustainable locations,
provides the right type of housing, is of good quality and does not adversely affect the amenity of existing
and future residents.

9.16 The aim of this policy is to reflect the criteria for assessing applications for residential development outlined
in PPG3. All new housing development should where possible make efficient use of previously developed
land. Good design and layouts can help to achieve this whilst also producing environments which are more
distinctive, accessible, safer and energy efficient than the more traditional estates. Policy BE/2 'Design
Chapter 9

Housing

Criteria for New Development’ gives further advice regarding the design of new development. In addition, large sites (over 0.4 ha) should incorporate a mixture of dwelling types in order to provide a wider housing choice and promote the development of mixed and balanced communities.

9.17 The development of greenfield sites whilst sufficient brownfield sites exist to meet housing provision need will undermine urban regeneration. Therefore, it is important that greenfield sites are only permitted when the amount of available brownfield sites coming forward does not meet the required build rate. For the avoidance of doubt this includes the renewal of planning permissions. Information regarding the availability of brownfield sites to meet housing requirements will be obtained through the undertaking of regular housing capacity studies.

9.18 Additional specific advice to developers is given in the Supplementary Planning Guidance Note (SPG) ‘Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development’. This SPG is to be reviewed and the advice within it widened to reflect more up-to-date Regional and National Guidance on issues such as the design and layout of new housing.

H/4 BACKLAND SITES

On sites within the curtilage of a dwelling and on other sites where access is restricted by surrounding land uses, new residential development will only be permitted where the proposal satisfies the following criteria:

a) The proposal is sensitive to, and compatible with, the character of the surrounding area and adjoining buildings in terms of scale, design and materials;

b) Where the proposal is within the curtilage of an existing dwelling, sufficient private garden space is provided for both the existing property and the proposed development;

c) The proposal does not affect adversely the amenity of residents of adjoining dwellings through overlooking, overshadowing, loss of privacy or loss of daylight;

d) The proposal achieves satisfactory access and off-street parking arrangements without significantly increasing noise, nuisance and disturbance to the occupants of adjoining properties;

e) The proposal involves no loss of, or damage to, trees or other natural features of amenity value or sites of ecological importance; and

f) The proposal does not prejudice the development potential of an adjacent site.

9.19 The development of under-used backland sites can help to make more efficient use of land within the urban area. They also give the opportunity to provide new housing in areas of high demand where alternative sites may be scarce.

9.20 However, proposals involving the development of gardens and other ‘backland’ sites (i.e. where road access is restricted because of surrounding housing or other uses) require careful consideration to ensure there is no loss of amenity for existing residents. There must be proper means of access, which is convenient and safe for both drivers and pedestrians, and adequate provision for car parking. There must be adequate space between new and existing dwellings to avoid spoiling the privacy and amenity of adjoining householders. Sensitive design and good landscaping are required if new buildings are to be fitted successfully into small vacant sites in residential areas.

9.21 The development of backland sites will be resisted where the proposal would adversely affect the character of the surrounding area, lead to over-development of the site or sterilise the development potential of an adjacent site.

9.22 All proposals should have regard to Policy BE/2 and any related supplementary planning guidance produced by the Council.
H/5 RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

Housing development proposals will be permitted that result in a net site density of between 30-50 dwellings per hectare.

Higher densities will be sought, and permitted, on sites in and around town centres and within walking distance of public transport nodes (including railway stations), proposed Metrolink stops and corridors well served by public transport.

Development proposals at a lower density will be permitted provided that a developer can demonstrate that a higher density would be impossible or undesirable – taking into account the shape, topography and character of the site and impacts on the living conditions of local residents.

9.23 Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 – ‘Housing’ encourages the efficient use of land through higher densities of residential development. The guidance makes it clear that developments of less than 30 dwellings per hectare net constitute an inefficient use of land, and seeks to encourage net densities of between 30-50 dwellings per hectare, with a greater intensity of development at places with good access to public transport. Such sites will be assessed having regard to accessibility indicators. Raising densities in locations well served by public transport and close to jobs and amenities will reduce the need to travel by car. Increasing densities also means that more dwellings can be accommodated within the urban area thus reducing the pressure to develop greenfield sites.

9.24 In achieving higher densities emphasis will be placed on good quality design and layouts. Having more dwellings on a site should not compromise the quality of the residential environment. Imaginative and well thought out layouts can achieve these densities, provide a mix of dwellings and maintain a good living environment for residents both in and around the new development.

9.25 In the policy, reference is made to net site density which includes only those areas which will be developed for housing and directly associated uses. This will include:

- Access roads within the site;
- Private garden space;
- Car parking areas;
- Incidental open space and landscaping; and
- Children’s play areas where these are to be provided.

It therefore excludes:

- Major distributor roads;
- Primary schools;
- Open spaces serving a wider area; and
- Significant landscape buffer strips.

9.26 There may be occasions where achieving a high density is either impossible or inappropriate on a site. The size, shape, topography and ground conditions on a site often affect the developable area. Also, in some areas, a high density development may not be suitable due to the character of the surrounding residential environment, its impact on the amenity of local residents, traffic generation, existing high density or other policy constraints. It will up to the developer to justify why the minimum density cannot been achieved.

H/6 PROVISION OF RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE IN NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

New housing developments will be required to make adequate provision for recreational open space by applying a standard of 2.1 hectares per 1000 population. This will be achieved through the following requirements:

a) Proposals comprising 100 or more bedrooms should include on-site provision.
b) Proposals comprising less than 100 bedrooms will be required to make a contribution, through a commuted sum, to off site provision.

Subject to assessment, the above requirement may be waived/reduced/varied in those circumstances where a housing proposal arises in an area where the existing recreational open space is sufficient to cater for existing need as well as that arising from the development.

Recreational open space that is provided on-site should be capable of providing for the desired range of recreational activity in terms of size, shape location, slope and layout for use by the residents of the proposed development. In some cases this will include facilities for children’s play, having regard to the Council’s strategy for play facilities across the Borough and the suitability of the site to accommodate such a facility. Use of the land should not be restricted to such residents. Incidental landscaping does not count towards this provision.

The commuted sum for off-site provision would need to be directly related to providing or improving an area of open space that is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development proposal, and is therefore of direct benefit to the occupiers of the new development.

Unless other ways of securing the maintenance of the open space are agreed with the Council, the developer will be expected to enter into a legal agreement to secure the maintenance of the site for an agreed period. Such agreements will relate only to those areas of outdoor sports provision and local open space which have been provided or improved for the direct benefit of residents of the new development.

Exceptions to these requirements for open space provision will be made in the case of sheltered housing and other housing developed specifically for elderly persons.

9.27 It is essential that the development of new dwellings within the Borough does not lead to a deficiency of or over-use of existing recreational open space. In order to avoid this developers are expected to make allowance the provision of open space, whether it is to be provided on-site or relates to contributions to provide a facility nearby.

9.28 The Council has assessed what provision is required to meet current and anticipated demand. This has resulted in a minimum standard for recreational open space of 2.1 ha per 1000 population. This is made up of 1.1 ha of outdoor sports provision and 1.0 ha of local open space. The outdoor sports provision includes facilities such as pitches, greens and courts. The local open space incorporates facilities such as outdoor equipped playgrounds, other designated play facilities for children and casual or informal playing space. It should be noted that the provision of amenity or incidental landscaping not intended for recreation will not count towards the above standard.

9.29 In providing for local open space within the Borough, the Council has defined three broad categories of site which are:

a) LEAP (Locally Equipped Area for Play)* – these should include at least 5 types of equipment and a small games area. Site must be at least 0.36 ha and within 400m (5 min walking time) of home;

b) NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play)* – these should include at least 8 types of equipment, along with kickabout and cycle play opportunities. Site must be at least 0.85 ha and within 1000m (15 min walking time) of home; and

c) informal recreational open space – areas should be over 0.2 hectares and within 400m (5 min walking time) of home.

9.30 The LEAP and NEAP categories, referred to above, are derived from the National Playing Field Association’s (NPFA) suggested standards for children’s play provision. These standards set out the size of the site and pieces of equipment required, however the number and location of sites is dictated by the local assessment referred to in para. 9.28 above. The Council has set itself the target of improving all of the fixed
playground sites within the Borough to the LEAP standard, with the possibility of upgrading some of these to NEAP standard in the future where funding opportunities arise. The standards for informal recreational open space reflect the need for sites to be large enough to offer meaningful recreational value in locations close to people’s homes.

9.31 The thresholds for on-site provision use number of bedrooms instead of number of dwellings as it is considered that this will give a better indication of the number of new residents for which open space needs to be provided. The assumption has been made of 1 person per bedroom e.g. a 3-bedroomed property would be assumed to contain 3 persons. This standard will be used in calculating the requirements, both in terms of the area of on-site provision required and the contributions to off-site provision or improvement.

9.32 The minimum of 100 bedrooms for on-site provision has been chosen to ensure that any on site provision is of a size large enough to be properly laid out and give genuine recreational amenity to the residents of the proposed development. However, even on sites which meet this threshold it may not be viable to provide a meaningful formal outdoor sport facility e.g. a playing pitch. In cases like this in may be more practical to provide an area of informal open space or children’s play space on site whilst contributing to the provision or improvement of an outdoor sports facility on a site well related to the development. Even if the site is large enough, it may preferable on occasion to obtain a commuted some in lieu of the on-site formal sports provision to improve the quality of existing pitches close to the development. This may also be relevant in relation to informal open space and facilities for children’s play. This element of flexibility will enable the provision and improvement recreational open space to be directly linked to local need and demand.

9.32 There may be occasions where the quantity and quality of open space within the vicinity of a development is sufficient to meet existing needs as well as that arising from the development. If the applicant can illustrate through proper assessment that there is sufficient open space to cater for these needs then consideration may be given to waiving, reducing or varying the requirement.

9.33 Any open space is only of use to local people if it is maintained to an appropriate standard. The Council will therefore expect the developer to indicate how the maintenance of the open space provided on the site will be ensured. The Council will normally expect the developer to contribute towards maintenance costs through the payment of a commuted sum. This may appropriately be secured through a Section 106 Obligation although the details of any such obligation (i.e. the annual maintenance costs and the period over which contributions should be calculated) will be a matter for negotiation between the developer and the Council. It may be, however, that other ways of securing maintenance may be agreed with the Council. Where the developer is making contributions to off-site provision or improvement, the contribution required will include an element to cover maintenance costs over an agreed period. All new developments place additional demands on the existing open space arising from its occupants. Therefore, even on occasions where a contribution towards providing additional open space is waived because of existing provision nearby, a contribution will still be required towards its maintenance.

9.34 Further detail of the application and requirements of this policy is given within the proposed Supplementary Guidance Note ‘Open Space Provision in New Housing Development’.

H/7 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

All new private housing developments will be required to provide an element of affordable housing on site provided that:

a) The site is 1.0 hectares or more in size or has the potential for the development of 25 or more dwellings;

b) The site is located in reasonable proximity to local services and facilities and accessible by public transport;

c) There are no other particular costs associated with development of the site; and
d) The provision of affordable housing on the site would not prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in development of the site.

To ensure that affordable housing is occupied by those in genuine need, the Council will encourage and promote the involvement of a registered social landlord in the development process. Where a developer other than a registered social landlord is involved in the development process, the Council will seek to control the occupancy of dwellings built by means of a planning condition or by an agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act.

9.35 PPG3 seeks to encourage local authorities to promote the development of low cost/affordable new housing on suitable sites in areas where there is a demonstrable lack of such housing to meet local needs. For the purposes of this policy affordable housing is defined (as in Government Circular 6/98) as ‘low cost market and subsidised housing (irrespective of tenure, ownership, type of occupation or financial arrangements) that is available to local people who cannot afford to buy or rent housing appropriate to their needs on terms generally available on the open market.’ A Supplementary Planning Document will be prepared, and reviewed as necessary, to provide detail on how the policy will be applied to those developments which meet the criteria (a) – (d) above. This will be based on an up-to-date assessment of housing need.

9.36 An element of affordable housing will be required on all sites exceeding the threshold given in Circular 6/98 ‘Planning and Affordable Housing’ and indicated in the policy. There may be exceptional circumstances where it is not appropriate to pursue affordable housing on a site that meets the size threshold, and criteria (b) – (d) in the policy reflect the advice given within Circular 6/98. With regard to criteria (c) the developer will have to demonstrate that provision of affordable housing would undermine the financial viability of the scheme.

9.37 Circular 6/98 also gives advice on providing the right type of affordable dwellings, controlling occupancy and gives exceptions to on-site provision. In line with Circular 6/98, the Council is keen to secure on-site provision wherever possible. In fact the advice states that the release of a site, where a local planning authority has decided that an element of affordable housing should be pursued, without ensuring the provision of that housing on the site in question, may undermine the objectives of the policy.

9.38 However, where the Council and the developer both consider that it would be preferable to provide the affordable housing on a suitable alternative site within the Borough, the Council will negotiate to obtain a financial contribution in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 23 of circular 6/98.

9.39 Further detail of the application and requirements of this policy is given within the Supplementary Guidance Note ‘Affordable Housing’.

H/8 AREAS OF OLDER PRIVATE HOUSING

Development proposals will be permitted that result in:

a) An improvement to the quality of the housing stock;

b) The clearance and redevelopment of unfit, obsolete and low market demand housing;

c) The re-use of vacant and under-used buildings in order to make the most effective use of the existing housing stock;

d) Adequate areas of public open space, amenity landscaping and children’s play areas;

e) An improvement to access and parking arrangements;

f) A reduction in pedestrian/vehicular conflict; and

g) A safer environment through the design of the proposal

Resources will be directed to the Priority Regeneration Areas identified in Policy G/R/1.
The Borough has a private housing stock of 63,000 properties. This stock is diverse in terms of cost, quality, type and size and ranges from expensive rural commuter homes to concentrations of high-density grid pattern terraced housing. There are about 20,000 pre-1919 terraced properties within the Borough and, in some areas a number of problems are becoming evident including:

a) Poor quality housing which is unfit, obsolete or lacking in basic facilities
b) Evidence of low demand, including incidences of vacant dwellings;
c) House prices which are much lower than the Regional and National averages;
d) A mismatch in certain areas between the available stock and the size of households; and
e) A poor residential environment, including lack of open space and community facilities, conflicting land uses and problems associated with on-street parking and local traffic.

Rochdale is identified in RPG13 under Policy UR6 ‘Existing Housing Stock and Housing Renewal’ as an area where it is important to improve the quality of the existing housing stock and a comprehensive approach to housing renewal, clearance and urban regeneration is required. In order to support this, the Council will give favourable consideration to proposals which achieve one or more of criteria a-g above.

Rochdale Borough and neighbouring Oldham Borough have been chosen, along with eight other areas in England, as a Housing Market Renewal (HMR) area. These areas have been chosen because it is considered that intervention in the housing market may be required in order to address issues of low demand. The Partnership responsible for the delivery of HMR has set out key aims and objectives for the creation of a balanced housing market and this includes proposals which will address the criteria under the policy. There are also other regeneration initiatives in the Borough where tackling the issues outlined in the policy is vital in developing sustainable neighbourhoods.

The term adequate in relation to criteria d) means that the amount and quality of the provision is sufficient to meet local needs.

**H/9 AREAS OF PUBLIC SECTOR HOUSING**

Development proposals will be permitted that result in:

a) The housing stock meeting local needs;
b) A diversification of the housing stock and tenure to meet changing local demand, if necessary through selective clearance and redevelopment;
c) Adequate areas of public open space, amenity landscaping and children’s play areas;
d) Improved access and parking arrangements; and
e) Improved security and energy efficiency.

In April 2006 the Council owned 14,675 dwellings, which represents about one sixth of the Borough’s total housing stock. From 2002 the responsibility for the maintenance and management of this stock was delegated to an arms-length management organisation, Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (RBH). The Borough has a substantial number of households with low incomes and social housing often provides the best option in terms of meeting their housing needs. In order to ensure that local authority housing continues to provide for housing needs, the Council will consider favourably proposals which achieve one or more of the of criteria a-e above.

The 2001 Housing Need and Demand Study identified that there were a number of estates that potentially needed to be adjusted to match changing demand patterns. This may require a more a more radical approach than improving the existing dwellings and could involve the provision of a better mixture of housing in terms of type, size and tenure. The provision of a wider choice of housing will help to achieve more balanced housing market areas. The creation of more mixed and balanced communities should also
help to accommodate the growth of the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community and it is an important aim of the BME Housing Strategy and Action Plan to increase the percentage of BME Council Tenant households.

9.49 The status of the Borough as a Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Pathfinder gives additional scope for proposals to be developed which can tackle this issue on a larger scale. The availability of resources through HMR, and existing RBH resources, could allow the remodelling of estates to provide a wider and more attractive housing choice.

9.50 The term adequate in relation to criteria d) means that the amount and quality of the provision is sufficient to meet local needs.

9.51 The views of residents and resident groups will be vital to decisions made regarding the targeting of resources to improve the Council housing stock. Extensive community participation will be particularly important where more comprehensive solutions are required to secure the improvement of estates.

**H/10 RESIDENTIAL HOMES, GROUP HOMES AND SHELTERED HOUSING**

Proposals for the provision of residential homes, group homes or sheltered housing schemes where the intended residents are elderly, disabled or otherwise in need of care, will be required to satisfy the following criteria:

a) The proposal should not have any adverse impact upon the character of the surrounding area or the amenity of residents in any adjoining properties by reason of noise, visual intrusion or loss of privacy;

b) The proposal should provide adequate areas of private garden/amenity space for residents’ use; and

c) The proposal should make safe and convenient arrangements for access, parking and servicing including access for people with impaired mobility which will be a matter for negotiation with the applicant;

9.52 For the avoidance of doubt, this policy applies to the following categories of residential development, whether purpose-built or through conversion of an existing property:

a) Nursing homes and other residential institutions providing a significant element of personal care to residents requiring care by reason of old age, disablement, past or present dependence on alcohol or drugs, or past or present mental disorder (as defined by the Use Classes Order 1987);

b) Small group homes affording a significant element of care for residents receiving “Care in the Community”; and

9.53 For the purpose of Policy H/10, sheltered housing schemes are those where residents have their own self-contained accommodation and the support of communal facilities and/or a resident warden. Schemes lacking such facilities will be considered on the same basis as any other form of new residential development.

9.54 Policy H/10 seeks to ensure that residential homes, group homes and sheltered housing schemes are directed to the most appropriate sites and locations; that such schemes are acceptable in terms of their impact upon any adjoining properties; and that good standards of privacy and amenity are provided for the benefit of future residents.

9.55 Because their residents tend to be less mobile, residential homes, group homes and sheltered housing schemes are best suited to level sites close to, and having good access to, the public transport network, shops and community facilities such as post offices, health services and libraries. Ideally, the proposed
development should be within a reasonable walking distance of such facilities. Whilst locations away from such facilities are not necessarily unacceptable, they may be less attractive to potential residents. In such circumstances, the Council will look to the developer to demonstrate that the proposal will meet the needs of its future residents.

9.56 An adequately sized private garden or outdoor amenity area is required for the benefit of residents who, as they become older, are likely to spend an increasingly large proportion of their time at home. High standards of design, layout and landscaping, in accordance with Policy BE/2 will also be required to ensure that the proposal achieves a pleasant environment for its future residents. All proposals should have regard to any related supplementary planning guidance produced by the Council.

**H/11 RESIDENTIAL EXTENSIONS**

Extensions to residential properties will only be permitted where the proposal satisfies the following requirements:

a) It is compatible with the property to be extended in terms of scale, size, design and building materials;

b) It does not adversely affect the character of the street scene;

c) It does not unduly affect the privacy and amenity of adjoining residents through overlooking, overshadowing, loss of outlook or daylight;

d) It does not unduly deprive the property to be extended of private garden/amenity space, including parking areas;

e) It does not prejudice highway safety by obstructing the views of motorists or pedestrians; and

f) It does not prejudice similar development by the occupants of neighbouring properties.

9.57 For the avoidance of doubt, this policy applies to extensions to dwellinghouses, flats, houses in multiple occupation, residential homes and nursing homes.

9.58 Approximately 40% of planning applications determined by the Council are for extensions to dwellinghouses. If carried out to a satisfactory standard, an extension can provide valuable additional living space and, thereby, improve the quality of life of the property’s residents. Extensions can, however, have a significant impact upon the street scene and, over time, upon the character of residential areas. Policy H/11 seeks to ensure that residential extensions do not affect adversely the privacy or amenity of adjoining householders or the character of the surrounding area.

9.59 All proposals should have regard to policy BE/2 ‘Design Criteria for New Development’ and any related supplementary planning guidance produced by the Council.

9.60 Where proposals involve the extension of a residential property within the Green Belt, Policy D/7 of the Plan also applies. In such cases, the proposed extension must satisfy the requirements of both Policies H/11 and D/7.

**H/12 FLATS AND HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMOS)**

Proposals for the sub-division of dwellings into self-contained flats or houses in multiple occupation, will be required to comply with the following criteria:

a) The proposal should not have a significant adverse impact upon the character of the surrounding area and the amenity of residents in any neighbouring properties by reason of noise, visual intrusion or loss of privacy;

b) The proposal should provide adequate outdoor amenity and bin storage areas; and
**Housing**

**c) The proposal should make suitable, safe and convenient arrangements for access, parking and servicing**

9.61 For the avoidance of doubt, this policy relates to the conversion of dwellings into self-contained flats, bedsits or other houses in multiple occupation (HMOs), including lodgings and bed and breakfast accommodation not primarily for holiday purposes.

9.62 Where older properties have fallen into disrepair, sub-division into smaller units is often the most effective means of bringing such properties back into effective use. Such proposals can also help to meet particular housing needs by providing low cost accommodation, for example, for single people.

9.63 This form of development will normally intensify the level of occupation and may give rise to additional noise and disturbance. Neighbouring residents may be affected adversely, either directly, through party walls, or indirectly, as a result of increased traffic movements. Parking problems may also be exacerbated. Policy H/12 aims to ensure that the conversion of dwellings into flats, bedsits and other types of HMOs does not, individually or cumulatively, have a significant adverse impact upon the character and amenity of the neighbourhood in general, or upon residents of adjoining properties in particular. It also seeks to ensure satisfactory standards of amenity for future occupants of the property to be sub-divided.

9.64 Large detached dwellings are, generally, more suitable for sub-division into smaller units. Terraced properties are less suited to this form of development because of noise transmission through party walls and the likelihood that any on-street parking problems which may exist will be compounded.

9.65 All proposals should have regard to any related supplementary planning guidance produced by the Council.

9.66 Separate regulations exist to ensure that properties sub-divided into flats, bedsits or other HMOs meet safety requirements and provide accommodation of an acceptable standard. Whilst the Council will consider the need for sound insulation when determining a planning application, approval for other matters such as internal layout, fire regulations and means of escape must be obtained from the relevant authorities.

### H/13 RESIDENTIAL USES ABOVE RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL PREMISES

Proposals for the conversion of vacant or under-used floorspace above shops and other commercial premises to residential use will be permitted provided that they comply with the following criteria:

a) The proposal should not have a significant adverse impact upon the character of the surrounding area and the amenity of residents in any neighbouring properties by reason of noise, visual intrusion or loss of privacy;

b) The proposal should provide adequate bin storage areas; and

c) The proposal should make suitable, safe and convenient arrangements for access and servicing.

Where the ground floor is used for the consumption of food or drink or as a hot food takeaway, proposals will only be permitted where adequate soundproofing and venting of fumes can be achieved.

9.67 The conversion of vacant or under-used floorspace above shops to residential use can have a number of advantages. These include:

a) Helping to meet housing needs in general and those of smaller households in particular;

b) Bringing vacant or under-used floorspace back into effective use, particularly within town, district and local centres;

c) Improving the physical condition and appearance of buildings and the street scene in general;
d) Improving security;
e) Providing accommodation within walking distance of shops and other services; and
f) Injecting life into town and district centres, particularly during the evenings.

9.68 However, it is important that the enjoyment of the accommodation provided is not harmed by the activity of the commercial premises below. Many A3 uses including, bars restaurants and hot food takeaways can produce noise, smells and nuisance which can have adverse affects on any accommodation directly above the premises. It is therefore important that such developments incorporate appropriate mitigation measures so that these sources of nuisance are limited.

ACCOMMODATION FOR TRAVELLERS

9.69 The Council currently operates a site for travellers off Chichester Street, Rochdale. Current information suggests that there is no significant demand for additional sites for travellers within the Borough. Therefore, whilst it is not considered necessary to allocate an additional site within this Plan, the demand for new provision will be monitored. Any subsequent requirements for additional accommodation will be provided through a planning application on an appropriate site.
CHAPTER 10
SHOPPING AND THE ROLE OF CENTRES

G/S/1 (PART ONE POLICY)  HIERARCHY AND ROLE OF CENTRES

THE CENTRES LISTED BELOW WILL BE PROMOTED AS THE PRINCIPAL LOCATIONS FOR SHOPPING, OFFICES, OTHER COMMERCIAL USES, ENTERTAINMENT, LEISURE, CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES WITH THE SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATE TO THE CENTRE BEING RELATED TO ITS POSITION IN THE HIERARCHY OF CENTRES.

THE HIERARCHY OF CENTRES WITHIN THE BOROUGH, DEFINED BY THEIR SCALE AND FUNCTION, IS:

- MAIN TOWN CENTRE*: ROCHDALE
- TOWN CENTRES*: MIDDLETON, HEYWOOD, LITTLEBOROUGH
- DISTRICT CENTRE*: MILNROW
- LOCAL CENTRES*: (SEE APPENDIX B)

(* SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP)

TO ENSURE THE CONTINUED VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF THE ABOVE CENTRES, NEW RETAIL AND LEISURE DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE SITED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE SEQUENTIAL APPROACH. APPLICANTS SHOULD DEMONSTRATE THAT NO SUITABLE SITES OR BUILDINGS THAT ARE SEQUENTIALLY PREFERABLE ARE AVAILABLE OR LIKELY TO BECOME AVAILABLE WITHIN A REASONABLE PERIOD OF TIME. THE SEQUENCE FOR CONSIDERING SITES IS AS FOLLOWS:

1. TOWN CENTRES
2. EDGE OF TOWN CENTRES (INCLUDING EXISTING EDGE-OF-CENTRE RETAIL PARKS OUTLINED BELOW)
3. DISTRICT CENTRE
4. LOCAL CENTRES
5. ELSEWHERE

10.1 Within the borough of Rochdale, there are four town centres, Rochdale, Middleton, Heywood and Littleborough, and one district centre, Milnrow. Rochdale, as the largest of the centres, performs a special role as a sub-regional shopping centre and as the main focus for retail, commercial, employment, social and community activity in the borough. It also contains a large number of multiple national retailers.

10.2 Middleton, Heywood and Littleborough also perform town centre functions, although in Heywood and Littleborough there are few multiple national comparison goods retailers. The three centres also meet the day to day convenience shopping needs of surrounding residential areas. Heywood town centre is underpinned by a large supermarket and the intention is that a similar development will contribute to the regeneration of Middleton town centre.

10.3 Milnrow, as a district centre, contains smaller convenience stores, a more limited range of mainly independent comparison shops, and a number of other services and facilities. It serves a smaller catchment population than the town centres.

10.4 38 local centres of varying sizes are identified. They serve, or have the potential to serve, the day-to-day shopping requirements of surrounding areas within a short walking distance of them.
Chapter 10

Shopping and the Role of Centres

10.5 The majority of the urban area is within 500m of a defined centre, and therefore has good access to the facilities located within these centres.

10.6 Shopping underpins the economy of centres and serves to anchor other businesses and community facilities that contribute to their vitality and viability. Retail, commercial, entertainment and leisure development should firstly be directed to town centres where suitable sites or buildings suitable for conversion are available. If no suitable sites are available, and a need has been demonstrated, development should be sited in accordance with the sequential approach set out above.

10.7 The sequential approach aims firstly to maintain a strong concentration of retail and other potential high trip-generating activity within the four town centres, and to contribute towards improving, modernising, and increasing the attractiveness of all centres within the borough. It also reflects the importance of town, district and local centres in achieving sustainable patterns of development and land use, as set out in PPG6 “Town Centres and Retail Developments” (1996). The concentration of activities also supports the provision of public transport, enabling more people to access a wider range of activities and services, and facilitates combined trips, for example, for work and shopping or shopping and leisure, thereby reducing the need to travel. According to PPG6, if no suitable sites can be found in town centres, the next preferred option should be edge-of-centre sites.

10.8 A number of sites on the edge of Rochdale town centre in particular have been developed, with two non-food retail warehouses at The Point retail park on Molesworth Street, four at the Central retail park on Drake Street/Richard Street/Oldham Road, another two on Whitworth Road, and a non-food retail warehouse and a large supermarket on Dane Street. As they are established retail locations, and are within a relatively short distance of the main retail core, these sites are the preferred location for major new development if no suitable central town centre sites are available. This is in preference to district and local centres, where access to facilities is unlikely to be as good, and levels of pedestrian movement are likely to be lower. Edge-of-centre retail parks are not shown on the proposals map.

10.9 In accordance with the sequential approach, if no suitable town centre or edge-of-centre sites are available, development will be directed to district and local centres.

10.10 Out-of-centre sites away from existing retail provision will only be considered if there is a demonstrable need, there are no sequentially preferable sites available, in locations that are accessible by a choice of means of transport and preferably that are close to a centre that the development could link with.

10.11 In 2001, consultants undertook a retail expenditure potential study of the Borough, which included an analysis of the current levels of retail provision in Rochdale, Middleton and Heywood, and the likely need for further retail floorspace in the borough. Their findings have aided the formulation of policies in this chapter, and will also be used in assessing applications for major retail development. The Council will periodically update the retail expenditure study as required and take into account any new information in determining retail applications.

G/S/2 (PART ONE POLICY) REGENERATION OF CENTRES

IN SUPPORT OF PROMOTING THE CENTRES IDENTIFIED IN POLICY G/S/1 “HIERARCHY AND ROLE OF CENTRES” AS THE PRINCIPAL LOCATIONS FOR SHOPPING, OFFICES, OTHER COMMERCIAL USES, ENTERTAINMENT, LEISURE, AND CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK THE REGENERATION, AND SECURE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE ENVIRONMENT, OF THESE CENTRES BY:

A) PROMOTING LANDSCAPING AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT WORKS;
B) PROMOTING BUILDING IMPROVEMENT AND FACELIFT WORKS;
C) IMPROVING PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND INTERCHANGE FACILITIES;
D) RATIONALISING TRAFFIC CIRCULATION WITHIN AND AROUND CENTRES AND INTRODUCING TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES TO INCREASE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY;
E) CONTINUING TO IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE AND CLEAR TRAFFIC AND PEDESTRIAN SIGNPOSTING SCHEME TO CAR PARKS AND MAJOR FACILITIES WITHIN TOWN, DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES; AND

F) IMPROVING FACILITIES FOR PEDESTRIANS, INCLUDING THE PROVISION OF IMPROVED PEDESTRIAN CROSSING FACILITIES, IMPROVED PEDESTRIAN SECURITY AND PEDESTRIANISATION SCHEMES WHERE APPROPRIATE.

10.12 The Council has an important influence over the environment of the centres both through direct implementation and through encouragement and co-ordination of works by others. Landscaping, environmental and building improvements will all be promoted to enhance the centres’ visual attractiveness and physical environment. The improvement of transport interchange facilities, rationalisation of traffic circulation, continued introduction of traffic calming measures, and signposting for both pedestrians and traffic will facilitate access to centres and help to reduce conflict between pedestrian and vehicle movement. Together with the improvement of facilities for pedestrians, such schemes will contribute towards a safer environment and facilitate ease of movement within the centres. Such improvements will either be funded by the Council and/or other agencies or may be sought as appropriate through legal agreements or planning obligations associated with planning permissions for development in the centre.

10.13 In addition to the policies in this chapter, a number of policies elsewhere in the UDP are also relevant to the regeneration of, and nature, location and design of new development in town, district or local centres. The particularly relevant policies are:

- **Employment and the Economy (8)** Policy EC/6 "Office Development" seeks to encourage major office developments to locate within town and district centres.

- **Housing (9)** Policy H/13 "Residential Uses Above Retail and Commercial Premises" will permit residential use above retail and commercial premises within centres, subject to criteria being met, to improve viability and vitality.

- **Leisure and Tourism (11)** Policies G/LT/1 - LT/5 all relate to leisure and tourism, which contribute to the economies of a number of centres within the Borough.

- **Regeneration (12)** Policy G/R/1 "Physical Regeneration" identifies four priority areas for physical regeneration within the Borough and these incorporate the town centres of Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale. Specific sites for physical regeneration and redevelopment are identified. Those within or adjacent to a town or district centre include Areas of Opportunity at Ealees, Littleborough (See Policy R/4(a)), Riverside, Rochdale (See Policy R/4(e)), and Ashetton Way / Townley Street, adjoining Middleton town centre and associated with a potential redevelopment for retail use (See Policies R/4(g) and S/12), as well as a Physical Regeneration Area at Drake Street, Rochdale (See Policy R/3). Detailed approaches for each area are set out in these policies.

- **Accessibility (18)** Policies G/A/1 - A/10, A/15 - A/18, A/22 and A/24 all illustrate that the issue of accessibility is especially important in centres. Policies A/3 - A/10 relate to measures that must be considered when undertaking new development within centres, and Policies A/15 - A/18 relate to the provision of public transport. Through these policies, the Council will promote improvements to public transport facilities and modes of transport other than the private car.

- **Design and the Built Environment (19)** Policies G/BE/1 - BE/8 cover issues relating to design of buildings, landscape, street furniture and public art. Quality design is critical to the appearance and perception of a centre, and these policies seek to achieve this. Some centres also contain Listed Buildings and areas designated as Conservation Areas. These will be subject to additional restrictions on development that are covered by Policies BE/12 - BE/19.

- **Environmental Management (20)** Policies EM/10 "Derelict Land and Buildings" and EM/11 "Other Degraded Land and Buildings" encourage the redevelopment and reuse of derelict and other degraded land within centres. Underused land is a particular problem in edge-of-town centre locations.
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S/3 PRIMARY SHOPPING AREAS

Within the Primary Shopping Areas of Rochdale, Middleton and Heywood, the change of use of shops at ground floor or mall level will not be permitted unless:

a) It is needed to enable an adjacent use to expand, provided that this does not lead to over-dominance or more than two separately occupied non-A1 uses adjacent to each other, and it will not adversely affect the vitality and viability of the Primary Shopping Area; or

b) The proposed development, because of its particular nature and qualities, will make an exceptionally valuable contribution to the vitality and viability of the centre.

Where planning permission is granted for change of use from retail to non-retail uses either in accordance with, or as an exception to this policy, it may be subject to conditions (including where appropriate conditions restricting permitted development) to safeguard the vitality of the Primary Shopping Area.

10.14 Primary Shopping Areas (PSA) are identified in Rochdale, Middleton and Heywood town centres. These are the areas with the highest commercial rental values and, in general, the highest concentration of retail activity (and, in Rochdale and Middleton in particular, concentrations of national and regional multiple retail companies). The maintenance of this retail profile is important to the shopping function and character of these town centres. Littleborough town centre does not have the concentration of retail activity that warrants a Primary Shopping Area designation.

10.15 The Rochdale PSA includes only premises fronting Yorkshire Street, Lords Square and the malls within the Rochdale Exchange and Wheatsheaf Shopping Centres. The Middleton PSA includes all units fronting the mall at both levels within Middleton Shopping Centre, while the Heywood PSA includes only a limited number of properties fronting Market Street plus the large comparison store in the Times Mill Retail Park.

10.16 For an expansion of an existing use to be permitted, an applicant will need to adequately demonstrate why it should be located within the PSA, and that no other appropriate sites are available within the town centre.

10.17 To be classed as over-dominant, a property will have expanded to more than twice its original size, or have become significantly larger than surrounding frontages. If the number of non-retail units rises above 20% of the total number of ground floor or mall level units within a PSA this would be considered to be over-dominant and likely to have an adverse impact.

10.18 The vitality of a town, district or local centre is determined by actual and perceived activity at different times of day. This includes pedestrian activity in the street and activity ‘visible’ within buildings including the presence of displays in shop windows and lighting at night, the maintenance of buildings and spaces, the perception of safety and occurrence of crime and the ease of access.

10.19 Viability is concerned with economic issues including retailer representation, rental levels, the returns on investment in property and businesses, vacancy rates and diversity of uses.

10.20 To make an exceptionally valuable contribution to the vitality and viability of a centre, a development will need to provide to a high standard an appropriate service or facility that is not currently provided effectively within the centre and could not be appropriately located elsewhere in the centre.

10.21 If permission is given for a change to A3 use (including as an exception to policy) there may be a need to attach conditions designed to restrict future uses, although this will be examined in the circumstances of each case. The reason for this is to safeguard the objectives of the policy, namely maintaining a high concentration of retail activity within the PSA. Other conditions required to safeguard the vitality of the PSA will concern the style and treatment of frontages to the street or mall to ensure that the continuous pattern of retail-style display windows does not become fragmented.
At ground floor level fronting the street within the Secondary Shopping Areas in Rochdale, Middleton and Heywood town centres, and the Central Shopping Area in Littleborough town centre, only development of, or change of use to, shops, food and drink outlets and financial and professional services will be permitted. The development of other uses at ground floor level fronting the street will not be permitted.

10.22 In Rochdale, Middleton, and Heywood, the areas outside of the PSAs which still contain a concentration of shops, financial and professional services and food and drink uses are identified as Secondary Shopping Areas (SSA). Littleborough town centre does not have a PSA, but has an equivalent mix of uses to the SSAs, and is identified as a Central Shopping Area (CSA).

10.23 It is important to the vitality and viability of the centres that the range of uses in the SSAs and CSA are retained. The areas are relatively tightly drawn and there is ample scope for the location of other uses appropriate to a town or district centre elsewhere in the centres.

10.24 Food and drink outlets are those within Class A3, which include restaurants, pubs, cafes and fast food takeaways.

In those parts of town centres not identified as Primary, Secondary or Central Shopping Areas, the development of, or change of use to, shops, financial and professional services, food and drink outlets, offices, hotels, community and cultural facilities, leisure and entertainment uses and housing will be permitted provided that:

a) It will be of a scale and character appropriate to the size, role and function of the centre or part of the centre concerned;

b) It will be compatible with surrounding land uses and not detract from the amenity of adjoining uses; and

c) It will not adversely affect the vitality and viability of the centre or part of the centre concerned.

Major retail and leisure developments over 1000 square metres gross, in addition to meeting the criteria above, should also be well related to any Primary, Secondary or Central Shopping Areas in terms of siting, patterns of activity and pedestrian movement, ease of pedestrian access, layout, and design.

10.25 Those parts of town centres not identified as Primary, Secondary or Central Shopping Areas, are appropriate locations for a wide range of uses.

10.26 Different developments and uses are appropriate in different locations depending on the type and level of activity in the area. The Policy seeks to promote uses and activities that will generate economic activity for each other and not adversely affect amenity in sensitive locations. For example, offices and housing at the ground floor will be inappropriate where nearby businesses are relying on a volume of pedestrian activity to generate trade, unless there is little pedestrian activity at present and little prospect of securing development that will generate that activity. However, both uses would be appropriate above ground floor commercial uses where space would otherwise be underused, unless there are bars and clubs nearby that would cause a nuisance at night time, in which case caution would be required. Manufacturing, warehousing and distribution would not be considered appropriate uses within any of the town centres.

10.27 New shopping floorspace includes both convenience and comparison goods retailers.
10.28 Major retail and leisure development is defined as having a floorspace over 1000 square metres gross. This can make a positive contribution not just to its immediate surrounding area, but to the regeneration and quality of centres overall, provided that it is sited in suitable locations by being, for example, well related to existing provision, including Primary, Secondary or Central Shopping Areas within town centres. However, development of this size can also have a negative effect on a centre if it is not located carefully. For this reason these developments must satisfy the additional criterion stated in the policy, to ensure that the impact on the rest of the town centre is positive. What is regarded as an appropriate distance from the PSA/SSA/CSA will depend on the characteristics of the individual location, but in Rochdale the valley setting of the town and the historic pattern of retail development means that this distance is likely to be greater than in the other three town centres. Applicants may also be required to submit a Design Statement with their application for major retail developments, to ensure that they relate well to existing surrounding retail provision (See also Policy LT/4 - "Major Built Leisure, Cultural And Tourism Developments"). Where a development could substantially increase the attraction of a centre its potential impact on other centres should also be assessed.

(Note: The sequential approach is defined in Policy G/S/1 - "Hierarchy and Role of Centres", and vitality and viability is defined in Policy S/3 - "Primary Shopping Areas.")

S/6 DISTRICT CENTRE, LOCAL CENTRES AND LINEAR COMMERCIAL AREAS

In Milnrow District Centre and in local centres and linear commercial areas (as identified on the Proposals Map and listed in Appendix B) the development of, or change of use to, shops, financial and professional services, food and drink outlets, offices, community and cultural facilities and other uses appropriate to a district or local centre will be permitted provided that:

a) It will be of a scale and character appropriate to the size, role and function of the centre or area; and

b) It will be compatible with surrounding land uses and will not harm local residential amenity.

For retail development over 500 square metres gross, the applicant should also demonstrate that the sequential approach to site selection has been adopted and that no suitable sites or buildings that are sequentially preferable are available or likely to become available within a reasonable period of time.

In local centres and linear commercial areas the conversion of residential premises to commercial use will only be permitted where there are no suitable vacant premises available in the centre or immediate vicinity, or it can be demonstrated that the property is no longer suited to residential use due to poor amenity.

The conversion or redevelopment of vacant commercial premises to residential use will only be permitted in local centres that have a high overall vacancy rate and where it will assist regeneration.

10.29 Milnrow District Centre is an appropriate location for a wide range of uses, although it serves a smaller catchment area than the town centres.

10.30 Local centres also have an important role in facilitating access to services and facilities, thereby reducing the need to travel. 38 local centres are identified on the Proposals Map and in Appendix B. Outside of the town and district centres, these are the main concentrations of shops, services and associated facilities primarily serving local communities but also including specialist shops that serve a wider area.

10.31 The local centres differ significantly in size, character and condition. A relatively small number are thriving with no vacant premises or sites but the majority are in need of regeneration, many with serious problems of vacant units and/or sites and poor environmental conditions.
10.32 In many local centres there are houses at ground floor level, while others have residential properties above shops. Where there are large areas of vacant commercial premises, conversion to housing could be beneficial to the regeneration of the centre.

10.33 The overall objective is to sustain and support the local centre functions in these locations and secure regeneration where needed. The scale and character of development that will be appropriate will be dependent on the scale and character of the centre concerned and its surroundings. A small supermarket might be appropriate in some of the larger local centres where it would assist regeneration.

10.34 There are a number of linear commercial areas along main road frontages close to Rochdale and Heywood town centres that are made up of small scale commercial uses and vacant units and plots. They don't have the range of uses and are not in suitable locations to be defined as local centres but they do warrant a similar policy approach. These areas are identified on the Proposals Map and in Appendix B.

10.35 For retail developments over 500 square metres, there may be exceptional cases where a proposal for major retail development does not comply with the sequential approach, but is deemed critical to secure the future health and vitality of the centre while not having an adverse impact on that, or any other centre.

(Note: The sequential approach is defined in policy G/S/1 - "Hierarchy and Role of Centres", vitality and viability is defined in policy S/3 - "Primary Shopping Areas" and need is defined in policy S/8 - "Retail Development Outside Town, District and Local Centres.")

S/7 LOCAL SHOPS AND SERVICES

The development of, or change of use to, shops and other services of an appropriate scale to serve local needs will be permitted, and will be encouraged in new large scale housing and employment development, outside the existing centres (defined in Policy G/S/1 - "Hierarchy and Role of Centres") provided that:

a) It is in a location that is not, or will not be, reasonably served by an existing centre or local shop or service provision;

b) There are no suitable vacant shop or service units available in the vicinity;

c) It will be suitably located in terms of access by foot; and

d) It will not unduly affect the amenity of nearby residents or other uses by reason of noise, traffic generation and hours of opening.

Small scale extensions to existing shops and services, and ancillary shops at petrol filling stations, will be considered against the above criteria as applicable.

10.36 New shops and services of a scale primarily to serve local needs should be located in or immediately adjacent to existing centres unless the applicant can demonstrate that it will meet the needs of an area, or proposed residential or employment development, not reasonably served by an existing centre. This can include areas with existing shops where the shops do not adequately meet local needs.

10.37 Services include financial and professional services within Class A2, food and drink outlets, offices and community and cultural facilities.

10.38 The consideration of whether an area is well served by existing centres and shops will be determined by:

- The number of households or businesses within a short walking distance of the proposal that are not presently within a reasonable walking distance of an existing centre or shops; and
- The nature and range of those shops currently within reasonable walking distance.
10.39 In each instance a short walking distance will be in the region of 500 metres. Consideration will include the overall benefits of the new shop or service against the potential diversion of trade from a nearby centre and impact upon it.

10.40 In assessing whether vacant properties are suitable, consideration will be given to issues such as size, condition and sale price or rental level, which should not be significantly above market values.

10.41 Shops to meet local needs and ancillary shops at petrol filling stations are not likely to exceed 250 m². A significantly larger shop would be subject to Policy S/8 - "Retail Development Outside Town, District and Local Centres" and major leisure developments would be subject to Policy LT/4 - "Major Built Leisure, Cultural and Tourism Developments." Hot food takeaways and private hire vehicle booking offices are also covered by Policies S/10 - "Food and Drink Outlets" and S/11 - "Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Booking Offices" respectively.

S/8 RETAIL DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE TOWN, DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES

In areas outside town, district and local centres, new shops, other than shops to meet local needs and specialist shops (defined below), will only be permitted when:

a) The applicant has demonstrated the need for the development;

b) The applicant has demonstrated that the sequential approach to site selection has been adopted and that no suitable sites or buildings that are sequentially preferable are available or likely to become available within a reasonable period of time;

c) The proposal, either by itself or together with recently completed developments or outstanding planning permissions, will not harm the vitality or viability of any town, district or local centre;

d) The site is, or could be, widely accessible by existing or planned public transport provision and has good access to the Strategic Highway Network;

e) It will not unduly affect the amenity of nearby residents or other uses by reason of noise, traffic generation and hours of opening; and

f) The site is within the urban area and is well related to existing patterns of movement between residential areas and town, district and local centres and other major retail locations.

10.42 This policy relates to retail development on the edge of and outside town, district and local centres and therefore also applies to development within and adjoining existing edge-of-centre and out-of-centre retail developments.

10.43 When demonstrating need, an applicant should place greater weight on quantitative need, taking into consideration:

i. Capacity, in both physical and financial terms;

ii. Demand, in terms of available expenditure within the catchment area; and

iii. The predicted impact of the development on existing retail provision.

Although generally given less weight, qualitative need may also be taken into account, by assessing the proposed nature of the development, including issues of quality in terms of the ‘retail offer’, compared with existing retailing.

10.44 In accordance with the sequential approach, the policies in this chapter aim firstly to direct development towards town centre locations. Subject to need being demonstrated, if no suitable town centre sites are available, edge-of-centre locations should be used. For Rochdale town centre in particular, edge of centre sites may be substantially above the 200 – 300 metres walking distance from the Primary Shopping Area commonly regarded as edge-of -centre. This arises because the valley setting of the town centre and the
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The historic pattern of retail development has meant that sites closer have not been available. Development within or adjoining existing out-of-centre retail developments should only be considered after all possible locations in and on the edge of town centres, and then in district and local centres have been exhausted.

10.45 A proposal for a major out-of-centre development should demonstrate that the development cannot be subdivided so that the constituent parts could be accommodated in sequentially preferable locations. It should also demonstrate that the ‘class of goods approach’ has been applied in preference to the ‘format driven approach’. This means that the key question should be whether there is any reason why such goods cannot be sold from town centres, rather than the developer having a preferred format which, in their view, does not fit into town centres.

10.46 New out-of-centre sites away from existing retail provision should only be considered when no other sequentially preferable sites can be identified.

10.47 Specialist shops are defined as the following:

   a) Nurseries and Garden Centres requiring large external storage and display areas;
   b) Petrol Filling Stations (but not including ancillary shops), Tyre and Exhaust Centres, Car and Caravan Sales;
   c) Builders and Plumbers Merchants, Timber Suppliers, Hire Depots and other outlets providing a service mainly to the trade; and
   d) Other specialist shops selling goods that would not ordinarily be found in town, district and local centres (for example: boats chandler and farm produce shops).

10.48 Most of the specialist shops listed above would also be permitted in Mixed Employment Zones.

(Note: The sequential approach is defined in Policy S/1 - "Hierarchy and Role of Centres", vitality and viability is defined in Policy S/3 - "Primary Shopping Areas," the circumstances when a Transport Assessment will be required are set out in Policy A/11 "New Development - Transport Assessments" and the Strategic Highway Network is defined on the Proposals Map and is described in Policy A/24 - "Strategic Highway Network.")

S/9 SHOPS IN INDUSTRIAL PREMISES

Shops will be permitted within or as an extension to industrial premises, except within Primary Employment Zones (Policy EC/2), where:

   a) At least 75% of the goods for sale or display are ancillary to the business use of the premises, being predominantly produced, assembled, repackaged or fitted by the same business;
   b) The total floorspace of the shop will not exceed 25% of the total floorspace of the industrial premises, up to a maximum of 500 square metres;
   c) The sale or display takes place within the building;
   d) It will not unduly affect the amenity of nearby residents or other uses by reason of noise, traffic generation and hours of opening;
   e) No detriment results to the appearance of the site or building;
   f) Adequate car parking provision is made, in relation to the retail floorspace; and
   g) The site is, or could be, widely accessible by existing or planned public transport provision and has good access to the Strategic Highway Network.

10.49 The Borough is traditionally a manufacturing area with close links between businesses and local people. As such, direct sales to the public are not a new practice. However, as noted elsewhere, manufacturing has declined and there are a large number of economically marginal older industrial buildings. In addition, businesses are subject to economic fluctuations. In such circumstances, a shop can be an important
component in sustaining a business and/or a building and an exception to normal shopping policy is appropriate.

10.50 "Factory Shops" are generally considered not to require planning permission where the goods being sold are wholly made on the premises and the retail use will clearly be ancillary to the industrial use. However, the definition of what requires planning permission in this context can be uncertain and also it can be unclear what scale of retailing would be acceptable. Therefore, this policy indicates what will be allowed should planning permission be deemed to be required and indicates restrictions to such development.

10.51 Shops in or as an extension to industrial premises within Primary Employment Zones are not permitted by this policy due to these areas being some of the best locations for industrial, warehouse and business development in the borough. The Council will therefore seek to maximise the use of these areas for industrial uses.

10.52 The policy does not allow shops above 500 square metres within or as an extension to industrial premises due to the adverse impact on the vitality and viability of nearby town and district centres. Any proposals for such shops will be subject to the provisions of Policy S/8 "Retail Development Outside Town, District and Local Centres".

10.53 The display and sale of goods should be limited predominantly (in the region of 75%) to goods produced, assembled or repackaged on or off the premises by the business, or by companies in the same business group, and conditions will be applied to ensure this.

10.54 Approval may also be conditioned to restrict the range of goods to be sold to ensure that it will not adversely affect a nearby centre.

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**S/10 FOOD AND DRINK OUTLETS**

The development of, or change of use to, a café, restaurant, pub, wine bar, snack bar or hot food or fast food takeaway will be permitted provided that:

a) It is in accordance with Policies S/3 - S/8;

b) It will not unduly affect the amenity of nearby residents or businesses by reason of noise, smell, litter and hours of opening;

c) It will not result in an over concentration of such uses which could adversely change the nature and character of the area;

d) Vehicle access, manoeuvring and parking related to the use will not cause undue obstruction to traffic, be detrimental to road safety, or affect local residential amenity; and

e) Any ventilation flues and/or ducting can be accommodated without detriment to the visual amenity of the building or the surrounding area.

10.55 Food and drink outlets can provide an important service locally or as part of a visit to other locations for work, shopping and leisure. However, inappropriately sited, they can have a detrimental impact on the amenity of an area and surrounding uses, in particular, residential uses. Issues include traffic flows, road safety, hours of opening, cooking smells and litter. Conditions will be used to restrict hours of opening where this will satisfy concerns about amenity.

10.56 A concentration of such uses, in particular, hot food takeaways and pubs can attract large numbers of people and magnify the problems, including anti social behaviour late at night. Issues of over concentration will be judged against the impact on amenity together with wider interests and profile of the area and any record of problems.

10.57 Depending on the location of the proposed development, applicants will need to ensure that they have complied with Policy S/3 - "Primary Shopping Areas", Policy S/4 - "Secondary and Central Shopping Areas", ...
S/11 TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE BOOKING OFFICES

The development of, or change of use to, a taxi or private hire vehicle booking office will be permitted provided that:

a) It is in accordance with Policies S/3 - S/7;

b) It will not unduly affect the amenity of nearby residents by reason of noise and hours of opening; and

c) Vehicle manoeuvring and parking related to the use will not cause undue obstruction to traffic, be detrimental to road safety or affect local residential amenity.

10.58 Private hire vehicle booking offices provide a useful service but, like hot food takeaways, they can be poor neighbour uses. Hence, the policy seeks to ensure that they are located appropriately in terms of the amenity neighbouring uses, in particular, residential uses, traffic flows and road safety. Conditions will be used to restrict hours of use where this will satisfy concerns about amenity.

10.59 Depending on the location of the proposed development, applicants will need to ensure that they have complied with Policy S/3 - "Primary Shopping Areas", Policy S/4 - "Secondary and Central Shopping Areas", Policy S/5 - "Development Elsewhere in Town Centres", Policy S/6 - "District Centre, Local Centres and Linear Commercial Areas", or Policy S/7 - "Local Shops and Services".

S/12 RETAIL EXPANSION, FOUNTAIN STREET/OLDHAM ROAD, MIDDLETON

Within the area identified on the Proposals Map, redevelopment for a large convenience superstore and associated uses such as car parking will be permitted provided that:

a) Satisfactory alternative provision is made for the relocation of leisure and civic uses within or adjacent to the town centre;

b) The development scheme will be well related to existing town centre uses, in terms of siting, patterns of activity and pedestrian movement, ease and safety of pedestrian access, layout and design; and

c) The development should incorporate the retention of listed buildings on Manchester New Road, and respect their setting.

10.60 The site, in the eastern part of Middleton town centre, currently contains a variety of uses, including civic and leisure facilities, a small amount of retailing provision, a market, and car parking. It has been identified as a site for possible development because of its proximity to other retail provision and good access links.

10.61 A clear need for a major new retail development within Middleton has already been demonstrated, as the centre is currently relatively uncompetitive and is losing trade to neighbouring town centres and Manchester city centre, and the site identified is the only feasible location for major retail development within the town centre. A major retail development on this site should strengthen retail provision in Middleton town centre, and assist regeneration.

10.62 The redevelopment or remodelling of new retail facilities within the site should be located in such a way that it complements other elements of the town centre.
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10.63 The allocation includes part of a Secondary Shopping Area (Policy S/4 “Secondary and Central Shopping Areas”). A comprehensive scheme for major retail may need to incorporate this area but the Council will expect the adjacent listed buildings on Manchester New Road to be retained and the impact of any new development on the setting of the buildings to be addressed.

10.64 An application will need to include a design statement, to ensure that development is of a high quality and relates well to surrounding uses. A transport assessment will be required, due to the potentially significant volume of traffic that could be generated by the development, and the impact that it could have on the town centre. A Travel Plan will be required in accordance with Policy A/12 and PPG13, demonstrating good access to the site by a range of modes of transport. Good pedestrian links to other parts of the town centre are essential, including to the area east of Asheton Way (See Policy R/4(g) “Aesheton Way / Townley Street Area of Opportunity”), where the displaced civic and leisure uses may be relocated.

10.65 The council is actively discussing options with prospective developers and landowners. Detailed proposals will be subject to extensive consultation.
CHAPTER 11
LEISURE AND TOURISM

G/LT/1 (PART ONE POLICY)  SPORT, LEISURE AND TOURISM

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A RANGE OF SPORTS, SOCIAL, ENTERTAINMENT, CULTURAL, ARTS AND TOURISM FACILITIES WHICH MEET THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS AND VISITORS WILL BE PERMITTED AND PROMOTED. THE PROVISION, IMPROVEMENT OR EXTENSION OF BUILT LEISURE AND TOURISM FACILITIES SHOULD BE APPROPRIATELY LOCATED IN TERMS OF THEIR INTENDED FUNCTION, THEIR ACCESSIBILITY, AND THEIR IMPACT ON ADJOINING USES. MAJOR LEISURE AND TOURISM FACILITIES WILL BE EXPECTED TO SATISFY THE SEQUENTIAL APPROACH TO LOCATION SET OUT IN NATIONAL POLICY.

11.1 The Council wishes to cater for the increasing demand for leisure, cultural and entertainment facilities, expand the Borough's tourism potential and increase opportunities for sport. The policy reflects the Government's intentions and Planning Objectives set out in PPG 17 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation'. These stress the importance of planning for sport and recreation in delivering urban renaissance, supporting urban renewal, promoting social inclusion and community cohesion health and well being, and promoting more sustainable development.

11.2 The location of major entertainment and leisure uses will be controlled through a sequential test, with town centres being the preferred location (see Policy LT/4). This will help to ensure that such facilities contribute to the vitality and viability of town centres, assist urban regeneration, are accessible to all and reduce the need to travel. Smaller facilities such as pubs, clubs, and fitness clubs also have a role to play in sustaining town centres, particularly the evening economy.

11.3 Built sports facilities will be appropriate where they meet a need for new or wider opportunities to participate or where they improve the sporting experience. Through its 'Sport and Recreation Strategy' and its work in partnership with other public and private agencies, the Council will aim to achieve an equitable mix and distribution of basic local provision and specialist facilities appropriate to the prime sporting needs and aspirations of the Borough's population.

11.4 Although Rochdale is not a major tourist destination, tourism has an important role to play in the local economy, through job creation and investment. It also contributes to the physical regeneration of urban and rural areas through environmental improvement, the re-use of land and buildings, and by bringing benefits to residents and restoring civic and community pride. Thus, proposals that consolidate existing attractions and provide new facilities and attractions that increase the number and duration of visits and/or enhance the visitor experience will be encouraged.

LT/2 PROTECTION OF TOURISM ATTRACTIONS

Development Proposals that would adversely affect an existing tourist attraction will not be permitted where they would detract from its function, appearance or setting.

11.5 This policy relates to those attractions and facilities that are specifically intended to cater for visitors to the Borough. It is important that development that would have a negative effect on the tourism potential of the Borough’s existing attractions is resisted. This would include proposals that would reduce public access to a site or building, reduce the attractiveness of the surrounding environment, destroy buildings or features of interest, or result in noise, smells or disturbance which would detract from the visitor experience.
Proposals for new or extended tourist attractions or facilities for visitors will be permitted, provided that:

a) They are of a scale and nature appropriate to the area;

b) Access is available by a choice of means of transport;

c) Safe vehicular access can be provided;

d) The traffic generated can be safely accommodated by the local road network; and

e) There will be no harm to:

i. the character and appearance of the landscape;

ii. sites of nature conservation value or sites/buildings of archaeological or historic importance;

iii. residential areas; and

iv. the operation and expansion of existing businesses.

The Council will promote and facilitate tourism development in appropriate locations which both consolidates the existing tourism base and broaden the range of attractions, activities and facilities, consistent with the Council’s Tourism Strategy.

11.6 In relation to new facilities and attractions, the appropriateness of the location will depend on the nature of the facility or attraction proposed. For example, within the countryside, small scale facilities such as visitor or interpretation centres, which are ancillary to the enjoyment of the countryside will normally be appropriate. Major leisure and tourism facilities should preferably be located in or adjacent to town centres and Policy LT/4 will apply. Other attractions may be based on specific heritage landscape or recreational features and their development could have the potential to impact on and detract from adjoining areas and land-uses, through increased traffic, noise disturbance and visual intrusion. It is important that development that helps to meet the demands of tourists and visitors and supports the local economy does not cause harm to the qualities that draw tourists to an area, but contributes to the local environment. Consequently, the provisions of other policies of the plan will also be relevant in assessing development proposals in terms of their location, impact, and design.

11.7 In the main, tourism is promoted to reflect the main recognised strengths of the Borough:

a) Its countryside, especially the Pennine Edge, with its natural heritage and recreational opportunities;

b) Its cultural heritage and diversity;

c) Its industrial and textile heritage;

d) Its transport legacy; and

e) Its architectural heritage.

11.8 The Council’s Tourism Strategy reflects these themes and future promotion of tourism will focus on a wider range of activity and leisure interests and emerging trends. These include:

i. Active leisure pursuits e.g. cycling, walking, and specialist sports;

ii. Shopping, eating out, the town centre experience and the evening economy;

iii. Specific target markets, e.g., conference/business tourism, group travel, leisure day visits and short breaks;

iv. Boating and canal activities; and

v. Green tourism, i.e., environmentally friendly themed or managed tourism activities and access by public transport to attractions.
11.9 The Council will identify opportunities and work in partnership with other agencies and development interests in promoting and facilitating development consistent with the above. Other policies of the plan in this and other chapters identify specific sites or areas where tourism-related development would be welcomed in principle.

### LT/4 MAJOR BUILT LEISURE AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENTS

Major leisure and tourism facilities will only be permitted outside town and district centres where:

a) The applicant has demonstrated that the sequential approach to site selection set out in the justification of Policy G/S/1 ‘Hierarchy and Role of Centres has been adopted and that no suitable sites or buildings that are sequentially preferable are available or likely to become available within a reasonable period of time within town and district centres;

b) The applicant can demonstrate that the proposal, either by itself or together with existing developments or proposed developments with planning permission, will not harm the vitality or viability of any town or district centre;

c) The site is well served by public transport and is readily accessible by foot and cycle; and

d) The applicant has demonstrated that there is a need for the development.

For the purposes of this policy, major leisure and cultural uses are defined to include those activities and facilities likely to attract large numbers of visitors, such as, cinemas, theatres, concert halls, bingo halls and casinos, dance halls and nightclubs, and large indoor recreation facilities (e.g. swimming pools, sports centres, skating rinks and bowling alleys) of more than 1000 square metres of gross floorspace.

11.10 The Council acknowledges the growing demand for specialist recreational facilities and other major leisure developments. The Council wishes to encourage such developments, including tourism-related developments, which support the local economy, promote urban regeneration and provide facilities for local people and visitors. In PPS 6 ‘Planning for Town Centres’, the Government establishes that town and district centres should be the preferred location for developments that attract many trips, and explains that the sequential approach should also apply to key town centre uses which attract a lot of people including entertainment and leisure. The Council is keen to encourage diversification of uses in town and district centres and to encourage leisure developments that consolidate the role of these centres, thereby ensuring that facilities are accessible not just to car users but to all sections of the community. Consequently, those uses that are likely to generate the most trips should be in Rochdale, Heywood, Littleborough and Milnrow centres although the scale and character of such developments should be appropriate to the size, character and role of the centre.

11.11 The definition of leisure and cultural facilities is based on Use Class D2 – Assembly and Leisure, but extended to include theatres, and limited to exclude indoor recreational facilities of under 1000 sq. metres. Smaller scale built leisure facilities such as pub/restaurants and small fitness centres are excluded from the policy on the grounds that they are not major generators of trips and should be situated to meet a specific local demand, preferably in a local centre. Local centres have been excluded from the hierarchy because many of the leisure facilities defined would not be appropriate. Demand is expected to continue for substantial built community sporting and leisure facilities within or adjacent to school sites, other educational establishments or playing fields. Such developments may be appropriate in principle outside town and district centres despite having a township-wide catchment, provided criteria (b), (c) and (d) are satisfied.

11.12 A small number of sites or areas suitable for major tourism and leisure developments within, or adjacent to, town centres have been identified in other policies. This general policy is intended to ensure that new major developments proposed outside town centres are accessible, and would not affect the viability of the centres.
Proposals that would increase the provision of accommodation in hotels, guesthouses, bed and breakfast establishments and self catering facilities whether through new build, extensions or changes of use will be permitted provided they are within the 'Defined Urban Area' and are not visually or environmentally intrusive. In addition, large scale, new build accommodation should be located in or adjacent to town centres, especially if significant business/conference facilities or leisure facilities intended to serve non-residents are also proposed. Changes of use to rural buildings for visitor accommodation will be permitted subject to the provisions of Policy D/9 'Re-use and Adaptation of Buildings in Rural Areas'.

Specific sites where new hotel developments will be acceptable in principle are:

a) Kingsway Business Park, Rochdale; and
b) Hopwood Old Hall, Middleton.

11.13 There is currently an imbalance of overnight accommodation in the Borough in terms of quality, size of establishments and distribution. Most accommodation is ungraded, the majority of hotel/motel rooms are in Rochdale and Heywood, most inns are in Rochdale and the majority of B&Bs, guest houses and self catering are in Pennines. Middleton and Pennines have the least number of hotels and bedspaces. The Council wishes to encourage developments that address this imbalance, particularly quality hotel accommodation to support business developments, and small scale budget accommodation to support new / proposed tourism and recreation attractions.

11.14 The best location for new hotel accommodation will be within the urban areas and where they are accessible by a choice of means of transport, and do not have a detrimental impact on the amenity or character of the area by reason of their scale and the intensity of use. Sites in or adjacent to town centres are preferred although the Council recognises that few such opportunities currently exist. Proposals within strategic business locations, or in areas where they complement other uses or regeneration initiatives, and are accessible, may therefore, be appropriate. A specific opportunity for a new hotel development is identified within the Kingsway Business Park (Policy EC/7). Within the Green Belt, new hotels or extensions to existing hotels are not appropriate. The conversion of suitable rural buildings for visitor accommodation, including those in the Green Belt and on Protected Open Land would be appropriate in principle. For example, the conversion of Hopwood Old Hall, a vacant listed building within the Green Belt, to a hotel, may offer the best opportunity for re-use and investment in order to secure the conservation of the building and its setting.

LT/6 CAMPING SITES, TOURING AND STATIC CARAVAN SITES

Development Proposals will be permitted for camping sites, touring and static caravan sites, chalets and cabins, provided they do not adversely affect:

a) The character and appearance of the countryside either, on its own or, when added to other established sites in the vicinity;

b) The character of residential areas and residential amenity;

c) The quiet enjoyment of the countryside;

d) Designated areas or sites of nature conservation or heritage conservation value;

e) Farmland of Grade 3a or above; and

f) Features or attractions important for tourism and recreation.

Further, development proposals should not:

a) Be within an area liable to flooding;

b) Be on sites that are not able to be provided with water or sewage disposal facilities; or
c) Be on a site where the traffic generated by the proposal would adversely affect highway safety, including a safe access / exit.

11.15 Demand for camping and caravanning is growing nationally and may increase within Rochdale with the development of the Pennine Bridleway and the growing popularity of walking holidays and outward bound activities for groups. The area also has potential as a stopping off point en-route to more rural Pennine areas. However, caravan sites and sites containing chalets or cabins can have a significant visual impact on open land or countryside because of their typical layout and appearance. They also have an impact in terms of traffic generation and the demands they place on local services and facilities. It is therefore essential that special care is given to the location and design of such sites (especially in visually or environmentally sensitive areas) in order to minimise their impact. Sites also need to be located on flat land that has convenient and safe access to the road network and in areas that are not liable to flood and where water and sewerage facilities are available or can be supplied.

11.16 Screening of all sites may be an important consideration, particularly where the site is at the edge of the urban area.

LT/7 ROCHDALE CANAL

Development proposals will not be permitted that would adversely affect:

a) The recreational value of the canal watercourse and towpath;

b) The setting and visual amenity of the canal and its environs;

c) The nature conservation value of the Canal (as a SSSI and SAC) consistent with policies NE/2 and NE/4; or

d) The conservation of features of historic or archaeological importance within the canal setting.

Subject to the above, the Council will permit development proposals that:

e) Provide sites for the mooring of canal boats (both permanent moorings and those for trip boats); refuelling and other boating services at appropriate locations;

f) Affect improvements to the towpath and adjacent public areas for the purposes of walking, cycling and angling – including those that reduce conflicts between users;

g) Improve the setting and visual amenity of the canal corridor through a design that incorporates the canal into the development layout;

h) Re-use buildings and sites adjacent to the canal for leisure, tourism and other purposes that assist the regeneration of the canal corridor; and

i) Maintain, and enhance, the ecological value of the canal.

11.17 The Rochdale Canal forms part of a Pennine ring of canals, providing a circular route for broad boats over a large part of the region linking with such watercourses as the Bridgewater and Leeds/Liverpool Canal and the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

11.18 The Rochdale Canal has major potential for tourism and recreation, both waterborne and in the adjacent corridor, which is accessible to large parts of the urban area for a range of recreational pursuits. The canal is also an ideal route linking urban areas with the surrounding countryside for recreational walks and green commuting to nearby urban centres. The Council is keen to develop the recreational and tourism potential of the canal in partnership with other agencies and bodies and to promote wider links with other attractions and recreational facilities. However, the canal restoration is also seen as an opportunity to: transform the canal and its immediate surroundings from being a neglected backwater to an asset for all communities along its route; to conserve the canal as an outstanding feature of industrial archaeology; and to ensure that a working canal contributes to improving and protecting its internationally recognised nature conservation interest. It is important to ensure that measures are employed to reduce pollution and disturbance caused
by construction, industrial and other activities, and run off from sites adjoining the canal. The use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) will be appropriate in some circumstances.

11.19 Restoration will also help to stimulate new employment through businesses and attractions directly linked to the canal, and boost the local tourist economy by attracting visitors and new spending. It will also attract new uses for land and buildings adjacent to the canal, and is already resulting in new confidence in canalside property. The Plan will focus regeneration on rundown older industrial and mixed use urban areas adjoining the canal and this will complement environmental improvements to the canal corridor and increase its attractiveness as a feature and recreational resource. The Plan identifies mixed-use sites at Durn, Ealees (Littleborough) and Canal Basin (Rochdale) where canal-related leisure and tourism uses will be required. The above policy will aim to ensure that all adjoining development is sympathetic to the character and setting of the canal and safeguards its tourism, recreational, heritage and ecological value.

11.20 As a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and SAC (Special Area of Conservation), all projects or development proposals which might impact on the scientific integrity of the site will be subject to the closest examination under Policy NE/2 (international sites). The Council will liaise closely with English Nature in considering the implications of proposals to ensure harm is avoided.

**LT/8 WATER BASED RECREATION**

Proposals for water based recreation will be permitted where they can be successfully accommodated in the landscape and do not have an adverse impact on other recognised interests, either on site, or in adjacent areas. Particular consideration will be given to the intensity of use and factors such as access, car parking, public safety, residential amenity, noise, effects on farming, the relationship with other water users, nature conservation, water quality and the operational needs of statutory undertakers.

11.21 Water based recreational activities continue to grow in popularity. There are numerous water bodies around the Borough including upland and urban edge reservoirs, lodges, rivers and the Rochdale Canal. Many water bodies are either actively used for a variety of recreational activities including angling and various active water sports and others may have potential for new facilities for example as part of land reclamation schemes. (Policy LT/7 deals specifically with the Rochdale Canal and its recreational value.)

11.22 Many water bodies are valuable not only for recreational pursuits, but for drinking water and nature conservation. In rural locations in particular, they may be key features of an attractive, tranquil landscape where additional facilities could harm landscape quality or the amenity and character of the landscape for quiet enjoyment. The intensity of recreational use may also have wider impacts on other land uses and local amenity through such factors as traffic generation and other potential conflicts between recreational users and land management or residential amenity. It is important to ensure that any recreational use of water bodies is considered against such factors and that where required, appropriate mitigation through site management and other actions is employed. The Council will work with partners such as United Utilities and adjacent landowners to ensure that recreational management and development in and around the principal reservoir catchments, Hollingworth Lake Country Park and Council owned water bodies is carried out taking account of such considerations.

**LT/9 PROTECTION OF EXISTING BUILT SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

The redevelopment or change of use to built sports and recreational facilities will not be permitted unless:

a) An assessment has been undertaken which clearly shows the building to be:
   i. Surplus to requirements; or
   ii. No longer needed; or
iii. Uneconomical to maintain or repair; or
iv. No longer viable; or

b) Adequate replacement provision is made, of equivalent or better quality and in a suitable and accessible location; or

c) The Council considers that the development would deliver a benefit to the local community that would outweigh the harm resulting from the loss of premises used for sport and recreation.

In the absence of a robust and up-to-date assessment by the Council, an applicant for planning permission may seek to demonstrate through an independent assessment that the land and buildings meet a) above. Any assessment will be expected to take into account local sporting and recreational needs and demand, fitness for purpose including consideration of all the alternative recreational uses, and should demonstrate that the community is supportive of the proposals.

11.23 The past decade has seen an increase in the number and range of built facilities for sport and recreation, both public and private. These facilities are important to local communities and contribute to the quality of life and the general health of communities. PPG 17 ‘Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation’ states that sports and recreational buildings should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the buildings and land to be surplus to requirements. The Council has made some assessment of recreational open space and land has been identified for protection under policy G/3. The Council does not currently have a comprehensive assessment of all built sporting and recreational facilities that are of high quality, or of a particular value to the local community and therefore applicants seeking the development of such buildings for other uses may need to carry out independent assessments. PPG 17 advises that developers will need to consult the local community and demonstrate that their proposals are widely supported by them. The policy relates equally to large and small scale built facilities. Some buildings may be minor in scale and importance in themselves but will be vital to support existing outdoor leisure uses.

11.24 Whilst it is sustainable to adapt and reuse existing buildings for recreational and sporting functions, there will be exceptional cases where the loss of a building may be justified provided suitable alternative provision is made. It is important that alternative provision is of a suitable or equivalent standard and is in an appropriate location in terms of accessibility and its relationship with adjoining uses. The Council may seek the use of legal agreements to secure such provision.

11.25 Some open space protection allocations (G/3) include built sports facilities which support or relate to the open space function. Such facilities will be subject to this policy. For the avoidance of doubt this policy also relates to all buildings and structures housing or supporting recreational or sporting activity.
CHAPTER 12

REGENERATION

G/R/1 (PART ONE POLICY)  PHYSICAL REGENERATION

THE COUNCIL WILL PROMOTE AND CARRY OUT, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PRIVATE AND PUBLIC AGENCIES, MEASURES THAT SUPPORT PHYSICAL AND ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

WITHIN THE PLAN PERIOD, THE PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO THE PHYSICAL REGENERATION OF THE FOLLOWING BROAD AREAS:-

A) CENTRAL AND EAST HEYWOOD;
B) CENTRAL AND EAST MIDDLETON;
C) INNER ROCHDALE; AND
D) LANGLEY;

AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES TO GUIDE AND IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR PHYSICAL REGENERATION, RENEWAL AND REDEVELOPMENT ARE IDENTIFIED IN PART TWO POLICIES BELOW. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS THAT SUPPORT THE PHYSICAL REGENERATION OF TOWN, DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES, OLDER HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT AREAS; DERELICT AND DEGRADED SITES; AND AREAS ADJOINING THE ROCHDALE CANAL (INCLUDING SUCH RURAL SITES AND AREAS) WILL BE ENCOURAGED AND PERMITTED WHERE THEY ARE CONSISTENT WITH OTHER POLICIES AND PROPOSALS OF THE PLAN.

12.1 The Key and Spatial Objectives of the Plan emphasise the need to encourage, through the development process, the regeneration and renewal of urban areas, in particular town centres, areas of older housing, and employment and mixed-use areas. The Spatial Strategy and Strategy Map in Part One describe and define the broad locations where physical regeneration and modernisation is needed most to meet economic, environmental and social objectives. The Council and its regeneration partners acknowledge that the Plan must be realistic and should prioritise those areas in greatest need and where investment and activity can be expected to be concentrated over the Plan period. Consequently this policy provides a clear statement of the priority areas for developing regeneration initiatives and steering land-use change and development to provide wider regeneration benefits. These broad areas are also consistent with the Council’s Regeneration Strategy, and various other Council strategies and regeneration initiatives. They also reflect area-based regeneration proposals to which the Council is already committed.

12.2 It is important that regeneration activity responds to the special needs of each area and those local priorities identified through the community planning process. The measures promoted in this and other chapters of the Plan, include:

- the development and redevelopment of brownfield sites, especially underused and derelict sites, and poor quality buildings;
- the re-use, conversion, or refurbishment of available buildings;
- remodelling older or problem areas to achieve a more sustainable pattern of land uses which meets local and community needs;
- protecting and enhancing the local environment by encouraging good design and the relocation of inappropriate uses;
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- broadening employment opportunities, especially within town centres and close to areas of high unemployment;
- targeting investment and physical improvements in areas where currently, poor image discourages investment;
- promoting the regeneration and redevelopment of key sites and 'areas of opportunity' within or adjacent to town centres; and
- taking an holistic approach to the regeneration of areas of older or 'problem' housing through housing improvement, clearance and redevelopment, remodelling, and re-assessment of community needs and facilities.

12.3 A number of discrete areas are identified in the Plan either as ‘Physical Regeneration Areas’ or ‘Areas of Opportunity’ where a comprehensive approach to regeneration is necessary, and/or where a specific role or development opportunity can be identified - usually for mixed uses. Six of these fall within the Priority Regeneration Areas (PRAs) and four areas where specific regeneration opportunities have been identified, notably in Littleborough and Milnrow, fall outside the PRAs. Clearly, other opportunities will arise within and outside the Priority Regeneration Areas for the renewal, redevelopment or re-use buildings and sites that can contribute to the wider regeneration of older urban areas, improve local infrastructure and benefit the local community. The Council will encourage such developments where they are consistent with other policies of the plan and the Council's regeneration objectives.

12.4 It is not appropriate for the UDP to include detailed or prescriptive proposals for Regeneration Areas or Areas of Opportunity due to difficulties in anticipating market demand and the range of possible development / design options. However, the Council wishes to promote regeneration opportunities and provide a basis for controlling development in these important areas, whilst also retaining the necessary flexibility to respond to more detailed local strategies, masterplans and market interest.

12.5 The following Part Two policies therefore establish a broad framework for physical regeneration within clearly defined areas and identify a range of acceptable uses. The ‘Areas of Opportunity’ policies identify uses that would be acceptable, either as alternatives or complementary uses within a wider mixed use development, together with other planning and design requirements for the development of the area. The successful regeneration of such areas will require a partnership approach, involving the Council, other agencies, landowners and developers.

12.6 Consistent with the Plan’s Strategy, those areas identified for mixed uses are close to public transport corridors or town centres and therefore easily accessible. In identifying appropriate uses and requirements for designated areas, the Council has taken into account possible impacts on the amenity, safety, and general environment of adjoining neighbourhoods.

R/2 LANGLEY PHYSICAL REGENERATION AREA, MIDDLETON

Within the Langley Physical Regeneration Area, the Council will support, facilitate and implement proposals for the comprehensive regeneration of the area in accordance with an approved masterplan. Future programmes for physical regeneration and renewal will be expected to:

i. Take an holistic approach to dealing with economic, social and environmental problems; and

ii. Provide the planning framework for a sustainable community with new employment opportunities, a wider range of quality housing and supporting community facilities and a substantially improved environment.

Development within the estate will be expected to contribute, or avoid prejudice, to the following:

a) The diversification of the housing stock to meet changing local demand, through refurbishment, clearance and new build;

b) Improved access to employment opportunities;
c) An improved road layout and hierarchy that provides better access to and within the estate and improves road safety;

d) Bringing underused and neglected land into beneficial use and making effective use of land created from demolition;

e) Improved public transport facilities and establishment of new pedestrian and cycle routes;

f) The creation of safe, attractive public areas, streetscape improvements, and a focal point for the estate;

g) The provision of improved community facilities to meet local needs, including shops, local leisure, health and nursery facilities in locations that are accessible to the whole estate; and

h) The provision of a linked network and hierarchy of open space, including natural greenspace, neighbourhood parks, formal play areas, and amenity landscaped areas.

12.7 The Langley housing estate subject to this policy falls within the larger Langley Priority Regeneration Area referred to in Policy G/R/1. The estate suffers from high levels of deprivation: the 'Indices of deprivation (2000)' shows incomes, employment, child poverty, educational achievement, and health rank among the worst 1% - 2% in the country. Also, crime levels, particularly vandalism and burglary, are unacceptably high. There is a high level of vacant housing stock and a mismatch of type and tenure to meet existing and future demand. For example, the increasing demand for elderly person and small households is not well catered for and blocks of flats and certain pockets of family public housing are in low demand. The residential environment, lack of quality community facilities and employment opportunities contribute to a lack of confidence in the future of community and a number of specific issues and priorities have been identified as part of an initial consultation exercise organised by consultants. The Council therefore considers that a long-term regeneration strategy should be pursued in partnership with the local community, public sector agencies, the private and voluntary sectors and central government.

12.8 Such a strategy will include matters which are beyond the scope of the UDP, e.g., housing management, skills training, health and educational provision. However, physical change and a gradual remodelling of the estate will need to form a key element of any future strategy and this policy is intended to provide the framework for that change. The policy criteria reflect the need to ensure that development and land-use changes help to address the following needs:

- to improve poor transport links to the estate in order to improve accessibility for residents and to attract private investment;
- to create a more attractive and safe housing environment through traffic calming, greening and quality design in order to encourage investment, take-up, and reduce crime;
- to replace poor quality and low demand housing with new public and private sector housing to better reflect changing demand;
- to make better use of vacant/cleared land or underused open space to provide development opportunities or meaningful recreational or amenity open space;
- to improve the quality and accessibility of recreational and amenity open space; and
- to identify and secure a range of accessible community facilities relevant to local needs.

**R/3 DRAKE STREET PHYSICAL REGENERATION AREA, ROCHDALE**

Within the Drake Street Physical Regeneration Area, the Council will support, facilitate and implement, in partnership with other agencies and landowners proposals that:

i. Assist comprehensive regeneration and restore commercial viability;

ii. Introduce new businesses and leisure uses and create complementary day and night time activities;

iii. Improve the environment, the quality of the public realm and create a safe and attractive pedestrian environment;
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iv. Maximise the opportunity that Metrolink provides to regenerate the area and improve environmental conditions;

v. Strengthen links with the town centre shopping and commercial core and adjoining areas; and

vi. Fall within the following use classes:

- retail (A1) (within the town centre boundary)
- leisure and entertainment (D2) (within the town centre boundary)
- financial and professional services (A2)
- food and drink outlets (A3)
- housing (C3) at first / upper floor level

Development proposals will be assessed against the following guidelines:

a) Retail uses will be particularly appropriate at the northern entrance of Lower Drake Street from the Butts and on the eastern side of Drake Street / Oldham Road;  
b) Entertainment and leisure and office uses will be appropriate on the western side of Drake Street subject to public safety considerations;  
c) The residential uses of upper floors will be permitted subject to amenity considerations;  
d) Changes of use or alterations to frontages will be expected to maintain visual interest;  
e) The redevelopment of frontages for the above uses up to 3 storey will be permitted;  
f) Landmark buildings should be retained and opportunities for refurbishment and re-use considered;  
g) Proposals for redevelopment at Lower Drake Street will be expected to incorporate physical and visual links to "Riverside" (see Policy R/4(e)), and the option also exists to incorporate the Drake Street frontage into the wider Riverside scheme;  
h) Operational structures and other street facilities to support Metrolink, should be sympathetically sited and designed.

12.9 Drake Street lies on the southern edge of Rochdale town centre. It is an important route into the town centre, but its role as a retail area has been in decline for a number of years. Because of this there has been little investment in the area and some properties are in a poor condition. The street is generally unattractive, traffic further reduces environmental quality and the street has a poor accident record. There are, however a small number of attractive ‘landmark’ buildings that provide some character and visual interest to the street scene.

12.10 The Rochdale Challenge Partnership has commissioned, as part of an SRB5 initiative, the preparation of a Regeneration Strategy that aims to restore the commercial vitality and viability of Drake Street. This provides both a framework to help guide future development and positive action including environmental improvement works and financial incentives to support refurbishment and reuse of buildings. The routing of Metrolink along Drake Street will introduce a modern, high quality transport system to the street and create a new gateway to the town, with stops at Rochdale Station, Drake Street and the bus station. The general quality of the public realm will be improved to create a safe and attractive pedestrian environment. Existing linkages with other quarters within the town will be enhanced and opportunities sought to create a strong link with Riverside. The quality of the overall street scheme will be an important factor in the consideration of proposals for redevelopment and significant alterations. Applicants are advised to submit a Design Statement and have regard to relevant published Design Guidance.

12.11 The Rochdale Partnership and the Rochdale Development Agency in particular is currently working with landowners and other agencies in identifying specific development opportunities, including building
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refurbishments. Building grants for external and internal works are available, public realm works are planned and issues concerning the integration of Metrolink are being addressed.

**R/4 AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY**

Development within the Areas of Opportunity listed below (R/4(a-h)) will be permitted where it is consistent with the specified uses and stated development principles for each area.

Proposals will be required to:

a) Demonstrate that individual developments within an area will assist and not constrain a comprehensive and satisfactory overall development of the entire site;

b) Demonstrate the design principles to be employed for ensuring a high quality of design and appearance through the production of a design statement; and

c) Carry out or fund associated highway works, or other measures, including traffic management and measures to assist sustainable modes of travel as informed by a Transport Assessment or Travel Plan.

12.12 Most of the areas of opportunity below comprise land and buildings in different ownerships, and incorporate sites that have different constraints, opportunities and values. Consequently there may be pressure for piecemeal incremental development concentrating on those potentially more profitable sites which may not deliver, and possibly stifle, the comprehensive regeneration of the wider area or the best arrangement of uses. It will be important for developers to demonstrate that development proposals can assist the comprehensive development of an area and deliver appropriate uses and good design. Developers are therefore advised to prepare and agree a Masterplan with the Council or to have regard to any Brief or guidance prepared by the Council. This will ensure that when considering planning applications for partial or total development of the areas, the relationships between different uses, access and traffic circulation, other infrastructure and design concepts can be properly considered. Applicants will be expected to show how incremental or phased developments relate to a masterplan or overall scheme and how they will assist and not constrain the regeneration of the whole area. Such an approach will also encourage an element of cross funding to ensure the viability of a wider scheme. The Council and its partners will wish to assist however it can in advising on and securing a comprehensive scheme for these areas.

12.13 Design statements (which are required through Policy BE/2 'Design criteria for new development') are particularly important in explaining the design concepts to be employed in complex, prominent and mixed-use areas such as these, and should be submitted as part of detailed applications. The requirement for transport infrastructure improvements and Travel Plans is intended to ensure that the areas are accessible to all and that mixed use development is as sustainable as possible from a transport perspective.

**R/4(a) EALEES AREA OF OPPORTUNITY, LITTLEBOROUGH**

This previously-developed area is allocated primarily for a comprehensive development for tourism and other complementary mixed uses.

Development must be primarily for:-

a) Tourism, leisure and related uses (for example, heritage attraction, craft workshops, food and drink (use class A3)),

Acceptable ancillary uses are:-

b) Office and business use (B1);

c) Small scale and complementary retail (A1); and

d) A limited element of housing.
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The principles for development are:-

i. Redevelopment should take the opportunity to incorporate enhancements to the canal frontage and contribute to the leisure potential of the canal in this area;

ii. The design and layout of any comprehensive scheme should address the need to respect local building character, create visual interest along road and canal frontages, incorporate good quality pedestrian links to the town centre, and protect and enhance buildings and features of conservation value (e.g., the railway arches);

iii. The siting and layout of any housing element must not unduly constrain the principal tourism and leisure uses having regard to the need to safeguard residential amenity;

iv. Existing buildings of character, should where practicable, be retained and integrated as part of an overall scheme;

v. Off site highway improvements, including improvements to pedestrian routes to the town centre will be required;

vi. Any flood alleviation measures identified as necessary by the Environment Agency should be provided and maintained at the developer's expense;

vii. Proposals must protect the nature conservation value of the Rochdale Canal.

12.14 The area is located close to Littleborough town centre, adjacent to the railway station and the Rochdale Canal. The site is in mixed private and public ownership split into two areas by Canal Street. The area contains a small number of industrial buildings, some of which are in poor condition and some of which may have scope for conversion. The area also contains the railway viaduct, a grade II listed building.

12.15 The proximity of the site to Littleborough town centre and its location adjoining the Rochdale canal, which is currently being restored to navigation, provides an opportunity to establish tourism and leisure related uses through regeneration. The regeneration of the site will improve the vitality and viability of the town centre, enhance the canalside environment and complement the use of the canal for tourism and leisure uses. The arches under the viaduct provide potential for a museum, craft workshops, café, pub, restaurant and B1 industrial uses. This site will form a central link between the town centre and the rest of the site adjoining the canal.

12.16 Whilst the emphasis is on attracting tourism and leisure related development, the policy recognises that a small business or housing element would be appropriate if it assists the viability of an overall scheme. The policy seeks to encourage the redevelopment of those buildings that are unattractive and in a poor condition. However the retention of some buildings, where feasible, and the use of stone in new buildings will help to maintain the traditional character of the area. It is important that the development on the canal frontage makes use of the canal as a feature and is of a high quality. The design and layout of any scheme should accord with the guidance contained in the Council's Development Brief for the site. Some parts of the site are at risk from flooding and although a comprehensive flood alleviation scheme is underway for the nearby River Roch, some minor further flood defence measures may be necessary to safeguard new developments. The uses and development principles are complementary to the approach promoted by Policy LT/7 ‘Rochdale Canal’. Development principle (vii) reflects the need to protect the conservation status of the canal as a SSSI and SAC in line with policy NE/2 ‘Designated Sites of Ecological and Geological/Geomorphological Importance’.

R/4(b) DURN AREA OF OPPORTUNITY, LITTLEBOROUGH

This area is allocated for canal related leisure development and housing.

Development must include:-

a) Residential and visitor mooring facilities; and

b) Housing (primarily on land west of the Canal)
Acceptable uses in addition to (a) and (b) are:-

c) Boat hiring and maintenance;
d) Specialist retail (e.g. boats chandler) and other support facilities, and
e) Food and drink (A3) premises.

The principles for development are:-

i. New development should enhance the canal corridor and incorporate the canal as the key feature within the development, ensuring that public access to the canal is maintained and improved, and that the impact of development on the nature conservation value of the canal is taken fully into account;

ii. Measures should be incorporated to safeguard the amenity and safety of residents within or adjoining the site, and the visual amenity of adjacent Green Belt;

iii. Development proposals will be expected to incorporate off-site highway improvements, visitor parking controls and measures to make the site accessible and attractive to non-car visitors, and as informed by a transport assessment and travel plan; and

iv. Proposals must protect the nature conservation value of the Rochdale Canal.

12.17 The area straddles the Rochdale Canal, some 500m to the north east of Littleborough town centre. It falls within the urban area but adjoins the Green Belt. It incorporates a canal frontage of 280 metres.

12.18 Potential exists at Durn to create a mixed-use development to bring about environmental and economic benefits by promoting tourism, supporting town centre uses, enhancing the canal corridor and providing a quality housing environment. This site provides an ideal, and probably the only opportunity, to secure the provision of linear moorings or a mooring basin at the interface between the Pennine stretch of the canal and the urban area of Littleborough, adjoining the town centre and close to good rail and public transport links. A marina could be established with other boating, ancillary and support services and tourism uses that support canal traffic and visitors to the area. Specialist retail facilities would include retail services aimed at canal users and boat owners. Development would also help to complement local tourist attractions. The area on the east bank of the Canal is largely vacant and underused, comprising a filled in dock area, a workshop and storage warehouse although the central area is owned and operated by a plant hire firm. The removal of this use will be necessary if the full potential of the site is to be realised.

12.19 Housing development will be supported where it can assist and be properly integrated within the development of the site for canal related activities. There is currently interest in developing the land on the west bank used as a vehicle dismantlers. The opportunity also exists to secure a discreet development of flats or apartments with dedicated moorings. It is important that the primary developer works closely with the Council and other agencies to devise a high quality scheme that allows the integrated and comprehensive development of the whole area. The uses and development principles are complementary to the approach promoted by Policy LT/7 ‘Rochdale Canal’. Criterion (vii) reflects the need to protect the conservation status of the canal as a SSSI and SAC in line with Policy NE/2 ‘Designated Sites of Ecological and Geological/Geomorphological Importance’.

R/4(c) TWO BRIDGES ROAD AREA OF OPPORTUNITY, NEWHEY

This area is allocated for employment and residential mixed use development.

Development must include:-

a) Employment uses appropriate to a residential area (B1), which includes offices, research and light industry; and

b) Housing.
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The principles for development are:-

i. Any scheme should retain, or enable the satisfactory relocation of, existing businesses;

ii. The layout and design of any development should take into account and utilise the areas proximity to the station to maximum benefit and provide good pedestrian access to the proposed Metrolink station;

iii. A transport assessment will need to be carried out in support of proposals and this should assess impact on the motorway junction;

iv. Vehicular access, incorporating a new junction with Shaw Road, appropriate to serve both housing and employment uses, will be required;

v. The design of both residential and employment development should be appropriate to a mixed use scheme taking into account and minimising potential amenity conflicts between uses; and

vi. Buildings and features of character should where possible be integrated into any scheme.

12.20 The area adjoins the Rochdale/Oldham/Manchester railway line (to be converted to Metrolink) with the existing Newhey railway station (to become a Metrolink station) adjoining the northern corner of the area on Huddersfield Road. Newhey also has good access to the motorway network being adjacent to junction 21 of the M62. The area is, therefore, highly accessible both by public transport and by road and it is important that development be appropriate to, and utilise this accessible and potentially sustainable location.

12.21 This area has a number of older, and some new, industrial buildings occupied by employment uses. Although some businesses are thriving, the area overall suffers from a number of problems, including vacant and underused land and buildings, poor layout and access and is in need of regeneration.

12.22 Both employment and housing, especially at higher densities, are appropriate uses in highly accessible and sustainable locations. For this reason, along with the potential for housing development to assist the cross funding of any redevelopment, mixed employment and housing use redevelopment is proposed.

12.23 New employment uses should be appropriate to a residential area (in use class B1, see policy EC/5 “Employment Developments and Extensions Outside Allocated Areas”) in terms of the nature of the use and design and siting of the development. Redevelopment schemes should incorporate existing employment uses where possible with improved access and servicing. Where an existing employment use cannot be retained within the area satisfactorily it will have to be successfully relocated within the Borough. Overall redevelopment must deliver new and improved employment opportunities in the area and this is more important than delivering residential development.

12.24 The site has potential to accept a higher than normal housing density (i.e., at least 40 dwellings per hectare), with a design and layout appropriate to a mixed use development.

12.25 Access to the area needs to be reviewed and improved ensuring satisfactory access and servicing to existing and new employment uses and new residential development. A transport assessment is required in accordance with policy A/11, and in recognition of the potential of traffic to impact on the operation of the motorway junction, early consultation with the Highways Agency is recommended.

R/4(d) BIRCH HILL HOSPITAL AREA OF OPPORTUNITY, ROCHDALE

The site is allocated for a comprehensive mixed-use development including the redevelopment of a substantial part of the site for mixed housing.

The following uses will be permitted:-

a) Mixed housing, including an appropriate level of affordable homes;

b) Medical and healthcare facilities and ancillary accommodation;
c) Business / employment uses (B1);
d) Community uses, including leisure and small-scale retail, provided they meet an identified local need; and
e) Public recreational open space.

The principles for development are:

i. A development scheme should take opportunities to secure the retention and re-use of existing buildings of character;

ii. Public open space and landscaping should be incorporated;

iii. An element of employment, leisure and community uses will be acceptable provided these are of an appropriate scale and are suitably located and accessible, and do not detract from the wider housing environment;

iv. Development will be expected to contribute to the provision and maintenance of local amenity and recreational open space;

v. A transport assessment and travel plan will need to be produced in support of proposals and development will be expected to contribute to off-site highway and public transport improvements; and

vi. Housing developers will be expected to enter into legal agreement to provide a contribution towards improvements to the adjoining St Andrews primary school.

12.26 The development of a new District General Hospital (see Policy CF/3) will involve the closure of Birch Hill Hospital. The Health Trust's proposals do however include the retention of buildings in the north-western part of the Birch Hill site to accommodate some health care services and administration facilities. Whilst many of the buildings are old, purpose built and have limited potential for re-use, the opportunity should be taken to investigate potential for conversion to residential use, offices, and possibly light industrial uses. Non residential uses should be suitably located within the site to avoid conflict with residential uses. The opportunity should be taken to retain buildings of character, e.g., the clock tower, through conversion to appropriate uses. The majority of the site presents an opportunity to provide a high quality residential development on a brownfield site, well served by public transport and within a predominantly residential area. This large site provides the opportunity to accommodate approximately 240 units using a range of housing types and sizes to meet local needs and help create a balanced community. Scope exists to integrate 3-4 storey flat development with more traditional two storey homes within an overall design concept based on housing clusters within a landscape framework. The provision of recreational open space to meet the needs of the development will be required in accordance with Policy H/6. The establishment of a small area for local shops is encouraged to provide a supporting facility within walking distance of all parts of the site and adjoining housing areas. The nearby St Andrews primary school is currently at capacity and an expansion of the school will be necessary to cater for the development. The developer will be therefore expected to make a financial contribution and to provide safe footpath links between the site and the school. Following the adoption through the plan, of the permitted uses and principles of development, a planning brief will be prepared for the site. Applicants are advised to prepare a landscape plan and design statement to illustrate how the design principles in this policy have been taken into account in any submitted proposals.

R/4(e) RIVERSIDE AREA OF OPPORTUNITY, ROCHDALE

The site is allocated for comprehensive mixed-use redevelopment suitable for a variety of uses including the following:

a) Major commercial/public leisure facilities (D2);

b) Offices (A2).

c) Retailing (A1) subject to compliance with policy S/5 “Development elsewhere in Town Centres”;
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d) Food and drink outlets (A3);
e) Transport interchange facilities; and
f) Housing (C3).

The principles for development are:-

i. A comprehensive development scheme should incorporate the River Roch as a feature and create a high quality waterside environment;

ii. A transport assessment and travel plan will need to be produced in support of proposals and development will be expected to contribute to off-site highway and public transport improvements;

iii. Development should establish good quality pedestrian links with Drake Street and the area north of Smith Street and the Wheatsheaf Shopping Centre;

iv. The design and layout of development should complement design concepts employed for Drake Street and other committed proposals for adjoining town centre sites and should incorporate the establishment of new, and improvements to existing, public spaces; and

v. Any housing element should comprise flats or apartments subject to amenity safeguards and compatibility with adjoining uses.

12.27 The Riverside site lies on the south-eastern edge of the town centre, adjoining the bus station, proposed Metrolink terminal, and to the east of Drake Street. It is largely vacant, has an area approximately 7.2 hectares, comprises land in both private and public ownership and is split into two distinct parcels by the River Roch.

12.28 The Council and the Rochdale Development Agency are working together to secure a development project which would regenerate the site, complement the regeneration of Drake Street, and exploit the site's location adjoining the River Roch, bus station and proposed Metrolink terminal, and close to the heart of the town centre. The site is ideally suited for a major leisure facility and office development. As a location, and given the lack of other suitable sites in or adjoining the town centre, this would be consistent with the Government's policy guidance in PPG 6 (“Town Centres and Retail Development” 1996). The Council is sensitive to the current limited interest in commercial development on this site. As a major user of office accommodation in various parts of the town centre, the Council may consider being involved as a major partner in a development for the site which includes a consolidated office development. Proposals for retail development will only be permitted if it complies with policy S/5. An element of residential accommodation will be supported provided it can be successfully integrated with other, especially night-time uses/activities) and that issues of design, safety, and amenity are satisfactorily addressed. Development should take the opportunity to incorporate the river as a feature and to improve the waterside environment. The requirement for links with Drake Street is intended to ensure that the areas are successfully integrated and perform a complementary role, and that together they link successfully with other parts of the town centre. It is also important to ensure that the design of development relates well visually and functionally to surrounding development.

R/4(f) CANAL BASIN AREA OF OPPORTUNITY, ROCHDALE

The area is allocated for comprehensive regeneration, including the conversion and redevelopment of existing buildings, and environmental works.

The following mixed uses will be permitted:-

a) Industry and offices(B1, B2);
b) Community uses including improved health facilities and local shops;
c) Leisure uses (e.g. family pub/restaurant) and canal-related leisure and support facilities;
d) Canalside housing and apartments; and

e) Public open space.

The principles for development are:-

i. Development should create visual interest along the road and canal corridors and incorporate where appropriate works of public art;

ii. Opportunities should be taken to enhance the Rochdale Canal corridor and access to it for recreation;

iii. Opportunities should be taken to encourage the active use of the canal and towpath;

iv. Listed buildings and buildings of character and their settings should be protected and enhanced where possible through re-use and sympathetic design;

v. Developers will be expected to contribute to road and public transport infrastructure improvements;

vi. Safe, attractive public areas should be created and developments should make provision for the establishment of cycle and pedestrian links through the area and to surrounding areas;

vii. The mix of uses and density of development should reflect local demand, provide benefits to the local community, minimise vehicle/pedestrian conflict, and ensure compatibility with adjoining uses; and

viii. Proposals must protect the nature conservation value of the Rochdale Canal.

12.29 This area is based on the Rochdale Canal basin fronting Oldham Road and the Canal itself. It occupies a number of buildings and sites in different ownerships and primarily in industrial or commercial use. Some of the buildings are occupied, others are vacant or substantially under-used. The general condition of the buildings is poor and in need of significant investment to remove or replace. There is also some vacant land within the area. The area presents a number of opportunities for redevelopment or refurbishment for a mixed-use development based on a combination of commercial, leisure, community, residential and other uses. A listed mill complex (Norwich Mill) provides an opportunity for mixed commercial, leisure and community uses. Scope exists for high-density housing and apartments adjoining the canal to the east of Oldham Road. The area also has potential to cater for demand for small and medium size enterprises requiring the creation of small starter units, and, in the longer-term, offices. Development opportunities will be assisted by the establishment of Metrolink, which will be located 500 metres of the Canal Basin, and its location on Oldham Road, a Quality Bus Route. The Rochdale Canal Restoration Project will contribute to the revitalisation of the canal corridor through the Borough and will stimulate economic development opportunities in canalside locations. The regeneration of the area will also help to consolidate improvements and attract further investment in the Sandfield Renewal Area, within which it lies. The Rochdale Partnership has commissioned a masterplan to guide the comprehensive regeneration of the Canal Basin area and external funding will be sought to assist with land assembly, infrastructure improvements and environmental improvements.

12.30 Applications for development proposals will need to take into account any approved guidance or Masterplan. Applicants are advised to use Design Statements to demonstrate how detailed proposals accord with the design principles in this policy. The uses and development principles are complementary to the approach promoted by Policy LT7 ‘Rochdale Canal’. Criterion (ix) reflects the need to protect the conservation status of the canal as a SSSI and cSAC in line with Policy NE/2 ‘Designated Sites of Ecological Importance’.
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R/4(g) ASSHETON WAY / TOWNLEY STREET, MIDDLETON AREA OF OPPORTUNITY

Within the area between Assheton Way and Townley Street, the Council will permit redevelopment proposals for uses that require an edge of centre location, and which complement the regeneration of the town centre.

The following uses will be permitted:-

a) Civic, cultural, entertainment and leisure uses (Use Classes A3, C1, D1-2);

b) Non food retail warehousing;

c) Business use (Use Class B1); and

d) Within the area fronting Hall Street and Market Place, retail, financial and professional services, and food and drink (Use Classes A1, A2 and A3).

The principles for development are:-

i. Proposals should demonstrate that they can be integrated with the town centre and, where relevant, the Conservation Area to the north – taking account of visual and pedestrian links, as well as compatibility with adjoining uses.

ii. Any retail and leisure proposals should demonstrate that a need exists and that the sequential approach to site selection has been followed in accordance with Policy G/S/1.

iii. New development likely to cause unacceptable traffic and highway congestion and related problems or have an adverse impact on the local environment will not be permitted. A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan should accompany applications for major redevelopment; and

iv. Development adjoining the River Irk should satisfy the provisions of Policy EM/8 'Development and Flood Risk'.

12.31 This area directly adjoins the town centre, the Middleton Conservation Area and a mixed employment area to the east. The area currently contains a broad mix of uses, some of which occupy substantial sites. The Council considers that this area is well placed to accommodate uses which require an edge of centre location, which have a strong relationship with town centre uses and require a high standard of accessibility, particularly by public transport. The area is occupied by a number of businesses of varying sizes and there is a limited amount of derelict or underused land/property. Consequently, significant change is not likely in the short term. However the relocation of a major occupier could provide the catalyst for a remodelling of the area and achieving a more advantageous arrangement of uses. Also, a major retail redevelopment on land west of Assheton Way under Policy S/12, could help fund the relocation of the waste disposal facility to accommodate displaced civic leisure uses. It is important that piecemeal redevelopment takes account of its relationship with adjoining parcels and does not prejudice other opportunities for redevelopment and access. Opportunities should be taken to improve pedestrian access to the town centre and high standards of design will be expected to improve visual quality in this area.

12.32 With regard to the properties to the north of Market Street, these fall within a Conservation Area and redevelopment should exclude those buildings of character (in line with policies in the 'Design and Built Environment Chapter'). Development principle (i) reflects the need for proposals to be integrated with the town centre and conservation area and applicants are advised to submit a design statement to demonstrate how this has been achieved.

12.33 An area adjoining the River Irk falls within the indicative flood plain and it will be necessary to ensure that any new development fully addresses issues of impact and flood alleviation in line with Policy EM/7.
This area is allocated for mixed uses, through redevelopment and conversion of existing land and buildings, that: complement the operation of the East Lancashire Railway as a tourist attraction and gateway to Heywood; provide additional facilities and attractions for passengers and visitors; and improve the local environment.

Overall, development must include the following:-

a) Tourism, leisure and related uses (for example, heritage attraction, craft workshops, food and drink (use class A3);

b) Office and business uses (use class B1);

c) Additional visitor parking;

An acceptable use in addition to (a) to (c) is:

d) Small-scale specialist retail, complementary to the above uses.

The principles for development are:-

i. Pedestrian routes, within the area of opportunity and linking with key routes to the town centre, should be attractive, clearly defined and signposted;

ii. Development between Sefton Street and the railway should, where practicable, incorporate a new pedestrian bridge to link with Heywood station;

iii. Planning applications for the redevelopment of vacant land adjoining the railway should be accompanied by a survey for contamination and details of treatment;

iv. The former warehouse building on Sefton Street should be retained and refurbished;

v. Land between the railway and Sefton Street should be accessed from Sefton Street and off-site-highway improvements are likely to be required;

vi. New development adjoining the railway should incorporate appropriate landscaping, and building elevations, materials and detailing should be in sympathy with the refurbished Heywood station;

vii. Listed buildings within the Phoenix Brewery complex should be retained and refurbished for mixed uses; and

viii. Development proposals within the area of opportunity and associated ‘design statements’ should ensure the identification and retention of heritage features and reflect the vernacular of the ELR in accordance with guidance prepared by the Council.

12.34 The development of a new railway station at Heywood and the restoration of the line as a heritage railway linking with Bury and Rawtenstall is a high priority regeneration project. To sustain a successful operation and to maximise its economic benefits as a tourist attraction, it is vital to ensure that the surrounding environment is attractive to visitors and investors, and that other uses that complement and add value to the visitor experience are established. It is particularly important that Heywood is seen as a visitor destination and that interest in the area around the station encourages wider exploration of Heywood’s urban and countryside attractions. The regeneration of this area is also necessary to improve the local environment and attract investment within the industrial area beyond.

12.35 A 5.8ha vacant / underused site bounded by the railway, Sefton Street and Green Lane has potential for all the above uses but suffers from some contamination. A comprehensive scheme for the development of this site, incorporating off-site highway improvements will be expected. The former warehouse building at the northern end of Sefton Street is worthy of retention and has potential for conversion to a heritage leisure use. Railway Street is the key pedestrian link between Heywood Station and Manchester Street, the main
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road to the town centre. Physical works are needed to improve the overall environment of Railway Street and transform it into an attractive and visually prominent ‘gateway’ approach to the station complex. The Listed Buildings within the Phoenix Brewery site and which front Green Lane have particular potential for a mix of uses with pub/restaurant to the road frontage and business units/managed workspace to the rear. The listed brewery buildings are underused and require viable compatible mixed-uses to ensure their long-term future. Properly restored, these landmark buildings would be ideally suited for a pub/restaurant or other leisure use which require a prominent location. The establishment of food and drink A3 uses will also benefit visitors and employees within the wider industrial area. It is important that the design of new development is sympathetic to that of the refurbished station and other buildings of character, and helps to create a distinctive character for the area.

12.36 The Borough Council is currently working in partnership with the East Lancashire Railway Trust, the Rochdale Development Agency, owners of land and buildings, development consultants and others, to investigate funding sources and development interest.

R/4(i) TRUB FARM AREA OF OPPORTUNITY, CASTLETON

This area is allocated for mixed use development comprising housing, leisure, retail and employment.

Development should include:-

a) Tourism, leisure and related uses (for example, heritage attraction, craft workshops, pub / restaurant)

b) Boat facilities, which may include short term boat mooring and boat hire;

c) Office and business use (B1), and B2/B8 uses provided they do not impact on the amenity of adjoining uses;

d) Housing;

e) Retail development to the north of the area, close to Castleton local centre, in compliance with policies S/6 and S/8; and

f) An element of public open space.

The principles for development are:-

i. Development should enhance the canal frontage and create a quality canal side public realm and walking route which contributes to the leisure potential of the canal and the regeneration of Castleton centre;

ii. Enhanced links to Castleton centre both physically and visually, including good quality pedestrian links, will be required;

iii. The design and layout of any comprehensive scheme should create visual interest along the road and canal frontages and retain, and create where practical, open views from Manchester Road through the site to the open land beyond;

iv. Development should protect and enhance existing housing along Manchester Road;

v. The distribution of uses on the site should take into account the following:
   • the need to provide at the northern end of the site an attractive gateway leisure and retail development that relates well, and has good pedestrian links to, Castleton centre;
   • the location of residential development on land north of the new access road, away from the motorway;
   • employment uses to be located at the southern end of the site;
   • the need for an element of public open space provision;
vi. A Transport Assessment will be required to identify the potential impact on the highway network and the need for highways improvements to the junction on Manchester Road, which may have to be signal controlled, and elsewhere off site;

vii. Proposals must protect, and where practical enhance, the nature conservation value of the canal and adjacent corridor;

viii. Change of use or redevelopment of existing employment (B1-B8) premises will be subject to compliance with policy EC/4.

ix. Proposals must ensure the satisfactory integration of the new access road, from Manchester Road, and the canal bridge into any comprehensive development;

x. Proposals should enhance and extend the landscape buffer on the southern boundary adjoining the motorway.

12.37 The area of opportunity at Trub Farm, Manchester Road, Castleton is located to the south of Castleton village centre between the Rochdale Canal and Manchester Road with the M62 embankment forming the southern boundary.

12.38 In the northern part of the area, between the canal and Manchester Road, are housing, shops and a major industrial site. To the south of this is an open site between Manchester Road and the canal, with a new access road leading through it to a bridge across the canal. On the southern boundary is a distribution use, a vacant pub and the motorway embankment, part of which is designated as a greenspace corridor. The canal, to the west, has been raised and realigned to go under the M62.

12.39 The location provides the opportunity for a mixed-use development comprising predominantly housing and also retail, leisure and employment development, close to Castleton centre. Such a canalside development, if it is of a high quality design with good access to the canal and to Manchester Road, could make a major contribution to the image and overall regeneration of Castleton village.

12.40 Retail, canal side leisure uses and public realm could be located in the area between the northern end down to the locks and the old footbridge across the canal. To the south of this, the removal of one of the locks has created a longer pound which presents the opportunity for the development of canal related facilities, such as boat moorings.

12.41 The central part of the area offers the opportunity for canalside residential development. Change of use of employment sites will be permitted provided this forms part of this wider regeneration proposal supported by the Council, in compliance with policy EC/4.

12.42 A strong business focus is appropriate on the southern part of the site with commercial properties, preferably office, capitalising on the canal outlook and overall location to provide an attractive and appealing commercial location. This will also provide a buffer, to the residential development to the north, from noise from the motorway. New employment uses adjoining residential development will be restricted to those in Use Class B1 for reasons of amenity.

12.43 Design will need to address changes in level, and the raised canal treatment, to provide a strong and accessible canal frontage. The uses and development principles are complementary to the approach promoted by Policy LT/7 ‘Rochdale Canal’. The overall design will need to seek to maximise physical and visual links with Castleton.

12.44 A signal controlled junction may be required at the Manchester Road junction of the access road linking to the canal bridge. The development will have to comply with policy A/8. Proposals must address the need to satisfactorily complete and integrate the new access road (from Manchester Road) and canal bridge into any comprehensive development.

12.45 Development principle (vii) reflects the need to protect the conservation status of the canal as a SSSI and SAC in line with Policy NE/2 ‘Designated Sites of Ecological and Geological/Geomorphological Importance’.
A green corridor already exists along part of the M62 boundary and this should be further enhanced to provide a more effective landscape buffer against the motorway.

12.46 The land to the west of the canal is designated as greenspace corridor under policy G/8. Any development proposals for that land would have to be in compliance with that policy and would therefore be limited and would have to enhance its recreational, ecological and amenity value.

12.47 The possibility of the East Lancashire Railway being extended from Heywood through to Castleton should also be taken into account in the master planning of any development in terms of providing potential physical and thematic leisure use linkages.

**R/4(j) – ROOLEY MOOR ROAD AREA OF OPPORTUNITY, ROCHDALE**

This area is allocated for a mixed use ‘urban village’ type development comprising primarily employment and residential development supported by an appropriate level of ancillary uses.

The following uses must be provided:-

a) Employment and business uses (Class B1, B2 & B8);

b) Public recreational open space (scale of provision subject to relevant policies in the plan).

In addition to the above the following uses may also be permitted as part of a mixed use development:-

c) Housing, comprising a mixture of types including affordable homes;

d) Community uses including leisure and small-scale retail that meet an identified local need (subject to the relevant policies in the plan).

Any development must comply with the principles of development (i-xiii) below:-

i. A substantial part of the site will be required to be retained or redeveloped for employment and business uses (Class B1, B2 & B8). It is recognised that the appropriate size and mix of uses on the site will be dependent upon the findings of environmental and transport assessments and the financial viability of different development options and will be subject to negotiation with any developer;

ii. The refurbishment or redevelopment of all existing industrial premises and buildings will be expected in order to secure the long term viability of employment use, and ensure compatibility with other uses, on and off this site. However, proposals should retain on site, or satisfactorily relocate within the Borough, any companies already on the site that wish to stay in the Borough;

iii. An Environmental Assessment will be required for the ‘whole site’ and its environs (‘whole site’ defined in (iv) below);

iv. A comprehensive development must provide a permanent solution to the ‘whole sites’ industrial legacy of contamination through remedial works and, if necessary, through the future management of the site. In this context the ‘whole site’ means both the land identified as within the Area of Opportunity and the land owned by the company in the Recreational Management Area to the north of the site. A land contamination survey must be undertaken and a remediation scheme developed, which must be to the satisfaction of Rochdale MBC and must ensure that the whole site is suitable for its intended or actual use;

v. The mix and distribution of uses must be compatible in land use terms with uses on and surrounding the site and must take into account the land contamination problems;

vi. Satisfactory access and egress to the site for mixed uses will require particular attention to ensure that any potential environmental problems, such as traffic noise, for adjoining uses are minimised;
vii. A Transport Assessment will be required and the development must be supportable in transportation terms;

viii. A high quality layout and development will be required that utilises the opportunities provided by the river valley location to create an attractive environment;

ix. Development should be well related to, and provide links with, adjacent woodland and undeveloped areas to enhance their open space and amenity value. There is the opportunity to create new open space adjoining the river, linking with the existing open spaces to the north and south of the site;

x. The appropriate use and management of the land to the north of the site, in the same ownership as the land designated as an Area of Opportunity, is subject to policy RE/7 Recreational Management Areas. It will be a requirement, secured through a legal agreement, that the future satisfactory management and maintenance of this land is secured as part of any comprehensive redevelopment of the Area of Opportunity;

xi. Pedestrian routes to be retained and provided, and if appropriate, cycle routes provided through the site, especially providing links from adjoining areas along the Spodden Valley from Spodden Bridge to Healey Dell Local Nature Reserve;

xii. The nature conservation value of Healey Dell Local Nature Reserve and other recognised interests in the Spodden Valley (eg woodland and water features) must be given appropriate protection both during construction and in the operation of future uses. Opportunities for further conservation and enhancement measures should be included where possible;

xiii. Appropriate phasing will have to be agreed, to ensure that the operation and amenity of existing and new uses is not unduly compromised during development.

12.48 This is a major industrial site, owned by one company, that has many problems and issues that would be best addressed through comprehensive re-development. The ‘development site’ designated by this policy offers the opportunity for a high quality new urban village type development comprising new employment development, residential and community uses in an attractive environment.

12.49 The ‘development site’, identified as an Area of Opportunity, has an area 20 ha and is, or has been, in industrial use and is within the urban area. The company owns a much larger site (with a total area of 29.3 ha) including a wooded area, with lodges, within the Green Belt that extends up the river Spodden Valley to Healey Dell Local Nature Reserve and is all designated as a Recreational Management Area. This wider ownership is referred to in the policy as the ‘whole site’.

12.50 The ‘development site’ has been in intensive industrial use for many years and includes a number of older and some newer industrial buildings occupied by various businesses. A major industrial operator previously occupied the entire site but more recently they have vacated most of the existing buildings and many have been demolished. The remaining buildings in use are likely to become vacant within the plan period due to their leases expiring, but because of their size, condition and location they are unlikely to be in demand for continued employment use. However, it is important to retain the existing jobs if possible and to secure employment on this site in the longer term. Improvement of the site for long-term employment use can be achieved through redevelopment of the site with new buildings of an appropriate design and scale to the site and modern industrial needs.

12.51 The ‘whole site’ is contaminated as a consequence of the industrial processes carried out there. Any development must provide a permanent solution to the contamination problem on the ‘whole site’ through remedial works and, if necessary, through the future management of the site ensuring any problems are controlled. The de-contamination of the land to the north of the development site, its opening up to public access and its future management and ownership are all issues that are related to the successful redevelopment of the whole site. An agreed solution may be secured through a legal agreement as part of a planning permission.
12.52 The appropriate size, mix and location of uses on the ‘development site’ will be dependent upon the findings of environmental and transport assessments and the financial viability of different development options and will be subject to negotiation with any developer.

12.53 The site offers considerable potential for development that is well related to, and provides links with adjacent woodland and undeveloped areas in the ‘whole site’ to enhance their open space and amenity value. There is the opportunity to create new open space adjoining the river, linking with the existing open spaces to the north and south of the site, to provide an attractive pedestrian, and possibly cycle, route along the Spodden Valley from Spodden Bridge to Healey Dell Local Nature Reserve.

12.54 Adjoining areas have nature conservation value and it is important that they are protected during construction and taken into account in the choice of future uses.

12.55 The site currently has two access roads with currently inadequate junctions onto Rooley Moor Rd and these will require improvement as part of any comprehensive scheme.
CHAPTER 13
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES

G/CF/1 (PART ONE POLICY) COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES

PROPOSALS THAT IMPROVE THE QUALITY, RANGE AND DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES WITHIN THE BOROUGH WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THEY HAVE NO UNACCEPTABLE IMPACT ON THE QUALITY OF THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT AND ARE ACCESSIBLE TO THE COMMUNITIES THEY ARE INTENDED TO SERVE. THE PROVISION OR DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN ESSENTIAL SERVICES OR NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN WILL BE SUPPORTED PROVIDED THAT PROPOSALS HAVE NO UNACCEPTABLE IMPACT ON THE QUALITY OF THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT.

13.1 Community facilities are a major influence on the quality of life for local residents. Everyone benefits from facilities such as schools, colleges and higher education facilities, health services, hospitals, places of worship, social centres, nurseries etc. The Council will ensure that land is reserved for new facilities where it can, and will support the replacement or improvement of existing facilities, including those facilities that are of vital importance but which the Council is not directly responsible for providing, such as health care facilities. The aim of these policies is to provide accessible facilities to local communities that will reduce reliance on the car and encourage people to walk, cycle or use public transport. Also the creation of facilities within a local community can help to foster community identity and reduce social exclusion.

13.2 Development plans must also consider the requirements of the utilities for land to enable them to meet the demands that will be placed upon them but also the environmental effects of providing such facilities. The distribution of electricity, operational facilities for water supply and waste water treatment, the siting of telecommunications developments and other public utilities facilities are important in helping to provide essential services and to support key land uses and social and economic objectives. The Council will use its development control powers, where appropriate, to control the location and siting of facilities and to minimise their impact on local amenity, landscape and townscape.

CF/2 GENERAL CRITERIA FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNITY AND HEALTH FACILITIES

Proposals for new and improved local community and health facilities will be permitted and supported, provided:

a) The facility is accessible to the community it is intended to serve and, where practicable, within District or Local Centres;

b) The proposal will have no unacceptable impact on the amenity of surrounding land uses, particularly residential, by reason of visual appearance, scale, noise or other nuisance; and

c) The surrounding road network is capable of accommodating any additional vehicular traffic likely to be generated by the proposal without damage to the local environment or road safety.

13.3 Community facilities include community centres, places of worship, premises for cultural and social activities, schools and educational establishments whose facilities are used by the wider community, libraries, one-stop shops, children's day nurseries and day centres. Health facilities include clinics, health centres, doctors' surgeries, dentists and other health practitioners.
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Community Facilities and Public Services

13.4 Over recent years there has been pressure for particular types of facilities. For example, there is a growing demand from ethnic minority communities for buildings and sites for places of worship and social centres. There is also growing demand for care facilities as a result of increasing emphasis on ‘care in the community’. The Council recognises it is important that local community facilities should be located either close to the communities they are required to serve, or in central places (such as district or local shopping centres or grouped with other facilities) so they can be reached by walking and public transport. Some local facilities will be within or directly adjacent to residential areas and those living in close proximity to them could be subject to inconvenience and disturbance, particularly as a result of noise, increased traffic volumes and on-street parking. To avoid any undue disturbance to potential neighbours, the policy identifies specific amenity and environmental requirements that must be satisfied. Small facilities also need to be accessible to all potential users, particularly people who have mobility or sensory difficulties.

13.5 In ensuring conformity with other policies of the Plan, the Council will not permit the development of community facilities on land allocated for other purposes unless the facility is an appropriate and complementary use to the overall development.

**CF/3 ROCHDALE GENERAL HOSPITAL**

Development proposals will be permitted for hospital purposes and ancillary uses on: land bounded by Heights Lane; Quarry Street; Howard Street; Whitehall Street and Henley Street, Rochdale – as shown on the Proposals Map.

13.6 This area is allocated for the modernisation and expansion of the Rochdale Infirmary in line with the Pennine Acute Hospitals Trust's intention to upgrade existing facilities to the standard of a district general hospital. A first phase of the scheme is complete, but further expansion and redevelopment will be necessary to improve and extend health care facilities, including the transfer of facilities from Birch Hill Hospital. It is important that phased or incremental development is consistent with an overall scheme for the whole site so that design, traffic circulation and impact on adjoining land uses can be considered and planned comprehensively. The Council will therefore work with the NHS Hospital Trust to agree a development framework or Masterplan to guide future development.

13.7 A Design Statement may be required in accordance with Policy BE/2 'Design Criteria for New Development'. The preparation of a Design Statement can help to show how the design and layout of development relates to surrounding houses, in terms of appearance, massing and the height of proposed buildings.

13.8 Development proposals will be expected to comply with the provisions of Policy A/11 ‘New Development – Transport Assessments’ and Policy A/12 ‘New Development – Travel Plans and School Travel Plans’ in order to ensure that traffic impact, access, parking, and modal split is addressed. The aim will be to minimise car usage and maximise the use of public transport, walking and cycling for all those travelling to the site, to minimise the impact of road traffic in the area and its effect on local air quality. Legal agreements or planning obligations may be sought to secure improvements or developer contributions to transport or other essential infrastructure.

13.9 An environmental statement may also be required for major schemes in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999. Legal agreements or planning obligations may be sought to secure measures or developer contributions identified through a transport assessment and travel plan.

**CF/4 HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE**

Within this site, as shown on the Proposals Map, development proposals for the improvement and addition to education facilities will be permitted – provided that: they are consistent with the College’s Green Belt location; do not harm the character or setting of listed buildings; and are in accordance with Policy D/5.
13.10 Hopwood Hall College is the Borough’s major provider of tertiary education. College facilities are currently split between two sites, namely Hopwood Campus, Middleton and a town centre campus in Rochdale. Very little room for expansion exists at the Rochdale Campus and, as a consequence, any developments required to meet expanded curriculum needs will have to be accommodated at Hopwood. It is the long-term aim of the College authorities to develop the Hopwood site as a self-contained campus capable of providing high quality academic, technical and vocational training, meeting not only the needs of the local community, but also operating as a facility of regional importance in the field of education and training. This could involve the rationalisation, conversion, redevelopment of, or extensions to buildings and facilities. The Council supports this strategy, recognising the benefits it can bring in terms of both economic regeneration and enhanced social provision, provided that development has no greater impact on the Green Belt or on the local landscape. The Council has therefore identified the campus as a major developed site within the Green Belt under Green Belt policy D/5 and will expect all future developments to be carried out in accordance with the criteria in that policy.

13.11 A Design Statement is required in accordance with Policy BE/2 ‘Design Criteria for New Development’. The statement should have particular regard to the relationship of new buildings and general activity to the remaining buildings of character within the site, its attractive green belt setting and the recreational value and the ecological value of surrounding land (much of which is protected as a Site of Biological Importance).

13.12 A Travel Plan is required to: minimise car traffic; promote public transport use; promote safe cycle and walking routes and facilities for cyclists; and minimise pedestrian traffic conflict at the campus.

**CF/5 CEMETERY PROVISION**

The following sites are allocated for extensions to existing cemeteries:

a) Land at the rear of Hereford Way, Boarshaw, adjoining Middleton Cemetery; and

b) Land off Rochdale Road East, adjoining Heywood Cemetery.

Access will be obtained via the existing cemetery and the Council will ensure that suitable provision is made for landscaping and boundary treatment.

13.13 The Council needs to increase the supply of burial plots to meet predicted local demand and to supplement provision to cater for the needs of the borough as a whole. The most effective and efficient way of meeting demand for new grave spaces is through the extension of existing cemeteries wherever possible. In particular, this avoids the need for new infrastructure and ancillary buildings. Over the long term, however, further provision will be necessary and investigations and survey work are currently being carried out to identify suitable and accessible sites. So far, however, it has not been possible to identify a new site or sites for inclusion in this plan. The demand and potential for green burials and memorial gardens / planting are also being investigated. The potential exists to secure woodland burials or memorial planting within quiet natural woodland areas secured or managed through, for example, the Pennine Edge Forest initiative.

13.14 The proposed Heywood extension and the existing cemetery fall within the Green Belt, within which cemeteries are an appropriate use. The proposed Middleton extension lies to the rear of Hereford Way but excludes an area of land fronting Boarshaw Road protected as recreational open space under Policy G/3 and identified for improvement to meet an identified open space deficiency in the area.

13.15 Detailed proposals for the extension will be subject of consultation that will take into account the living conditions of nearby residents.
Applications for planning permission or for prior approval (as required under Part 24 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995) for telecommunications masts, satellite and terrestrial microwave antennae on masts, and satellite and terrestrial microwave antennae on a building or structure will be permitted where the following requirements are met:

a) In the case of satellite and terrestrial microwave antennae on a building or structure the equipment is not detrimental to the character and design of the building or structure, to the character of the local street scene or to the visual amenity of the area;

b) In the case of telecommunications masts the development is not detrimental to the character and appearance of the local street scene or to the visual amenity of the area;

c) The opportunity is taken to share sites or erect telecommunications equipment on an existing mast, building or other structure, unless this would be unacceptable in terms of increased height or visual clutter.

d) An applicant provides evidence of compliance with the Government guidelines on health impacts of telecommunications use;

e) The equipment is sited and designed so as to minimise its visual impact subject to technical and operational considerations; and

f) The operator removes any apparatus when it becomes redundant.

The Council will use conditions and, where necessary, legal agreements to secure the above.

In the case of developments affecting landscape character, sites and features of nature conservation value, sites of archaeological importance, a Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings or their settings, applications will not be permitted unless the Council is satisfied that:

i. the siting, scale or proliferation of facilities are not likely to injure significantly the special character or appearance of such areas, or that

ii. for technical and operational reasons, no alternative location is suitable and the proposed development is sited so as to minimise any injury to that special character or appearance.

13.16 Modern telecommunications are an essential and beneficial element in the life of the local community and in the national economy. The Government is committed to facilitating the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems whilst keeping the environmental impact to a minimum. The Council supports this approach and agrees that care should be taken to ensure that there is minimum impact on the environment and that the character and amenity of the townscape and countryside do not suffer as a result of telecommunications equipment being installed.

13.17 In order to minimise the external appearance of telecommunications equipment the Council will encourage innovative design solutions, not only in terms of the structure of masts and antennas but also the materials and colouring. Mast and site sharing is strongly encouraged by Government and the Council will expect applicants to provide evidence that the possibility of erecting equipment on an existing mast, building or other structure has been fully explored. In order to consider fully the environmental constraints and to explore possible alternative approaches, particularly in terms of siting and appearance, the Council will encourage close consultation with operators prior to an application being submitted. To implement the policy, the Council will make use of planning conditions and/or planning obligations offered by a developer.

13.18 The public has become increasingly concerned about the possible health risks posed by telecommunications equipment, particularly the proximity of masts and antennae to houses and schools. In response to such concern, and the recommendations of an independent expert group set up by the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB), the Government has accepted a ‘precautionary approach’ to the use of mobile phone technologies. Part of this precautionary approach is that emissions from mobile phone
base stations should satisfy the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) guidelines. It is important that evidence of compliance to these or any other future Government Guidance is provided with any application for prior approval.

CF/7 WATER AND WASTE WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Proposals for the development of operational facilities for water supply and waste water treatment will be supported provided such proposals are:

a) necessary to implement the policies of the Plan; and

b) in conformity with other relevant policies of the Plan.

13.19 United Utilities has a statutory duty to provide the water supply and waste water disposal services which are essential to new development and existing communities, as well as the environment. The company is also subject to UK legislation and EC directives, both of which are becoming more stringent. The company makes use of extensive installations, including reservoirs and water treatment plants and networks of pipes and sewers. Further improvement to this infrastructure will be required to meet the needs of the population and the environment. Developments necessary to implement the objectives of the Plan will therefore be supported in principle. This policy is not, however, intended as a blanket approval for development. When considering applications for water facilities the Council will expect compliance with all relevant locational, environmental and design policies of the Plan. Proposals for the disposal of sewage sludge will be treated in the same way as any other form of waste disposal; and will therefore be subject to the policies set out in the Waste Chapter of the Plan.
CHAPTER 14
GREENSPACE

G/G/1 (PART ONE POLICY)  GREENSPACE

THE COUNCIL WILL PROTECT AND ENHANCE EXISTING PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND WILL PROVIDE NEW OPEN SPACE IN ACCORDANCE WITH IDENTIFIED STANDARDS FOR FORMAL AND INFORMAL RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND ACCESS TO NATURAL AND AMENITY GREENSPACE. EMPHASIS WILL BE PLACED ON:

A) PROTECTING SITES WHICH HAVE AN EXISTING OR POTENTIAL VALUE FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT;

B) IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF OPEN SPACES WHICH HAVE POTENTIAL TO MEET IDENTIFIED DEFICIENCIES FOR SPORT AND RECREATION;

C) ESTABLISHING NEW OPEN SPACES WHEN NEED, LAND AVAILABILITY AND RESOURCES JUSTIFY AND ALLOW IT;

D) IMPROVING LINEAR RECREATIONAL LINKS AND ROUTES, AND TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY TO KEY AREAS OF OPEN SPACE, NATURAL GREENSPACE AND LINKS BETWEEN TOWNS AND AREAS OF COUNTRYSIDE; AND

E) SEEKING PLANNING OBLIGATIONS TO SECURE NEW OR IMPROVED PROVISION AND CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS FUTURE MAINTENANCE TO MEET NEEDS ARISING FROM NEW DEVELOPMENT.

14.1 The term open space embraces many kinds of outdoor recreational and leisure uses and areas of different size, location and character. First and foremost, they are functional areas, e.g. grassed areas used for informal recreation, neighbourhood and town parks, playing fields and sports grounds, allotments, natural green areas with public access, although they will usually have an amenity value. Thus, as well as providing opportunities for sport, informal and passive recreation, these open spaces make an essential contribution to the quality and character of the urban fabric, support urban regeneration and improve the quality of life in the borough. Currently the distribution of certain types of open space is uneven relative to need and a major problem is the quality of many areas of urban open space. The Council will, through its Parks, Sports Pitch, and Play Areas Strategies, define a hierarchy of spaces, pitches, and targets for their provision to meet the borough's particular needs. The UDP will protect those areas of value or potential, identify areas or circumstances where new or improved provision is to be made based on local needs and standards, and ensure that the location of facilities is well related to existing and new development. It is particularly important to ensure that 'local' facilities are accessible by safe, pedestrian routes and that other more major facilities are easily accessible by public transport. The Council is keen to ensure that opportunities are taken to continue developing the recreational and amenity potential of greenspace corridors and 'natural' areas of urban open space e.g., urban woodlands. The Council will also ensure that new developments that create a demand for open space contribute towards new or improved provision.

G/2  STANDARDS FOR RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE

The Council will ensure the protection and future provision of recreational open space to meet the following minimum standards:

a) Local Open Space Standard – Minimum of 1.0 hectares per 1000 population of land which is suitable for children’s play and informal recreation.
Greenspace

b) Outdoor Sports Facilities Standard – Minimum of 1.1 hectares per 1000 of playing field and outdoor games pitches for active recreation.

14.2 Access to sport and recreation, both formal and informal, can make a vital contribution to a person’s quality of life. It provides enjoyment, an opportunity to interact with others and improves health and general wellbeing. It is therefore important to provide a range of open spaces and facilities that are sufficient in size and location to meet local demand.

14.3 Local Open Space includes outdoor equipped playgrounds for children and areas of informal open space which provide opportunities for recreation to people of all ages. In providing for local open space within the Borough, the Council has defined three broad categories of site, which are:

a) LEAP (Locally Equipped Area for Play)* – should include at least 5 types of equipment and a small games area. Site must be at least 0.36 ha and within 400 m (5 min walking time) of home.

b) NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play)* – should include at least 8 types of equipment, along with kickabout and cycle play opportunities. Site must be at least 0.85 ha and within 1000 m (15 min walking time) of home; and

c) Informal recreational open space - should be over 0.2 hectares and within 400 m (5 min walking time) of home.

14.4 The LEAP and NEAP categories, referred to above, are derived from the National Playing Field Association’s (NPFA) suggested standards for children’s play provision. The Council has set itself the target of improving all of the fixed playground sites within the Borough to the LEAP standard, with the possibility of upgrading some of these to NEAP standard in the future where funding opportunities arise.

14.5 In providing for recreational needs, areas of informal open space also have an important role to play. They provide opportunities for informal games and other passive recreation (e.g. dog walking), and have general amenity value and are used by people of all ages. In order to have some meaningful value they need to be suitable in terms of size, shape, topography and access. In assessing current provision and future demand, the Council has taken into account all accessible greenspaces, including those outside the urban area but which meet the needs of people in adjacent residential areas.

14.6 Outdoor Sports Facilities includes pitches, greens, courts and athletics tracks, whether they are in the public, educational or private sectors, and are available for public use or use by members. Current provision of such facilities is approximately 192 hectares, which equates to 0.95 hectares per 1000 population. It has been calculated that the total provision required to meet current and anticipated demand, and achieve the Sports Pitch Strategy usage/quality standard, is 217 hectares. This gives a standard of 1.1 hectares per 1000 population and is considered a realistic assessment taking account of local demand, the availability of sites and the resources available to lay out and maintain new provision. Due to the climate and local ground conditions, the quality of a number of pitches is poor and this limits usage. Therefore, in order to meet demand, it is important that existing pitches are upgraded and improved as well as the achievement of additional provision to meet the standard of 1.1 hectares per 1000.

G/3 PROTECTION OF EXISTING RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE

The development of public or private recreational open space for any other purpose will not be permitted unless one or more of the following exceptions applies:

a) The development is for a non commercial community use within a park or other outdoor recreation area, is ancillary to the recreational use of the area, would not lead to a deficiency in recreational open space in relation to present or future needs, and does not harm the recreational, townscape or nature conservation value of the remaining open space;

b) Alternative provision is made of at least the equivalent quantity and quality of recreational open space, in a satisfactory location and taking account of local environmental and traffic considerations;
c) The development funds improvements to existing outdoor sports facilities within the site or on another site, commensurate with the open space being lost; and

d) The development comprises a built recreational facility of greater benefit to the wider community than the open space being lost and does not result in a serious deficiency in open space in the area.

Where exceptions are to be made under (b) and (c) above, the Council may impose planning conditions and/or seek planning obligations under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to secure the suitable replacement or improvement of open space.

With regard to criterion (d), such proposals will only be permitted where no suitable alternative brownfield site exists.

School playing fields which are surplus to educational requirements, and privately-owned sports grounds which have deteriorated due to lack of use and maintenance, will continue to be safeguarded from development as they still offer potential to meet current and future recreational needs.

14.7 It is important to protect open spaces, which have, or potentially have, a value for either formal or informal recreation in order to prevent the creation of further areas of deficiency. Such areas include town and neighbourhood parks, playgrounds, playing fields school playing fields, other formal sports pitches and courts, and informal grassed areas. The sites shown on the Proposals Map are those areas over 0.2 hectare which are currently in use, excluding those areas located outside the Defined Urban Area which are protected from most forms of built development under Green Belt and Open Land policies D/4 and D/10. This policy will also apply to any new areas of open space that are secured to meet the Council's standards and recreational strategies. It is also recognised that there are a small number of sites below 0.2 hectare that have recreational value, e.g. kick pitches and bowling greens, and these will also be protected under this policy.

14.8 However, there are also a number of sites which, because of their small size, difficult location, topography, ground conditions or other restrictions, will have a very limited value or potential for recreation. Some of these sites may, however, have an amenity value and would be protected by the provisions of Policy G/10 ‘Protection of Urban Amenity Open Space’.

14.9 School playing fields (especially secondary school playing fields) make a substantial contribution to overall public playing fields provision through the Council’s dual-use policy. The loss of school pitches (in great demand for community sporting use due to their general accessibility and the availability of changing and shower facilities) would further increase deficiencies in overall formal outdoor sports provision. Redundant school playing fields also provide the most significant opportunity, and in some cases the only opportunity, to alleviate a deficiency in informal or casual recreational open space provision.

14.10 The policy recognises that in exceptional cases, development may be permitted on a site, or part of a site, if suitable alternative provision can be made in appropriate locations, or if improvements to another site are considered preferable by the Council - see criteria (c) and (d). The Council’s intention to seek planning obligations where appropriate for the suitable replacement or improvement of open space is in line with PPG17 “Sport and Recreation”. The details of any Section 106 agreements will be a matter for negotiation between the developer and the Council.

14.11 Criteria (d) recognises that occasionally an area of open space will provide the only available site for built recreational facilities (e.g. a sports centre or changing/shower facility). However, open spaces should not be seen as an easy option to provide land for such facilities and development will only be permitted in exceptional cases.
The Council will permit development proposals that increase the quantity and quality of local open space across the Borough, including those that lead to:

a) Improvements to existing fixed playground sites to meet the LEAP standard, with some upgraded to NEAP standard;

b) New fixed playground sites of LEAP standard in areas that are currently deficient;

c) Additional areas of informal recreational open space;

d) Improvements to existing areas of informal recreational open space; and

e) Increased public access to, and within, areas of local open space.

14.12 The availability of local open space close to homes contributes greatly to the quality of the residential environment. They give opportunities for children’s play and informal recreation for all ages. The Council will aim to provide local open space at a standard of 1.0 hectares per 1,000 population wherever possible. However, in view of the high density of the built-up areas of the Borough and the limited scope for new provision in some areas, it will not always be possible to achieve this standard. The policy recognises that it is not just the size or amount of open space in an area which restrict opportunities for informal recreation, but the poor quality of many areas and the lack of facilities contained within them. Without improvements, poor quality open spaces will remain under-used and neglected, whilst pressures for development will become more acute. Poor accessibility, and the real or imagined threat to personal safety and security, are other reasons why open spaces are not used to their full potential, and improvements are also necessary to address these problems.

14.13 The Council will monitor the quantity and quality of open space so that new provision and improvements to existing open space can be targeted to areas of greatest need. This is particularly important as land and resources are likely to be limited. The Council has identified those fixed playground sites in the borough that it intends to bring up to LEAP standard. The areas currently deficient in children's play space and local informal recreational open space within each of the Townships are:

**Heywood**
- Children's play space - Hopwood and Summit
- Informal open space - Hardfield Street/Hind Hill Street, Summit and Heady Hill

**Middleton**
- Children's play space - Langley, Hollins, John Lee Fold and Moorclose
- Informal open space - North Langley, Alkrington

**Pennines**
- Children’s Play Space - Hurstead/Greengate and North Milnrow
- Informal open space - Wardle, Hurstead/Deamley and North Milnrow

**Rochdale**
- Children’s play space - Healey, Norden and Bamford
- Informal open space - Fairway/Heywood Road, East Castleton, Fairway, Castleton

14.14 Although in most cases local open space will comprise fixed playgrounds and informal areas of open space within housing areas there are also other sources of open space. Greenspace corridors, community woodlands, local nature reserves and areas of accessible countryside can be found throughout the Borough. These are often close enough to people’s homes to provide additional opportunities for informal recreation.

G/5 NEW PROVISION OF OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

The Council will permit development proposals for formal outdoor sports facilities that meet existing and future demand, including those that are part of a wider development scheme or to be implemented through developer contributions. Proposals will be assessed against whether they would result in:

a) The best use of existing sports pitches and other playing surfaces;
b) An upgrade of sports pitches and other playing surfaces, and the provision of associated facilities; or
c) The provision of new sports pitches, as well as the replacement of those pitches whose retention is not viable on economic management or local demand grounds.

14.15 There is an under-provision of outdoor sports facilities of all kinds in the Borough. The Council’s objective will be to secure formal sports facilities to a standard of 1.1 hectares per 1000 population outlined in policy G/2. It is not necessary for small individual communities to be self-sufficient in formal sports facilities, i.e. soccer, rugby, cricket, hockey, etc. However, it is desirable for pitches to be distributed so as not to disadvantage areas of the Borough. It is therefore appropriate to consider provision and demand at the Township level. The current issues affecting each Township with regard to outdoor sports provision are as follows.

**Heywood**
- Pitches are currently operating at maximum levels of usage.
- Some pitches are being overplayed resulting in a deterioration of the playing surface
- Most feasible opportunity to enhance provision is through improvements to existing school playing fields which have a ‘community use’ policy.

**Middleton**
- There is significant demand in the Township, mainly for junior pitches.
- Possibility of providing additional junior pitches at existing sites.
- Improvements are required at a number of existing pitches, especially in terms of drainage and ancillary facilities.

**Pennine**
- Currently unmet demand in the area for senior and junior football pitches.
- The local authority operates only one playing field in the Township, with the rest of the sports pitch provision either predominately privately owned or leased to voluntary run sports clubs.
- There is some potential to increase provision in the area but it would require significant improvements in terms of drainage and infrastructure.

**Rochdale**
- There is currently unmet demand in Rochdale for junior football pitches, rugby pitches and cricket pitches.
- Many pitches are overused and require improvements to drainage and infrastructure. The condition of some pitches means it may be more cost effective to lay out new pitches on other sites.
- There are opportunities to increase provision at existing sites and improvements to under-utilised school pitches could help support additional community use.

14.16 Many existing grass pitches are in a poor condition due to over-intensive use, and deterioration of the playing surfaces is often exacerbated by the Borough's relatively high rainfall, the preponderance of boulder clay soils and the fine particulate structure which offer poor drainage. Other pitches have inadequate facilities such as showers, changing rooms and car parking. Improving existing pitches not only benefits existing users, but also means that the pitch can be used more often (e.g. if it has better drainage) thus reducing the need to lay out new pitches.

14.17 One of the main problems in laying out new sports pitches is the lack of suitable sites that are available within the urban area. Whilst urban sites are preferred, urban fringe locations, which are accessible to areas of population, will be acceptable. It is likely that opportunities for sporting activities in the urban fringe will increase as farming activity in marginal areas contracts in response to Government pressures to curb agricultural production and to diversify the rural economy.

14.18 It must be recognised that the ability of the Council to implement some of the above measures using its own capital budgets and spending powers will be very limited. However, the UDP, together with the Council’s ‘Sports Pitch’ and ‘Sport and Recreation’ strategies will provide a proper context and a basis for assessing priorities within the Council’s capital programmes. Also, the Council will take every opportunity to secure funding and assistance from external sources. Finally, in seeking to improve overall level of provision, the Council will assist local voluntary sports clubs to acquire, operate and maintain facilities for their exclusive or shared use, where appropriate.
Development proposals for the provision of formal sports facilities within existing areas of open space e.g. sports grounds, playing fields (including school playing fields) and parks, that result in the more intensive use of such areas by providing additional facilities (including stadia and other spectator facilities, changing facilities, indoor sports facilities, other built structures e.g. floodlighting, car parking and vehicle servicing) will be permitted provided that they do not:

a) Involve the loss of land for casual/informal recreation (where general public use is authorised) which would result in a deficiency of such open space in the local area;

b) Detract from the amenity of adjoining residential properties;

c) Detract from the landscape qualities of the area of open space; and

d) Have a detrimental impact on areas of nature conservation interest.

14.19 Any provision of additional formal outdoor and indoor sports facilities is likely to be directed mainly at existing areas of open space. It is acknowledged that concentrating such facilities and making more intensive use of such areas can have operational and financial advantages in increasing accessible provision in deficient parts of the Borough and minimising running and maintenance costs. However, the policy recognises that the effect of such an approach can be to compromise the other qualities that an open space currently provides, i.e. its general amenity value or physical attraction, existing natural features and the value of that area for casual informal use. In addition, the extra traffic which is generated, the buildings and structures which are often necessary to support the activities, and the activities themselves, can have a significant impact on local amenity and create visual, noise or other disturbance.

The development of existing allotment sites and livestock plots for other uses will not be permitted unless alternative provision is made which is at least of an equivalent standard and in a satisfactory location, prior to the use of an existing site being terminated. Where discontinued sites cannot be re-established due to abnormally high costs of land preparation and provision of associated infrastructure, the Council may consider that protection is not appropriate. Where new (including relocated) sites are to be provided, a high standard of external appearance, the provision of modern facilities (e.g., water supply, pathways and suitable fencing) and good access will be required.

The Council will, as resources permit, seek to ensure an adequate supply of suitably serviced allotment gardens and livestock plots in order to meet existing and future demand.

14.20 The majority of allotment gardens and livestock plots in the Borough are Council owned (the Council operates some 40 sites comprising more than 600 individual plots) although there is a small number of privately owned sites. Sites remain popular in most locations, with high levels of occupancy and a waiting list for many sites. Demand is often local to sites and most sites are within walking distance of nearby residential areas. Demand is likely to remain high due to factors such as increased leisure time and a growing interest in self-sufficiency and home-grown produce (particularly among some ethnic minority groups).

14.21 The Council intends to protect such sites as a valuable local resource for leisure and subject to the availability of resources will continue to enhance sites in respect of the facilities they contain and their visual quality. Where new or relocated sites are provided, they will be expected to be of an appropriate size, accessible, include a suitable range of facilities for users, and to take account of any particular qualities or characteristics of their setting e.g., in the design of buildings and use of boundary fencing materials in order to protect or enhance local visual amenity.

14.22 The policy will be applied to all allotment sites irrespective of size but for practical purposes, only those sites over 0.2 hectare are shown on the Proposals Map.
G/8 (A) GREENSPACE CORRIDORS

Greenspace Corridors shown on the Proposals Map will be protected. Development and other measures which will enhance their recreational, ecological or landscape and amenity value will be permitted. In those parts of the corridors which are outside the Defined Urban Area, the provisions of Policy D/10 will also apply. Within all parts of Greenspace Corridors, the Council will not permit development proposals which would:

a) Lead to an unacceptable narrowing or a division of the corridor into sections, thereby,
   i. restricting the movement of wildlife along it, or
   ii. restricting the movement of people along established or proposed recreational routes or rights of way;

b) Result in the loss or severance of links between areas of recreational open space;

c) Result in the loss of existing valued recreational facilities or prejudice proposed new facilities; or

d) Prevent public access into the corridor at strategic locations;

or which would result in unacceptable harm to:

e) The better landscape qualities and character of the corridor;

f) The amenity value of the corridor where it provides welcome visual relief from urban development, including attractive views in and out of the corridor;

h) Viable agricultural operations, including good quality grazing land and allotments.

G/8 (B)

Any new development permitted within or adjacent to the corridors will be of a design, and use materials appropriate to, the character and setting of the corridor. Boundary treatments and landscaping should help to retain or re-establish a ‘countryside’ character in the corridors and contribute to nature conservation interest through design and use of appropriate species.

G/8 (C)

Proposals for open or built recreational facilities should be of a scale and nature appropriate to the location and should not lead to an unacceptable level of recreational activity having regard to visual amenity, nature conservation interests and the need to retain an informal or unspoilt character. Development or activities should not conflict with existing uses or activities (e.g., grazing) and should not create disturbance for local residents.

G/8 (D)

Development proposals will be permitted that protect and enhance Greenspace Corridors and realise their potential for recreation and nature conservation.

14.23 Within the urban area there are a number of substantial undeveloped green wedges or corridors which contain a variety of open land uses and natural greenspaces (including managed open spaces, woodland, farmland, allotments etc.). Some corridors are substantial such as those in the Roch, Beal and Irk valleys whilst others are smaller consisting of a series of linked greenspaces. Greenspace Corridors have a diversity of character ranging from attractive ‘semi rural’ landscapes to more tightly defined corridors which provide visual relief and accessible greenspaces for surrounding heavily built up areas.
Chapter 14

14.24 Greenspace Corridors have a range of purposes which are:

a) to provide opportunities for informal outdoor recreation;

b) to provide recreational routes linking recreational open spaces and urban areas with the surrounding countryside;

c) to secure the enhancement and establishment of wildlife habitats and areas of nature conservation interest;

d) to allow the free passage of wildlife species, flora and fauna; and

e) to provide amenity through welcome relief from urban development.

14.25 These corridors are an important open land resource and the Policy is designed to protect such areas from major developments or any built incursions that would sever parts of a corridor, impede its function and detract from its natural, visual or recreational quality. It is accepted that limited small scale built development may be appropriate but proposals must demonstrate high standards of design, layout materials and landscaping which complement the character, landscape and nature conservation qualities of the corridor. This is especially important within corridors which have a more natural or rural character such as river valley corridors. The criteria set out in policy NE/6 ‘Landscape Protection and Enhancement’ and any supporting landscape character guidelines produced will be applied to development proposals within or adjacent to greenspace corridors. It is also important to ensure that within river valley corridors, development and activities do not increase the risk of flooding or have an adverse impact on water quality. Proposals will be assessed against policies EM/7 ‘Development and Flood Risk’ and EM/8 ‘Protection of Surface and Ground Water’.

14.26 The Policy recognises that many parts of greenspace corridors are privately owned and in beneficial use e.g. for grazing or other open uses. The provision of, or increase in recreational activity must take account of the need to protect private interests and minimise the potential for conflict with recreational use. Proposals for recreational use will also be assessed against the ability of the host landscape to accommodate such use without detracting from its character or environmental quality or the visual amenity of the area.

14.27 In addition to the control of development, the Council will support and carry out appropriate measures to protect and enhance the environmental, visual, recreational and ecological quality of corridors. Initiatives such as the Pennine Edge Forest and Roch Valley River Valley Initiative are helping to establish long term improvement programmes for corridor enhancement, including planting of locally native trees, improved recreational access along water courses from adjacent communities and measures to conserve and improve landscape, ecological, soil and water quality. The potential for corridors to contribute to urban regeneration has also been recognised, for example in developing strategies for Housing Market Renewal areas and the regeneration of older industrial and urban fringe locations, in particular derelict and untidy land. The Council will continue to work with landowners, developers, community interests, voluntary and public sector agencies to promote and carry out further improvements where opportunities and resources permit.

G/9 STANNEY BROOK CORRIDOR AND PARK

The Council will not permit development proposals that would adversely affect the recreational potential, natural landscape value and nature conservation interest of the Stanney Brook Corridor and Park.

The Council will secure in partnership with the developers of the Kingsway Business Park:

a) Provision for active and passive recreational pursuits, having regard to the need to protect the nature conservation value of the corridor;

b) The extension and improvement of the existing Stanney Brook Park for outdoor recreation;

c) Appropriate landscape improvements and management regimes; and
d) The establishment of pedestrian links to and within the corridor.

14.28 The site subject to this proposal falls largely within the Kingsway Business Park (Proposal EC/7). Consistent with the intention to secure a high quality, low density development within a landscaped setting, the Kingsway Business Park proposal includes requirements for:

a) The preservation and enhancement, or creation of new sites/features, of ecological importance (e.g. habitats) wherever possible; and

b) The creation of new and the extension of existing public open space and formal recreation areas, including the extension and improvement of Stanney Brook Park.

14.29 Proposal G/9 effectively defines the Stanney Brook corridor and park and how the Council proposes to protect and enhance them. It is considered that its limited expansion and the provision of new recreational facilities typical of a small urban park could enhance the park. This will meet future demand for recreation from employees and visitors to the Business Park and the residents of existing and proposed housing areas to the east. The Stanney Brook corridor, however, will only have potential for limited low-key, passive recreation. An improved footpath network and the provision of landscaped seating areas would be particularly desirable. The Stanney Brook corridor is also defined as a greenspace corridor under Policy G/8 and the opportunity exists to establish links with other parts of the corridor network, and enhance its ecological value as a Site of Biological Importance through appropriate landscaping and management.

14.30 The relationship between the Stanney Brook corridor and other areas and elements of the Business Park development should be carefully considered. The Stanney Brook corridor should be regarded as an integral landscape feature of the Business Park and the layout and design of industrial buildings will need to have regard to its distinct rural character. In order to secure vehicular access to and within the Kingsway site, it will be necessary for the Stanney Brook corridor to be crossed by roads in at least two places. The Council will not wish to place undue restrictions on road crossings but would wish to ensure that the impact on the corridor and the watercourse itself is minimised.

14.31 The implementation of this proposal will require close co-operation between the Council and the developers of the Business Park. Joint funding arrangements will need to be agreed on the basis of an overall enhancement and management plan for the Stanney Brook corridor and park and this should form part of any overall scheme for the development of the Kingsway Business Park.

**G/10 PROTECTION OF URBAN AMENITY OPEN SPACE**

The Council will not permit development proposals for the development or change of use of incidental urban greenspace unless the benefits arising from the proposal outweigh the loss of the land. In assessing proposals, the existing value of the greenspace will be based on the following considerations:

a) Its structural value, in defining local communities or providing a buffer area between incompatible uses;

b) Its visual amenity value;

c) Its contribution towards the setting of individual buildings or groups of buildings;

d) Its value for passive recreation, as an attractive setting for key walking/cycling routes, or as an attractive bus waiting environment; and

e) Whether it comprises an area of nature conservation interest or landscape feature worthy of retention.

14.32 Within the built-up area of the Borough (shown as the Defined Urban Area by Policy G/D/1) there is an extensive patchwork of informal natural or grassed areas or more formal landscaped areas which, because of their size, physical characteristics or location, have limited potential for meaningful recreation. However, they often contribute or have potential to contribute towards the environmental quality of an area. More specifically, these areas often act as a buffer area between incompatible uses (e.g., as a visual screen or noise attenuation zone), help to enhance the settings of individual buildings or groups of buildings, help to distance housing from major roads, provide habitats for wildlife and provide opportunities for passive low-
Greenspace

key recreation e.g., walking, sitting and relaxing. The value of these open spaces should not be under-
estimated and it is therefore important that consideration of proposals for the development or the change of
use of amenity open space should balance the benefits of development against the loss of that land.
CHAPTER 15

COUNTRYSIDE AND THE RURAL ECONOMY

G/RE/1 (PART ONE POLICY) COUNTRYSIDE AND THE RURAL ECONOMY

THE COUNCIL WILL SAFEGUARD AND ENHANCE THE ECONOMIC VITALITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OF THE COUNTRYSIDE. ACTIVITIES AND DEVELOPMENT WHICH HELP TO REGENERATE OR DIVERSIFY THE RURAL ECONOMY, SUPPORT THE WELL BEING OF RURAL COMMUNITIES, OR INCREASE THE RECREATIONAL AND TOURISM POTENTIAL OF RURAL AREAS WILL BE PERMITTED, IN PARTICULAR:

A) AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND APPROPRIATE FARM DIVERSIFICATION ENTERPRISES;

B) THE ESTABLISHMENT OR EXPANSION OF RURAL BUSINESSES AND ACTIVITIES;

C) OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL PURSUITS AND PROPOSALS WHICH FACILITATE IMPROVED ACCESS TO AND WITHIN THE COUNTRYSIDE; AND

D) FACILITIES FOR TOURISTS OR VISITORS.

PROPOSALS WILL BE EXPECTED TO RESPECT AND WHERE POSSIBLE ENHANCE THE NATURAL, CULTURAL AND VISUAL QUALITIES OF THE LANDSCAPE AND THE CHARACTER OF THE COUNTRYSIDE.

15.1 The protection of the countryside and the need to sustain its socio-economic vitality is a clear priority in Government planning policy and in the policies and programmes of a range of Government departments and agencies.

15.2 The countryside in the Borough includes a diversity of activity such as agriculture, minerals extraction and waste disposal, tourism and leisure and a range of industrial operations. These uses both reflect and impact on the particular characteristics of Rochdale's countryside: its distinctive landscape character, its cultural heritage, its natural assets, and its relationship with urban areas and communities. It is therefore important to ensure that future uses and developments, which draw on the qualities and assets of the countryside, also help to safeguard them. The positive encouragement of appropriate uses and developments can help to maintain a viable rural economy which is vital to protect employment, provide local facilities, assist the care and management of the landscape, the regeneration of degraded sites, and the re-use of, or investment in existing buildings.

15.3 With continued and increasing economic pressure on the agricultural sector, it is vital that new rural enterprise to support existing agricultural uses and employment and further diversify and sustain the rural economy is encouraged and facilitated. The Plan will support development of appropriate rural enterprises based on such activities as tourism, sport and recreation, forestry, environmental education, conservation and other business ventures which do not conflict with the objectives of protecting the openness, character and quality of the countryside. Consideration will be given to the provisions of policies relating to Green Belt and Protected Open Land where relevant.

15.4 The policy also acknowledges the considerable potential for enhancing and extending recreational provision appropriate to a rural area where those activities would not conflict with other land uses such as agricultural operations and nature conservation.
Development proposals that help to sustain or regenerate the economic vitality and environmental quality of the countryside in and around the main urban centres will be supported. Development proposals will be permitted where they assist agricultural diversification, regenerate areas despoiled by previous industrial uses and revive poor quality landscapes. Proposals should be of an appropriate scale and type for the location and should take full account of opportunities to:

a) Protect or restore landscape character and quality in respect of visual appeal, and cultural and historic features;

b) Protect and enhance recreational access to the countryside and strategic trails from surrounding urban areas;

c) Conserve and enhance biodiversity through appropriate protection of habitats and wildlife corridors and the creation of new interest;

d) Develop community forestry in appropriate locations; and

e) Safeguard and enhance green wedges and open spaces which have existing value or potential for countryside recreation.

Development in or adjacent to river valleys should be of limited scale, should not sever the open parts of the valley and should not detract from the wider landscape setting. Developments should also take account of Policy EM/7 ‘Development and Flood Risk’. In areas designated as Greenspace Corridors, the provisions of Policy G/8 will apply.

The Council will also encourage and carry out proposals for environmental improvements and recreational uses appropriate to the countryside around towns having regard to nature conservation interests and existing uses. Within the Green Belt, the provisions of Policy D/4 ‘Control of Development within the Green Belt – General’ will apply.

15.5 The countryside around towns is often described in negative terms as ‘urban fringe’. The areas of countryside which lie in and adjacent to the urban parts of the Borough do contain areas of dereliction and poor environments but also many areas of attractive and historic landscapes in the upland fringes and river valleys, providing opportunities for a variety of recreational pursuits close to the main centres of population and with a rich diversity of wildlife. These areas are an important resource for the local community providing a gateway between the core of the urban areas and the wider countryside.

15.6 The policy recognises that the countryside around towns is also an economic entity where agriculture, other industrial and commercial uses and public utilities e.g., water and sewage facilities are based. Its continued viability is important for both the local economy and for its effective environmental management and well being. It is envisaged that in most cases, development proposals will be small scale or limited extensions or reuse of existing buildings except where there could be larger scale proposals put forward to address problems of significant derelict or vacant sites. The policy, in conjunction with other policies of the Plan seeks to help ensure that the countryside in and around towns can accommodate necessary development whilst also achieving the conservation or regeneration of its environmental qualities and value to the local community on the doorstep.

15.7 This approach is consistent with Natural England’s advice for the countryside in and around towns contained in the document ‘Planning Tomorrow’s Countryside’, in addition to the ‘England Forest Strategy’ as published by the Forestry Commission and other local area strategies such as those of the Environment Agency.

15.8 The Council is also actively involved in managing significant areas of the ‘countryside around towns’ through its Countryside Service and rights of way management. There are key ‘gateway’ sites between town and country, many waymarked routes and trails are promoted and managed, and many woodlands and other open spaces are managed for their recreational, wildlife and amenity value often in partnership e.g., with...
United Utilities. The Council will continue to develop integrated greenscape management which will include the production of a Greenscape Strategy and the development of further initiatives and partnerships at all levels where resources and opportunities permit.

**RE/3 DEVELOPMENT INVOLVING AGRICULTURAL LAND**

Development will not be permitted if it would result in the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 3a and above) unless the following criteria are met:

a) An overriding need for the development can be demonstrated;

b) There is a lack of development opportunities in already developed areas;

c) There is little land in grades below 3a which does not have a recognised environmental designation; and

d) The development is proposed on land of the lowest practical grade.

Any development which is permitted should not:

i. Involve the severance or fragmentation of substantial tracts of open farmland;

ii. Sever communications between parts of viable farm units; or

iii. Give rise to pollution or other environmental disturbance likely to adversely affect farm operations.

15.9 Most farmland, other than some areas of land in the western part of the Borough around Castleton, Middleton and Heywood is of a relatively low grade and not considered by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to be the best and most versatile land for which a general presumption against development should apply. There is however a notable amount of Grade 3b, 4 and 5 land which is still a locally valuable resource and high productivity is often achieved by good husbandry and investment in the farm operation which maximises the more limited potential of the land. In addition to its value for farming operations, much of this farmland, in particular that in the South Pennine fringes has a high local landscape value and often a significant value for nature conservation e.g. upland birds.

15.10 The Council will be seeking to encourage the retention of farm holdings with a sound farm structure unless there are overriding and proven strategic considerations as set out above. The policy recognises that there are substantial areas of uninterrupted farmland, the integrity of which it is desirable to maintain. The policy also seeks to ensure that development does not create access difficulties between different parts of a farm unit or holding, or reduces the viability of that unit. The suitability of proposals for farm and other rural diversification enterprises which involves the redevelopment or reuse of farm land and buildings is further dealt with in policies RE/4 (below) and D/9 (Chapter 7).

**RE/4 DIVERSIFICATION OF THE RURAL ECONOMY**

Proposals for the diversification of farm enterprises and small scale business development will be supported where they help to sustain or regenerate the rural economy and meet the following criteria:

a) Any new buildings must be appropriate to their rural setting in terms of scale, location and design:

b) Existing buildings must be of permanent and substantial construction, capable of conversion without major reconstruction;

c) The site has good road access, adequate for traffic likely to be generated;
d) The proposal helps to sustain or restore the character of the surrounding countryside by virtue of its design and location and has no detrimental effects on landscape, ecology (including protected species) or historic buildings and features;

e) The proposed use will not include requirements for open storage, parking, or other associated development that would detract unacceptably from the character of the area. Suitable screening, boundary treatments and landscaping should be used where this would enable the proposed use to be carried out without being intrusive in the countryside;

f) The proposal will not cause harm to local amenity by virtue of factors such as noise, dust or traffic generation;

g) The site is well contained by clear boundaries; and

h) The proposal satisfies the provisions of Green Belt and protected open land policies where appropriate.

15.11 It is important to protect the countryside for its own sake and the vitality and viability of the rural economy is an important factor in helping to achieve this. With increasing economic and structural pressures affecting agriculture both nationally and locally, it is important to facilitate the diversification of the rural economy where this is required to safeguard existing rural jobs, provide wider employment opportunities and help to sustain rural communities and the character and environmental quality of the countryside. This reflects the objectives of Natural England and the objectives and initiatives of the Government's Rural Development Programme for England. The guiding principle for development in the countryside is that it should benefit the rural economy and communities and maintain or enhance the environment.

15.12 Farm related diversification opportunities are varied and can include the sale of agricultural services to other farmers, provision of tourist accommodation (e.g., bed and breakfast, self catering units, camping), provision of leisure facilities (e.g., fishing, golf, riding) and the sale of produce (e.g., farm shops). Other opportunities may include forestry or renewable energy production (e.g. biomass).

15.13 Although farm diversification is a major component of the rural economy, the role of other enterprises in promoting healthy rural economic activity is also recognised by the policy. Many small-scale enterprises could for example utilise existing rural buildings for employment use with few alterations, whilst also complementing agricultural and other rural activities. This could include certain types of tourism, high technology manufacturing, arts and crafts and service enterprises which do not generate high levels of traffic or require larger business units. The Pennine Way and Pennine Bridleway National Trails may also present opportunities for tourist accommodation and other service provision.

15.14 The Council will apply criteria (a)-(h) listed above in all cases and will require appropriate details of existing buildings forming part of a proposal which may include structural reports, plans detailing new or replacement components and the presence or otherwise of protected species. The provisions of Policy D/9 ‘Re-use and Adaptation of Buildings in Rural Areas’ will be applied in all relevant cases. In addition as a high proportion of rural land is within the Green Belt, the provisions of Policy D/4 “Control of Development in the Green Belt - General” will also be applied where appropriate.

RE/5 ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE

Development proposals that protect, improve and extend access to the countryside on foot, cycle or horseback will be permitted. Planning agreements and planning conditions will be used where appropriate to secure improvements. Development proposals and infrastructure improvements should wherever possible improve opportunities for access by maintaining, improving and extending the existing rights of way network and improving signposting and waymarking.

Priority should be given to:

a) Existing definitive rights of way, footpaths and bridleways;
This plan is indicative. For Boundaries, please consult the registration authorities i.e. Calderdale MBC and Lancashire County Council.
b) The protection and development of strategic routes such as the Pennine Way, Pennine Bridleway, Rochdale Way and routes linking to them;

c) Existing or potential routes within or linking with Greenspace Corridors (see Policy G/8);

d) Schemes which improve access to and within Recreational Management Areas (see Policy RE/7) and the wider Southern Pennines;

e) The adaptation of key routes at major facilities to enable use by people with impaired mobility;

f) Common Land and land identified as open country under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 by Natural England; and

g) Other routes which may be identified within a future Recreation Strategy prepared by the Council.

Proposals should minimise problems of trespass, reduce conflicts with farming interests and should be subject to consultation with farmers and landowners. The Council will also seek to minimise conflict between recreational users through measures to enhance recreational management.

15.15 The rights of way network is a vital facility in ensuring that people have access to the countryside. The policy aims to encourage people to experience the countryside at first hand, near to their homes, at popular places or attractions and in the Southern Pennines and therefore priority will be given to the access network in those areas.

15.16 There is already an extensive rights of way network in the Borough including sections of the Pennine Way and Pennine Bridleway national trails. The Rochdale Way is a locally designated strategic circular route and there are other significant local routes such as the Rochdale Canal towpath. The Council, in partnership with Natural England and others has sought to improve recreational access from the urban areas to the wider countryside and with partners in Pennine Prospects, the South Pennine Rural Regeneration Company the Council is seeking to further improve opportunities for access within the wider region.

15.17 Rights of way are not just about the major recreational routes. The local network of paths (statutory and non-statutory) is a valuable and often underused resource and there is a need to safeguard these routes, remove blockages, maintain them in a satisfactory condition, extend them where appropriate and ensure they are clearly defined and waymarked. Facilities for horseriders, cyclists and trailbike riders are limited and the Council will seek to establish new routes (especially circular bridleways and link-routes between existing bridleways). It is also important to ensure that the network of routes in and around urban areas which may include safe routes to school and ‘green’ travel to work routes is linked in appropriate ways with recreational routes in the countryside through promotional activities and physical improvements.

15.18 In establishing, extending and improving rights of way in accordance with an overall strategy, it will be possible to help minimise conflict between users, landowners and managers and discourage accidental damage and trespass.

15.19 The Council intends to continue its efforts to make as much of the network as possible accessible to people with impaired mobility, including those with various disabilities and carers with prams and pushchairs. Work to facilitate such use has been carried out at various sites to date including Hollingworth Lake Country Park, Watergrove Reservoir, the former Healey Dell - Cronkeyshaw Common railway line and the Rochdale Canal towpath. Further works will be carried out as opportunities and resources permit.

15.20 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 makes provision for the establishment of a general right of access on foot to large areas of open country. The areas are mapped by Natural England and managed by the Council in terms of access and recreational matters. Rochdale already has the highest proportion of ‘Urban Common’ in the Southern Pennines concentrated largely in the moorland areas of the Southern Pennine fringe. Urban Common provides a right of access for air and exercise on foot and for horse riders in many parts of the moorland fringe. The Council will seek to identify opportunities and resources to protect
and enhance access and reduce trespass and conflict with other moorland uses where practicable which will include partnerships with landowners and other interests.

**RE/6 RECREATIONAL RIGHTS OF WAY**

The Council will develop, in partnership with other agencies, bodies, occupiers and landowners, a system of strategic recreational rights of way as identified on the Proposals Map. The intention will be to secure the protection, development and improvement of these routes to link areas of managed and accessible countryside and establish links with routes in the wider region. The Council will encourage and implement high quality links with such routes from urban areas.

Where appropriate and practicable, the Council will support schemes which facilitate the greater use of these routes by cyclists, horseriders and those people with impaired mobility. Where opportunities and resources permit, the Council will support and implement enhancement schemes such as waymarking, picnic, interpretation and other facilities along the routes. The routes on the Proposals Map include:

a) The Rochdale stretch of the Pennine Way;
b) The Rochdale stretch of the Pennine Bridleway;
c) The Rochdale Way;
d) The Rochdale Canal;
e) Routes forming a part of an emergent Southern Pennines recreational network; and
f) Other primary countryside routes linking urban areas and local route networks with strategic routes and trails in adjoining districts such as the Oldham Way, Calderdale Way and Rossendale Way.

In the implementation of this proposal, the Council will take account of the conservation of the countryside including the buildings within it, the protection of agricultural interests, areas of nature conservation importance (including designated areas) and the character and purpose of the route where appropriate.

15.21 An accessible and varied recreational network is important for the quality of life in urban areas, its contribution to the rural economy and for conserving the character and heritage of the countryside. This is clearly reflected in the objectives of Natural England and others and is a major theme in the Southern Pennines Heritage Strategy being implemented by Pennine Prospects and partners in the region.

15.22 The policy reflects the Council’s priorities for improving access to and within the countryside (see Policy RE/5 above). The development of a strategic network of recreational rights of way linking town and country and areas of managed countryside is also consistent with the Council’s approach in ‘Recreational Management Areas’ (Policy RE/7) and tourism policies. Where opportunities and resources permit, the Council will develop both countryside and urban links which connect with those identified on the Proposals Map, in line with Policy G/8 ‘Greenspace Corridors’ and as part of its responsibility to maintain the definitive footpath network.

15.23 Many sections of the routes identified on the Proposals Map are already established paths although some gaps or obstructions exist and the legal status of routes varies across the proposed network including a limited number of stretches where there is currently no legal right of way. Whilst the Council wishes to encourage greater use by walkers, horseriders, cyclists and people for whom mobility is a problem, it will be necessary to adapt management and improve appropriate sections of the network through specific measures to facilitate such use. The Council will also seek to secure the provision of signposting, picnic and other facilities along routes in appropriate places through its own resources and with the assistance of other agencies and organisations including Natural England, the Forestry Commission and United Utilities. The Council’s Countryside Service has prepared a Strategy outlining its commitment to meet such objectives. In seeking to develop cross boundary links to connect with strategic routes in adjoining areas,
the Council will work closely with partners in Greater Manchester, Pennine Prospects and the West Pennine Moors Area Management Committee. Areas of nature conservation importance will be given full consideration in implementing this policy, in particular those routes within the Rochdale Canal and South Pennine Moors Special Areas of Conservation and the network of Local Nature Reserves and Sites of Biological Importance. Consultation with Natural England and Greater Manchester Ecology Unit will be carried out where required.

**RE/7 RECREATIONAL MANAGEMENT AREAS**

The Council will, as resources and opportunities permit, develop the recreational potential of the areas shown on the Proposals Map and listed below, through effective management:

a) Hollingworth Lake Country Park and environs;  
b) Healey Dell Local Nature Reserve and environs;  
c) Piethorne Valley;  
d) Watergrove Reservoir;  
e) Hopwood Woods Local Nature Reserve;  
f) Ashworth Valley;  
g) Greenbooth and Naden Reservoirs;  
h) Alkrington Woods Local Nature Reserve;  
i) Roch Valley (west of Rochdale Town Centre);  
j) Roch Valley, Heywood; and  
k) Bowlee Community Park and environs.

Within these areas, the Council will promote outdoor recreational uses including both specialist sports and active outdoor pursuits and passive recreation (e.g., nature appreciation and related educational pursuits) that are consistent with the conservation and enhancement of the local landscape and ecology. Such uses should not be detrimental to the amenity or character of the area or lead to conflict with other recreational or land management interests. Management measures will include the provision of visitor facilities such as footpaths, nature trails, car parks, picnic areas, visitor interpretation points, play areas, events areas etc. (as appropriate to the area) and management services. Existing land uses and resources will be safeguarded and access to areas sensitive to visitor usage restricted.

New built development will not generally be permitted unless it is in connection with an existing building or use, or is ancillary to an outdoor use, and is of an appropriate scale, design and layout.

The types of recreational activities, visitor facilities, landscaping works and management regimes will have regard to the particular character and potential of the area, local needs and opinions and the effect on surrounding uses.

15.24 The areas listed in the policy represent the areas of greatest potential for outdoor recreation in terms of their accessibility, existing attractions, features and facilities and the opportunities they present for consolidating and expanding recreational activities. They provide the potential for high quality countryside and natural greenspace close to the main urban areas and are a ‘gateway’ to the wider countryside which contains long distance trails and significant areas of urban common and open country as defined in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

15.25 The Council believes that a co-ordinated ‘management’ approach to recreational provision within each area is essential to ensure that recreational development is sensitive to the natural character and attributes of each area and other land uses in the vicinity e.g., it does not generate excessive noise, pollution or danger
Countryside and the Rural Economy

to the public or wildlife. As areas differ in character and the opportunities they offer, more detailed and individual site and area management is required. The Council’s Countryside Service will work with landowners, key national and regional agencies (including funders), community and recreational interests to develop such plans as outlined in their Service Strategy. The policy is intended as a long term framework for promoting and facilitating future management plans, investment programmes and to further guide the control of development in conjunction with other policies such as ‘Landscape Protection and Enhancement’ (NE/6) and ‘Countryside around Towns’ (RE/2) in addition to Green Belt policies which apply in many locations.

15.26 It may be that further recreational and landscape based developments will give rise to new areas to be managed as Recreational Management Areas and included in the Plan at a future date.

**RE/8 COUNTRYSIDE VISITOR FACILITIES**

The Council will promote and extend opportunities for countryside recreation by securing the provision of visitor facilities in appropriate locations. The purpose of such facilities will be to:

a) Establish and enhance recreational gateways between the urban areas and the countryside;

b) Provide managed and sustainable access to major recreational routes and facilities, designated open country and areas of scenic or natural interest;

c) Make appropriate provision for visitors such as car parks, cycle and horse parking, toilets and shelter, educational and interpretative resources, picnic sites and play areas and equipment;

d) Facilitate the use and enjoyment of the countryside for people with impaired mobility; and

e) Assist the conservation and enhancement of appropriate habitats and access to natural greenspace.

The design and layout of schemes providing facilities will have regard to the character of the landscape, farming and other land and utility management interests, nature conservation, residential amenity, safety and security, and the needs of all users.

15.27 The countryside around the Borough, especially in the Southern Pennine fringe contains a wealth of opportunity to experience and enjoy the countryside whether it is for quiet relaxation, access to longer distance routes and trails or specialist activities. The growth in demand, and opportunities for countryside recreation and leisure pursuits requires appropriate facilities to be provided so that a high quality experience of visiting the countryside can be open to as many people as possible regardless of their abilities and without increasing pressure on sensitive habitats, landscapes and other land use interests. This includes a range of sites and services such as car parking, amenities such as toilets and shelter, information and activity based facilities.

15.28 By developing ‘gateway’ sites to the countryside, the Council and other local authority and recreational management interests in the Southern Pennines aim to increase their ability to effectively manage and promote such a range of usage and create an environment where access to the countryside and visitor facilities can be enhanced for all sections of the community. Such gateway sites include Hollingworth Lake Country Park, Watergrove Reservoir, Piethorne Valley and Healey Dell Local Nature Reserve. Provision of facilities is dependent on the appropriateness of the location and can range from a small information point or seating area to a major visitor centre with a wide range of services. The Council is working with Pennine Prospects and other local authorities and partner organisations to identify the potential for a regional network of sites and facilities from major sites to smaller local sites as part of the implementation of the Southern Pennine Heritage Strategy called the South Pennine Heritage, Education and Access Network (HEAN).
15.29 It is important to ensure that all developments providing countryside visitor facilities are well designed and located and appropriate in their scale and nature to the character of the area. Facilities should not lead to conflict with surrounding land uses or result in pressure on the local environment e.g. wildlife and habitats or local amenity e.g., through traffic generation or noise, which cannot be successfully managed.
Countryside Gateways
Existing and Proposed
(Policy RE/8)

KEY
2. Blackstone Edge/Pennine Way.
3. Piethorne Valley.
4. Summit Quarry.
5. Watergrove Reservoir.
6. Wildhouse Lane.
7. Limersgate.
10. Ashworth Moor.
11. Lane Head/Rooley Moor.
15. Ashworth Valley.
16. Littleborough/Rochdale Canal.

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CHAPTER 16

MINERALS

G/M/1 (PART ONE POLICY) PROTECTION AND PRUDENT USE OF RESOURCES

AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF MINERAL RESERVES IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS TO MEET NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN NATIONAL GUIDANCE, AND APPORTIONED TO SUB-REGIONAL LEVELS IN THE CASE OF AGGREGATE MINERALS, WILL BE MAINTAINED. KNOWN MINERAL RESOURCES WILL ALSO BE PROTECTED FROM STERILISATION BY OTHER FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT. WHEN OTHER DEVELOPMENT IS APPROVED, THE PRIOR EXTRACTION OF MINERALS WILL BE PERMITTED SUBJECT TO COMPLIANCE WITH POLICIES M/3 AND M/4.

16.1 Minerals are important natural resources which underpin the local and national economy. Extraction of minerals provides raw materials for power, construction and manufacturing industries and provides employment not only for those employed in the extractive process but also for those engaged in secondary industries which process the minerals into useable products.

16.2 Although mineral resources are finite they have often been lost or sterilised by other forms of development. Safeguarding the resource is crucial if the need for minerals is to be met in the longer term.

16.3 In the Borough there are significant areas underlain by sand to the south of Rochdale and around Heywood and Middleton, whilst sandstone/gritstone outcrops from the Pennine hills to the east and higher ground north of Heywood and Rochdale. Historically, shales in the coal measures have been worked for brick making at Shawclough, Newhey and Summit and coal was extensively mined. Whilst the current level of extraction within the Borough is low, significant changes may occur in supply and demand patterns throughout the life of a Plan. It will therefore be necessary to regularly monitor supply and demand, consider the implications of changes and of any revised guidance on levels of aggregate provision which may be issued in the future. In the case of aggregate minerals (sand and gravel, sandstone and gritstone) the national regional framework for the provision of aggregates is set out in MPG6 and this has been translated downwards by the North West Regional Aggregates Working Party. This policy aims to ensure that the Borough will continue to contribute to the maintenance of regional supply patterns and the likely demands for particular minerals in future years.

M/2 LOCATION OF MINERAL WORKING

Within defined Areas of Search, proposals for the extraction of sand and gravel and sandstone and gritstone will be permitted provided they comply with the criteria set out in Policy M/3. Outside the defined Areas of Search proposals for the extraction of these minerals will only be permitted if the land in question is not subject to a Stage One constraint and the proposals comply with the criteria set out in Policy M/3. Proposals for extraction of other materials will be judged against the criteria set out in Policy M/3.

16.4 MPG 1: General Considerations and the Development Plan System states that each Mineral Planning Authority must be responsible for making sufficient provision to meet the anticipated need over the period of the Plan and to maintain continuity and supply. Although there are a limited number of extraction sites within the Borough which meet these requirements, these sites are nearing the end of their life, are unsuitable for further working or are not economic. The MPA does not currently have sufficient information relating to reserves of minerals in terms of quantity, quality or geological disposition to identify specific sites or...
preferred areas for future minerals development. An Area of Search approach has therefore been adopted in order to identify those areas of the Borough where mineral resources are known to exist and where proposals for the extraction of minerals will be appropriate. The Areas identified are located predominantly in those areas of the Borough which are highly valued for their landscape quality. Proposals for extraction will therefore need to be carefully balanced against potential loss of landscape character. Assessment of all development proposals will give relevant weight to local, regional, national and international designations.

16.5 The Areas of Search shown on the proposals map have been carried over from the adopted Rochdale Unitary Development Plan. They were identified by use of a sieve methodology that took into account the geology of the Borough and major planning constraints (Stage One constraints) to screen out areas that are unacceptable in principle. Stage One constraints are:

a) The built up area;

b) Sites of Special Scientific interest, Grade A Sites of Biological Importance and sites designated as Local Nature Reserves;

c) Country Parks;

d) Conservation Areas;

e) Public Open Spaces; and

f) The Rochdale Canal Corridor, i.e. all land immediately adjacent to the Canal plus any nearby areas which are prominently visible from the Canal.

16.6 To these were added a number of other areas where mineral working were thought to be unlikely on either planning or geological/technical grounds. These include:

i. Planning permissions for built development commenced since the survey of the built-up area was completed;

ii. Cemeteries;

iii. Playing fields attached to schools and colleges;

iv. Isolated islands of less than two hectares of land totally contained within the urban area;

v. Embayments of sand and gravel less than 200 metres wide extending into an urban area;

vi. Operational sewage works, reservoirs and storage/parking areas attached to industrial sites;

vii. Areas sterilised by refuse, industrial waste or spoil heaps; and

viii. Existing mineral workings.

16.7 Some minerals, notably oil, coal bed methane and shale and clay were not subject to the Areas of Search approach and proposals for the exploration and extraction of such minerals will be considered in relation to the requirements for Policy M/3.

M/3 ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSALS

Mineral exploration, working, mineral waste disposal or aggregate depots will be permitted only when each of the following criteria which are relevant to the type of development proposed can be satisfied:

a) Adequate reserves of the mineral in terms of both quantity, quality and the geological disposition of the deposit have been proved;

b) It accords with the latest available estimates of demand and permitted reserves;

c) It will not prevent the working of other mineral deposits of significant value;

d) It does not result in the sterilisation of significant quantities of minerals within the site or in adjacent areas, by reason of the working methods;
e) It does not increase the quantity or extent of active workings in a particular locality to an unacceptable degree;

f) It will not have an unacceptable impact on areas of recreational use or potential (e.g. Recreational Management Areas), river valleys and Greenspace Corridors, Common Land, Designated Sites of Ecological Importance, woodlands including ancient woodlands; or areas covered by Tree Preservation Orders;

g) It will not have an unacceptable effect on a Listed Building or its setting, an Ancient Monument or a Conservation Area;

h) It will not have an unacceptable effect on landscape character, geological, ecological, archaeological or historic interest within or adjacent to the site;

i) It will not have an unacceptable effect on the viability of agricultural holdings or lead to permanent loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1 to 3a), taking into account the type and quality of restoration likely to be achieved following mineral working;

j) It will not have an unacceptable effect on land stability, drainage, water supply or ground water resources;

k) It will not have an unacceptable impact on dwellings or on other environmentally sensitive properties in terms of visual amenity, noise, dust, air pollution, water pollution or other nuisance;

l) The access arrangements are satisfactory and the traffic generated will not have an unacceptable effect on properties adjoining the routes used by traffic from the development or on road safety anywhere between the site and the Strategic Highway Network;

m) Existing and proposed transport routes, footpaths and other rights of way are retained and protected, or appropriate diversions secured;

n) In the case of proposals for the working of sandstone and gritstone, extraction and storage of overburden do not take place within 200 metres of a significant number of dwellings or other environmentally sensitive properties, taking into account local circumstances;

o) It assists in reclaiming derelict and degraded land without compromising planning constraints and residential amenity; and

p) In the case of gas and oil exploitation, it forms part of an overall scheme for the development of an oil or gas field approved by the Council.

16.8 Minerals can only be worked where they occur and location, scale and duration of operations can have significant impacts on the environment. The aim of this policy is to accord with the objectives for sustainable development in mineral planning as set out in MPG1. The stringent geological, environmental and transport criteria set out above must be complied with if minerals are to be used prudently and mineral working is to be acceptable. The Council will take the presence of best and most versatile agricultural land, which is defined as grades 1, 2, and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification into account as well as all other sustainability considerations and, where development is permitted, seek to ensure that any adverse effects on natural resources or the environment are minimized. When assessing proposals the Council will take into account the contribution that a proposal can make to Greater Manchester’s proportion of regional production.

16.9 In all cases, it will be necessary for the applicant to demonstrate by borehole information and testing of samples that the quality, quantity and geological disposition of mineral reserves is proven and that unnecessary sterilisation of primary material or of other deposits of significant value occurring in association with the primary resource will not occur. However, even where these criteria and those relating to matters such as access and restoration are adequately dealt with, a concentration of active sites within a restricted area may not be acceptable as this may place an undue and prolonged burden on particular communities or lead to unacceptable levels of traffic on local routes. A proposal which is so small in scale or inadequate in it’s scheme of working that it leaves large quantities of mineral unworked or sterilises adjoining deposits will not be viewed sympathetically.
16.10 In considering proposals covered by the above criteria, the Council will give relevant weight to local, (including regional), national and international designations.

16.11 Sandstone and gritstone extraction are often accompanied by blasting and a 200 metre rule has been formulated to protect nearby residents. Similarly, the creation of overburden mounds can create significant noise and dust problems, as well as being visually intrusive, and the 200 metre stand off seeks to protect local residents though the policy recognises that there may be particular local circumstances which justify a departure from this rule.

16.12 Use of oil and gas resources can involve intrusive industrial scale structures, continuous working and significant traffic implications. Without an overall scheme, sporadic development could take place over a wide area as a potential field is revealed.

**M/4 OPERATING CONDITIONS**

Where mineral working is acceptable in principle, operators will be required to submit schemes of screening, working and restoration for approval by the Council and the Council will, through the use of planning conditions:

a) Limit the duration of operations;

b) Control the levels of noise and vibration;

c) Control hours of working, vehicle movement and maintenance of plant and equipment;

d) Ensure satisfactory access to the site;

e) Prevent or control the production and disposal of polluted water and dust;

f) Control the level of blasting;

g) Ensure the satisfactory disposal of waste materials arising from mineral working;

h) Limit the visual impact of the development;

i) Ensure the stability of surrounding land;

j) Ensure the site is satisfactorily restored, progressively if possible, and is subject to appropriate aftercare;

k) Protect groundwater, water supply and public service infrastructure;

l) Limit the area of operations;

m) Ensure the protection of soil resources and their replacement at restoration stage; and

n) Safeguard conservation interests.

16.13 Mineral working, by its very nature will produce some loss of environmental quality for local residents. The Mineral Planning Authority (MPA) wishes to ensure that where minerals are extracted this is carried out in a manner which causes least damage to the environment by careful location of workings, regulation of day to day operations and subsequent restoration and aftercare of the site. Careful siting and design can do much to mitigate the impact of mineral workings but there is always a need to ensure that precise standards of working and restoration are adhered to. Comprehensive conditions can do much to allay local fears about the effect of mineral extraction and ensure that environmental impact is minimised as far as possible. The reference to conservation interests is intended to include both the built and the natural environment.

**M/5 RESTORATION AND AFTERCARE**

When restoration of a mineral exploration, extraction, or surface mineral waste disposal site to agriculture, forestry or amenity use is proposed the Council, in consultation with the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) the Forestry Commission, Natural England or...
other appropriate bodies, will require the standard of restoration required by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and any subsequent relevant legislation. It will impose appropriate aftercare conditions.

16.14 Standards of restoration have been very variable in the past. The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires land in agricultural use prior to working to be restored to its pre-existing standard, so far as is practicable. The term “amenity use” is intended to include the conservation or promotion of landscape and wildlife.

M/6 TRANSPORT OF MINERALS

The development of rail and/or water linked aggregate depots and mineral waste disposal points will be permitted where these have good access to the Strategic Highway Network. Where planning permission is granted planning agreements to secure any highway improvements required as a result of the development will be sought.

16.15 The Council’s overall approach to the transfer of freight from road to rail is set out in Policy A/21 and the accompanying reasoned justification. Provision of rail depots and mineral waste disposal points where possible will reduce the need to move aggregates or mineral wastes by road and provide environmental benefits. Careful location will be required to ensure that road traffic serving the depots/waste disposal points does not give rise to significant local environmental problems which outweigh any gains.

M/7 ALTERNATIVES TO NEWLY-WON MINERALS

Proposals for the use of waste materials (such as concrete and brick, ash and colliery shale) as alternatives to newly-won minerals, will be permitted subject to compliance with policies relating to location and operation of minerals and waste facilities.

16.16 The use of waste materials as a substitute for primary aggregates is both technically feasible and, provided costs of transport are competitive, economic. Recycling this type of waste will normally be the Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO) and would have a significant impact on the demand for scarce landfill space within the Borough. However, the processing of construction and demolition wastes involves the use of large machinery to load and unload, and to crush and screen the material. Whilst the material is inert and non-pollutive, the process has the potential to create noise and dust and to be visually intrusive because, for practical reasons, it is usually carried out in the open. Proposals for this type of facility will therefore need to demonstrate that regard has been had to the DETR Good Practice Guide: Controlling the Environmental Effects of Recycled and Secondary Aggregates Production and to other policies within the Plan.

M/8 LONG-STANDING PLANNING PERMISSIONS

In the case of mineral workings which have long-standing planning permissions with inadequate conditions of working or restoration the Council will require the operators to bring those conditions up to current standards. Extensions to such workings will only be permitted where the existing site is included within a comprehensive landscaping, working and restoration scheme.

16.17 Most mineral extraction sites have been operational for many years and are often controlled by planning permissions that lack the standards of control expected today. There may for example be little or no control over noise or dust emissions, hours of operation, vehicle movements, protection of wildlife or a requirement for restoration on completion.

16.18 In Rochdale almost all of the old minerals permissions are registered as Dormant. This means that mineral operators are required to submit schemes of modern working conditions that are designed to minimise the impact of mineral working on the environment before extraction may recommence. However, in considering
modern working conditions for sites which benefit from planning permissions granted under Interim Development Orders which pre date the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act the Mineral Planning Authority may be constrained by legislation which requires compensation to be paid if restrictions imposed as part of the review process affect the “winning and working” of minerals.

16.19 Other approaches such as Planning Agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 or the consolidation of all previous consents into a new permission when extensions to workings and periodic reviews are under consideration will also be considered as an alternative course of action.
CHAPTER 17

WASTE

G/W/1 (PART ONE POLICY) WASTE MANAGEMENT

PROPOSALS WHICH LOCATE WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES AS CLOSE TO THE SOURCE OF WASTE AS POSSIBLE AND ACCORD WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF THE NORTH WEST REGION TO BE SELF SUFFICIENT IN MANAGING ITS OWN WASTE WILL BE PERMITTED. PROPOSALS FOR THE PROVISION OF WASTE TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL FACILITIES AND METHODS OF WASTE TREATMENT THAT REDUCE THE VOLUME AND POLLUTION POTENTIAL OF WASTE WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

A) SUCH PROPOSALS DEMONSTRATE THAT THEY ARE THE BEST PRACTICABLE ENVIRONMENTAL OPTION FOR A PARTICULAR WASTE STREAM;

B) THEY WILL NOT HAVE UNACCEPTABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS; AND

C) THEY WILL NOT CONFLICT WITH OTHER POLICIES WITHIN THE PLAN.

17.1 This policy supports the Council’s objective of promoting sustainable waste management through reduction, re-use and recycling of materials and reflects the guidance contained in PPG 10: Waste Management, September 1999.

17.2 In recognition of the need for sustainability, waste management policy and practices have evolved significantly in recent years and the way that we manage our waste will continue to change rapidly over the next 20 years. The EC Framework Directive on waste requires each country to become self sufficient in the management of its wastes through a range of integrated waste facilities. Nationally, the White Paper, “Waste Strategy 2000”, sets out the government's commitment to reducing the amount of waste that is finally disposed of to landfill and targets derived from the Waste Framework Directive. These include the aim of recovering value from 45% of municipal waste by 2010, at least 30% of which will be through recycling and composting; and to recover value from 66% municipal waste by 2015 with at least 50% through recycling and composting. Over the next 15 years the Directive aims to reduce the quantity of biodegradable municipal solid waste disposed of to landfill to 35% of the 1995 tonnage.

17.3 This builds on the concept of the waste hierarchy which prioritises our waste management with reduction, re-use and recycling being the preferred options and energy from waste, incineration and landfill being the least favoured option.

17.4 The amount of municipal waste alone produced regionally for the period 1998 – 99 is estimated to be 3.8 million tonnes. (Environment Agency; Strategic Waste Management Assessment 2000) With municipal waste estimated at 1.5 million tonnes, Greater Manchester produces more than 40% of the regional total but only 19% of the amount we produce is recovered or disposed of within the County. The remainder is either exported to other sub regions of the North West (58%) or out of the region altogether (23%). Whilst there is clearly a need for new and improved methods of recovering and treating our waste in more environmentally friendly ways to ensure greater self-sufficiency within the Greater Manchester area, the necessary infrastructure is not yet in place. Unfortunately at present there is no guidance available to the ten District Councils within Greater Manchester on the range scale or types of waste management facilities that will be needed to deal with our existing and projected waste arisings. There will continue to be a need for a certain amount of landfill capacity for the foreseeable future but the supply of empty consented landfill sites within the Greater Manchester area is rapidly diminishing. Work has recently been carried out by the Regional Technical Advisory Body (RTAB) for the North West to assess the situation and to examine a number of waste options. These will inform early revisions to Regional Planning Guidance and a Regional Waste
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Waste

Strategy which will inform a Waste Management Strategy for Greater Manchester and provide guidance on the number and type of waste treatment and disposal facilities required to meet our needs.

17.5 An urbanised area such as Rochdale generates substantial volumes of waste material from both businesses and households. In the year 2001-2002, the Borough generated some 90,500 tonnes comprising of 86,000 tonnes of household and 4,500 tonnes of commercial wastes. This was disposed of by the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority in the manner described above. Recyclng within the Borough currently averages a rate of 5%. The Council has already prepared a Waste Reduction and Recycling Strategy for the Borough which forms part of a joint recycling plan produced by the Greater Manchester Local Authorities and the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority and incorporates the existing Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Management Plan. It sets out how the Council proposes to reduce waste and maximize recycling activities to meet the targets set but an increase in recycling and pre disposal treatment of waste will require an increased range of waste handling, treatment and disposal facilities across the Borough within the life of this Plan.

17.6 The location of waste treatment and disposal sites is often a source of conflict within the community as local residents oppose proposals for sites near to them. However, we cannot continue to produce increasing quantities of waste and dispose of it without considering the impact of our actions on the environment. Whilst the Council recognizes the urgent need for additional facilities, no specific site allocations are identified on the proposals map due to uncertainty at the present time about the level of provision and type of facilities required. Until such time as the level of provision required has been established, the Council wishes to ensure that there is sufficient flexibility within its waste policies to respond to future demand for waste facilities and the development of new waste treatment technology and to encourage proposals which will contribute to the range of waste facilities within the Borough. To meet the need for future waste management sites which will assist the implementation of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Strategy, the Council will ensure that all practicable options are assessed and that a balance between waste management policies and other policies within the Plan is achieved by assessing proposals in relation to the Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO) for a particular waste stream. BPEO is a systematic consultative and decision making procedure which emphasises the protection and conservation of the environment across land, air and water. The BPEO procedure establishes for a given set of objectives, the option that provides the most benefits or the least damage to the environment, as a whole, at acceptable cost, in the long term as well as in the short term. Proposals for new waste treatment and disposal facilities will also be assessed against criteria based policies W/3 and W/4. Supplementary planning guidance relating to waste facilities will be prepared when the anticipated Waste Strategies emerge.

W/2 EXISTING WASTE FACILITIES

The following sites will be retained in their present uses for waste handling, treatment, transfer or disposal:

a) Waithlands, Rochdale - Civic Amenity site;
b) Peel Lane, Heywood - Civic Amenity site;
c) Spring Vale, Middleton - Civic Amenity site;
d) Regent Street site, Rochdale - transfer;
e) Rugby Road site, Rochdale - transfer;
f) Corporation Road site, Rochdale - transfer;
g) Prettywood site, Heywood - transfer;
h) Hooley Bridge site, Heywood - transfer;
i) Entwistle Road site, Rochdale - transfer;
j) Whittle Quarry, Heywood – disposal; and
k) Wilderness Quarry, Heywood – disposal.

Any proposed changes in the nature of the operations taking place on the above sites will be assessed in relation to criteria set out in Policy W/4.
17.7 Existing waste facilities are identified on the Proposals Map and will be retained. The sites referred to in this policy have established uses or planning consents for the types of waste activities listed. However, changes in use or operational developments resulting from improved waste management technology at these sites could lead to significantly different environmental or other effects from those arising from present uses and these would need to be considered in the light of the criteria set out in Policy W/4.

W/3 CRITERIA FOR LOCATION OF WASTE DISPOSAL FACILITIES

An application for a waste transfer, treatment or disposal facility will only be permitted, where the proposal:

a) Will not result in the sterilisation of significant quantities of any minerals either within or adjacent to the site;

b) Will not adversely affect natural, recreational, ecological, archaeological or historical interests;

c) Will not lead to an unacceptable permanent loss of best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1 to 3a), taking into account the quality of restoration likely to be achieved, or a loss of viability of agricultural holdings;

d) Will not have an unacceptable impact on the stability of underlying or adjacent land, drainage, water supply or ground water resources, including on or under adjoining land;

e) Will not have an unacceptable impact on the character or appearance of a Listed Building together with its setting, an Ancient Monument, or a Conservation Area;

f) Will not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of dwellings or other environmentally sensitive properties by reason of visual prominence, noise, vibration, dust, smells, litter vermin, air pollution, water pollution, landfill gas migration or other nuisance;

g) Incorporates satisfactory access arrangements and the traffic generated will not have an unacceptable effect on properties adjoining routes used by site traffic or on road safety anywhere between the site and the Strategic Highway Network;

h) Retains and protects existing and proposed routes, footpaths and other rights of way or secures appropriate diversions; and

i) There is a satisfactory scheme of screening, landscaping and restoration.

17.8 This policy should be understood to include sorting, processing and/or recycling facilities as well as treatment facilities and landfill operations. In view of the potential for pollution and effect on general amenity, all waste facilities must be carefully located in relation to both environmental resources and residential communities. This policy sets out the environmental constraints on location and the requirement to protect both our natural resources and the quality of life enjoyed by people living close to the site or on access routes.

17.9 Need for a facility will be assessed in relation to the type of facility concerned. “Need” is defined as a requirement for additional capacity and facilities to deal with waste produced in the Rochdale area which outweighs any material interest affected by the proposal. A small landfill site would be primarily assessed in relation to local need whereas a specialized incinerator taking hazardous waste would be looked at in relation to regional or even national need. In assessing development proposals against criteria b) and e) the Council will apply the relevant weight required by international, national, local (including regional) designations. Areas of value for recreation, transport corridors, and residential amenity will also need to be assessed. In the case of agricultural land which is classified as best and most versatile proposals will, primarily, be assessed against Policy RE/3 Development Involving Agricultural Land, and protection of soil resources, good restoration techniques and a programme of aftercare and maintenance to restore soil fertility will be required if a satisfactory standard of restoration is to be achieved.

17.10 Waste disposal can affect the stability of underlying ground and the Council will consult on this aspect of proposals with the Greater Manchester Geological Unit. Similarly, land drainage and groundwater implications will be assessed on the advice of the Environment Agency. The term “environmentally sensitive properties” can include factories carrying out certain industrial processes that may be adversely
affected by dust or fumes. Examples could include food processing, computer manufacturing and paint spraying as well as schools, hospitals, nursing homes, etc.

17.11 Proposals which are acceptable in principle under Policy W/3 will need to demonstrate, through the submission of working and landscaping plans, methods of working and screening operations whilst work is in progress, together with restoration and aftercare schemes, that their environmental impact has been carefully taken into account and that after-uses of sites has been considered. In the case of waste transfer and treatment proposals only working and landscaping plans will be required, but for landfill sites working, landscaping, restoration and aftercare schemes will be required.

### W/4 OPERATION AND RESTORATION OF WASTE DISPOSAL SITES

Where proposals are acceptable under Policy W/3, the Council will, as appropriate:

- a) Limit the duration of operations;
- b) Control the level of noise and vibration;
- c) Control hours of working, vehicle movement and maintenance of plant and equipment;
- d) Ensure satisfactory access to the site;
- e) Limit the visual impact of the development;
- f) Safeguard conservation, ecological and archaeological interests within the site;
- g) Ensure the site is satisfactorily restored, preferably with a scheme of phased working and restoration;
- h) Ensure that suitable provisions for aftercare are made in the case of restoration to agriculture, forestry or amenity use;
- i) Limit the area of operations;
- j) Ensure the protection of soil resources and their replacement at restoration stage;
- k) Ensure final levels are not exceeded, making appropriate allowance for settlement; and
- l) Establish the general nature of the wastes acceptable on, or to be excluded from, the site where there are valid planning reasons for such restrictions.

17.12 There is some overlap between control exercised by planning and licensing regimes but, in general, the above matters will be covered by planning conditions or agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Detailed aspects of site preparation, operation, the precise nature of wastes permitted, pollution prevention, and control of gas and leachate emissions during operation and post closure are the subject of waste management licenses issued by the Environment Agency. However, the range of permitted wastes is relevant to:

- a) Final levels of the site and allowance for settlement;
- b) The requirement for conditions relating to dust, litter and odour suppression;
- c) Surface treatment of sites, e.g. the provision of deep soil layers over clay caps and appropriate forms of tree planting.

17.13 Restoration and aftercare schemes will be expected to reflect the Plans key objectives of nature conservation and habitat creation as set out in Chapter 21.

### W/5 ENERGY FROM WASTE

Proposals to recover energy from waste will be permitted provided that they demonstrate BPEO, are consistent with the principles of the waste hierarchy, the proximity principle, the need for regional self-sufficiency, and meet the provisions of Policies W/3 and W/4 above.

17.14 Organic matter which breaks down in an oxygen deficient environment creates and releases potentially harmful gases such as methane. However, these gases may be harnessed to provide a valuable energy
source to generate heat or electricity. Digested waste prior to final disposal to landfill enables energy to be recovered in a controlled manner and significantly reduces the quantity of organic matter to be disposed of. Where landfill is identified as the BPEO for waste disposal the potential for gas utilisation will always need to be addressed. Proposals to obtain energy by incineration, (the least preferred option), will need to demonstrate their suitability in relation to the policy’s terms of reference.

W/6 CIVIC AMENITY SITES

The Council will permit civic amenity sites that are suitably located for use by the public for the disposal of household and related wastes and are provided with storage facilities for recyclable materials. Sites must be sited, designed and landscaped so that there are no adverse effects on the amenity of residential areas by way of pollution, visual intrusion or traffic generation.

17.15 Civic amenity sites provide an opportunity for residents to dispose of bulky waste, garden waste and recyclable materials. They can make a valuable contribution to the reuse and recovery of waste by providing the opportunity for segregation of hazardous wastes. Such sites need to be close to centres of population and the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority established a general objective of providing facilities at a two mile radius. Within the Borough the Wardle/Littleborough area is beyond the two mile radius from the Waithlands Civic Amenity site and consideration should be given to provision of a further site to serve the area.

W/7 ARRANGEMENTS FOR SPOIL DISPOSAL

Where major development proposals, including new highways and road improvements, involve the generation of spoil which cannot be disposed of within the boundaries of a site, the Council will require details of the volume and type of excess waste material to be disposed of and the methods by which it is proposed to dispose of the material. Encouragement will be given to schemes for waste disposal which bring significant community benefits e.g. reclamation of derelict land, subject to compliance with other policies within the Plan.

17.16 Major construction projects often generate substantial and unexpected volumes of excavated material. Unless advance provision has been made for the disposal of such material or recycling of the material produced, the outcome may be the use of unauthorized sites, fly tipping on a substantial scale or disposal which conflicts with BPEO. This policy will enable the Council to gauge the likely spoil disposal problems resulting from development proposals and require the developer to make adequate provision for disposal in advance.

W/8 TRANSPORT OF WASTE

The development of rail or water linked waste management facilities will be permitted where these have good access to the Strategic Highway Network. Where planning permission is granted, planning agreements to secure highway improvements required as a result of such developments will be sought.

17.17 Careful location of waste disposal facilities in relation to the source of waste can reduce the overall distance that waste needs to be transported. Similarly, by bulking up waste into fewer, larger loads at waste treatment facilities the number of lorry movements required to move a given volume of waste can be substantially reduced. However, where possible provision of rail or water linked facilities will help to reduce the quantities of waste transported by road and the associated environmental impacts.
G/A/1 (PART ONE POLICY) ACCESSIBILITY

THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO FACILITATE ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL BY INTEGRATING LAND-USE DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORT, REDUCING THE NEED TO TRAVEL AND PROMOTING CHOICE IN THE AVAILABILITY OF TRANSPORT, INCLUDING WALKING, CYCLING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT. NEW DEVELOPMENT AND NEW TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE SHALL BE LOCATED, DESIGNED AND INTEGRATED WITH ITS SURROUNDINGS IN SUCH A WAY AS TO:

A) REDUCE THE GROWTH IN LENGTH AND NUMBER OF MOTORISED JOURNEYS;

B) FACILITATE ACCESS BY WALKING, CYCLING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT – INCLUDING FOR PEOPLE WITH RESTRICTED MOBILITY - IN ORDER TO WIDEN TRAVEL CHOICE FOR ALL AND REDUCE RELIANCE ON THE PRIVATE CAR;

C) PROVIDE FOR ACCESS FOR GOODS VEHICLES AND CARS, TAXIS, PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES MOTORCYCLES, MOPEDS AND MOTOR SCOOTERS, SUCH AS TO MEET THE OPERATIONAL NEEDS OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND ENSURE ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH RESTRICTED MOBILITY, BUT MINIMISE THE ADVERSE IMPACTS OF MOTORISED TRANSPORT ON THE WIDER COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT; AND

D) FACILITATE THE MOVEMENT OF GOODS BY RAIL WHERE PRACTICABLE.

18.1 The Rochdale UDP aims to facilitate accessibility for all by integrating land use development and transport, reducing the need to travel and promoting choice in the availability of transport including walking, cycling and public transport. This is to be done by shaping the pattern of development and influencing the location, scale, density, design and mix of land uses, and by ensuring that the necessary transport infrastructure is provided and managed to facilitate new development.

18.2 The policies in this chapter have been prepared in accordance with the broad objectives and principles of the current Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan, and allow the key land use elements of the LTP strategy to be implemented in the Borough. Other policies in the LTP not relating to land use issues will be covered by other strategies/programmes and other agencies.

18.3 Cars in particular have changed the way we live, bringing great flexibility and widening horizons. As a result the length and number of motorised journeys has risen massively and is projected to increase further still. New and wider roads have been built to accommodate this growth but there is still congestion and demands for more roads. Emissions of carbon dioxide from road transport are the fastest growing contributor to climate change and in Greater Manchester those areas that will have air pollution levels that will not meet national health based standards in 2005 include areas closely related to main traffic routes.

18.4 Accordingly we need to reduce the growth in the length and number of motorised journeys, promote travel choice and reduce reliance on the private car. The promotion of walking, cycling and public transport will have all-round benefits for the economy, the environment, public health and quality of life. Although the transport of goods will remain heavily road dependent, it is important to facilitate the movement of goods by rail where it would or could be practicable.

18.5 A further benefit is that fewer cars on the road will lead to less congestion for travel that is essential by road. Access for goods is, and will remain, heavily dependent on road transport and access by car will continue to be essential to the economic viability of most developments. There is therefore a need to design and
manage access by motor vehicles in order to minimise the potential adverse impacts on the wider community and the environment. Depending on the scale and location, relevant factors could include noise, vibration, fumes, road safety, community safety, physical impact and barriers to access.

18.6 Despite the increase in car use, walking remains the most important mode of travel at the local level and offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly those under 2 kilometres. It also forms a significant part of all longer journeys by public transport and car.

18.7 Cycling also has the potential to replace short car trips, particularly those under 5 kilometres, and to form part of longer journeys by public transport.

18.8 Public transport offers significant potential to substitute for car trips to local, district and town centres, particularly if development that will attract large numbers of people is concentrated in such centres or in other locations well served by public transport.

18.9 A significant part of the borough is rural and it is important that wherever possible people living in these areas have access to facilities and services by means other than the private car. The Council, in partnership with other bodies including GMPTE, will seek to ensure this through, for example, participating in initiatives such as Rural Bus Challenge and supporting other community transport schemes; a number of which may cross the borough boundary.

18.10 Equality of access for disabled people is an essential component of an inclusive society. Nearly one-fifth of the population has a permanent impairment and a high proportion of people with a permanent impairment are elderly. Improved access also benefits people with toddlers; people pushing a pram or pushchair; women who are heavily pregnant; people who are carrying shopping or luggage; people who are mobility restricted temporarily by illness or injury; and elderly people.

A/2 ACCESSIBILITY HIERARCHY

Development proposals will be permitted where the design and layout of all schemes, or proposals for highway works, reflect the following broad hierarchy of accessibility:

i. Pedestrians and disabled people;

ii. Cyclists;

iii. Public transport;

iv. Taxis, private hire vehicles and commercial traffic for local access;

v. General traffic (off-peak);

vi. General traffic (peak).

In all circumstances the safety, accessibility and amenity of people who live in or otherwise use the area will be considered before the needs of people who are just travelling through.

18.11 PPG 13 'Transport' states that development should reflect the need to travel by means other than the car. This policy is intended to ensure that development designs take account at the outset, the need to encourage safe travel by sustainable forms of transport. This hierarchy means that the needs of pedestrians and disabled people will be considered first and so on down the hierarchy until all of the accessibility requirements for the development or highway works have been considered. The underlying aim is to ensure that the needs of more vulnerable road users, including pedestrians, disabled people, cyclists and users of public transport, are given careful consideration in the planning of new developments and highway works. This will serve to foster social inclusion and promote more environmentally sustainable forms of transport.
18.12 Taxis and private hire vehicles provide access to a car on those occasions when it is most needed for people who do not otherwise have access, because of cost and/or choice. They are also used intensively and can reduce the need for car parking in central and other commercial areas. Local access for lorries and vans is essential to the economic viability of businesses and needs to be accommodated. Hence, in the hierarchy, both are considered before the needs of general traffic.

18.13 Motorcycles vary considerably in terms of engine size and resultant environmental and social impact and there are no reasonable means to distinguish between different engine sizes in the hierarchy. Accordingly, motorcycles are ranked with cars and commercial as 'general traffic'.

18.14 Peak traffic levels are usually high with increased congestion and air pollution and a high proportion of sole occupancy car trips to and from work. It is widely accepted that, for economic, social and environmental reasons, the volume of traffic at peak times needs to be reduced through improving and promoting alternatives to single occupancy car use, including walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing. Off-peak general traffic is therefore ranked before peak time traffic because it includes a higher proportion of shopping journeys essential to the vitality and viability of town centres. Traffic levels are also lower and more easily accommodated without unduly compromising the needs of other road users and/or impacting on local communities.

### A/3 NEW DEVELOPMENT - ACCESS FOR PEDESTRIANS AND DISABLED PEOPLE

Development proposals will be permitted provided they facilitate safe and convenient access for pedestrians, disabled people and other people with restricted mobility. Relative to the scale, type and location of the development, the proposals should ensure that:

a) Walking routes are safe, convenient, environmentally pleasant, highly visible from surrounding land and buildings, well lit and signed;

b) Pedestrian access into development sites is located to provide the most convenient route to nearby facilities and destinations;

c) Existing rights of way are maintained or improved; and

d) Walking routes are capable of being shared safely with cyclists.

Pedestrian routes within developments must be equally accessible to all, including those with restricted mobility. In whole or in part, they should not be stepped, steep, narrow or be formed of uneven surfacing materials unless significant changes in site levels (relative to the size of the development or other site features) make this impractical. In this situation a reasonable alternative route must be provided.

Where off-site access for pedestrians (including those with restricted mobility) is inadequate, a legal agreement or other commitment will be sought to secure the developer's contribution to the works needed to improve accessibility. This will be relative to the scale and type of the development and the relevant characteristics of the local highway network.

18.15 Safe and convenient access for pedestrians, disabled people and other people with restricted mobility is an important element in addressing issues of equality and inclusion, and helps increase safety of movement by reducing conflict between pedestrians and motor vehicles. It also helps to reduce the number of car journeys made, reducing congestion and pollution levels, in addition to being beneficial to personal health.

18.16 People with restricted mobility include elderly people, pregnant women, young children and those with prams and pushchairs. Easier mobility enables people to be more independent and to enjoy a range of activities otherwise barred to them by lack of access.
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18.17 If people are to be encouraged to walk and people who do walk are not to be disadvantaged, walking routes must be direct, wide, visible, well lit, free from hazard and obstruction and signed where appropriate.

18.18 Nearby facilities and destinations will include nearby shops and centres, bus or tram stops and rail stations and could include schools, community facilities and other uses. Access points should be located where walking distances to such facilities are as short as possible within the reasonable requirements of the development.

18.19 Existing rights of way should be maintained or improved. New routes should ideally not be hidden from view to the side or rear of properties as this increases the risk of personal attack and crime against property. However, in order to achieve routes for the wider benefit of the community, this may not always be possible.

18.20 Pedestrian routes should not be narrow and enclosed for security reasons, and a suitably designed shared cycling and walking route can improve the security and safety of pedestrians and cyclists alike. However, the first priority is for pedestrian safety and combined routes should only be attempted where this will not be put at risk.

18.21 Examples of improvements to be funded by developers' contributions include:
   a) Widened footways;
   b) Improved surfaces to routes;
   c) Improved crossing facilities that include dropped kerbs and tactile paving and, according to the needs of the location, built-out areas and/or pedestrian refuges and/or signal controlled crossing facilities;
   d) Measures to ensure that parking and delivery needs can be met without causing an obstruction to pedestrians, including people with restricted mobility;
   e) Street furniture and other street equipment minimised and located to ensure that it does not cause an obstruction;
   f) Improved ‘natural surveillance’ and street lighting where this will improve personal safety and security; and
   g) Other road safety measures.

A/4 NEW DEVELOPMENT - ACCESS FOR CYCLISTS

Development proposals will be permitted where the design and layout of development schemes facilitate safe and convenient access for cyclists. Relative to the scale, type and location of the development, proposals should ensure that:
   a) Roads are designed to facilitate safe cycling;
   b) Off-road routes are safe, convenient, highly visible from surrounding land and buildings, well lit and signed as appropriate;
   c) The access infrastructure within new developments gives priority to the establishment of convenient routes for cyclists, unless essential motor vehicle access would be compromised by the lack of other suitable and safe alternatives;
   d) Cycle access points are located to provide direct and convenient links with adjoining uses, the wider cycle network and identified potential off-site cycle routes;
   e) Cycle routes intended or likely to be shared by pedestrians are designed to ensure safety and compatibility; and
   f) Safe and secure cycle parking is provided in accordance with the Council’s cycle parking standards, close to the access points to the buildings for which the parking is required.
Where off-site access for cyclists is inadequate, a legal agreement or other commitment will be sought to secure the developer's contribution to the works needed to improve accessibility. This will be relative to the scale and type of the development and the relevant characteristics of the local highway network.

18.22 The provision of safe and convenient cycling access is, like walking, important in providing a choice of transport mode for all, and in reducing reliance on the private car.

18.23 If people are to be encouraged to cycle it is essential that new roads and access points to roads are designed to accommodate cycling safely. Off-road routes will only be required where a road is designed to accommodate heavy volumes of traffic and there is insufficient room to dedicate space to cycling. Alternatively, off-road routes can create short cuts for cyclists in addition to a road option.

18.24 Access points should be located where cycling distances are as short as possible within the reasonable requirements of the development and road safety.

18.25 All off-road cycling routes or route corridors should be designed for safe, shared use with pedestrians, either with a cycleway alongside a footway or a wide shared path, preventing conflict between the two groups.

18.26 Sufficient secure cycle parking is essential if people are to be encouraged to cycle more (see Policy A/14 - "A Strategic Cycling Route Network"). The provision of changing and showering facilities for cyclists at places of work should be considered to encourage cycle trips.

18.27 Examples of improvements to be funded by developers' contributions include:
   a) Dedicated road space for cyclists or shared road space with public transport;
   b) Advance stop lines at signal controlled junctions;
   c) Dedicated signals at signal controlled junctions;
   d) Shared pedestrian and cyclist signal controlled crossings at busy main roads;
   e) Other road safety measures; and
   f) Improvements to existing rights of way.

18.28 The safer cycling route network will be used to inform improvements to the walking environment where appropriate.

A/5 NEW DEVELOPMENT - ACCESS FOR BUS SERVICES

All development proposals will be required to make appropriate provision for access and servicing by public transport.

Where off-site accessibility for bus services is inadequate to facilitate a reasonable degree of bus use to/from the development, a legal agreement will be sought to secure the developer's contribution to the improvements needed to improve accessibility. The developer's contribution will be considered against the overall scale of access predicted for the development, the likely proportion of access by bus compared to access by car, the relevant characteristics of the local highway network and/or local bus services, and improvements already implemented or planned.

Large developments should be designed to allow buses within them where there is a realistic opportunity for the diversion of services. A legal agreement or other commitment will be sought to secure the developer's contribution to the provision of a suitable service, from the date of the first part of the development being brought into use, until such a time that it might reasonably not require financial support.
18.29 The extent that development will need to address the criteria within this policy will depend on the size, type and location of the development. It is essential that new development will facilitate access by bus services wherever possible but the policy will not be significant for most smaller scale developments.

18.30 Where access by bus services is inadequate to promote bus use and it is reasonable to require the developer to contribute to improvements, a legal agreement will be sought. This could cover the provision of:
- Improvements to the highway to facilitate bus access or access to/from buses by passengers;
- Improvements to existing bus services;
- New or diverted bus services on roads outside the site; or
- New or diverted bus services using roads within the site.

18.31 Off-site improvements to the local highway network are most likely to be sought. Improvements could include:
- Bus priority measures at traffic lights, with the use of transponders in the highway and on buses;
- Bus gates at junctions;
- Bus lanes;
- More convenient and safely located bus stops;
- Bus shelters and other improvements to the waiting environment (in accordance with the LTP Bus Strategy);
- Raised boarders, built-out stops and/or other highway measures to improve access for bus users between the pathway and passenger platform; and
- Measures to ensure that parking and delivery needs can be met without causing an obstruction to buses.

18.32 Improvements to bus services would be appropriate if the existing service was infrequent or didn't serve the site at relevant times, for example, when shifts begin and end at employment sites.

18.33 Developers of large sites that are not within a reasonable walking distance of a bus stop are required to explore the potential options for a new or diverted service with GMPTE and local bus operators. As a guide, this will apply when the longest walking distance between buildings such as houses or workplace on the site and the closest bus stop is further than:
- 400 metres from a bus stop served by a high frequency bus service, considered to be every 10 minutes or more during the daytime; or
- 250 metres from a bus stop served by a bus service of 30 – 60 minutes frequency.

18.34 It may be appropriate for a new or diverted bus service to serve existing roads only. Otherwise, roads within the site should be designed to be convenient for bus service operators. Opportunities for access through the site to neighbouring areas are more likely to secure a viable bus service and should be accommodated, possibly through bus gates to avoid through traffic.

18.35 Walking routes between new developments and bus stops are also relevant and are still subject to the criteria within Policy A/3 - "New Development - Access for Pedestrians and Disabled People."
A/6 NEW DEVELOPMENT - ACCESS BY TAXI

Proposals for large shopping and/or leisure developments, rail stations and tram stops will be required to make adequate provision for access by taxi. Facilities should:

a) Have adequate capacity for taxis according to existing and/or anticipated demand;

b) Be within a safe and convenient walking distance of the access to the building or facility to be served;

c) Incorporate, where reasonable, seating and shelter;

d) Be in a secure location, well lit at night; and

e) Be accessible for people with restricted mobility.

18.36 Provision for taxi access will be required where there is sufficient demand for such facilities. The scale of provision will be determined by existing usage in the area and/or at similar developments elsewhere.

18.37 Many people with restricted mobility, including disabled and elderly people, use taxis for ease of access to facilities. A safe and convenient walking distance should therefore not be greater than 100m, although in most cases it will be expected to be considerably less than this.

A/7 NEW DEVELOPMENT - ACCESS FOR SERVICE VEHICLES

Proposals for industrial, commercial or shopping developments will be required to make adequate provision for delivery vehicles off the highway unless the constraints of the site, such as its size, site levels and adjacent land uses, make off-highway provision impracticable. In such circumstances, development will only be permitted if provision for delivery vehicles can be made on the highway, funded by the developer, without detriment to road safety, traffic management and access priorities for pedestrians, including people with restricted mobility, cyclists and users of public transport.

Where it is required to protect the amenity of the area, access for freight will be time and/or weight restricted. Measures that can be taken to reduce the adverse impact of deliveries will be sought and required by condition or planning obligation as appropriate.

18.38 Delivery vehicles, including vans, light goods vehicles and heavy goods vehicles play an indispensable role in supporting the local business economy and our lifestyle requirements. They require access to all industrial, commercial and shopping areas for local deliveries and for long distance carrying. The potential for transfer to rail is limited largely to longer distance bulk transport. Local deliveries are dependent on road transport and local accessibility for freight has to be accommodated.

18.39 Wherever possible, provision for deliveries will be required off the highway in order to reduce conflict with access priorities for pedestrians, including people with restricted mobility, cyclists and users of public transport, reduce congestion and improve amenity. Development requiring on-highway servicing will only be permitted where it will not be detrimental to any of these interests or to road safety and general highway capacity.

19.40 In considering the importance of deliveries to the local economy, access prohibitions will only be made on delivery times or size of vehicle when this is absolutely necessary to protect amenity, in particular, residential amenity at night times and amenity issues for customers, for example, in town centre streets. Mitigating measures will be sought and secured by planning condition if they relate to the physical development. If they relate to operational good practice either on the site or in respect of the delivery vehicles used or driver behaviour, commitments will be sought and the prohibition relaxed if secured by a planning obligation. In all such circumstances prohibitive measures will be held in reserve by condition of the approval.
New development will be permitted provided that the additional traffic generated will not be detrimental to the safe and efficient operation of the Highway Network, both adjacent to and further away from the site. Proposals should not:

a) Have an adverse impact on the safety of any road users;

b) Have an adverse impact on accessibility for pedestrians, including people with restricted mobility, cyclists or users of public transport in the immediate vicinity of the development;

c) Substantially increase congestion;

d) Divert traffic on to less suitable roads; or

e) Cause an unacceptable environmental impact on residential properties passed by traffic associated with the development whilst accessing the principal road network.

Where additional traffic movements directly generated by a development proposal would adversely affect the existing highway infrastructure, the developer will be required to fund works to leave the highway network in a no worse state. The works required by the Council could be any or all of the following:

i. Improvements to the existing highway infrastructure;

ii. Improvements to public transport and related infrastructure;

iii. Measures to secure modal shift away from vehicular traffic to walking and cycling;

iv. Other traffic management measures; and/or

v. The removal or restriction of car parking provision.

Developers will be expected to enter into a legal agreement to secure the funding of improvements and measures to achieve modal shift. Improvement works and other measures should be completed prior to the development being brought into use.

18.41 Capacity on the highway network is, understandably, a sensitive issue but the priority is to mitigate adverse impacts on safety, accessibility, congestion and/or the diversion of traffic on to less suitable roads, rather than refuse development that is otherwise in accordance with the Plan. However, there are many areas within the Borough that are densely developed and traffic congestion at peak times is a problem. Many sites suitable for development will require some improvement to the highway network or to public transport provision, if they are to function safely without creating unacceptable problems for existing users and to encourage travel choice. In the case of developments which generate significant volumes of traffic, it is expected that improvements may be identified in the context of a Transport Assessment (see Policy A/11 - "New Development -Transport Assessments").

18.42 Where development proposals need to be accompanied by improvements to the existing highway network, the developer(s) will be expected to fund such improvements through Planning Obligations under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and/or Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980. Many improvements will be small scale and limited to the immediate vicinity of the site although in the case of major developments, more substantial measures may be required which may be some distance from the site. Where improvements form part of a wider scheme, a developer may be required to only fund part of the works. Where development traffic would access the highway at major junctions, the Council will usually expect the developer to fund any improvements necessary to ensure a 15 year capacity, in line with Circular 04/2001 “Control of Development affecting Trunk Roads.” In addition, where the proposed development has the potential to impact upon the safe and efficient operation of the trunk road network, the Highways Agency should be consulted.
18.43 Where developers propose to reduce the impact of development traffic through modal shift away from car traffic, a section 106 obligation will be required to set out a formula as to how this will be practically achieved.

**A/9 NEW DEVELOPMENT - ACCESS FOR GENERAL TRAFFIC**

Development proposals will be required to facilitate safe and convenient access for general traffic, which includes cars, motorcycles and commercial vehicles. Relative to the scale, type and location of development, the proposals should ensure that:

a) Roads, junctions and access points to/from premises are safe, convenient and suitable for the volume and characteristics of traffic that will be required to use them; and

b) Access for emergency service vehicles and other service vehicles, such as waste collection vehicles, is provided.

Residential roads shall be designed to restrict vehicle speeds within an upper limit of 20 mph. The developer will also be required, through a legal agreement, to secure an Order to implement a 20 mph speed limit to the new estate roads. The developer will also be required to pay for traffic calming to the residential roads between the development and the local distributor road, to enable a 20 mph speed limit to be introduced on them. In cul-de-sacs in residential developments likely to be occupied by households with children, ‘home zone’ principles will be applied.

18.44 This Policy relates to all types of development for which vehicular access is proposed and covers access for general traffic to/from the highway and the provision of new roads within areas of new development. Parking issues are covered by separate policies.

18.45 Powers to apply 20 mph speed limits in residential areas have been made available to the Council and a number of 20 mph zones have been introduced. The intention is to reduce the impact of traffic in residential areas to improve amenity and make them safer environments for children. It is, therefore, appropriate to ensure that new residential roads are designed with a 20 mph speed limit in place at the outset. It is also appropriate to extend the zone through existing residential areas to the closest local distributor road, in order to minimise the impact of additional traffic from the development on those residential areas.

18.46 In order to achieve this developers will be required to fund the necessary Order. In ‘home zones’, motorists have to slow to walking pace and give way to pedestrians and cyclists. This requires a radical rethink of the street layout. Instead of a conventional roadway with a kerbed footway on each side, a shared area is designed with hard and soft landscaping and on-street parking at angles to the street, as appropriate. The co-operation of developers will be sought in incorporating ‘home zones’ within new residential developments.

**A/10 NEW DEVELOPMENT - PROVISION OF PARKING**

The Council’s Schedule of Parking Standards is set out in Appendix C. This identifies maximum standards for car parking provision and minimum standards for disabled parking, cycle parking and motorcycle parking.

Based on an assessment of the following criteria, the Council will require car parking provision as part of new development at less than the maximum standard;

a) The location of the development and the appropriateness and feasibility of providing parking provision within that location;

b) Access to other transport modes;

c) The availability of other convenient and safe off-street parking;
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d) The availability of unutilised on-street parking capacity and the ability to accommodate parking without harm to visual amenity or pedestrian/road safety; and
e) The willingness of a developer to fund traffic Orders to establish controls on on-street parking or other measures to mitigate the impact, including securing modal shift away from vehicular traffic and other traffic management measures.

Additional car parking spaces above the maximum car parking standards will not be permitted unless:

i. the need for additional car parking has been clearly demonstrated through a Transport Assessment or other study; or

ii. In town and edge-of-town centre locations, the parking facility will genuinely serve the town centre as a whole, as a 'dual use' car park; or

iii. There are significant implications for road safety that cannot be resolved through the introduction or enforcement of on-street parking controls.

For disabled car parking, cycle parking and motorcycle parking, new development will be expected to meet the minimum standards set out in Appendix C.

Where the Council requires controls on parking issues, it will impose planning conditions or seek obligations to ensure that these are implemented.

18.47 The availability of parking for cars (including cars used by disabled people), motorcycles and bicycles, is an important influence on the choice of transport mode. A balance has to be struck between discouraging car use and not imposing standards that are so stringent as to reduce the viability of developments. The Council's Parking standards for new developments have been developed in association with the other Greater Manchester authorities, taking account of up-to-date national guidance.

18.48 For car parking, the Council's Parking Standards identify maximum standards, to ensure that land is used more efficiently and access by walking, cycling and public transport is encouraged. This means that in town and district centre locations in particular, where there is good existing or potential public transport access and the potential for 'walk in' or cycle trips, developments should operate successfully with levels of parking provision lower than the maximum standard. Indeed, in some locations such as Primary Shopping Areas (See Policy S/3 "Primary Shopping Areas"), it may be inappropriate or impractical to require on-site provision and there may be adequate off-site provision within the wider centre. Conversely, new car parking associated with a development could contribute to meeting the wider parking needs of the centre it is located in.

18.49 The Council's Standards identify minimum car parking standards for disabled people because many disabled people must rely on cars for access to essential facilities. ('Minimum' standards mean the least number of spaces required.)

18.50 Minimum cycle parking standards are also required to encourage cycling and to meet the needs of cyclists for secure parking at new developments. All cycle parking should incorporate cycle lockers, 'Sheffield stands' or other secure fixtures or areas that cycles can be locked to or within.

18.51 New development in this policy includes conversion and change of use.

18.52 Convenient and safe existing off-street parking can, where appropriate, be utilised to accommodate the demand from the new development. However, new off-street car parking is required to serve new development if, without it, the development would give rise to levels of increased on-street car parking that would cause additional problems for road safety, congestion, access and/or amenity in nearby streets.
18.53 According to the circumstances in the area, an Order to mitigate the affects of on-street car parking could prohibit on-street parking, time limit it to meet the needs of local businesses, restrict it to local residents only, or combine all or two of these options on different lengths of road in the area. Any such controls would need to be paid for by the developer.

18.54 With the exception of genuine ‘dual use’ town centre car parks, applicants will be required to demonstrate that there is a need for car parking above maximum levels. They will be expected to show through an assessment or other study, that measures have been considered (in the design, location and implementation of the scheme) to minimise the need for car-parking.

18.55 Planning conditions will be imposed or planning obligations sought to control parking provision, (including temporary provision pending measures to achieve a shift to other modes of transport), usage (e.g., shared or dual use, length of stay), charging, and the imposition of on-street parking controls.

**A/11 NEW DEVELOPMENT - TRANSPORT ASSESSMENTS**

The submission of Transport Assessments will be required alongside planning applications where:

a) The development has the potential to lead to a material increase in the volume of road traffic or increased impact because of the type of traffic, and it is necessary to determine whether highway works or other measures are necessary; and

b) The development is major, and thus may involve a number of individual elements or uses which involve major generators of travel demand, and it is appropriate to illustrate accessibility to the site by all modes and the likely model split of journeys to and from the site.

The scope and detail of Transport Assessments should reflect the size of a development and the extent of the transport implications. Where (b) above applies, the assessment should illustrate what highway works and other transport measures are necessary to improve access, manage parking demand, address the impact of the development on air and noise pollution levels, and improve accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport. Any necessary measures identified in the Transport Assessment must support and complement the Local Transport Strategy set out in the Local Transport Plan.

18.56 New development makes additional demands on the transport network, increases levels of traffic and creates more pollution. This policy requires developers to deal with some of the impact of their developments instead of passing the costs on to the wider community. Transport Assessments enable local planning authorities to assess a planning application and provide a basis for discussion on details of the scheme, such as the levels of parking, the siting of the buildings and entrances, and the need for further measures to improve access arrangements to the site, mitigate transport impacts and the scope for improving access to the site by public transport, walking and cycling.

18.57 Prospective developers should hold early discussions with the Council (and the Highways Agency where there is likely to be a material effect upon the trunk road network) in order to clarify whether proposals are likely to be acceptable in transport terms and to scope the requirements of any Transport Assessment. The DfT will be issuing good practice advice on the content and presentation of Transport Assessments and the application of this advice in Rochdale will be considered when it is available.

18.58 Incremental development, including smaller developments that may not be considered to have significant transport implications can, over time, substantially undermine the effectiveness of the Local Transport Strategy, and can result in development overall that does not encourage or enable accessibility by non car modes. Also the cumulative effect of developments in an area or transport corridor has the potential to undermine local transport objectives. Consequently, in addition to the provision of individual highway improvements associated with the development, consideration may need to be given to a contribution to
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18.59 As a guide to requiring a transport assessment, the Council would regard an increase in turning movements in the order of 5% as material in most cases, that is, a 5% increase in traffic using any link of a junction. Where the capacity of the junction is, or is near to being exceeded, a smaller percentage increase on a link would normally be material, as would any additional turning movements which in the case of, for example, heavy laden slow moving vehicles, might have serious safety implications for road users.

A/12 NEW DEVELOPMENT - TRAVEL PLANS AND SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANS

A travel plan (which includes provision for implementation and monitoring) will be required to accompany planning applications for any development likely to have significant transport implications:

a) Because they have the potential to generate significant volumes of traffic;

b) Because they have the potential to contribute to planned local transport initiatives (including identified routes for the promotion of walking, cycling, public transport or the reduction of traffic);

c) Because they would impact on, and a travel plan would help to address, an existing local traffic problem (e.g. congestion, parking and freight traffic movements); or

d) Because they are within areas identified for the improvement of air quality.

The development of new school facilities that have the potential to change the number or nature of trips to the site, or accessibility arrangements to/from the site, will be required to submit a School Travel Plan alongside the application for planning permission.

The Travel Plan / School Travel Plan will be required to have measurable outputs and targets agreed with the Council in partnership with GMPTE and local transport providers, and state the arrangements for enforcement and penalties in the event that agreed objectives are not met.

18.60 Travel Plans currently have no standard format or content but national guidance and good practice should be used to inform them. They should seek:

a) reductions in car usage, particularly single occupancy car journeys, and increased use of walking, cycling and public transport;

b) reduced traffic speeds and improved road safety and personal security for pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport; and

c) more environmentally sensitive delivery and freight movements.

18.61 The types of developments and size thresholds above which a Travel Plan will automatically be required are currently identified by Government (PPG 13 - Transport, 2001) as:

i. retail, conference facilities, cinemas and other indoor leisure developments over 1000m² gross floorspace;

ii. employment uses and higher and further education developments over 2,500m² gross floorspace; and

iii. stadia with more than 1500 seats.

18.62 Certain employment and mixed-use designations in this Plan require a Travel Plan to be submitted alongside a planning application for the development of the site/area.
18.63 Where the development is speculative, and the detailed data upon which a travel plan should be based is unknown, the Council will seek a framework travel plan to accompany the planning application, and a full travel plan prior to the completed development being brought into use.

A/13 LOCAL WALKING ROUTE NETWORK

Public Rights of Way and other pedestrian routes identified in the Council’s 'Local Walking Route Network’ will be protected where they fall within sites proposed for development, subject to consideration of opportunities for local re-routing where this would improve convenience and safety for pedestrians. Improvements to the walking environment and the provision of new links will be a priority on the Local Walking Route Network and such improvements should address safety, convenience, attractiveness, comfort and accessibility for disabled people and other people with restricted mobility.

18.64 As part of the Local Transport Plan, a Greater Manchester walking strategy was prepared which aims to encourage walking as a mode of travel for short trips and leisure purposes. This document will guide the Council’s own walking strategies and the preparation of a Local Walking Route Network which establishes key walking routes and destinations in consultation with the local community. This will enable investment to be targeted on upgrading routes to provide consistent high quality, safety and convenience for pedestrians. Convenience, comfort and safety are achieved by routes that are short, direct, wide, visible, well lit, free from obstruction, clean, in good repair, well signed and segregated from road traffic. Routes should also be accessible to people with restricted mobility.

18.65 A Local Walking Route Network will include definitive rights of way but will also identify other quality routes. Many routes will mirror the highway network and follow the cycling route network whilst others will include separate walking routes through developments or open areas e.g., Greenspace Corridors. A quality network will not be achieved over the short term as funds are currently limited. However, the identification of strategic routes and the preparation of design standards as Supplementary Guidance will help the Council to prioritise investment and secure improvements through its own funding programmes, as part of regeneration projects, and as part of new development proposals.

18.66 Routes identified in the 'Local Walking Route Network' will be protected and where possible improvements / new links secured through the development control process in accordance with Policy A/3 “New Development - Access For Pedestrians and Disabled People”. Planning agreements with developers may be sought to secure related off-site improvements.

A/14 A STRATEGIC CYCLING ROUTE NETWORK

The provision of cycle routes will be encouraged and facilitated to create a safe, multi-purpose Strategic Cycling Route Network. Development likely to prejudice the establishment or improvement of the network, or identified links to and from it, will not be permitted. Where development sites include or could reasonably connect to identified routes, proposals should consider the potential to:

a) Establish safe and practical links to and within the network for access to homes, community and shopping facilities, schools, places of work and recreational opportunities;

b) Create links to or provide trip end facilities e.g., secure cycle parking, cycle lockers; and

c) Provide signage and other traffic management measures to facilitate safe usage fully integrated with other user types.

The Council may require, or negotiate for, on or off-site cycle provision funded by the developer.
The Local Transport Plan and the Greater Manchester Cycling Strategy promotes the identification of local cycling networks to promote cycling as a mode of travel, particularly for short trips, to reduce car travel. Such trips include journeys to school, work, shopping and community facilities (e.g., health) and for recreation in town and country. An indicative Strategic Cycling Route Network is shown on the accompanying map. The network represents a series of key linear and circular routes providing a major opportunity to improve cycling choice and provision in the Borough for a range of users and from which further links and extensions may be identified over time. The Council has adopted the Greater Manchester Cycling Strategy as the framework for the local strategy for cycling which will enable investment to be targeted and improvements secured through the development process. The intention is to establish a network of routes that link the major origins and destinations in the Borough and surrounding areas in Greater Manchester and the Southern Pennines. Thus, the network will include urban and rural routes, both on and off highway and may be shared with pedestrians and horseriders. Encouraging and facilitating cycle trips is also a key focus in the Travel Plans programme (See Policy A/12 - "New Development - Travel Plans and School Travel Plans") which will result in improved choice and opportunity for cycle use to and within specific neighbourhoods and facilities (e.g. workplaces and schools) throughout the Borough.

To encourage cycle usage, routes need to be safe, pleasant and direct. In some cases the need for a direct route will be less of a priority than the cycling environment / experience, e.g., routes used primarily for recreation.

Wherever possible, the network will use quieter or 'traffic calmed' residential streets along which signing and maintenance will be the primary requirements. Otherwise, roads where dedicated space for cyclists is, or can be made available, will be used. Key links away from roads may be established where they will achieve a significant benefit in terms of road safety, distance or recreational use. Such routes should be visible from surrounding land and buildings, well lit to remain highly visible at night, and suitably surfaced, in particular routes such as those promoted as part of School Travel initiatives. Consideration of lighting and visibility may be less of a priority in some urban fringe areas (where they may not be appropriate or practicable), and it should not preclude the establishment of urban links where they can make a significant contribution to the usability of the network. The whole network should be signed effectively.

The Council has an active role in promoting and implementing improved cycling provision. Its ability to contribute to the implementation of a strategic network is dependent on the availability of funding through the Council’s own budgets, external grants and through opportunities arising out of development or redevelopment and major comprehensive traffic management or highway improvement schemes. The Council will continue to work with developers, local authorities and other agencies e.g. Natural England, North West Development Agency and others, to take or safeguard opportunities to establish new routes, links, improvements to existing routes (for example the Pennine Bridleway and links to it) and associated cycle facilities e.g., parking and signage. The Council will seek to secure legal agreements with developers and commuted sums to secure provision where such opportunities are identified.

The Council, in association with Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive, will facilitate the provision of high quality, safe and accessible bus passenger waiting and interchange facilities. Improvements to bus stops and bus priority measures will be introduced. Development that would adversely affect existing or proposed bus facilities and priority measures will not be permitted.

There is a need to make bus travel more attractive in order to reduce reliance on the car and improve social inclusion. The GMPTE, in association with the Council, propose to introduce a variety of bus priority measures and facilities. The Council is already working with GMPTE, neighbouring authorities and operators on four Quality Bus Corridors (QBCs) in the Borough. These routes are identified in the Local Transport Plan. They are:

a) A58 Littleborough town centre to Borough boundary with Bury at Heap Bridge via Rochdale and Heywood town centres;
This map is indicative and for illustration only. It should not be used for detailed planning of cycle trips. Please consult an appropriate Ordnance Survey map or contact the local Highways Authority for details about where cycling is permitted.
b) A671 Rochdale town centre to Borough boundary with Oldham at Summit;
c) A664 Rochdale town centre to Borough boundary with Manchester at Alkrington via Castleton and Middleton, with spurs to Middleton and Heywood connecting with the A58 QBC; and
d) A671 Rochdale town centre to Borough boundary with Lancashire at Healey.

18.72 The aim is to reduce bus journey times and variability, and improve bus reliability to make bus travel more competitive with the private car and increase the comfort and convenience of all bus users. Bus priority schemes will therefore be targeted on these corridors. Within the bus network in general, it will be important to improve the environment around bus stops through better lighting, footway improvements that include kerb heights to assist low floor bus operation, the provision of pedestrian crossing facilities, bus shelters and travel information.

A/16 ROCHDALE BUS STATION

Redevelopment of the bus station in Rochdale town centre, either on the existing site or on an alternative site in a location at least as accessible to/from the relevant Primary Shopping Area, will be permitted provided that it will:

a) Have sufficient capacity to accommodate all bus services serving the town centre with surplus capacity to accommodate reasonable forecasts for growth in services;

b) Have sufficient capacity to accommodate passengers boarding and alighting buses in comfort and safety with surplus capacity to accommodate reasonable forecasts for growth in passenger numbers;

c) Improve the safety, comfort and convenience of the waiting environment for passengers;

d) Provide for ease of interchange between services;

e) Maintain or improve the convenience and safety of bus access to/from the local highway network;

f) Incorporate measures to ensure safe access and circulation for pedestrians, including people with restricted mobility;

gh) Provide safe and secure cycle parking lockers in accordance with the Council’s cycle parking standards, and safe access to/from the bus station for cyclists;

h) Be served by a taxi rank within a short walking distance of the bus station; and

i) Be served by an area for dropping off and picking up people travelling to/from the bus station by car or other motor vehicle, including private hire vehicle, within a short walking distance of the bus station.

Smaller scale redevelopment of the bus station facilities will be permitted provided that it will meet the requirements of the policy as far as they are material to the development proposed.

18.73 Rochdale bus station does not provide the standard of environment and level of facilities necessary to attract significantly more people to travel by bus.

18.74 GMPTE are committed to improving Rochdale bus station. The bus station has a multi-storey car park above which is a constraint on the layout, facilities and amenity. Nevertheless, considerable improvements could be achieved.

18.75 The potential for relocation should not be ignored if an alternative site would be equally well located in relation to all of the accessibility issues identified in the policy, including proximity to the Primary Shopping Area.
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18.76 The bus station should have sufficient capacity to accommodate all bus services serving the relevant town centre and future reasonable forecasts for growth in both services and passenger numbers, reasonably at least 10 years ahead.

18.77 The quality of the waiting environment and availability of information are essential to maintaining and promoting bus use.

18.78 In addition to facilitating interchange between services, bus stations should be:
   a) Easily accessible on foot to and from the relevant town centre and nearby residential areas;
   b) Fully accessible by people with restricted mobility;
   c) Accessible by cycle with safe access into the site and secure cycle parking;
   d) Served by a taxi rank within a short walking distance;
   e) Served also by an area capable of accommodating dropping off and picking up of people whose journey will continue or has commenced by bus; and
   f) Safe.

18.79 The proposed terminus for Metrolink is located in Smith Street alongside Rochdale bus station and any proposal to relocate the bus station will need to maintain close interchange between the two.

A/17 BUS INTERCHANGE AND BUS / RAIL INTERCHANGE

In addition to the two bus stations, other locations identified by GMPTE where measures will be taken to promote and ease interchange between bus services or between bus and rail services, as shown on the Proposals Map, are:

Bus Interchange:
   a) Market Place and Church Street and Bamford Road adjacent, Heywood town centre;
   b) Long Street, Hollin Lane and Rochdale Road (close to the junction of), Middleton;
   c) Manchester Road, Sudden, between its junctions with Edinburgh Way and Bolton Road; and
   d) Oldham Road, Kingsway and Queensway (close to the junction of), Rochdale.

Bus and Rail Interchange:
   e) Castleton railway station and Manchester Road adjacent, Castleton;
   f) Mills Hill railway station and Oldham Road adjacent, Middleton;
   g) Rochdale railway station and Maclure Road / Tweedale Street adjacent, Rochdale; and
   h) Littleborough railway station, Station Road and Church Street, Littleborough town centre.

18.80 Ease of interchange between bus services and between bus and rail is essential if travel options by public transport are to compare more favourably with the flexibility of the car. Better information and signing on the availability of different services and where to catch them is required. Physical measures are also necessary in most of the locations to improve the highway environment for pedestrians, including people with restricted mobility, consistent with Policy A/24 "Strategic Highway Network" and for buses and bus users consistent with Policy A/15 "Facilities For Buses".

18.81 A large part of the highway outside Mills Hill railway station is in Oldham and is the responsibility of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council as Highway Authority. Improvements to the highway will be sought in partnership with Oldham Council.
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A/18 METROLINK

The development of Metrolink to Rochdale from Oldham and Manchester will continue to be actively pursued, including:

a) On-street running into Rochdale town centre;

b) Stops at Newhey station, Milnrow station, Kingsway Business Park, Newbold and Drake Street;

c) Interchange with rail, buses and taxis at Rochdale Station; and

d) A terminus interchange with buses and taxis at Smith Street, Rochdale town centre.

The alignment and sites of the proposed stops will be protected from adverse development.

18.82 The extension of Metrolink to Rochdale and Oldham is being promoted by GMPTE and is one of the Council’s priority new infrastructure projects in support of regeneration. It is part of a single contract that also includes lines from Manchester to Manchester Airport and Ashton-under-Lyne. The contract to design, build, operate and maintain the extension is expected to be awarded at the end of 2002, and the total construction period is estimated to be in the region of five to six years. However, it is not yet known whether the lines will be constructed simultaneously or in sequence. Some lines may therefore be finished sooner than others.

18.83 It is fully accessible for people with restricted mobility, and will provide a fast and frequent service into the heart of Rochdale and Oldham town centres and Manchester city centre.

18.84 The alignment follows the existing Oldham – Rochdale railway line from the Borough boundary south east of Newhey to the junction with the Rochdale – Halifax railway, whereby it runs alongside the railway and then on-street at High Level Road and Maclure Road to Drake Street. Buildings fronting the south side of Drake Street between Maclure Road and Milnrow Road are proposed for demolition to accommodate the route and the proposed Drake Street stop. GMPTE hold Compulsory Purchase Powers to acquire these buildings. The route then continues on-street along Drake Street to the proposed terminus at Smith Street.

18.85 In addition to the Smith Street terminus and Drake Street stop, stops are proposed at the existing Milnrow and Newhey railway stations, at Newbold in Rochdale and at Maclure Road outside Rochdale railway station. The Council and its development partners for Kingsway Business Park are also promoting a stop to serve the Business Park.

A/19 NEW RAILWAY STATIONS

New railway stations will be permitted at Slattocks, Middleton; Stoneyfield/Sandbrook Park, Rochdale; and Summit, Littleborough, as shown on the Proposals Map, subject to:

a) Full accessibility and appropriate facilities for pedestrians, including people with restricted mobility, cyclists and taxis;

b) Provision for dropping off and picking up passengers by motor car including safe access to/from the highway;

c) Measures to facilitate, where appropriate, interchange with bus services;

d) Suitable provision for passenger shelter, safety and security and ‘real time’ information; and

e) Adequate provision to safeguard the local environment and the amenity of nearby residents.

18.86 The three station sites are carried forward from the Adopted UDP and are identified in GMPTE’s priority list of potential new station sites in Greater Manchester. All three stations are currently subject to an appraisal by GMPTE concerning their viability and their wider impact on the provision of rail services and how people choose to travel. It is important to assess the viability of each station against the impact on the operation
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...and attractiveness of the service, and the effect on people's travel patterns. The policy includes those essential matters which any planning application should address to ensure integration with other forms of transport and to provide a safe and attractive environment for rail users.

18.87 The GMPTE, in consultation with each Greater Manchester district, are currently developing a Rail Investment Strategy that incorporates a programme of measures, including station improvements (for example, improvements to access, safety and passenger shelter). Rochdale Council has a number of priorities that it wishes to investigate through the Rail Investment Strategy. These include a new car park, entrance, ticket office and indoor waiting area at Rochdale Station (in anticipation of the development of an interchange with Metrolink); access for people with restricted mobility at Littleborough station; and a booking office and other works at Mills Hill Station.

A/20 EAST LANCASHIRE RAILWAY

The Council will actively promote the restoration of the Heywood to Bury railway line for passenger and freight services. In order to safeguard the link with the national rail network, the Council will not permit any development likely to prejudice the continued use of the line between Heywood and Castleton for railway operation.

18.88 The railway through Heywood is being restored as a heritage railway as part of the East Lancashire Railway, with a new station platform at Heywood. It is a high priority regeneration project for Heywood Township. In order to maximise the regeneration benefits of the railway, the adjoining area is allocated as an Area of Opportunity for complementary mixed use development (see Policy R/4(h)).

18.89 GMPTE and Lancashire County Council are leading work to test the potential for the reinstatement of a full rail service along the line serving Heywood, Bury and Rawtenstall. There is potential also for rail freight serving sites along the line including Heywood Distribution Park and other industrial sites off Pilsworth Road. The success of all of the above initiatives is dependent on the retention of the link to the national rail network at Castleton.

A/21 ACCESSIBILITY FOR FREIGHT TO RAIL

Proposals for rail connections to industrial sites will be permitted provided that:

a) there will be no undue adverse impact on the amenity of nearby non-industrial uses by virtue of noise, vibration or visual intrusion; and

b) any road crossings required can be accommodated safely and without undue inconvenience to road users, including the emergency services.

Proposals for rail heads intended to serve off-site businesses will be permitted provided that the additional traffic generated can be satisfactorily accommodated on the highway network, both in terms of capacity and impact on the environment.

18.90 Notwithstanding the fact that opportunities for transfer of freight from road to rail are relatively limited, those opportunities that do exist can be commercially advantageous. Subject to the safeguards outlined, the use of rail for freight can also reduce congestion and the environmental impact of freight and should be facilitated. Rail side industrial areas that might have potential include:

a) Mills Hill industrial area;

b) Stakehill Industrial Park;

c) Trans-Pennine Industrial Estate, Castleton

d) Royle Pennine Trading Estate;

e) Dunlop Mills, Castleton;
18.91 Developers may be required to fund highway and railway infrastructure improvements and other mitigating measures, as part of a planning obligation, to ensure that the additional traffic can be accommodated on the highway and railway network. This should ensure that there is no negative impact on road congestion or rail capacity, or detriment to road safety, and that safe access to/from the highway can be achieved.

A/22 CAR PARKS IN TOWN, DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES

In town, district and local centres, redevelopment for alternative uses of existing stand-alone car parks, or car parks associated with other developments, will only be permitted where:

a) sufficient, suitably located car parking spaces will remain to meet the needs of the centre without detriment to its future vitality and viability; or

b) sufficient, suitably located replacement car parking provision will be provided to meet the needs of the centre.

New development within town, district and local centres will be required to make appropriate provision for car parking in line with Policy A/10 "New Development - Provision of Parking".

In town centre locations, new stand-alone car parks will not be permitted unless they are a direct replacement for an existing car park elsewhere, or a clear need has been demonstrated. In district and local centres, new public parking provision will be permitted and provided where it is important to the future vitality and viability of the centre.

18.92 Car parking provision, in particular short stay parking, is essential to the vitality and viability of town and district centres. Off-street car parks are essential to ensure that on-street parking can be restricted to locations where it will not cause problems for road safety, congestion, access and/or amenity. Within town centres, the Council’s aim is to ensure adequate short-stay shopper and visitor parking in as central a location as possible, whilst siting longer stay commuter parking at the edges.

18.93 Middleton, Heywood, Littleborough and Rochdale all suffer to varied extents from piecemeal car parking provision. However, Heywood has benefited from the large car park at the Times Retail Park and Middleton should benefit similarly from the rationalisation of car parking provision as part of the major redevelopment in the town centre. Littleborough has two main car parks within the town centre, neither of which are particularly well related to the Central Shopping Area. Rochdale has three large car parks along with a number of small car parks that are not meeting the needs of the town centre as well as they could. This policy will be further considered following monitoring of the parking provision within the four town centres.

18.94 Milnrow district centre and the local centres have varying ranges of off-street public car parking with none in some of the local centres. The parking provision that does exist is likely to be serving a valuable function for the centres concerned, and improved provision, including stand-alone car parks, may in some circumstances help increase the vitality and viability of the centre.

18.95 Sufficient, suitably located car parking provision means enough, appropriately sited, car parking to meet the need of the centre. The nature of this need may change over time, and so this also needs to be taken into account. The demand can also be reduced through additional measures, such as the provision of increased public transport services.
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18.96 In all circumstances the need to retain or replace car parking will be considered against available evidence. The Council has records of the usage of its own pay and display car parks. Other operators will be expected to produce evidence of parking use. A balance will need to be struck between usage at the busiest times of the week and at the busiest times of the year.

18.97 New car parking in town centres will only be permitted in the circumstances listed above in order to restrict the amount of traffic in central areas, thereby reducing pollution and improving the pedestrian environment.

A/23 CAR PARKING AT ROCHDALE STATION

The provision of a car park on the site of the disused platforms at Rochdale Station, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be permitted provided that:

a) There will be provision for safe vehicular access to and from the highway;

b) There will be access for people with restricted mobility between the car park and the station platforms; and

c) Appropriate measures are taken to ensure the safety and security of car park users and parked vehicles.

18.98 There is a shortage of car parking serving Rochdale Station and approximately 40 on-street spaces will be lost to accommodate Metrolink at a time when demand for spaces could increase considerably. The provision of dedicated off-street car parking is a longstanding priority of the Council, and secure off-street parking will help to increase the attractiveness of using the railway for commuting. In respect of Metrolink, a commitment has been secured that best endeavours will be used to secure 40 replacement spaces. The site of the disused platforms at the station could accommodate up to 250 car parking spaces with vehicular access from Miall Street. If parking was provided at platform level, a lift and/or access ramp would be needed for people with restricted mobility to get from the car park to the station subway and up to operational platforms. Security will need to be a high priority in the design and implementation of the car park.

A/24 STRATEGIC HIGHWAY NETWORK

The Strategic Highway Network, as defined on the Proposals Map, will be maintained, improved, signed and managed to accommodate main flows of general traffic within and through the Borough, other than motorway traffic. Physical traffic management measures will continue to be introduced where it is evident that general traffic is using less suitable roads to the detriment of road safety and amenity. Pedestrian, cyclist and bus access requirements will be met where required.

Priority improvements for the Strategic Highway Network are identified at:

a) Town Head junction, Rochdale;

b) Milnrow Road / Oldham Road / Drake Street junction, Rochdale;

c) B6225 Canal Street diversion and Halifax Road junction, Littleborough;

d) A664 Kingsway, Rochdale and M62 Junction 21, Milnrow - new highway link;

e) Kingsway / Queensway / Oldham Road junction, Rochdale;

f) Edinburgh Way / Manchester Road / Roch Valley Way junction, Rochdale;

g) Manchester Road / Bolton Road junction, Rochdale; and

h) Assheton Way / Oldham Road / Middleton Way, Middleton town centre.

18.99 The role of the Strategic Highway Network has been to accommodate general traffic – including lorries - between urban areas and to/from the motorway network and, in doing so, reduce the impact of traffic in
other areas. This remains the case but the challenge for the future is to continue doing so while also prioritising bus priority measures and the pedestrian and cyclist environment, both along the route and at points across it.

18.100 All of the above schemes will seek to enhance vehicular capacity except Assheton Way / Oldham Road / Middleton Way where current vehicular capacity is much greater on these short sections of dual carriageway than on feeder roads to them. In this location, there is potential to improve pedestrian accessibility by reducing the width of the roads and providing surface level pedestrian crossings in place of the existing subways. Cycle and bus access could also be enhanced.

18.101 Proposals a), b), e), f), g) and h) are all on Quality Bus Corridors and bus priority measures will need to be accommodated within the overall junction improvements. The improvements at Milnrow Road / Oldham Road / Drake Street also need to accommodate Metrolink. The new highway between Kingsway and the M62 is needed to serve Kingsway Business Park so that traffic does not have to use the A640 Rochdale Road and Elizabethan Way to/from the M62. In addition, where the proposed improvement has the potential to impact upon the safe and efficient operation of the trunk road network, the Highways Agency should be consulted.

Priorities a) - e) are carried forward from the Adopted UDP.
CHAPTER 19
DESIGN AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

G/BE/1 (PART ONE POLICY)  DESIGN QUALITY

NEW DEVELOPMENT (BOTH BUILDINGS AND THEIR SETTINGS) WILL BE REQUIRED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROVISION OF AN ATTRACTIVE, SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT, AND IN PARTICULAR CONTRIBUTE TO THE QUALITY OF THE TOWNSCAPE AND LANDSCAPE, AND ACCORD WITH THE BEST OF ITS SURROUNDINGS. DEVELOPMENTS THAT ENGENDER LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS WILL BE ENCOURAGED.

19.1 An essential aim of the Plan is to improve the environment. The Plan strategy focuses on the need for physical improvements to the quality of public and private places - both buildings and the open spaces around them, and the need for design to respect countryside character. The Council will therefore expect development proposals to have a high individual quality of design which respects the best qualities and character of the local townscape and countryside, and where possible upgrades it. The design of the spaces between buildings is also important to create an attractive setting, a safe environment and to ensure accessibility to all sections of the community (e.g., those with mobility difficulties), consistent with the Plan's Key Aims. Good innovative design can not only set a standard for other new development in an area but can take opportunities to: improve energy efficiency in new buildings; create and protect landscape features to enhance amenity, attract wildlife and diffuse pollution; reduce opportunities for, or the fear of, crime; and improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. Design and layout that responds to the best qualities and character of an area and which creates new interest will reinforce local distinctiveness and a sense of place.

19.2 Part 2 Policies in this and other chapters set out detailed requirements and criteria for new development. It is envisaged that existing Supplementary Planning Guidance will be reviewed and new guidance prepared to promote good practice and explain the Council's design expectations both for specific sites/areas and types of development.

BE/2 DESIGN CRITERIA FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

Development proposals will be required to demonstrate good design by:

a) Ensuring that they are compatible with or improve their surroundings by virtue of their scale, density, height, massing, layout, materials, architectural style and detail and means of enclosure;

b) Creating visual interest in areas or buildings lacking character;

c) Taking opportunities to retain, enhance or create views, landmarks and other townscape features which make a material contribution to the character of the area and reveal such features to public view;

d) Retaining and enhancing the architectural or historic qualities and features of buildings of character;

e) Appropriate treatment of open spaces between and around buildings, including the provision of landscaping as an integral part of the development layout;

f) Retaining key natural features, including trees, as part of the landscaping of the site;

g) Providing for safe and convenient access and circulation;
h) Minimising opportunities for crime against people or property;

i) Making adequate provision for natural light within and between buildings;

j) Minimising the potential environmental impact of and on the development, including noise, air and water pollution.

19.3 Policy G/BE/1 ‘Design Quality’ requires that development should make a positive contribution to the quality of the existing local environment. In order to influence the quality of new development (including alterations, conversions and changes of use) this policy identifies those factors that will be taken into account in assessing good design and layout. The requirements acknowledge that good design is not just about aesthetic quality, but about the relationship of development to other uses and how it relates to established patterns of movement and activity in the wider area. For example, careful design can help lessen both the fear and likelihood of violence, reduce opportunities for crime, encourage use of sustainable forms of transport, and provide convenient access and movement for a range of people with mobility and sensory difficulties. With regard to issues of personal safety and security, developments will be expected to incorporate the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) and developers are advised to consult Greater Manchester Police Architectural Liaison Unit for crime prevention advice.

19.4 Some of the design requirements set out in the policy are amplified by other specific and more detailed policies of the Plan and, thus, this policy should be read in conjunction with those other policies.

19.5 Applicants for planning permission should be able to demonstrate how they have taken account of urban design in their proposals and that they have had regard to relevant policies in this plan and any adopted supplementary design guidance/documents. In line with PPG, applicants should provide, as a minimum a written statement setting out the design principles adopted as well as illustrative material in plan and elevation. More detailed design statements will be appropriate for large developments or for small developments in sensitive areas or on prominent sites (e.g. town centres, canal corridor, conservation areas, sensitive landscapes). Design statements can include perspective views, photographs, drawings of the proposed design itself and where appropriate, plans of the proposed layout in relation to neighbouring development and uses.

19.6 Further guidance on what matters should be addressed in design statements is set out in some site-specific proposals. Site / area masterplans or development briefs or village design statements will need to interpret the criteria in this policy in the light of local circumstances. Exceptionally, Planning Obligations may be sought in preference to planning conditions on development in order to secure good design.

**BE/3 ADVERTISEMENTS**

Proposals for the display of signs or advertisements will be permitted provided that they:

a) Would be compatible with the character of the surrounding area including, in terms of their scale and design;

b) Would not dominate or adversely affect the appearance of buildings;

c) Would not create a danger or distraction to road-users; and

d) Would not obstruct the free passage of pedestrians.

Within the Green Belt, Conservation Areas, the curtilages of Listed Buildings and in residential areas, free standing displays will not be permitted unless they relate to the permitted use of the site and are of an appropriate scale and design.
Proposals for advertising signs displayed on buildings or business premises will be required to:

a) Ensure that the size, number, position, design and illumination of advertisements do not harm either the character and appearance of the whole building on which they are displayed or the general character of the street scene; and

b) Show especially high standards of siting, design etc., in respect of advertisements, displayed on Listed Buildings or buildings in and adjoining Conservation Areas.

19.7 Advertising and signs are an accepted and necessary part of the built environment. However, advertisements are designed to attract attention and a large, garish or poorly sited advertisement, or a proliferation of unsympathetic advertisements, can easily detract from the whole building on which they are displayed, and the general street scene. Some Conservation Areas are situated within the town centres of the Borough, and thus buildings are often in commercial use. It is important, therefore, to ensure that advertisements and signs are of a quality appropriate to the special architectural or historic character of these areas.

19.8 As well as considering the effects of advertising and signs on ‘amenity’ (the effect on the visual amenity of the neighbourhood where the advertisement is displayed), the Council is also empowered to consider the effect on public safety (which means the safety of people using any form of transport likely to be affected by the advertisement). Thus, this is reflected in the policy. The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance Note, “Design Guidelines for Shop Fronts and Associated Advertisements” will assist developers and designers and will also be used by the Council in determining planning applications.

All proposals for the alteration of the frontages of shops, restaurants, offices and other commercial premises will be expected to satisfy the following requirements:

a) Existing frontages of architectural quality or historic value should be retained and restored;

b) The style and design of a new or replacement shop front, including fascias and security grills and shutters, should be compatible with the style of the building into which it is being inserted, and sympathetic to the character of the street scene; and

c) The design of entrances to premises should provide safe and convenient access for people with physical or sensory disabilities.

19.9 When retail and other commercial premises are up-graded, or when they change hands, frequently the shop front and the associated advertising will be altered. It is an increasing trend for businesses to employ standardised ‘house’ colours, logos and other design features to convey their corporate identity to the shopper. All too often, this approach takes place with either inadequate or no consideration of the resultant impact upon individual buildings or the shopping street as a whole. It is the aim of this policy to ensure that, when changes do occur, they are compatible with the character of the host building and sympathetic to its immediate environment.

19.10 The Council has published a Supplementary Planning Guidance Note: “Design Guidelines for Shop Fronts and Associated Advertisements”. This provides detailed advice on shop front design to assist developers and development control practice.
Design and the Built Environment

BE/6 ART IN THE ENVIRONMENT

The incorporation of new works of art and craft (including visual crafts, decoration, and landscape design) within major new building developments, refurbishments and environmental works, will be encouraged and permitted provided they constitute improvements to the local environment.

Since the 19th and early 20th centuries, the contribution of public art and crafts in the Borough has been limited. Well-conceived works of art and decoration can enhance buildings and the spaces around them, add character to a locality and give new expression to community and cultural identity. Public art also has the potential to enhance the wider environment, reinforce tourism and cultural industries, stimulate confidence and investment and thus contribute towards urban regeneration. Works that celebrate the historical background of the site or a locality will be particularly welcome.

19.11 Public art is defined as work by artists and craft people that can be viewed from external or internal public spaces. This includes, for example, art work incorporated into building facades and public interiors, landscaping, sculpture, railings, metalwork, street furniture, decorative paving, murals, etc. In some positions, art may be combined satisfactorily with outdoor advertising which can provide financial sponsorship. Public art can sometimes respond directly to the needs of communities, for example, in the design of public seating and street furniture and play equipment. It can create jobs for artists, craftsmen, designers and manufacturers.

19.12 Whilst the incorporation of art elements will be expected in large scale commercial developments, there will also be opportunities within other smaller developments. The Council will negotiate with developers for the integration of environmental art and will support the involvement of artists in the design of and implementation of appropriate projects of its own, as funding permits. In all cases, the art element should be designed into schemes from their inception and should take account of the characteristics of the building or site, its function, its location, and its potential for visual appreciation. The art element must also ensure that access needs of pedestrians, disabled people, cyclists, public transport, deliveries and emergency services vehicles are not impaired. The Council has recently secured the incorporation of several works of art within regeneration projects, new developments and environmental improvement schemes.

BE/7 STREET FURNITURE AND THE PUBLIC REALM

The provision of street furniture and hard landscaping will be expected as an integral feature of public areas in new developments, areas intended for leisure or relaxation, and areas intended primarily for pedestrian use/circulation.

Street furniture and other features should be designed and sited, as applicable, to:

a) Complement the role and function of the area including the provision of seating, shelter, signing, lighting, litter bins, cycle parking and play facilities;
b) Ensure that access requirements are not obstructed including for pedestrians, disabled people, cyclists, public transport, deliveries and emergency services vehicles;
c) Ensure that sight lines are maintained for the purposes of security and road safety;
d) Resist damage by weather and vandalism;
e) Integrate with other design elements in the locality and the improvement works; and
f) Avoid clutter.

19.13 Street furniture and hard landscaping is an important element in urban open space. Appropriately designed and sited in response to the characteristics of the location, street furniture, surface treatments, structural works and other landscaping can contribute significantly to the successful functioning of areas intended for...
public use. The needs of each location will differ but all should be investigated and met wherever reasonable.

19.14 It is essential that all elements of public realm schemes are integrated well with each other and their surroundings and are designed to last without extensive maintenance.

19.15 Masterplans for large sites and design statements should address the above principles. Supplementary Planning Guidance, such as site planning briefs and Village or Town Design Statements will identify opportunities and further advice on such works.

BE/8 LANDSCAPING IN NEW DEVELOPMENT

All developments will be required, where appropriate, to incorporate landscape schemes of a high quality.

Amenity landscaping will be required where, in the Council's opinion, it is necessary to:

a) Retain and integrate existing trees, planting or other landscape features (including areas of nature conservation or value);
b) Screen or soften a development from adjoining land, or to screen an adjoining use from the site;
c) Provide visual enclosure around car parking, storage or plant areas;
d) Provide a structure to the development layout to create local character and distinctiveness, or as a setting for individual buildings or groups of buildings;
e) Protect and enhance the setting of existing individual buildings or groups of buildings
f) Provide landscaping on land adjoining or possibly forming part of a highway in order to maintain distance between the development and the highway for environmental or safety reasons, to provide a suitable setting for pedestrian or cycle routes, or to take account of easements for underground services; or

g) There is an opportunity to enhance or create areas of nature conservation value.

Landscaping schemes will be expected to:

h) Include, where appropriate, a survey of features of importance on the site, especially trees, hedges watercourses, ponds, walls and historic or archaeological remains;
i) Include proposals for new paving, structures and planting showing the location, species and planting size of trees and shrubs;
j) Provide arrangements for the replacement of failed planting;
k) Include proposals for the protection of incorporated landscape features during building works;
l) Take opportunities to enhance or create areas of nature conservation value and to secure appropriate maintenance regimes; and
m) Ensure that areas intended for public use are accessible and take account of personal safety and security.

The Council will expect the developer to enter into a legal agreement to secure the maintenance for an agreed period of those areas of open space and landscaping which are principally of benefit to the development itself. In the case of large developments or prominent sites, the developer will be required to submit a landscape plan as part of a submission for planning approval.

19.16 The treatment of the spaces within and around developments is important in securing good design and to enhance the character or amenity of the area in general. This policy therefore emphasises the need for landscaping to be designed as an integral part of the development.
19.17 With regard to maintenance, the Council will expect the developer to enter into a legal agreement to secure maintenance for a set period, the period and the amount of any commuted sum to be the subject of negotiation in each case.

19.18 A 'landscape plan' means a plan showing how the proposals relate to their surroundings, identifying those features to be conserved, removed or enhanced, in the context of topography, aspect, visual exposure or enclosure, noise protection and shelter. Where appropriate it should also show the distribution of open space, footpaths and roads and the subdivision of the site into identifiable areas.

19.19 Landscaping schemes can be an important way of contributing to local BAP targets for both species and habitats. Where appropriate, locally native species, including those identified in Biodiversity Action Plans, should be used. Locally native species will be particularly appropriate in urban sites where they are compatible with the nature, design and density of the development.

G/BE/9 (PART ONE POLICY) CONSERVATION OF THE BUILT HERITAGE

PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO THE PRACTICAL CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THOSE FEATURES OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT WHICH ARE THE MOST VALUABLE, IN PARTICULAR: CONSERVATION AREAS; LISTED BUILDINGS AND THEIR SETTINGS; SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS; PARKS AND GARDENS OF SPECIAL HISTORIC INTEREST; AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS. SUCH BUILDINGS, AREAS AND FEATURES OF ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC MERIT WILL BE PROTECTED FROM ADVERSE DEVELOPMENT OR DEMOLITION AND POSITIVE MEASURES WILL BE TAKEN OR SUPPORTED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, TO FACILITATE THEIR CONTINUED UPKEEP AND BENEFICIAL USE. PARTICULAR EMPHASIS WILL BE PLACED ON SECURING NEW USES FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS TO ENSURE THEIR FUTURE, AND ON PROMOTING CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES WHICH PROVIDE A STIMULUS FOR THE REGENERATION OF TOWN CENTRES, OLDER URBAN AND RURAL AREAS, INCLUDING HISTORIC AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPES.

19.20 The Borough's built heritage forms part of a finite national resource - which once gone can never be replaced. It has the effect of uplifting the local environment, contributing to local distinctiveness, our sense of history and our quality of life. The Council also sees buildings of architectural and historic merit having an increasingly important role to play in providing opportunities for commercial development, tourism, as a focus for urban regeneration, and as a tool for education. The Council is committed to preserving and enhancing the best of the built heritage through the control of development and the promotion of improvement measures. Enhancement measures may include positive action by the Council, through: area improvement schemes; regeneration schemes in partnership with others; and through promoting proposals for the restoration, reuse and adaptation of buildings. It is important that viable uses for buildings of architectural and historic merit are secured to help maintain investment. The Policy recognises that if older buildings of character and features of historic or architectural interest are well maintained and restored for new uses, they can increase the appeal of an area, maintain local character and distinctiveness, help to stimulate investment, and support economic regeneration. Consequently, the Plan places particular emphasis on the positive contribution that built heritage can make to maintaining the character and sustaining the regeneration of the Borough's older urban areas, its town centres and its rich historic and cultural landscapes.

BE/10 DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND ANCIENT MONUMENTS.

Developers must take full account of the presence of known Ancient Monuments and sites of archaeological importance and their settings in proposals. Planning permission will be refused where developers do not sympathetically accommodate such structures or remains, particularly where the proposal has a significant affect on the site itself or its setting.
Proposals should accommodate the physical preservation of archaeological features in situ. In exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, and where the site is of lesser significance, archaeological excavation to secure the preservation of features either on or off site may be appropriate to enable preservation by record. In such cases, the applicant may be required to carry out a programme of proper recording of archaeological evidence before development takes place. Such a programme could be secured by planning conditions or through a Section 106 obligation negotiated with the applicant. In all cases there should be a full and appropriate prior evaluation of the archaeological resource detailing its value, the likely impact of proposals and mitigation as required.

19.21 Ancient Monuments and sites of archaeological interest are a valuable part of the Borough's heritage and should be conserved as far as possible. The effects of development proposals on archaeological value must be assessed and evaluated before planning applications are determined and the County Archaeological Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) is a reference for this purpose.

19.22 The development control process provides an opportunity to suggest amendments to a proposal to protect a site or allow monitoring during development. In certain cases archaeological mitigation may be required. For example, where the local planning authority decides that the physical preservation in situ of known sites is not justified and that development should proceed, the developer may be required to make appropriate provision for the excavation and recording of remains. This can be achieved through planning conditions and legal agreements reached between appropriate parties. The policy applies to sites scheduled as being of national importance and all other known sites and monuments. Although the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is ultimately responsible for the protection of scheduled sites and monuments, the Council needs to ensure the protection of other sites. The Council will consult with Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit, English Heritage and DCMS as appropriate in respect of any explicit or implied threat to a site. It should be recognised that proposals which do not require planning permission can have an impact on sites and their settings and it may be appropriate to use planning legislation to bring minor works and development under planning control.

**BE/11 PROTECTION OF LOCALLY IMPORTANT BUILDINGS AND FEATURES OF ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC INTEREST.**

The Council will permit development proposals that do not adversely affect buildings and features which are of local interest and which contribute to the character of an area and/or are important in townscape terms.

19.23 In addition to those buildings that are statutorily listed for their architectural or historic merit, there are many other urban and rural buildings that contribute to the local cultural heritage and the character of the built up areas and the countryside. They include diverse examples of traditional or locally characteristic urban or rural architecture and use of materials. Other features of importance include town parks, gardens relating to former houses and estates, and a range of smaller scale features such as traditional boundaries (walls, hedgerows), mill lodges, and public utilities.

19.24 It is important to ensure that their heritage value and contribution to local character is clearly recognised in proposals and that opportunities to incorporate and conserve such value are incorporated into the design of proposals. The Council will prepare planning briefs where appropriate and the use of design statements, including Town and Village Design Statements prepared by the local community, can be a useful tool in highlighting locally important buildings and features. The Sites and Monuments Record will also be used to identify such sites and buildings of interest. The Council will also look into the usefulness of, and the resources required to produce a list of such buildings and features to help guide developers and others.

19.25 The primary responsibility for statutorily ‘listing’ buildings lies with the Secretary of State. There may be circumstances where significant buildings not presently listed merit urgent protection in the light of proposals which would threaten their continuing existence, or fundamentally affect the contribution they make to the local scene. In such cases the Council may serve a Building Preservation Notice or an alternative
BE/12  DEMOLITION OF LISTED BUILDINGS

Consent to demolish listed buildings will only be granted where the building is incapable of restoration or sensitive adaptation and every possible effort has been made to continue the present use or to find a suitable alternative use, including placing the building for sale on the open market without restrictions.

Where the demolition of a Listed Building is acceptable, there must be detailed plans for the development or appropriate treatment of the site and the development must enhance the appearance of the surrounding area. Conditions will be imposed on any grant of consent for demolition, including a condition that demolition shall not take place until a contract for the carrying out of redevelopment works has been made and planning permission for those works has been granted.

In those circumstances where demolition is unavoidable, the applicant may be required to carry out a programme of proper recording, prior to demolition commencing. Such a programme could be secured by planning conditions or through a Section 106 obligation negotiated with the applicant. As a result of demolition there may be materials (e.g., stone setts or walling materials) which could be reused on site, helping to maintain the character of the area. The Council will strongly recommend to developers that such salvage practices be adopted as best practice wherever practical and possible.

19.26 A strong presumption will be made against the demolition of any Listed Building, and it will be for the applicant to demonstrate that there is no possible alternative. Consent will not be given for the total or substantial demolition of any Listed Building without clear and convincing evidence that:

a) all reasonable efforts have been made to sustain existing uses or to find viable new uses, and these efforts have failed;

b) that preservation in some form of charitable or community ownership is not possible or suitable; or

c) that redevelopment would produce substantial benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from demolition.

19.27 Consent will not be given for demolition simply because redevelopment is economically more attractive to the developer than repair and reuse of a historic building, or because the developer acquired the building at a higher price that reflected the potential for redevelopment rather than the condition and constraints of the existing historic building.

In exceptional cases where these criteria have been fulfilled and the loss of the Listed Building is demonstrated to be unavoidable, planning conditions may be attached or a legal agreement sought, requiring the applicant to fund the cost of implementing a programme of proper recording of those parts to be demolished, prior to the commencement of work.

The effect on wildlife, in particular protected species, should always be considered fully in any proposal and the provisions of Policy NE/4 ‘Protected Species’ will be applied.
Changes of use to Listed Buildings will be permitted where:-

a) An appropriate and sympathetic balance is struck between the effect of changes on the special interest of the Listed Building and the viability of any proposed use; and

b) A satisfactory assessment of the viability and impact of the proposal compared to alternative possible uses is carried out.

19.28 Although generally desirable, it may not always be possible for buildings to remain in their original use and new uses may be needed to secure a viable future for the building. New uses that are economically attractive may not always be acceptable in terms of their impact on the character of a Listed Building and care must be taken to consider this constraint when preparing a proposal.

19.29 In particular, commercial and residential uses can provide relatively high levels of return dependent on location, and these can often be more easily used to justify the investment involved in the restoration and reuse of a particular Listed Building. However factors such as the division of internal spaces and intensification of use involved can adversely affect character and changes to the curtilage and setting (e.g., parking and access requirements, shop fronts, signage) can have similar impacts if not designed with due care. Although many types of Listed Buildings are susceptible to inappropriate change, those most at risk include agricultural buildings, chapels, civic and industrial buildings, and many smaller buildings with possibly quite unique features.

19.30 Achieving a proper balance between conservation and viable new uses of a Listed Building should always be based on specialist advice. Where such expertise is available and proposals show suitable consideration of the conservation interest and character of the building, normal development control policies will be applied with flexibility in the interests of securing an appropriate and viable future for the building. Proposals must be compared against alternative, possibly less damaging uses to clearly demonstrate that the proposal is the most appropriate balance of viable usage with the conservation of historic and archaeological interest. These criteria will be applied as appropriate in conjunction with those of Policy BE/14 “Alterations and Extensions to Listed Buildings”.

BE/14 ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS TO LISTED BUILDINGS

Development proposals affecting the character of a Listed Building must not harm the architectural value or historic interest of the host building, its curtilage and the surrounding area. In particular, applications for Listed Building Consent involving alterations and extensions (and repairs where materials and/or techniques differ from the original) will need to demonstrate, through the provision of detailed plans, that:-

a) Account has been taken of the scale and proportions of the host building, and its relationship to other buildings and their setting;

b) Sympathetic and high quality materials are used;

c) Internal spaces, features and fixtures are retained; and

d) Appropriate detailing is employed throughout, particularly the arrangement and design of fenestration and appropriate roof forms.

In cases where Listed Building Consent for alteration or extension is given, and where it is appropriate to record the character of the building before works commence, a condition may be attached to such consent, or a legal agreement sought with the applicant relating to a proper programme of recording.
19.31 The character and historic significance of a Listed Building can easily be damaged by unsympathetic alterations even of a relatively minor nature. Specialist advice and guidance to building owners, developers and contractors before and during building works, will continue to form a formal part of the Council’s role in the conservation of Listed Buildings, whether Listed Building Consent is required or not.

19.32 Where such consent is required, detailed drawings clearly indicating the existing form of the building and the precise changes proposed, including items such as a schedule of works, must be submitted. Listed Building owners should ensure that appropriate advice and expertise is employed in preparing and submitting a proposal.

19.33 Where unauthorised work to a Listed Building has been carried out, i.e., without first obtaining Listed Building Consent, an application for the retention of the works will be required - following the same procedures as for other Listed Building Consent applications. Consent will not be granted merely to recognise works already carried out and the proposal will be rigorously assessed against all relevant criteria. If works are not of a suitable standard or type, consent will not be granted. In such circumstances, a Listed Building Enforcement Notice may be issued or prosecution in accordance with Government’s planning policy guidance may be initiated.

19.34 These provisions will be applied, where appropriate, in conjunction with those for Policy BE/13 ‘Changes of Use to Listed Buildings’. The provisions of Policy NE/4 ‘Protected Species’ will also be applied where appropriate.

BE/15 NEW DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING THE SETTING OF A LISTED BUILDING

Development will not be permitted, where through its siting, scale, design or materials, would harm the setting of a listed building.

19.35 Listed Buildings and their settings are particularly sensitive to change in the local built environment. A high standard of maintenance will also assist the effective conservation of such buildings and their settings.

19.36 Where new development is proposed which would impinge on the sensitivity of a Listed Building or its setting, the applicant will be required to clearly demonstrate how its character and setting have been taken account of by the proposed development and provide evidence of suitable conservation measures employed where appropriate. Such evidence should make reference to the design techniques and principles employed and to the visual relationship between the Listed Building and the proposed development and to compare it with the existing situation. Where such evidence is not submitted or is incomplete or unconvincing, consent will not be granted.

19.37 Opportunities will arise to enhance Listed Buildings and their settings, for example, through new development schemes, environmental improvement and building improvement schemes (e.g., cleaning, illumination and other works) and land management initiatives (e.g., in rural areas). Such schemes have been carried out within town centres and Conservation Areas and the Council will endeavour to secure further improvements as resources permit.

BE/16 DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS IN CONSERVATION AREAS

When considering proposals for the demolition of unlisted buildings in a Conservation Area, the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area in which the building is situated will be considered. Proposals to demolish such buildings will be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish Listed Buildings (see Policy BE/12). Consent to demolish will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the building cannot be beneficially used and all possible efforts have been made to find a use for the building. Where the demolition of an unlisted building is acceptable, there must be detailed plans for the
development or appropriate treatment of the site and development must enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area. Any grant of consent for demolition will include a condition that demolition shall not take place until a contract for the carrying out of works of redevelopment has been made and planning permission for those works has been granted.

19.38 The demolition of an unlisted building in a Conservation Area can often have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the area. Such buildings may have a character and quality in their own right as well as contributing to the historic character and architectural style of the area or townscape. It is for this reason that the demolition of buildings in Conservation Areas requires formal planning consent. The building should be retained, improved and where possible put to an alternative use. Sometimes buildings do not contribute to the character and appearance of a Conservation Area and their demolition may lead to opportunities for environmental improvements. In other cases retention and alternative uses are not feasible or practicable and, thus, demolition may be acceptable in principle. Demolition must be related to an imminent scheme to redevelop the site of the building or, if appropriate, a scheme to landscape or treat the site in a manner which enhances the Conservation Area. Protected species may be present within older buildings in conservation areas and it is important that proposals for demolition are considered against Policy NE/4 ‘Protected Species’.

**BE/17 NEW DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING CONSERVATION AREAS**

Development proposals will be permitted that preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area. In assessing a proposal, the following principles – where relevant – will be taken into account:

a) Its relationship to existing buildings, the site and its surroundings;

b) Its design - including elevations, roof form, materials, finishes and detailing;

c) The retention, replacement and restoration of historic features and details of buildings, and - in the public realm - walls, paving and street furniture;

d) The retention and enhancement of landscaped areas, trees and natural features;

e) The design of new shop fronts (and replacements and/or alterations to those existing) should reflect the character or appearance of the conservation area, consistent with the provisions of Policy BE/5;

f) The design and siting of advertisements, new street furniture, paving and other highway surfaces and related structures (e.g., lighting and signs); and

g) The design and siting of car parking and servicing facilities.

Development proposals should include detailed plans and drawings enabling its implication(s) for the character and appearance of the conservation area to be established.

19.39 The Planning (listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. That requirement is carried forward into government guidance (PPG 15: Planning and the Historic Environment). This policy reflects those requirements. It is not the Councils intention that new development should be stifled provided that development satisfies the principles set out in the policy. Current Conservation Areas and their boundaries are shown on the Proposals Map. The Council is undertaking a review of Conservation Areas in the borough and will appraise existing Conservation Areas and their boundaries, and formulate specific proposals and policies for their preservation and enhancement. These will provide a detailed context for the preparation and determination of development proposals.
Design and the Built Environment

Chapter 19

BE/18 CHANGES OF USE TO BUILDINGS IN CONSERVATION AREAS

Proposals for the change of use of unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas will be permitted provided that:

a) The new use is compatible with adjoining uses;

b) Conversion and adaptation respects the architectural and historic interest of the buildings and their settings; and

c) The provisions of Policy BE/17 “New Development Affecting Conservation Areas” are satisfied.

19.40 It is not always possible for buildings in Conservation Areas to remain in their original use. Policy BE/13 “Changes of Use to Listed Buildings” recognises that it may be necessary to find an alternative use for a Listed Building in order to ensure its maintenance and retention. Similarly, unlisted buildings of character that contribute to a Conservation Area can also be maintained in this way. In some cases, commercial uses (e.g., offices) may provide an opportunity to ensure a continuing future for a building. However where such uses are acceptable by virtue of other policies of the Plan, their impact for example in terms of traffic generation, car parking, alterations to frontages and related advertisements, must not detract from the special character of the Conservation Area - particularly those in a rural setting. Uses should also seek to reflect the historical associations of the particular Conservation Area.

19.41 Vacant upper floors are a characteristic of many Conservation Areas in the Borough, particularly those located within town centres. It is important to encourage their use to contribute to the vitality of the Conservation Area and maintain investment in the buildings. Any alterations or extensions to buildings, or ancillary facilities (e.g., car parking and servicing) which are proposed in connection with the new use will be assessed against Policy BE/17 above.

BE/19 PROTECTION OF PARKS AND GARDENS OF SPECIAL HISTORIC INTEREST

Development proposals which would result in the loss of, or cause harm to the historic character, structure or setting of any part of a designated historic park or garden will not be permitted.

19.42 The National Heritage Act 1983 enables English Heritage to compile a register of gardens and other land of special historic interest. This may include town parks, former estate land and cemeteries. In many cases such sites are an important part of the local landscape and are accessible to the public for recreation or reflection. It is important to ensure that the historic features (built and natural) and character of such sites are fully recognised in development proposals so that their protection and enhancement can be achieved. The advice of the Garden History Society, English Heritage and Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit will be sought where required, in respect of proposals for new development within such sites and other proposals seeking to conserve, restore or introduce features and facilities.

19.43 Sites currently listed in the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens include Rochdale Cemetery, Queens Park, Heywood, and Broadfield and Falinge Parks, Rochdale.
CHAPTER 20
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

G/EM/1 (PART ONE POLICY)  ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND POLLUTION CONTROL

THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT THE LOCATION AND IMPACT OF NEW DEVELOPMENT IS REGULATED IN THE INTERESTS OF GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT. DEVELOPMENT THAT HELPS TO MAKE ROCHDALE A CLEANER AND SAFER PLACE WILL BE ENCOURAGED AND PERMITTED. THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK THE MINIMUM PRACTICABLE LEVELS OF GROUND, AIR, WATER AND NOISE POLLUTION FROM ALL DEVELOPMENTS AND WILL ENSURE THAT EXISTING LEVELS OF POLLUTION IN THE BOROUGH ARE PROGRESSIVELY REDUCED AS RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITIES PERMIT. DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE ACTIVITIES WILL BE EXPECTED TO SAFEGUARD PUBLIC SAFETY AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, INCLUDING WATER-COURSES AND FLOOD PLAINS.

20.1 Part of the Borough's industrial legacy has been the pollution of the air and watercourses, and contamination of the ground. The Council is committed to addressing these problems through the planning process as well as through other legislation in order to provide a clean, safe and healthy environment for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors.

20.2 Air quality is an increasingly important quality of life issue. Air pollutants can have adverse effects on human health and can also damage the natural environment and buildings. Poor air quality can also detract from the image of the local environment and discourage investment in regeneration and enhancement. The Council is also seeking to reduce air pollution problems through its transport policies, land use allocations and landscape measures. Specific proposals to monitor and address air quality issues will also be pursued through a local Air Quality Management Plan.

20.3 The Environment Agency will be supported in its efforts to control the disposal of chemicals and other pollutants into the ground and water-courses. The Council is also required to consider the impact of new development on the capacity of water-courses and the effectiveness of flood plains.

EM/2 POLLUTION

If the emission of pollutants from a proposed development cannot readily be controlled by other environmental legislation, such development will not be permitted where it would be likely to result in an increase in air, water, noise, light or other pollution, which would be harmful to the environment, and to land uses and land users in the area.

Where permission is granted, it will be subject to appropriate conditions or obligations to ensure that air, water and noise pollution is kept to acceptable levels.

New housing or other environmentally sensitive development will not be permitted where existing pollution levels are unacceptable and cannot satisfactorily be reduced.

20.4 The Council, the Environment Agency and other bodies have powers to control pollution and licence emissions under environmental health and other legislation. It is not the function of the policy to duplicate these powers. However, the planning system has an important role to play in determining the location of potentially polluting development as well as controlling other development in proximity to any sources of
pollution. This policy therefore sets out how the Council intends to take account of the effects of pollution on current and future uses of land and their amenities.

20.5 Certain types of development and its associated traffic can give rise to water, ground or air pollution and excessive noise or pollution from light sources, and this can cause severe problems when they are close to housing and other uses sensitive to pollution. For example, the close physical relationship between housing and industry in many parts of the Borough requires special attention to be given to the impact of pollution in the control of development. (Problems can also arise where certain industrial processes and activities cause difficulties for other neighbouring industrial and commercial uses). Conversely, it is desirable to ensure that sensitive uses are kept apart from polluting or potentially polluting uses where such uses cannot reasonably coexist in order to prevent future problems for those sensitive uses and to prevent restrictions on the operation and expansion of existing industrial uses.

20.6 The Council will expect developers to take account the impact of external lighting in development schemes. It will wish to be satisfied that the lighting scheme proposed is the minimum required for security and working purposes, and that light spillage and potential glare is minimised, particularly to residential and commercial areas, areas of wildlife interest, and areas whose open landscape qualities would be affected.

20.7 The Council will expect developers to provide sufficient environmental information to enable the Council to make a proper judgement on the application. Where a proposal falls within the scope of the ‘Environmental Assessment Regulations’ an environmental statement should be provided. In other cases, where an application is not accompanied by sufficient information on which to reach a decision, the Council may request supplementary information.

20.8 Where there is a significant possibility that any proposed development will affect air quality standards, an air quality assessment may be required. The Council will expect developers to consider the air quality impacts on humans, flora and fauna of traffic using the development as well as pollutant emissions from the proposal itself. Such assessments and measures for controlling air quality to acceptable levels will be particularly appropriate within the ‘Air Quality Management Area’ (AQMA) or where applications may conflict with measures proposed in AQMA ‘Action Plans’.

20.9 In assessing development proposals the Council will also have regard to available scientific evidence and will seek the advice of relevant pollution control authorities. Where required to safeguard planning interests which lie outside the scope of the relevant pollution control authority, planning conditions or obligations to control aspects of development will be used.

20.10 It should be noted that this and other chapters of the Plan contain more specific ‘pollution’ policies or policies and proposals which include ‘pollution’ criteria, in particular:
- Policy EM/3 below, which specifically deals with ‘noise and new development’;
- Policy EM/4, which deals with ‘contaminated land’;
- Policy EM/5, which deals with ‘development in proximity to landfill sites’;
- Policies EM/6, which deal with the location of potentially ‘hazardous’ uses or installations, and proposals for development in proximity to them;
- Policy EM/8 which deals with the ‘protection of surface and ground water’.

**EM/3 NOISE AND NEW DEVELOPMENT**

Development will not be permitted where:

a) It would lead to unacceptable levels of noise nuisance to nearby existing or future occupants of buildings, or users of open space; or

b) It involves a noise sensitive use (such as housing, a school or hospital) which would be sited in or close to an area that is, or is likely to become, subject to unacceptably high levels of noise generation.
Environmental Management

Where the effects of existing noise on proposed new development, or noise likely to be generated by new development, can be adequately controlled by design, landscaping and other measures, as enforced by planning conditions, the Council will grant planning permission, provided the development is acceptable in all other respects.

20.11 Noise pollution is an increasing problem, but only in the most extreme cases is it regarded as a statutory nuisance against which special legal action can be taken. In other cases, noise associated with industrial processes and activities and, more increasingly, traffic, can cause significant environmental problems and to some extent planning controls can help to tackle this.

20.12 Local planning authorities are required by Government to consider noise emissions resulting from development and activities in determining planning applications. It is also important for the effects of noise nuisance from existing sources to be taken into account when considering development proposals close to those sources.

20.13 This policy recognises that some developments or activities that generate noise can be designed or controlled to reduce the effects of noise disturbance. Schemes can be designed to incorporate measures such as earth-mounding and planting, noise barriers, sensitive location of plant, machinery and outside storage areas, access and vehicle circulation areas, and limitations on hours of operation. Similarly, where development is proposed close to an existing source of noise, attenuation measures can be incorporated within the scheme. For example, a housing development proposed close to a motorway could be acceptable where noise levels are minimised by careful layout, and the use of noise barriers or landscaped buffers. In some cases, the Council will wish to secure noise attenuation measures by imposing conditions on planning permissions and by seeking legal agreements with the developer or operator. In applying this policy, the Council will be guided by the advice set out in PPG24 ‘Planning and Noise’, and will obtain specialist advice as necessary in considering particular proposals.

EM/4 CONTAMINATED LAND

Where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that land which is the subject of a development proposal has the potential for contamination, the Council will require a detailed survey of ground conditions, details of any proposed remedial treatments and a completion report to establish that the work has been carried out in accordance with the agreed remediation scheme. In considering proposals for new development or change of use, the Council will take account of their potential for contamination of land and will seek to prevent further contamination by refusing proposals likely to give rise to significant contamination or by imposing stringent conditions.

20.14 The Council has a duty under legislation other than planning to identify sites that fall within the statutory definition of contaminated land and to bring about remediation of these sites. However, there are many sites that are contaminated as a result of historical uses of the land but which do not meet the statutory definition. The Council will seek to address the problems of these contaminated sites as re-development proposals are put forward.

20.15 In the case of sites proposed for development the extent and nature of contamination needs to be established by careful and systematic survey work at an early stage. The assistance of specialist consultants with the requisite range of skills may be necessary to confirm the degree and extent of contamination. Once the level of contamination has been adequately assessed, a programme of remediation work, which is appropriate to the proposed use, can be designed. The agreed remediation scheme should then be implemented and on completion, a report detailing the work has been carried out will be required. This should obviate the need for expensive remedial action during the course of construction or once the development has been completed.
Environmental Management

20.16 Leakages and drainage from contaminated land can also pose serious risks of pollution both to surface and groundwater systems. The risk to surface water and ground water resources by the disturbance of contaminated land must also be ascertained and preventative measures devised (See policy EM/8 “Protection of Surface and Ground Water”).

EM/5 DEVELOPMENT IN PROXIMITY TO LANDFILL SITES

The Council will strictly control the location of residential and other development on, or in close proximity to, existing or former landfill sites and will not grant permission for such development where there is considered to be a substantial risk to the development as advised by the Environment Agency. Residential development within 50 metres of the boundary of infilled waste and the provision of garden areas within 10 metres of the boundary of infilled waste will not be permitted. Any proposals that are permitted will be subject to conditions to ensure that adequate precautionary measures are undertaken to secure the long term safety of the structure and its occupants.

20.16 Many former and existing landfill sites are known to be producing landfill gas, principally methane and carbon dioxide, as a result of the decomposition of wastes in the landfill. This mixture of gases may give rise to a variety of hazards if it migrates to and accumulates in property or confined spaces. If present in sufficient quantity, the gas may form an explosive mixture with air, it can be an asphyxiant and, in certain circumstances, be toxic. Leachate can also migrate and generate gas some distance from a landfill. Monitoring at regular intervals over a suitable period of time can establish that gas levels have fallen below the threshold at which risk is likely to occur, as defined in the Department of the Environment’s Waste Management Paper No. 26. Alternatively, it is possible to design and install barriers to gas migration either at the edge of the landfill site or in the foundations of the property so as to reduce the risks to an acceptable level. Residential development presents particular problems, as the pattern of ownership is fragmented and individual owners may not be aware of the possible risks and may carry out small scale developments without planning permission, e.g. the construction of garages, sheds, greenhouses or domestic extensions, which could be at risk if not protected by barrier measures. Contamination problems could also affect garden areas, and disturbance of the ground to create garden areas could provide pathways for landfill gas.

EM/6 HAZARDOUS NOTIFIABLE INSTALLATIONS

The location of residential and other development in the vicinity of existing notifiable installations will be strictly controlled. Planning permission for development adjacent to existing notifiable installations and/or for the expansion or intensification of notifiable installations will only be granted where the Council is satisfied that risks to the public, the land and the surrounding environment have been fully assessed. Where it is considered that the development will result in a substantial risk to the public, the land or the surrounding environment, planning permission will be refused.

20.17 Certain industrial or warehousing activities, together with pipelines, as a result of the processes taking place, or the quantity or type of material used, stored or carried, create risks which affect a wider area than the premises or pipeline themselves. Such sites are identified as notifiable installations and there are a number of these within the Borough. The use and storage of certain materials in notifiable quantities is subject to stringent control by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE). However, planning consent to store hazardous substances is required under the Hazardous Substances Act 1990. It is considered to be prudent to control proposals for new and the expansion of existing notifiable installations and proposals for any development which takes place within a specified distance of the installation. Consultation distances for each installation are set by the HSE. In determining whether or not to grant consent to store hazardous substances or to carry out development proposals within the consultation distance the Council will take account of the advice it receives from the HSE following an assessment of the risk involved.
EM/7 DEVELOPMENT AND FLOOD RISK

Development will not be permitted in areas identified as flood plains, or other areas where development could contribute to increased flood risk, unless an appropriate flood risk assessment has been carried out and all of the following criteria are met:

a) It will not increase the risk of flooding within the flood plain or in adjoining areas by reducing flood storage capacity, increasing flows within a flood plain or through the additional discharge of surface water;

b) It will not itself be at risk from flooding;

c) Appropriate sustainable drainage systems are used;

d) Adequate access adjacent to the water course for maintenance is provided;

e) Existing or proposed flood defences are protected;

f) It would not result in extensive culverting; and

g) Flood defence works required as a consequence of development are provided at the developer’s expense.

Flood defences and related engineering works must also ensure that recognised ecological, geomorphological, archaeological, landscape and recreational interests associated with a water course or adjacent areas are fully taken into account and appropriate mitigation provided. The sequential test approach and principles set out in PPG 25 ‘Development and Flood Risk’ will be followed in considering development proposals.

20.18 The incidence and impact of flooding is an increasing cause for concern and there is a likelihood of increased flood risk due to factors such as climate change. Other factors which can affect the pattern and effects of flooding include the location of development and the use of land, particularly where it involves the raising or filling of land or increased discharge of surface water. Government policy and guidance sees land use planning as a positive tool to help reduce the risks to people and the developed and natural environment caused by flooding.

20.19 Indicative Flood Plains as identified by the Environment Agency are shown on the Proposals Map. Developers should consult the Environment Agency where proposals fall within flood plains, adjacent areas where development could contribute to flood risk and other areas liable to flooding. It should be noted that the flood plain information provided on the Proposals Map is for illustration only and that only the most up to date flood risk information should be used for flood risk assessment purposes. The Environment Agency have produced a Flood Map containing information about Flood Zones (replacing Indicative Flood Plains) and flood defences. This map is updated at three monthly intervals and further information can be obtained from the local authority or the Environment Agency website (www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency). For all proposals, an appropriate form of flood risk assessment (based on a sequential test and principles set out in PPG 25 “Development and Flood Risk”) must be carried out to identify the likely frequency and impact of flooding, taking into account the adequacy of flood defences and the affect development will have both on and off site. Based on such an assessment, the acceptability or otherwise of proposals can be identified, and any required mitigation established.

20.20 The sequential test for the characterisation of flood risk outlined in PPG25 also identifies the appropriate planning response for the various categories of flood risk. In areas identified as having a high risk of flooding (i.e., an annual probability of flooding of 1% or greater), development will be heavily restricted in functional flood plains and in undeveloped or sparsely developed areas. In developed areas, there may be more scope for development provided that suitable flood defences can be provided. In areas with lower risk, the opportunities for development are consequently greater but may still require measures to mitigate potential flood risk. The Council, in identifying development allocations, has had regard to the sequential approach outlined above. In areas identified as having an increased risk of flooding, priority has been given
to locating allocations in previously developed areas. Where allocations correspond with such areas of increased flood risk, the provisions of this policy are noted as a core requirement for assessing proposals.

20.21 The ecological, geomorphological, archaeological, landscape and recreational value of watercourses and flood plains can be significant. The effect of flood defence engineering on such features of interest should therefore be taken into account in the design of a proposal. For example, mitigation measures that would affect the natural meandering of a watercourse, remove waterside habitats, or increase or decrease the flow of water in particular locations may be harmful.

20.22 Where additional flood defences, other mitigation works or warning measures are required as a result of new development, they should be funded by the developer, including adequate provision for ongoing maintenance.

20.23 Note: The areas of floodplain shown on the Proposals Map are indicative and based on generalised source material which may not include specific flood defences and other local factors potentially affecting the likelihood or location of flood risk. They should not, by themselves, be used to infer that specific areas are, or are not at risk of flooding. In all cases, the local planning authority should be consulted to ascertain the most current and detailed information available from the Environment Agency and the local authority.

EM/8 PROTECTION OF SURFACE AND GROUND WATER

Development likely to pose an unacceptable risk to surface water and ground water quality, or to water supply will not be permitted.

Development proposals will be expected to:

a) Make satisfactory arrangements for the disposal of sewage, trade effluent or contaminated surface water;

b) Avoid exacerbating existing problems such as premature or increased frequency of discharges through storm sewer overflows due to inadequate infrastructure or lack of capacity;

c) Ensure adequate safeguards against the pollution of surface or ground water through the spillage or leakage of stored oils/chemicals or other potentially polluting substances; and

d) Ensure that there will be no detrimental effect upon the availability of water resources to existing users and the environment.

20.24 It is important to ensure that development and associated activities do not lead to the pollution of watercourses, surface water features or sensitive ecological habitats. The protection of water resources and river quality is an important part of sustainable development. It is also an important aspect of improving and developing the Borough’s river valleys and water features for recreation and tourism activities. The Council will therefore restrict development that threatens surface water quality and will generally encourage initiatives that result in an improvement in surface water quality. Ground water resources are an essential source of water for public supply, industry and agriculture. They also sustain the base flow of many rivers. Once ground water has been contaminated, it is difficult if not impossible to rehabilitate it.

20.25 The need to consider the effects of development on water quality is stressed in national guidance. It is for the relevant pollution control authority to regulate the precise discharges from any commercial or industrial activity and the Council will not involve itself in detailed discussions as to the level of pollutants in any discharges. However, the infrastructure necessary to enable discharges to take place or prevent uncontrolled discharges are frequently subject to planning control. The Council will exercise its planning function to ensure proper protection is afforded in decisions where there is a risk to the water environment. The Council will normally approve development where the risk or impact of potential pollution on land-use or amenity can be controlled by planning conditions and the necessary infrastructure is secured through planning obligations.
Where the Council considers that a development site is potentially either itself unstable or bounded by unstable land, the developer will be required, before the application is determined, to provide:

a) A report of survey and findings assessing the nature and scale of any stability problems; and

b) Details of any remedial measures to be carried out.

Where remedial measures are necessary, planning permission will only be granted subject to a condition that the development is carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

20.26 There are areas of land in the Borough where instability of the land itself or of land in close proximity can present certain potential dangers to the development of such sites and the owners and occupiers of the land. The instability can have a variety of causes, either singly or in combination, e.g. geological factors, geomorphological or hydrological factors, past mining, tipping, quarrying or engineering operations. National Guidance stresses that instability can be a material factor in assessing planning applications and it is the owner’s responsibility to take appropriate measures to deal with any problems on his land. The Council will, in conjunction with the Greater Manchester Geological Unit, seek to identify areas and locations where instability may be a problem and will consult the Unit on proposals falling within such areas.

Development proposals for the reclamation of land and buildings for after-uses will be permitted, including those sites:

a) Where it may remove a risk to health or personal safety;

b) That can contribute to area regeneration and redevelopment schemes; and

c) That can provide opportunities for environmental improvement through, for example, landscape restoration and enhancement, nature conservation, forestry, or outdoor recreation.

20.27 The term 'derelict' is used to describe land and buildings that must be treated before any development or beneficial use can take place. The Council's Derelict Land Programme and other initiatives have led to substantial reductions in the level of derelict land. The type and location of dereliction varies widely and includes former industrial sites in the core of the urban areas and large former quarries in the countryside.

20.28 Derelict land and buildings have an adverse affect on the visual quality of an area, acting as a disincentive to investment and reducing surrounding land values. There can also be health and safety concerns for adjoining communities. It is also a significant potential resource for development which can be used to foster urban regeneration and reduce pressure on greenfield sites. Derelict land may also have potential for outdoor recreational activities and urban and rural forestry. The Council is committed to tackling dereliction through a range of regeneration and environmental improvement programmes and will encourage private landowners, individually and in partnership to consider reclamation of their sites and premises using grant aid where available.

20.29 In some cases, reclamation may not be an expensive undertaking. The ‘natural’ regeneration of many derelict sites e.g., former quarries and spoil heaps can lead to the creation of new nature conservation interest and the redevelopment of a site for outdoor recreation uses may only require minimal works and infrastructure. It is important to ensure that where nature conservation interest has established, it is recognised in redevelopment proposals. The potential presence of protected species should be taken into account in all cases, in particular proposals affecting derelict buildings.
20.30 The Council will continue to work with North West Development Agency, the Forestry Commission and other partners to facilitate the reclamation of derelict land and buildings and assist urban and rural regeneration through the improvement of image, investment potential and environmental quality. A Derelict Land Strategy for Greater Manchester has been produced through the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities to support the implementation of key local and county wide objectives and the reclamation of priority sites and areas.

**EM/11 OTHER DEGRADED LAND AND BUILDINGS**

Development proposals for the redevelopment, rehabilitation or reclamation of land and buildings that are not derelict but are not in beneficial use, will be permitted, including those sites addressed by Policy EM/10 a) to c).

20.31 There are many sites and buildings throughout the Borough which do not fall strictly within the definition of ‘derelict’ but which have the appearance of dereliction and decay and which the Council would like to see developed or enhanced for built or open uses. Sites can be large or small and include redundant industrial or commercial premises, spare land associated with existing or former land uses (e.g., ‘back’ land attached to industrial premises or transport corridors), and in rural areas, redundant agricultural buildings. In many cases buildings are ill suited to modern needs, neglected and possibly unsafe. Such buildings and land can have a significant adverse impact on the environmental quality of an area without remedial treatment where in some cases, the only practical option may be clearance.

20.32 As with derelict land and buildings, such sites are an increasingly valuable resource for development whether built or open. There are opportunities to assist social, economic and environmental regeneration and the Council, in partnership with other public, private and voluntary sector partners, will continue to promote, encourage and carry out site and area based regeneration and renewal initiatives. This will include the treatment of vacant and visually degraded land and the clearance or rehabilitation of unsightly and underused land and buildings. There are also opportunities for community participation in local environmental improvements such as those managed through Groundwork Trust or the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV). Sites will also be included in the Greater Manchester Derelict Land Strategy where they have a potential role in addressing key environmental or social and economic regeneration objectives.

20.34 There may be a degree of nature conservation value which has established over time at such sites due to factors such as the relative lack of disturbance or management of vegetation. In some cases this may be locally valuable and any proposals should take account of such features where appropriate. The presence of protected species may also be an issue and survey work to ascertain such use should be carried out, in particular where buildings are concerned.

**G/EM/12 (PART ONE POLICY) RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY CONSERVATION**

Proposals for the generation of energy involving renewable energy technologies and facilities will be supported where they have no unacceptable impact on the local environment as demonstrated through an appropriate assessment of environmental impacts.

Measures to conserve and use energy efficiently within all development proposals through design, location and use of materials will be supported and encouraged.

20.35 As fossil fuels are depleted and the need to reduce greenhouse gasses and their impacts on the environment remains a high priority, it is necessary to introduce alternative ways of generating energy to ensure a sustainable and secure resource for future generations. Renewable sources of energy can make an important contribution to UK energy supply and assist global environmental protection through the control...
and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The Government is committed to a target of achieving 10 per cent of UK electricity requirements from renewable sources by 2010. It has supported the development of proposals through research and development of technologies and the Non Fossil Fuel Obligation (NFFO) which requires regional electricity companies to achieve specified amounts of electricity generation capacity from renewable energy sources.

20.36 The Lancashire and Yorkshire Renewable Energy Planning Study (including Rochdale and Oldham districts) undertaken on behalf of the Energy Technology Support Unit (ETSU) in 1997, showed that there was a strong and diverse regional potential for the development of renewable energy schemes based on a number of technologies and a variety of scales of operation. The potential resource includes landfill gas, municipal, industrial and agricultural waste, biomass, solar, hydro and wind. The Study also emphasised the need to ensure that full and appropriate protection was given to landscape and local character, nature conservation and the amenity of local communities. This has been further emphasised in a regional scoping study conducted by Sustainability North West and published in 2001.

20.37 The Plan provides support for renewable energy developments that are appropriate to their location in terms of scale, design and operation, which help to achieve established national and regional targets and which provide valuable local community benefits (e.g. providing power for a particular facility or helping to diversify the rural economy). The Plan will ensure that in assessing proposals, full protection is given to recognised environmental and community interests and that all impacts, both positive and negative are set out by applicants in an appropriate form of environmental assessment. All social and economic benefits which may arise from a proposal, for example the strengthening or creation of rural businesses and employment or dedicated sustainable and clean power supply for community, industrial or commercial facilities and local properties will be taken into account in any assessment.

20.38 In addition to the role of renewable energy, imaginative design and the location of developments to maximise the potential for energy conservation and efficiency can achieve significant environmental benefits. This is equally applicable to new buildings and the reuse or extension of existing buildings. The Plan will promote and encourage all development proposals to seek to reduce energy consumption through layout, design, construction techniques and use of materials and the use of alternative energy sources. Proposals will also be expected to make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and provide opportunities for the reduction of car borne trips.

**EM/13 ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND NEW DEVELOPMENT**

Development proposals which include measures to conserve and assist the efficient use of energy will be supported where this can be successfully incorporated into the design and layout, and where there are no adverse impacts on the amenity of the surrounding area (e.g., by virtue of visual impact, pollution and environmental disturbance). Measures which will be especially encouraged include:

a) The maximum use of local materials and recycled building materials for appropriate construction tasks where this would not adversely affect the quality, character and setting of the development;

b) The use of design, layout, landscaping and materials which help to conserve energy through the ongoing use of the development; and

c) The use of sustainable power generation systems such as solar and photovoltaic, small-scale combined heat and power, and other appropriate installations based on renewable and low carbon technologies.

20.39 The raw materials for construction and the majority of energy production rely primarily on non-renewable natural resources. National and regional objectives and targets have been established to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels and to develop the use of more sustainable energy practices including the increased contribution made by renewable energy technologies and the recycling or re-use of materials for many construction activities. The Council strongly supports such objectives through its corporate energy policy for energy management and in the Local Agenda 21 Strategy for the Borough.
20.40 Energy consumption should be an important consideration in the design and construction of new development (including the adaptation of existing buildings) and should be reflected in the use of materials, siting, layout, orientation and landscaping. Advances in alternative and sustainable energy technologies has also meant that a range of options are now available for the provision of heat and power to domestic properties, community and commercial facilities. These may include solar panels, photovoltaic cells, Combined Heat and Power (CHP), small-scale wind turbine development and hydro-electric power.

20.41 It is important to consider the impact of proposals both on and off-site in the surrounding area. Alternative energy technologies often require associated infrastructure or specific features on a building (e.g., solar panels) which may affect the character or setting of a building. In addition there may be impacts on local amenity through noise, smell, or other aspects of the processes involved e.g., waste storage, which must be fully assessed and mitigated where required. Recycled materials may also not be appropriate for certain uses at sensitive sites or locations where a particular character or treatment is required.

20.42 The Council will need to be satisfied as to the suitability of proposals for the site and its surroundings in all cases. Wherever possible and appropriate, the Council will assist developers by providing advice and guidance on energy efficient design and layout of new buildings, building methods and the use of sustainable power and heating systems.

**EM/14 WIND POWER DEVELOPMENTS**

The Council will support proposals for wind power developments and individual wind turbines where there is no unacceptable intrusion in the landscape, having regard to the cumulative impact and intervisibility of such developments whether within Rochdale or in neighbouring local authority areas. The following criteria must also be met in each case:

a) The proposal would not have an unacceptable effect on the visual character and quality of the landscape or materially detract from the physical record of the historic and cultural evolution of the landscape. Any proposal in conflict with this criterion will need to demonstrate that other locations are not suitable;

b) The proposal would not have an adverse impact on the setting of historic structures and Conservation Areas or historic landscapes;

c) The proposal creates no unacceptable amenity or noise problems for local residents;

d) The proposal would not result in a health or safety risk, nuisance to the public or adverse impact on highway safety by undue distraction to road users;

e) The proposal, by virtue of its siting or operation, would not adversely affect areas of ecological value or result in danger to wildlife or loss of important habitats;

f) Any proposal must demonstrate the best use of topography, siting, design and colour to minimise the visual impact of the proposal. Any ancillary structures and access roads should employ sensitive design and use of local materials to respect the character and appearance of its setting;

g) Every effort is made to route power lines underground where they link a wind power development to the national grid, or link individual wind generators to user buildings. All proposals should seek to minimise the length of cable connection in order to reduce the visual impact of such structures when sited above ground;

h) The Council is satisfied that the proposal would not result in electro-magnetic interference with local television reception and specialist radio communication networks;

i) Full consideration of the impact of any proposal including construction, vehicular access, visual and physical impacts and the effect on local residential amenity will be sought by the Council through a detailed statement of the environmental effects, to be submitted preferably at the time of application; and
j) The proposal would not cause serious harm to the value of the surrounding area for quiet relaxation and recreation.

The Council will require that where a windfarm facility is approved in accordance with the above, it should be used for power generation only. The granting of planning permission in accordance with this Policy will be subject to the condition that, if any wind turbine generator is not in operation producing electricity for six months, it shall be removed and the site fully restored to a use and condition which are appropriate to its surroundings and in accordance with this Plan.

20.43 The South Pennines has a significant potential for wind power development and within the North West region, the North West's renewable energy study has highlighted onshore wind power generation as having a major part to play in the future of energy. Within the Borough, the greatest potential for such development is located in the northern and eastern Pennine fringes where average windspeeds are sufficiently high.

20.44 The need to encourage wind power as a part of the contribution to regional energy supply should not override other considerations when dealing with planning applications such as its visual impact and other effects on amenity and the local environment. The physical and visual impact of developments cannot be underestimated. Large structures and supporting infrastructure can dominate a landscape by virtue of their size, siting and operation. The moorland landscape within Rochdale is highly visible from surrounding settlements and it is unlikely that individual turbines and especially multiple wind turbine developments can be fully screened from public view. Special consideration will be given to the relationship of any proposal to other wind power developments in the area which may not be within the Borough. The effects of a proposal on the recreational or tourism value of an area will also be assessed. The moorland also has a wide ranging ecological value including extensive areas covered by statutory and local designations which must be given full consideration in any proposal. The provisions of policy NE/2 ‘Designated Sites of Ecological and Geological/Geomorphological Importance’ will be applied to all proposals within or likely to affect designated areas.

20.45 The Council has adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance on Windpower Developments which gives full details of all factors which must be satisfactorily covered in planning applications and any environmental assessment carried out to support a proposal. It is strongly recommended that prospective developers take full account of the guidance in the preparation and presentation of proposals.

**EM/15 SAFEGUARDING OPERATIONAL WIND POWER DEVELOPMENTS**

An operational wind turbine facility will be safeguarded as an electricity generation plant by controlling development that could impair the operation of the turbines.

20.46 The successful harnessing of wind energy, and the continuing exploitation of wind for existing electricity generation, depend in part on the character of neighbouring uses. It is important to ensure that, in line with Guidance, subsequent development in the vicinity of a turbine that could reduce wind speeds or otherwise impair the efficient operation of a turbine is controlled.

**EM/16 SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SOURCES**

Proposals for the development of sustainable energy installations will be permitted where they have no unacceptable adverse impacts on local amenity or environmental quality and are shown to make an appropriate contribution to local or regional energy needs. In considering proposals and their siting, design and operation, particular attention will be given to the following:

a) The effect on the amenity of the surrounding area (e.g., residential, recreational);

b) The effect on buildings and areas of historic and archaeological importance and their setting and character;
Environmental Management

c) Measures to successfully overcome and manage any potential hazards created by the installation;
d) The effect on landscape character and quality; and
e) The effect on nature conservation interest.

An appropriate form of environmental assessment will be expected to accompany proposals where this is required by Regulations or where it is necessary to assess the proposal and its effects.

20.47 The continuing depletion of fossil fuel resources and the effects of their use on our atmosphere and climate have heightened the need to increase the level of energy efficiency in society. Central to this objective is the reduction in usage of fossil fuels for energy provision and the increasing use of sustainable sources of energy production through renewable and recycled energy technologies. Government has set a target of at least 10% of electricity being generated through renewable sources by 2010. This target and the potential social, economic and environmental benefits for the region and for local communities are highlighted in regional strategy and guidance.

20.48 In addition to wind power which is subject to a separate policy, the principal potential for sustainable energy sources is based on:-
- Biofuels (derived from biomass, energy crops, landfill and sewage gas, municipal and agricultural wastes etc);
- Hydro power (derived from water bodies and rivers); and
- Solar power (derived from passive solar design of buildings, solar heating collectors or photovoltaic conductors).

20.49 The use of sustainable energy sources can be deployed at various scales including small-scale use for individual domestic properties or other small premises, combined heat and power installations for larger developments or area use, and facilities which provide power for the electricity grid. In all cases, it is important to ensure that installations and any associated infrastructure (e.g., grid connections, battery or other fuel and waste storage and disposal) are of an appropriate scale and design for their location, do not adversely affect the amenity of residents or other users of land, and do not have any significantly damaging environmental effects through their operation. Proposals dependent on their scale, location and type may be subject to a statutory requirement to submit an Environmental Statement. In other cases, the Council may require environmental assessment details in order to assess fully the impact of a proposal both positive and negative. Developers are advised to discuss whether such an assessment is required and what form it should take with the Council prior to submitting a planning application.
CHAPTER 21

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

G/NE/1 (PART ONE POLICY) NATURE CONSERVATION

SITES AND FEATURES OF NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE WILL BE GIVEN FULL AND APPROPRIATE RECOGNITION AND PROTECTION IN THE ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS. THE COUNCIL WILL, SO FAR AS OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES PERMIT, CREATE AND ENHANCE SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST AND ENCOURAGE SUCH ACTIONS BY OTHER PARTIES. THROUGH THE PROTECTION, ENHANCEMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF EXISTING SITES AND GREENSPACE CORRIDORS, AND THE CREATION OF NEW SITES OF INTEREST, IT IS PROPOSED TO INCREASE LOCAL BIODIVERSITY.

21.1 The protection and enhancement of the natural environment is a fundamental objective of sustainable development and also one of the key objectives of this Plan. It is central to the effective management of environmental resources, the Borough’s landscape heritage and the quality of life for local communities. Biodiversity is an important feature of the Rochdale Local Agenda 21 Strategy and has been further highlighted in the recently published Biodiversity Audits for the North West and for Greater Manchester. A Biodiversity Action Plan has been produced for Greater Manchester which includes specific guidelines and proposals for significant species and habitats. The Borough contains a diverse range of areas, habitats and features of nature conservation value, both urban and rural, many of which are recognised by either statutory or local designations and which together form a mosaic of sites and wildlife corridors. Moorlands to the north and east of the Borough with adjacent reservoir catchments and enclosed farmland hosts important flora and fauna including internationally recognised birds and the habitats they depend on. Wooded river valleys and man made interest such as the Rochdale Canal, mill lodges and small urban woodland, open spaces and water features provide further interest in and around the urban areas, helping to create a mosaic of sites and features.

21.2 It is essential that the impact of development proposals on sites, species and features of value is fully recognised in all aspects of development control and land management. Development proposals should demonstrate a clear understanding of any impact on species and habitats both positive and negative, incorporating appropriate conservation and enhancement measures into the design and implementation of any scheme. When assessing the impact of planning proposals on sites of nature conservation interest, the more important the site for wildlife, the more weight will be given to wildlife considerations.

NE/2 DESIGNATED SITES OF ECOLOGICAL AND GEOLOGICAL / GEOMORPHOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE

Development proposals adversely affecting sites and areas of ecological and geological/geomorphological importance will not be permitted, the Council seeking to protect and enhance them. In assessing proposals, the Council will apply national planning policy as it relates to international, national and local (including regional) designations as follows:

a) International Designations - Development not directly connected with or necessary for the management of a designated or proposed European Site (Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation) will be subject to rigorous examination. Development which will adversely affect the integrity of such sites or where such affects on the integrity of the site cannot be ascertained will not be permitted unless:
The Natural Environment

i. There is no alternative solution; and

ii. There are imperative reasons of over-riding public interest for the development which outweigh the nature conservation value of the site.

Where the site hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species, development or land use change will not be permitted unless it is necessary for imperative reasons of human health or public safety or for benefits of primary importance for the environment.

Development should accord with relevant European policy and guidelines for the protection of such sites. The advice of Natural England will be sought in all cases.

(n.b.; candidate sites of interest are treated as confirmed designations for planning purposes).

B) National Designations - Development which is likely to affect a Site of Special Scientific Interest will be subject to special scrutiny. Where such development would have a direct or indirect adverse affect on the special interest of the site, it will not be permitted unless the reasons for development clearly outweigh the nature conservation value of the site itself and the national policy to safeguard such sites.

C) Local and Regionally Important Designations - Development affecting a Local Nature Reserve, Regionally Important Geological / Geomorphological Site or Site of Biological Importance will only be permitted where:

i. It would not adversely affect the fundamental nature conservation value of the site as defined by appropriate expert assessment;

ii. Provision has been made by the developer to ensure the safeguarding of the substantive nature conservation value of the site in implementing a proposal;

iii. It is clearly demonstrated that there are reasons for the proposal which outweigh the need to safeguard the substantive nature conservation value of the site; or

iv. Where full or partial losses occur they are mitigated by providing appropriate compensatory nature conservation benefits either on or off-site.

In all cases where development is permitted, conditions or planning obligations will be used where they are required to ensure the protection and enhancement of the site’s nature conservation value.

21.3 It is important to protect (by controlling development) and conserve (by encouraging good management) important natural habitats and areas of scientific interest in line with European and National policy and guidance, and the nature conservation strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan for Greater Manchester. The Council will also prepare a Biodiversity Action Statement for the borough highlighting specific local targets and objectives.

21.4 The South Pennine Moors Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is also a Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under European legislation. These designations contain a significant sweep of high moorland at the northern and eastern fringe of the borough. The area has been identified as the core of the South Pennines Heritage Area designated by the Standing Conference of South Pennine Authorities (SCOSPA, now replaced by Pennine Prospects). A strategy and action plan for its safeguarding and good management has been prepared by SCOSPA and its partners including Natural England, supported by the EU ‘Life’ programme. The Rochdale Canal in Rochdale and Oldham districts is also a SSSI and a SAC. SPAs and SACs form part of the European Natura 2000 network of sites highlighting the best of European natural heritage. Development proposals in such areas are subject to rigorous assessment and will only be permitted where they do not damage the nature conservation interest of the site or where the need for development clearly outweighs the nature conservation imperative. Procedures for assessing development proposals are set out in PPG 9 ‘Nature Conservation’ and in
guidance booklets published by Natural England. The advice of Natural England will be sought in all cases to ensure that the proper weighting is given to nature conservation interests.

21.5 There are three existing Local Nature Reserves in the Borough at Healey Dell, Alkrington Woods and Hopwood Woods. They are managed as sites where examples of the best of the Borough’s natural heritage e.g.; Semi-natural Ancient Woodlands can be experienced by the public. Further LNR designations will be dependent on the availability of suitable sites and management resources.

21.6 Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) are sites of nature conservation importance defined on a Greater Manchester wide basis, which contain valuable habitats, animal and plant communities, and also locally rare habitat types. They are classified under 3 grades: grade ‘A’ sites are of ‘county or regional importance’, grade ‘B’ sites are those of ‘district importance’ and grade ‘C’ sites are of ‘more than local importance’. The policy acknowledges the importance of all grades of SBI which are a key component of the Borough’s natural capital but grade A sites have a special strategic significance due to their county or regional value. Sites may be upgraded or downgraded depending on circumstances and new sites may be added as the result of improved or additional survey information. For the avoidance of doubt, this policy will apply to new sites which may be designated in the future and will take account of changes in grade or status.

21.7 The Proposals Map does not distinguish between existing categories or grades since changes may occur over the Plan period.

21.8 The policy does not make provision for the relocation of habitats as part of development proposals. Relocation is difficult to achieve (e.g. in respect of the water environment), is rarely successful and should only be investigated as a last resort and with expert ecological advice. Where loss of features is unavoidable, development proposals must still provide a suitable form of mitigation for such losses by providing appropriate compensatory benefits either on or off site. Losses should be minimised wherever possible and where a proposal would result in the significant or complete loss of a site, developers will be expected to demonstrate that the reasons for development clearly outweigh the nature conservation interest of the site and that there is no alternative approach which would reduce loss or damage to the SBI.

**NE/3 BIODIVERSITY AND DEVELOPMENT**

In areas not identified as SBIs, LNRs, SSSIs, SPAs or SACs, the effect of land use changes on existing features, species and habitats of ecological value e.g., flora, fauna, wetland, ponds, mill lodges, reservoirs, hedges and trees will be taken into account in assessing proposals. Any development should seek to retain such features and incorporate them into the development. Where this would place an unreasonable constraint on the development, steps to provide compensatory features or habitats of an equivalent nature and value, commensurate with the scale and type of development permitted may be required.

Development proposals affecting areas of peatland, should seek to safeguard such areas from loss or damage or any adverse impact on its ecological value. Proposals will be expected to clearly demonstrate the ability to successfully incorporate such areas and their established ecological interest into the development.

Consultation with appropriate expert bodies to enable the assessment of proposals will be undertaken. Where appropriate, the Council will seek to negotiate planning agreements to safeguard ecological interest.

Developments which establish new landscaping and open spaces that contribute to nature conservation and local biodiversity will be supported and encouraged, especially where this will:

a) Help to address local habitat deficiencies or the needs of species and habitats of conservation concern;

b) Help to provide accessible, high quality natural greenspace in urban areas; or
c) Create or extend wildlife corridors both within the urban area and connecting the urban areas with the wider countryside around towns.

The Council will negotiate with developers to secure such measures and will seek to carry out improvements through its own activities and in partnership with others.

21.9 Some features or habitats may not be important enough to warrant special designation in their own right and these are not protected by Policy NE/2 above. Taken as a part of a wider mosaic of biodiversity, as stated in PPG9 'Nature Conservation', their protection can help to safeguard the natural landscape and its quality and diversity.

21.10 Regulation 37 of the Habitat Regulations 1994 requires that development plans provide appropriate protection of landscape features which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora. These include hedgerows, stone walls, linear tree belts, woodlands, semi-natural grassland, peatland, heathland, green lanes, river corridors, lakes, canals, reservoirs and ponds. It is important to recognise such features and to ensure that they are given full and appropriate consideration when assessing proposals. In addition to using the Council's 'Habitat Survey' to identify possible features or habitats of value, consultation with expert bodies will be carried out as appropriate so that all relevant factors are considered and given due weight in the assessment process. The expertise and local records of local field naturalists will also be utilised in helping to identify natural interests to be considered in assessing proposals. Reference will also be made to the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Audit and Action Plan which includes a series of Biodiversity Action Plans for priority species and habitats at national, regional and county level. The Council will produce a district Biodiversity Action Statement in due course further highlighting local biodiversity priorities, issues and targets. There are also other relevant plans and strategies such as those of the Environment Agency and Natural England’s Natural Areas targets which will be referred to as appropriate.

21.11 Potential development sites can contain features that could easily be incorporated into a development or where appropriate mitigation can be built into a scheme through compensatory measures. This will help to safeguard and enhance biodiversity and may also help to integrate the development into the environment more successfully e.g., by retaining or contributing to natural amenity value, in particular in urban areas where natural greenspace may be limited. There may be circumstances where it is difficult or for practical purposes impossible to re-create or replace certain features with an equivalent feature, such as peatland. In such cases, full account will be taken of the assessment of appropriate expert bodies as to the value of such features and whether a scheme could safeguard them or would result in unavoidable loss. Such expert advice will also be used to ascertain whether there is an acceptable type and level of mitigation that could be provided should loss be unavoidable.

21.12 In addition to protecting and enhancing existing sites and features of interest, it is important to identify opportunities and carry out schemes to create new natural features and greenspaces, in particular in areas where there may be a deficiency of accessible wildlife interest close to homes, schools and workplaces in the urban areas. There are many opportunities for creating new or improved ecological interest in urban and rural areas through new development and utilities infrastructure such as sustainable urban drainage systems, improved landscape management and community action. This can make a significant contribution to enhancing the quality of life and local amenity of all local residents and can also be an innovative element of urban regeneration projects or other land reclamation projects e.g., schemes linked to mineral workings and tipping. In many cases, habitat creation can be achieved and maintained quite simply and inexpensively in comparison to other forms of landscape treatment and can often be as a result of changes in landscape management to produce interesting and locally valued sites for nature and recreation.

21.13 Creating new sites of interest and wildlife corridors within the urban area and extending into the wider countryside around towns helps to sustain and enhance the biodiversity of the Borough. It is an important objective in the Biodiversity Action Plan for Greater Manchester and accompanying Biodiversity Action Plans which will also include a district Biodiversity Action Statement in the near future. It will also help to complement and extend the Greenspace Corridor network identified under Policy UG/8 of the Plan which seeks to provide a series of multi-functional corridors linking the towns with the wider countryside for recreation, wildlife and amenity.
Development proposals which would affect a species protected by National or European law or its habitat, will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that:

a) There is no adverse impact on the species concerned;

b) Loss of, or damage to habitats supporting such species is minimal and, where required, adequate alternative habitats are provided to sustain at least the current levels of the population of the species; and

c) Where a proposal affects a European Protected Species, it fulfils the appropriate criteria for development as set out in National and European legislation.

Planning conditions and planning obligations will be used to secure the protection of species and their habitats where required.

21.14 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, subsequent amendments of the Act and additional legislation enacted both in this country and Europe, includes a range of protective measures applicable to wild animals (including all wild birds, badgers, bats, water voles and others) and plants. It is an offence to ill treat any animal, kill, injure, sell or take protected species, or to intentionally damage or destroy their places of shelter. In addition, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 specifies that wildlife or habitats must not be recklessly disturbed.

21.15 Guidance contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 9 “Nature Conservation” states that the presence of a protected species is a material consideration when considering development proposals which could harm a species or its habitat. In all cases, where there are known to be protected species that could be affected by a proposal, the Council will consult with Natural England before determination. In granting planning permission, the need to take further steps to ensure the protection of a species by attaching appropriate planning conditions or entering into planning obligations whereby the developer would take steps to secure this objective will be considered. The Council will also work closely with Greater Manchester Ecology Unit in such matters. The role of the local expert knowledge in identifying the presence of, and potential threats to protected species is important and the Council will work with Greater Manchester Ecology Unit to develop good communication with such groups as the Rochdale Field Naturalists, South Lancashire Bat Group and Pennine Link Badger Group. The Council will also work closely with the Wildlife Liaison Service of Greater Manchester Police.

21.16 Although the potential presence of protected species will be a consideration when assessing all development proposals (including new building, refurbishment, alterations, and demolition) there are certain types of host environment where particular care is required. These include derelict and neglected land and buildings, listed buildings and buildings in the countryside. It is strongly recommended that a full and appropriate survey is carried out in all cases where the presence of protected species is possible, prior to the submission of a planning application. Where protected species are present, the effect on the species and associated habitats must be fully established and appropriate mitigation of the impacts carried out which will include compensatory habitats if required.

21.17 European Protected Species are identified in the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (Regulation 38 and 42, Schedules 2 and 4). They include a range of species which are rare or significantly declining in a European context. In addition to the requirements for planning permission, a licence must be obtained from the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) where any proposal would involve the capture, disturbance, damage or destruction of a European Protected Species or its breeding or resting place. The Regulations set out three tests that development must satisfy both for planning consent to be granted and for a licence to be given:

a) The development is in the interests of public health and safety or for other ‘imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature.’

b) There is no satisfactory alternative; and
c) The development will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the species at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

21.18 It should be noted that satisfactory mitigation in itself will not be considered to be justification for development taking place.

21.19 Developers should be aware of the implications of encountering European Protected Species on potential development sites and early assessment of potential nature conservation considerations will help reduce the potential for later delays and difficulties in obtaining a licence or even offences being committed. A guidance note for developers has been produced by DEFRA and Natural England setting out the legal protection of such species and the planning and licensing requirements and procedures which apply.

G/NE/5(PART ONE POLICY) LANDSCAPE AND WOODLANDS

PROPOSALS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF LANDSCAPE QUALITY AND CHARACTER AND HELP TO ENHANCE OR REINTRODUCE LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS, WILL BE SUPPORTED. IN CONSIDERING THE IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS, SPECIAL EMPHASIS WILL BE PLACED ON THE EFFECT OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE VISUAL AND CULTURAL CHARACTER OF THE LANDSCAPE AND FEATURES OF ACKNOWLEDGED CULTURAL, NATURAL AND HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE. THE COUNCIL WILL CARRY OUT AND ENCOURAGE ACTIONS BY OTHER PARTIES TO PROTECT AND IMPROVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, STRUCTURE AND QUALITY.

MEASURES TO SECURE THE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF EXISTING WOODLANDS AND ESTABLISH NEW WOODLAND PLANTING IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS WILL BE CARRIED OUT AND ENCOURAGED. THE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF WOODLAND SHOULD PROVIDE CLEAR BENEFITS FOR LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND QUALITY, BIODIVERSITY, THE VIABILITY OF RURAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY OR RECREATION AS APPROPRIATE.

21.20 The Borough has a diverse and rich landscape heritage which contributes strongly to local environmental quality, the distinctive character of settlements and their settings and which hosts a range of ecological and archaeological assets. Key features include large areas of open moorland; traditional upland farming patterns creating a patchwork of buildings, drystone walls and field patterns; and a series of open, often-wooded river valleys that connect into the core of the urban centres. The diversity of landscape character and its key features are described in policy NE/6 ‘Landscape Protection and Enhancement’. The local landscape illustrates the evolution of the wider Southern Pennines as defined by Natural England and others in the Joint Character Map of England and highlighted by Pennine Prospects through a non statutory South Pennines Heritage Area. The production of a Southern Pennines Heritage Strategy with the active partnership of key government agencies and voluntary sector interests is intended to help promote and ensure the protection and enhancement of the built, cultural and natural heritage.

21.21 There are parts of the Borough’s landscape which contain derelict, vacant or poorly managed land and where there has been significant loss of landscape quality, character and features. In many cases such locations are in and around the edges of urban areas which can result in increased pressure on the landscape. There is a need to regenerate such landscapes, restore features of local significance and re-establish landscape character and quality.

21.22 Also, within the urban context, there are pockets of natural areas and woodlands which contribute to, or have the potential to contribute to environmental quality and the setting of urban uses.

21.23 The plan aims to ensure that any proposals with landscape and visual implications should not cause unacceptable visual harm, disturbance or loss of landscape elements that contribute to local distinctiveness, the historic, cultural or natural quality of the Borough or to recognised local amenity value such as attractive views or tranquil areas for informal recreation.
21.24 The Council will also seek to sustain and enhance the quality of the landscape within the Borough through its own regeneration and countryside management programmes, partnership with community interests, major landowners and government agencies and promotion of good management practices to private landowners.

21.25 The Plan also recognises the importance of woodland in the environment and the contribution it can make to landscape and townscape quality, local and recreational amenity, biodiversity and the reduction of pollution. It may also increasingly be a source of alternative energy and a sustainable and viable opportunity for rural economic diversification.

21.26 The Borough has woodland cover of approximately 2.5% of the total land area, which is significantly lower than the England average of around 7% cover. This policy will support the aim of the Council's Woodland Strategy to increase significantly, the level of tree and woodland cover in the Borough. It also recognises the need to retain existing trees and woodland, in particular mature woodland important for nature conservation, and trees and woodland which form an important part of the local street scene or landscape character and structure.

21.27 The Council will also seek to protect and enhance the tree and woodland resource through the implementation of its Woodland Strategy, Township Action Plans, management plans and improvement programmes. The Council is also a partner in the Pennine Edge Forest initiative, a partnership comprising the districts of Rochdale, Oldham, Stockport and Tameside and supported by the Forestry Commission, Natural England and the North West Development Agency amongst others. Pennine Edge Forest (PEF) aims to create a positive role for woodland in urban and rural regeneration and to provide a forest resource with the maximum benefit for local communities and biodiversity. The Council will work (individually and through PEF) with Red Rose Community Forest, other Southern Pennines partners and initiatives, the Forestry Commission and other Government and environmental agencies, landowners and community interests to promote, protect and enhance the woodland resource.

NE/6 LANDSCAPE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT

Development will be permitted where it conserves the physical and cultural attributes of the landscape and contributes, as appropriate, to the regeneration, restoration, enhancement or maintenance of the landscape likely to be affected.

Proposals with potential landscape and visual implications will be assessed having regard to the extent to which they would:

a) Make a positive contribution to the visual amenity of the area (including views into and from the site and surrounding area);

b) Remove incongruous landscape features;

c) Assist the conservation of:

i. Landscape elements that contribute to local distinctiveness;

ii. Historic elements which make a significant contribution (individually or cumulatively) to landscape character and quality (e.g., field, settlement or road patterns, existing buildings, sites and features of archaeological interest);

iii. Semi-natural vegetation which is characteristic to the landscape type;

iv. The visual condition of landscape elements; and

v. Tranquillity and the amenity and informal recreation value of the landscape.

Development which adversely affects the character or physical structure of the landscape or which would detract from the physical record of the historic and cultural evolution of an area will not be permitted.
Chapter 21

The Natural Environment

21.28 The landscape which surrounds the settlements of Greater Manchester and the wider Southern Pennines is diverse and a major cultural resource within the region with particular literary, industrial and ecological significance. The landscape seen today derives from a varied legacy of industrial and agricultural development stretching over hundreds of years coupled with the remains of much earlier human activity. It is important to ensure that the natural, visual and historic character, quality and distinctiveness of the landscape is recognised by and reflected in development proposals.

21.29 New development can make a positive contribution to landscape conservation where it is well sited, of an appropriate scale, and takes full account of existing landscape character and quality or opportunities to strengthen or reintroduce such value through design, layout and use of materials.

21.30 Government guidance supports the objective of enhancing landscape character and countryside quality and this is developed in the Joint Character Map of England prepared by Natural England and English Heritage, where the features of land use, land form, biodiversity and the historic development of town and country, and other factors which characterise the landscape of England are highlighted at a sub regional level. Further work has been carried out by the Standing Conference of South Pennine Authorities (now Pennine Prospects) and others to produce a South Pennine Landscape Assessment, accompanied by Landscape Guidelines and a Countryside Design Summary to inform developers, land managers and others.

21.31 Informed by the above documents and previous local landscape assessment, the Council has carried out its own appraisal of landscape character and quality. This has identified a series of landscape character areas (see illustration) with associated important landscape features, potential threats to their character and good practice principles for future management which may include the restoration or enhancement of landscape character and features lost due to previous land use or management. The appraisal will be subject to periodic review to monitor future beneficial or adverse change.

21.32 In determining planning applications, reference will be made to the documents outlined above and all proposals will be expected to clearly show how they contribute to the conservation, regeneration, restoration or enhancement of the landscape in identified Character Areas.

Landscape Character Areas (brief descriptions)

| Unenclosed Moorland | • sweeping landform with open ‘wilderness’ character  
|                     | • tranquil  
|                     | • extensive views  
|                     | • a mosaic of upland habitats often underlain by blanket peat  
|                     | • a sealed prehistoric landscape  
|                     | • active and relict land uses including water supply, power transmission, mineral extraction and agriculture (rough grazing)  
|                     | • very sparse settlement with evidence of previous habitation now abandoned  
|                     | • large areas of open public access on foot and horseback |
| Enclosed Upland     | • often exposed farmland on steep slopes adjacent to high moorland  
|                     | • evidence of prehistoric human activity in the landscape  
|                     | • varied field patterns (some relict), often bounded by dry stone walls and hedgerows, from medieval to later 19th century enclosure  
|                     | • limited tree cover restricted to steep sided cloughs, shelter belts, scattered copses and more recent plantations in water catchments  
|                     | • extensive network of paths and tracks  
|                     | • general tranquil, often bleak and isolated character  
|                     | • scattered farmhouses, hamlets and industrial buildings both active and relict, illustrating the traditional dual economy of the area  
|                     | • land uses based on agriculture (mixed grazing), water supply and power transmission with evidence of former quarrying  
|                     | • semi improved acid and neutral grasslands and wet, rushy pastures, some now reverting to moorland |
| Settled Farmlands   | • more domesticated farmscape with occasional small settlements on lower slopes and valley edges adjacent to urban centres  
|                     | • improved grasslands used for cattle, sheep and horse grazing  
|                     | • varied styles of enclosure including dry stone wall, hedgerow and fences |
Rochdale Unitary Development Plan
Adopted June 2006
(Supplementary Map - For Information Only)

Landscape Protection and Enhancement
(Policy NE/6)

KEY
- Unenclosed Moorland
- Enclosed Upland
- Settled Farmlands
- Canal Corridor
- Industrialised Valleys
- Urban Valleys
- Urban Area
- Historic Parkland

Scale 1:70,000
• varied mix of open land uses including farming, equestrian, outdoor sports (e.g.,
golf) and managed areas of countryside
• scattered tree and woodland cover, more significant than in upland areas
• evidence of medieval settlement
• historic industrial development evidenced by textile mills and mineral extraction
  sites active and relict
• greater influence of adjacent urban areas through ribbon and suburban
  development, landfill and cemetery sites etc, often fragmenting character

**Canal Corridor**
• varied landscape character in urban and rural stretches
• substantially intact watercourse with evidence of historic development and use of
  the canal
• ‘Pennine’ section includes open and steep sided (often wooded) valleys with
  extensive evidence of the industrial evolution of the canal corridor
• urban stretches include densely developed industrial corridors along the
  watercourse separated by lower lying undulating farmscapes
• significant historic interest dating from before canal construction
• strong relationship with historic communications network through the valleys
  (road, rail)
• high ecological value of vegetation in the watercourse and of adjacent open land

**Industrialised Valleys**
• steep, narrow valleys with fast flowing rivers and streams, more open towards
  moorland edge
• generally secluded, tranquil character with extensive evidence of industrial past
  relict and active industrial sites based on water and steam powered mills (18th
  and 19th centuries) often with associated lodges, weirs and localised coal
  workings
• wooded cloughs and extensive areas of semi natural ancient woodland with
  open pastures and scrub
• extensive network of paths and tracks

**Urban Valleys**
• tightly bounded by main urban centres
• varied character including open farmland, woodland, utilities infrastructure,
  equestrian uses, golf courses, allotments and landfill sites
• mixed environmental quality
• continuity of valleys sometimes interrupted by urban development but extensive
  stretches of open, well wooded valleys remain
• secluded feel to some more heavily wooded areas
• important industrial archaeology in many areas
• mixed character and quality of buildings
• extensive and sometimes fragmented network of paths and tracks
• intermittent long distance views to the moorland beyond

**Historic Parkland**
• intact and relict grounds and gardens with associated woodland and open
  spaces
• a mix of formal and informal landscape areas
• evidence of various periods of development from medieval origins to more recent
  historic houses and ancillary buildings and structures from various periods
  including more recent additions and alterations
• strong relationship to wider landscape in river valleys and farmland

**NE/7 TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS**

Where it is necessary to protect important trees and woodlands which contribute to the quality of
the built or rural environment, the Council will make Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). No work of
any nature should be carried out which could possibly affect the health of a tree or trees included in
a Tree Preservation Order without the proper written authority of the Council. This includes any
work which is carried out to trees or other works which could damage root systems or any part of
the tree above ground. Any works carried out to trees must constitute good arboricultural practice.

21.33 There are currently more than 190 Tree Preservation Orders covering trees and woodlands in the Borough
which will be given special protection. The policy requires that all proposed works to a tree require the prior
written consent of the Council. Where works come within the scope of section 9 of the Forestry Act 1967 (as
amended), the Forestry Commission will determine the application under Felling Licence Regulations in consultation with the Council. In addition, the policy recognises that activities above or below ground in the vicinity of a tree or trees can cause physical damage to trees and their roots. Such activities may include trenching and cabling, alteration of ground levels, and a range of other construction, engineering and maintenance works. Where a tree, group of trees or woodland is shown to be of particular amenity or conservation value and perceived to be at risk, the Council will continue to make Orders. In Conservation Areas, there is automatically a measure of protection for trees within their boundaries.

**NE/8 DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING TREES, WOODLANDS AND HEDGEROWS**

Development proposals will be permitted that do not adversely affect trees, woodland or hedgerows.

Proposals on sites containing trees and woodlands should ensure:

a) Suitable space and conditions for the successful retention of trees, woodland and hedgerows;

b) That new tree planting is of an appropriate scale and species and that the impacts on the amenity of the development and surrounding area in the longer term e.g., root spread, stability, loss of daylight, leaf fall and personal safety have been fully considered;

c) Suitable care and protection of trees and their environment during construction;

d) The nature conservation value of existing hedgerows, trees and woodland has been safeguarded where appropriate including the incidence of protected species e.g., bat roosts, and the value of ground flora e.g. bluebells;

e) Hedgerows which meet the criteria set out in the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 and other hedgerows which are locally distinctive and valuable for their natural or historic value are fully safeguarded;

f) The requirement of the Forestry Commission for a felling licence to be obtained is met where appropriate;

g) Suitable arrangements for future maintenance and management of trees and woodland (which may need to be secured by means of a legal agreement); and

h) Replacement planting of trees in the event of death or failure during a 5 year period.

21.34 Development proposals often occur on land where there are individual trees, woodlands or hedgerows that have a value for local character and amenity, recreation and nature conservation. The policy advocates those healthy trees and hedges that can contribute to the design and quality of the development and the environmental quality of the area in general should be protected and retained through favourable management. It is important to impose appropriate safeguards to ensure that existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows are retained and that no damage takes place during development. Where necessary a full tree survey will be required to properly assess the effects of a proposal on trees.

21.35 The policy acknowledges that in some cases, the limited removal of trees may be unavoidable (e.g. to satisfy highway requirements) and replacement planting of trees of an appropriate species and scale and in a suitable location (within the site where possible) will be expected in order to compensate for the loss. Where any trees are being felled, it is recommended that appropriate enquiries are made to check whether a felling licence from the Forestry Commission is required.

21.36 This approach is consistent with the objectives of the Forestry Commission set out in the England Forestry Strategy which seeks to increase woodland cover and promote a greater appreciation of the benefits of trees and woodland to decision makers, developers and the wider community. It also encourages better woodland management, the protection of ancient semi-natural woodland and the retention or suitable replacement of trees in development proposals. The policy is also consistent with the Council’s approved Woodland Strategy.
21.37 It is important to ensure that appropriate surveys are carried out to ensure that any nature conservation or historic value of trees, woodland and hedgerows is fully considered and where necessary suitable mitigation is employed. The incidence of protected species is an important consideration and the provisions of policy NE/4 ‘Protected Species’ will be applied. For hedgerows, the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 set out the nature conservation and archaeological criteria for hedges subject to its provisions. In addition Natural England has produced a research note which defines locally distinctive hedgerow types in the English landscape. There will also be a range of Local Biodiversity Action Plans for Greater Manchester produced for various woodland types and ground flora which will help to inform proposals. The Pennine Edge Forest, which includes Rochdale MBC, will provide advice and support for proposals wherever possible.

21.38 When incorporating trees into the design of a development or planting replacement trees, it is important to consider the longer term practical implications of location and species selection. The effects of trees as they grow towards maturity can be to block out light or through spreading or shallow root systems cause damage or pose a threat to safety. There may also be problems caused by leaf fall and where footpaths become enclosed through tall trees and hedges, there may be an actual or perceived effect on personal safety.

**NE/9 PROTECTION OF WOODLANDS**

The Council will take measures to conserve and enhance existing woodlands, including ancient woodlands, which are important for their contribution to biodiversity, landscape, amenity, and for their recreational and commercial value. The Council will achieve this through planning conditions and obligations, management schemes and Tree Preservation Orders.

21.39 Rochdale has a low level of woodland cover which currently amounts to approximately 2.5% of the total Borough land area. This compares unfavourably with an average of around 7% for England. Despite the low level of woodland cover, there are many fine examples of woodland, in particular in the river valleys. Woodlands are an important part of the landscape in both urban and rural areas, a valuable habitat resource and an asset for quiet and active recreation, often close to where people live and work. It is also an important filter for air pollutants and acts as a carbon sink. It is important to ensure that existing woodland is not unnecessarily lost or damaged through development and that through proper care and management the value of woodland in the local landscape is safeguarded. The Council will employ appropriate management measures such as Tree Preservation Orders, planning agreements and the use of Forestry Commission and other woodland management schemes to achieve this. The Council will also work with partners such as other Councils, the Forestry Commission and Natural England to encourage, promote and provide resources to assist woodland management and protection.

**NE/10 NEW WOODLAND PLANTING**

The Council will support proposals and initiatives which increase the amount and quality of new woodland planting throughout the Borough. The aim will be to develop a mixed range of woodland across the Borough to enhance landscape and biodiversity, provide greater recreational opportunity, assist the diversification of the rural economy and contribute to the reduction of air pollution. Tree species should be locally native and appropriate to the location. Where appropriate, new or extended woodland through natural regeneration will be encouraged and supported. Care must be taken to ensure that tree planting does not damage or lead to the loss of existing valuable habitats either on site or in adjacent areas.

The Council will particularly encourage woodland planting schemes:

a) In upland areas (in valleys and cloughs but not on open moorland and skylines);

b) Marginal farmland and degraded environments in the urban fringes or the countryside around towns;

c) Within Greenspace Corridors;

d) Within Recreational Management Areas;
Chapter 21

The Natural Environment

e) To connect fragmented areas of tree and woodland cover (especially ancient semi-natural woodland);
f) To provide new or enhanced areas of natural greenspace in the urban area; and

g) To assist the regeneration and redevelopment of derelict and degraded urban sites and areas (for example through screening and structural planting on development sites).

21.40 As there is low woodland cover in the Borough, it is important to increase both the extent and quality of new woodland. The Council is a member of the Pennine Edge Forest initiative with a range of other agencies including the Forestry Commission and is actively involved in new woodland planting and helping to support and advise other landowners and community interests who wish to carry out planting schemes. A significant increase in woodland cover is one of the principal objectives of the England Forestry Strategy and the Council’s Woodland Strategy, adopted in 1994. The supporting Township Woodland Action Plans help to identify areas where in broad terms, woodland planting could be appropriate and what the priorities for action should be. In addition, the Greater Manchester Derelict Land Strategy identifies the importance of community forestry in reclamation schemes. The North West Development Agency and the Forestry Commission are actively supporting the identification and planting of such sites in Rochdale and other G.M. Districts. These will form part of funding programmes such as the Newlands initiative to be implemented through Pennine Edge and Red Rose Forests.

21.41 It is important that development proposals recognise the scope for new woodland planting and the benefits that it can bring to design quality and the local community, economy and environment. The Council will seek developer contributions and planning obligations to secure such planting where appropriate. It is equally important to be aware of the possible negative impacts of tree planting through poor choice of site and species for local amenity and landscape character. Tree planting can also be detrimental to existing habitat value for example through loss of open grassland, changes to drainage patterns and soil conditions etc. It is important to seek expert advice prior to any new woodland planting being considered or carried out so that all potential impacts, positive and negative can be identified.
## APPENDIX A – EMPLOYMENT LAND SUPPLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy No</th>
<th>Site / Policy name</th>
<th>Type of Site / Comments</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EC/7</td>
<td>Kingsway Business Park</td>
<td>Strategic greenfield site (Note: the area shown is the approx. area likely to be available for B1-B8 uses)</td>
<td>Committed Allocation</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8</td>
<td>Development Sites in designated Primary Employment Zones (EC/2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(a)</td>
<td>Waterfold Farm, Heap Bridge, Heywood</td>
<td>Greenfield site</td>
<td>Committed Allocation</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(b)</td>
<td>Hareshill Road, Heywood</td>
<td>Greenfield site, restricted to B1 &amp; B2</td>
<td>Committed Allocation</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(c)</td>
<td>Cowm Top (land north of Cripplegate Lane), Castleton</td>
<td>Greenfield site</td>
<td>Committed Allocation</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(d)</td>
<td>Site at Buckley Road / Buckley Brook Street, Rochdale</td>
<td>Brownfield site</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(e)</td>
<td>Site at Buckley Road, Rochdale</td>
<td>Brownfield site</td>
<td>Committed Allocation</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(f)</td>
<td>Land north of Oldham Road, Middleton</td>
<td>Brownfield site</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(g)</td>
<td>Site on Heywood Distribution Park, Pilsworth Road, Heywood</td>
<td>Brownfield site</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(h)</td>
<td>Site on Heywood Distribution Park, Pilsworth Road, Heywood</td>
<td>Brownfield site</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(i)</td>
<td>Site on Smallbridge Business Park, Rochdale</td>
<td>Brownfield site</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(j)</td>
<td>Site on Smallbridge Business Park, Rochdale</td>
<td>Brownfield site</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(k)</td>
<td>Site on Pilsworth Road, Heywood</td>
<td>Brownfield site</td>
<td>Committed Allocation</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total in Primary Employment Zones</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>51.1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8</td>
<td>Development Sites in designated Mixed Employment Zones (EC/3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(l)</td>
<td>Land at Sparthbottoms, Rochdale</td>
<td>Brownfield site</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(m)</td>
<td>Land at Roeacre Street/Bradshaw Street, Heywood</td>
<td>Brownfield site</td>
<td>Committed Allocation</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(n)</td>
<td>Site on Belfield Road, Rochdale</td>
<td>Brownfield site</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(o)</td>
<td>Site on Belfield Road/Mayfield Street, Rochdale</td>
<td>Brownfield site</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(p)</td>
<td>Site of former Rex Mill, north of Middleton Road, Middleton</td>
<td>Brownfield site</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC/8(q)</td>
<td>Land adjoining Eagle Technology Park, Queensway, Rochdale</td>
<td>Brownfield site</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total in Mixed Employment Zones</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Employment Land Supply

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy No</th>
<th>Site / Policy name</th>
<th>Type of Site / Comments</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EC/9</td>
<td>Sandbrook Park, Rochdale</td>
<td>Brownfield site</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R/4</td>
<td><strong>Areas of Opportunity (R/4)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R/4(a)</td>
<td>Ealees, Littleborough</td>
<td>B1 permitted</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R/4(c)</td>
<td>Two Bridges Road, Newhey</td>
<td>B1 required</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R/4(d)</td>
<td>Birch Hill Hospital,</td>
<td>B1 permitted</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R/4(f)</td>
<td>Canal Basin, Rochdale</td>
<td>B1 / B2 permitted</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R/4(g)</td>
<td>Assheton Way / Townley Street,</td>
<td>B1 permitted</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middleton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R/4(h)</td>
<td>Sefton Street / Green Lane /</td>
<td>B1 required</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Railway Street Heywood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R/4(i)</td>
<td>Trub Farm, Castleton</td>
<td>B1 required / B2 &amp; B8</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>permitted subject to amenity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R/4(j)</td>
<td>Rooley Moor Road, Rochdale</td>
<td>B1, B2 or B8 required</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>subject to amenity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Employment Land Supply** 159.7
APPENDIX B – LIST OF LOCAL CENTRES

LOCAL CENTRES

The 38 local centres referred to in policy S/6 are:

1. Oldham Road at Royds Street West, Rochdale (nos. 293 to 329 odd plus Wellfield Surgery);
2. Oldham Road south of Kingsway, Rochdale (nos. 210 to 240 even and 409 to 513 odd and car park off Argyle Street);
3. Milkstone Road with Tweedale Street and Station Road, Rochdale (nos. 3 to 63 odd and 4 to 50 even, Milkstone Road; nos. 9 to 37 odd and 2 to 50 even, Tweedale Street; and between Station Road and Lower Tweedale Street);
4. Milkstone Road at Maldon Street, Rochdale (nos. 69 and 69a to 91 odd);
5. Queensway Neighbourhood Shopping Centre, Well I’ Th’ Lane, Rochdale;
6. Bamford Village Centre, Bury Old Road (nos. 555a to 575 odd);
7. The Precinct, Martlet Avenue, Bamford;
8. Norden Village Centre, Edenfield Road (nos. 794 to 806 even and 645 to 685 odd);
9. Cutgate Centre, Cutgate, Rochdale;
10. Rooley Moor Road, Spotland Fold (nos. 223 to 255 odd and no. 240);
11. Spotland Road, Rochdale (nos. 62 to 128 even, surgery at nos. 55 to 85 odd and shop units at ‘Thetford’, junction with Sheriff Street);
12. Shawclough Village Centre, Shawclough Road (nos. 26 to 42 odd);
13. Halifax Road, Hamer, Rochdale (nos. 61 to 137 odd and car parks at Athol Street);
14. Stephenson Square, Smallbridge, Rochdale;
15. Milnrow Road, Newbold, Rochdale (nos. 109 to 147 odd and car sales garage);
16. Manchester Road, Marland, Rochdale (nos. 369 to 403 odd and 406 and 408 even);
17. Castleton Village Centre, Castleton (nos. 801 to 831 odd and 728 to 834 even, Manchester Road);
18. Manchester Road at Queensway, Castleton (nos. 848 to 872 even);
19. The Strand, Kirkholt, Rochdale (including community centre, club, health centre and public house);
20. Whitworth Road, Rochdale (nos. 69 to 143 odd and 72 to 162 even plus petrol station adjacent Clemintina Street and public house adjacent Greenbank Road);
21. Yorkshire Street (east of Town Head), Rochdale (nos. 147 to 215 odd and 182 to 286 even);
22. Boarshaw Road at Roydes Street, Middleton (nos. 203 to 233 odd);
23. Grimshaw Lane at Haslam Street and Wade Street, Middleton Junction (nos. 284 to 302 and 326 to 352 even);
24. The Downs, Alkrington, Middleton (shopping parade and adjacent public house);
25. Kirkway at Mainway, Alkrington, Middleton (shopping parade, library building, public house, petrol station, RC church, church hall, community centre and club);
26. Manchester New Road with Kingsway, Alkrington, Middleton (nos. 211 to 215 odd, Manchester New Road and 2 and 4, Kingsway);
27. Mount Road with Kirkway, Alkrington, Middleton (nos. 62 and 64 Mount Road and 94 and 96 Kirkway);
28. Rhodes Village Centre, Middleton (nos. 1 to 6, Chapel Walk, 596 to 610 even, Manchester Old Road and pub adjacent no. 596);
29. Lakeland Court, Langley, Middleton (shopping parade with adjacent Council offices);
30. Wood Street, Langley, Middleton (shopping parade opposite Windermere Road);
31. Nowell Road, Hollins, Middleton (nos. 38 to 50 even);
32. Birch Road with Ramsden Road, Wardle (nos. 442 to 448 even, Birch Road and 76/78 Ramsden Road);
List of Local Centres

33. Smithy Bridge Village Centre, Smithy Bridge Road (nos. 55 to 99 odd and Methodist Church);
34. Newhey Village Centre, Huddersfield Road and Shaw Road (nos. 5 to 13 odd and 8 to 34 even, 
   Huddersfield Road, 1 to 27 odd and 2 to 6 even, Shaw Road and 12 Gordon Street);
35. Manchester Road at Walton Street and Rock Street and Manchester Street at Fir Street, Heywood (nos. 
   6 to 22 and 48 and 48a to 54 even and 1 to 13 odd, Manchester Road, medical centre at Walton Street 
   and 94 to 118 even and 125 to 141 odd, Manchester Street);
36. Bury Street at Albert Street, Heywood (nos. 58 to 114 even, Bury Street);
37. Bury New Road, Summit, Heywood (nos. 96 to 122 even, Bury New Road
38. Argyle Parade, Darnhill, Heywood (shopping parade with community facilities to rear)

LINEAR COMMERCIAL AREAS

The 6 linear commercial areas referred to in policy S/6 are: -

1. Oldham Road, Rochdale, east side from Milnrow Road to the Rochdale Canal;
2. Drake Street, Rochdale from School Lane / Milnrow Road to Church Stile / Milkstone Road;
3. Milnrow Road, Rochdale from Oldham Road to Molesworth Street and Railway Street;
4. York Street and Rochdale Road East, Heywood, north side from Queens Park Road to Wild Street;
5. Manchester Street, Heywood, south side from Hornby Street to Hardfield Street;
6. Bridge Street, Heywood, north side from Collinge Street to Smethurst Street.
### Schedule Of Standards For Provision of Car, Cycle and Motorcycle Parking Spaces In New Development and Changes of Use.

(To be read in conjunction with Policy A/10 "New Development - Provision of Parking")

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of development</th>
<th>Maximum standard for car parking provision (see table below for disabled parking provision)</th>
<th>Minimum standard for cycle parking provision</th>
<th>Minimum standard for motorcycle parking provision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A1. Food retail &lt;900m²</strong></td>
<td>1 per 25m²</td>
<td>1 per 100m² - minimum of 2</td>
<td>Individual consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food retail &gt;900m²</strong></td>
<td>1 per 16m²</td>
<td>1 per 200m²</td>
<td>1 per 600m², minimum of 2 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A1. Non-food retail &lt;900m²</strong></td>
<td>1 per 35m²</td>
<td>1 per 100m² - minimum of 2</td>
<td>Individual consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-food retail &gt;900m²</strong></td>
<td>1 per 22m²</td>
<td>1 per 200m²</td>
<td>1 per 900m², minimum of 2 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A2. Financial &amp; professional services</strong></td>
<td>1 per 35m²</td>
<td>1 per 400m², minimum of 2 spaces</td>
<td>Individual consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A3. Food &amp; drink</strong></td>
<td>Restaurants - 1 per 7m² public floor area</td>
<td>1 per 140m² public floor area – minimum of 2 spaces</td>
<td>1 per 280m² public floor area- minimum of 2 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fast Food Drive Through</strong></td>
<td>– 1 per 8.5m² gross floor area.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B1. Business</strong></td>
<td>Stand alone Offices - 1 per 35m²</td>
<td>1 per 400m² – minimum of 2 spaces</td>
<td>1 per 1,400m² – minimum of 2 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business Parks – 1 per 40m²</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B2. General industry</strong></td>
<td>1 per 60m²</td>
<td>1 per 700m² – minimum of 2 spaces</td>
<td>1 per 2,800m² – minimum of 2 spaces</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Schedule of Parking Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of development</th>
<th>Maximum standard for car parking provision (see table below for disabled parking provision)</th>
<th>Minimum standard for cycle parking provision</th>
<th>Minimum standard for motorcycle parking provision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B8. Storage or distribution</td>
<td>1 per 100m2</td>
<td>1 per 850m2 – minimum of 2 spaces</td>
<td>1 per 4,000m2 – minimum of 2 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1. Hotels</td>
<td>1 per bedroom including staff – Leisure and conference facilities should be considered separately if appropriate.</td>
<td>1 per 10 bedrooms, minimum 2 spaces</td>
<td>1 per 40 bedrooms – minimum of 2 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2. Residential institutes</td>
<td>To be determined through a Transport Assessment</td>
<td>To be determined through a Transport Assessment</td>
<td>To be determined through a Transport Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>1 per 4 beds</td>
<td>1 per 40 beds, minimum of 2 spaces</td>
<td>1 per 160 beds – minimum of 2 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care / nursing homes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3 Note: Parking standards for C3 developments (below) are intended to result in an average, throughout the plan area and over the plan period, of 1.5 dwellings off-street car parking spaces per dwelling.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3. Dwelling Houses</td>
<td>2 per dwelling (not including a garage)</td>
<td>No standard</td>
<td>No standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2+ bedrooms outside town centres</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single bed dwellings and dwellings in town centres</td>
<td>1.25 per dwelling</td>
<td>No standard</td>
<td>No standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flats/apartments</td>
<td>2 per dwelling</td>
<td>Flats and apartments – 1 secure locker per 5 dwellings – minimum of 2 spaces.</td>
<td>Individual consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2+ bedrooms outside town centres</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single bed dwellings and flats/apartments in town centres</td>
<td>1.25 per dwelling</td>
<td>Flats and apartments – 1 secure locker per 5 dwellings – minimum of 2 spaces.</td>
<td>Individual consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheltered housing</td>
<td>1 per 3 dwellings + 1 per 2 full time staff</td>
<td>No standard</td>
<td>No standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1. Non-residential</td>
<td>1 per 2 full time</td>
<td>1 per 10 full time</td>
<td>1 per 40 full time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of development</td>
<td>Maximum standard for car parking provision (see table below for disabled parking provision)</td>
<td>Minimum standard for cycle parking provision</td>
<td>Minimum standard for motorcycle parking provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical or health facility</td>
<td>equivalent staff + 3 per consulting room</td>
<td>equivalent staff, minimum of 2 spaces</td>
<td>equivalent staff, minimum of 2 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crèche, day nursery or day centre</td>
<td>1 per full time equivalent staff</td>
<td>1 per 10 full time equivalent staff, minimum of 2 spaces for pupils</td>
<td>No standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>1.5 spaces per classroom</td>
<td>1 per 10 full time equivalent staff + 1 per 10 pupils</td>
<td>1 per 40 full time equivalent staff – minimum of 2 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher or further education</td>
<td>1 per 2 full time equivalent staff + 1 per 15 students</td>
<td>1 per 10 full time equivalent staff + 1 per 10 students</td>
<td>1 per 80 full time equivalent staff + 1 per 600 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art gallery, museum, exhibition hall or library</td>
<td>1 per 30m2 public floor area</td>
<td>1 per 300m2 public floor area – minimum of 2 spaces</td>
<td>1 per 1200m2 public floor area – minimum of 2 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public hall or place of worship</td>
<td>1 per 5m2 public floor area</td>
<td>1 per 50m2 public floor area – minimum of 2 spaces</td>
<td>1 per 200m2 public floor area – minimum of 2 spaces</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**D2. Assembly & Leisure**

- Cinema, bingo hall or casino, concert hall: 1 per 8 seats.
- 1 per 80 seats – minimum of 2 spaces
- 1 per 320 seats – minimum of 2 spaces

- Indoor sports or recreation: 1 per 25m2
- 1 per 250m2 – minimum of 4 spaces
- 1 per 1,000m2 – minimum of 2 spaces

- Outdoor sports and recreation: Individual consideration.
- Individual consideration.
- Individual consideration.

- Stadia / spectator seating: 1 space per 15 seats, 1 coach parking space per 1000 seats (minimum standard)
- 1 per 150 seats – minimum of 2 spaces
- 1 per 600 seats – minimum of 2 spaces

- Railway, bus stations and tram stops: Individual consideration.
- Minimum of 10 per station
- Individual consideration.
## Schedule of Parking Standards

### Disabled Car Parking

(Disabled car parking should be provided in addition to general car parking provision. This applies to all Use Classes listed in the table above, with the exception of individual dwelling houses.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of general car parking spaces provided</th>
<th>Minimum standard of disabled car parking provision to be provided (in addition to the general car parking spaces provided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below 12</td>
<td>10% of total capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - 200</td>
<td>3 bays or 6% of total capacity (whichever is greater)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 200</td>
<td>4 bays plus 4% of total capacity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Explanatory Text:

Rochdale’s Parking Standards are based on draft Greater Manchester-wide standards developed in association with the other Greater Manchester authorities.

### Car Parking

The car parking standards comply with maximum levels set out in PPG13 ‘Transport’, although for some types of Use Class, the standards are slightly more restrictive to reflect local circumstances. They are also in accordance with the maximum levels set out in draft Regional Planning Guidance (May 2002). The draft RPG also sets out ‘urban conurbation’ ceilings, and these are generally consistent with the Rochdale standards, with a few exceptions again designed to reflect local circumstances.

### Disabled Car Parking

This is based on recommendations in the Department of Transport Traffic Advisory Note on Parking for Disabled People.

### Cycle Parking

The cycle standards are generally slightly higher than the level of parking provision suggested in the National Cycle Strategy to reflect the increasing importance of cycle provision.

### Motorcycle Parking

The motorcycle standards generally allow for 2.5% of maximum car parking provision.
APPENDIX D – GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Affordable Housing (also sometimes known as low cost housing)
Housing which is accessible to people who cannot afford to buy into the open market.

Amenity
A positive element or elements which contribute to the overall character of an area, for example open land, trees, historic buildings and the inter-relationship between all elements in the environment.

Amenity Open Space
Open space which has a value in contributing to the areas amenity, notably in terms of its visual or environmental role (rather than its specific value for recreation or nature conservation).

Ancient Monument
A structure or archaeological remains of national importance where the provisions of the “Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act 1979” applies.

Ancillary
Facilities or development which are additional, but not always essential or directly related to the main use of an area of land.

Areas of Search
Areas underlain by minerals which do not have major planning constraints in terms of the Development Plan and where, therefore, the Council will consider proposals for mineral working, provided detailed criteria set out in the other policies are met.

Biodiversity
The range of life forms which constitute the living world, from microscopic organisms to the largest tree or animal, and the habitat and ecosystem in which they live.

Brownfield Land
See “Previously Developed Land”

Buffer
An area of land which separates or screens incompatible uses, e.g. an area of landscaping.

Business Park
Modern business areas characterised by a mix of light industry, office and research uses distinguished by their high standards of design, low density and landscaping.

Car Parking Strategy
A framework of policies and proposals to co-ordinate improvements to car parking facilities in Rochdale Town Centre.

Circular
A government publication providing guidance on specific issues. Identified by the number and year in which it was published.
Glossary of Terms

Community Plan
Overarching local strategy for the future of the Borough, outlining actions towards environmental, economic and social well-being, and contributing to sustainable development in the UK. See Rochdale Partnership / Local Strategic Partnership.

Committed Sum
One off payment made instead of providing facilities or a service, and which takes away responsibility to make such provision. Most commonly applied in the context of open space or landscape maintenance.

Comparison Goods
Items which are purchased less frequently and which people are more likely to search out and compare before buying, usually taken to be clothing, footwear, DIY goods, household and recreational goods, toiletries, jewellery, etc.

Conservation Area
An area of special architectural or historic interest identified by the Council under the “Planning (Conservation and Listed Buildings) Act 1990”, where it is desirable to preserve and enhance the special character of that area.

Contaminated Land
Land where certain substances are present which can give rise to air or water pollution, migration of gases and risk to human life, and danger to plant equipment.

Convenience Goods
Items which are purchased frequently and for which convenience is a major consideration in deciding where to shop, usually taken to be food, alcoholic drink, tobacco, newspapers, magazines and cleaning materials.

Density
The intensity of development in a given area. Usually measured, for housing, in terms of number of dwellings per hectare. Net residential density is measured as the number of dwelling units per hectare of land developed specifically for housing and directly associated uses.

Derelict Land
Land which is damaged by past development so that it is incapable of beneficial use without treatment.

Development
The carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land (Section 55, Town & Country Planning Act 1990).

Development Control (DC)
Control of development by the Local Planning Authority or Secretary of State for the Environment through the consideration of planning applications.

English Heritage
The agency responsible for advising Government on the preservation and interpretation of ancient monuments and historic buildings in England.

English Nature
The agency responsible for advising Government on the conservation of flora, fauna, geological and physiographical features in England.

Environmental Impact Assessment
A written statement which the Council may require from planning applicants setting out in detail the environmental effects that a proposed large new development (such as an out-of-town shopping centre or industrial complex) will have on the surrounding area.
**European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)**
Grants from the European Commission (EC) towards the cost of public sector investment in infrastructure projects to create/safeguard jobs within community programmes and initiatives instigated by the European Commission.

**General Development Order 1995 (GDO)**
An Order which describes those categories of development which may be carried out without the need to apply for permission (‘permitted development’).

**Greenfield Land**
Land which has not previously held built development.

**Greenspace Corridors**
Corridors of urban open land which perform a number of functions, e.g. as areas of recreational, wildlife and amenity value. For fuller description see Policy UG/8.

**Habitat Survey**
A survey which provides information on habitats which are of local interest and used to support nature conservation matters.

**Hectare**
A measure of surface area equivalent to 2.4711 acres or 10,000 square metres.

**Heritage**
Things of value inherited or passed on from generation to generation, qualities which are worthwhile to preserve for posterity.

**Highway**
A generic term encompassing various public rights of way over land, e.g. for the passage of vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders. Usually used to describe a road carriageway for vehicles and the adjoining footway. A full legal description is contained in the Highways Act 1980.

**Housing Association**
A non-profit making organisation run by a Committee of volunteers. All share the common aim of providing homes for people who cannot afford a suitable home on the open market. Registered housing associations receive grants from the Government to provide subsidised housing for rent and sale or through shared ownership.

**Housing Investment Programme (HIP)**
The annual spending programme on housing for each Local Authority, submitted to the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR) for their approval.

**Informal Recreation**
Recreation activities which are not formally organised and which do not generally require marked-out areas.

**Infrastructure**
The provision of communications and services to include provision of roads, drains, gas and electricity at a basic level, and also including social infrastructure such as schools and community centres.

**Inward Investment**
Investment by the private sector from sources outside of Borough, including from abroad.

**Land Banks**
The permitted reserves of a particular mineral measured in terms of the number of years of production that they will provide at a certain level of demand. The current land bank duration for sand and gravel is 10 years and 15 years for sandstone as recommended by the DTLR.
Glossary of Terms

Landfill Gas
A gas produced by the decomposition of landfill waste within a tip, which, when certain conditions exist, can migrate and cause potential environmental hazards on adjacent sites.

Listed Buildings
A building of special architectural or historic interest included within a list compiled by the Secretary of State for the Environment under the “Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990”. Listed Buildings are graded according to their importance. They cannot be altered or demolished without specific consent being granted.

Local Agenda 21
The process of local action towards sustainable development, and implementing the Agenda 21 Framework agreed at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992.

Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
An area of botanical or wildlife interest, which is selected by the Local Authority in consultation with English Nature, where access and use by the public is encouraged. In Rochdale, LNRs are also defined as Sites of Biological Importance.

Local Transport Plan (Greater Manchester)
A five-year plan for Greater Manchester setting out objectives and a strategy for integrated transport provision, together with a programme of major projects and complementary schemes. It is required by Government to be prepared and is submitted to Government for approval and funding.

Metrolink
Metrolink is the name given to the Greater Manchester Light Rapid Transit (LRT) supertram system which currently operates between Bury and Altrincham via the City centre.

Non-Conforming Uses
Existing land uses which are located within an area with a different primary land use, i.e. industrial use within a primarily residential area. Non-conforming uses do not necessarily cause nuisance to neighbours.

National Playing Fields Association (NPFA)
The independent national charity which advises on the design, layout and safety of playing fields and other playing space. Also acquires, protects and improves playgrounds, playing fields and other playspace.

Notifiable Installations
A site where hazardous substances are manufactured, processed, kept or used in quantities over certain limits set in the Notification of Installations Handling Hazardous Substances Regulations 1952.

Oldham and Rochdale Groundwork Trust
An environmental movement with the aim of achieving environmental regeneration and improving, at a local level, people’s environmental awareness. Groundwork works in partnership with companies, Local Authorities, community and voluntary groups, and schools.

Outline Planning Permission
Confirms the principle of developing land for a given land use. Normally for a period of three years.

Passenger Transport Authority/Executive (PTA/E)
The Greater Manchester PTA is made up of thirty Members (Councillors) appointed by the ten local Councils of Greater Manchester. Its role is to provide a framework which enables operators to provide public transport services. It does this with the assistance of the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (GMPTE), which is a professional transport organisation required to advise on and implement the GMPTA’s policies.
**Pedestrianisation**
Full or partial removal of traffic from a street to give pedestrians priority.

**Planning/Development Brief**
Prepared by the Local Planning Authority to provide guidance of the favoured land use for a site to potential developers. It will set out land use opportunities, constraints and the standards which a particular development should meet.

**Planning Obligation**
A legal undertaking made by agreement between the Council and a developer or, unilaterally, by the developer for the purpose of restricting or regulating a development or use of land, usually made in connection with the granting of planning permission (see Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990).

**Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs)**
A series of Guidance Notes issued by Central Government which are statements of the Government's Planning Policy. There is also a separate series of Guidance Notes dealing with Minerals Planning (MPGs).

**Previously Developed Land**
Annex C of PPG3 ‘Housing’ defines previously developed land as that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agriculture or forestry buildings), and associated fixed surface infrastructure. The definition covers the curtilage of the development and may occur in both urban and rural settings. The definition includes defence buildings and land for mineral extraction and waste disposal where provision for restoration has not been made.

The definition excludes land and buildings that are currently in use for agricultural or forestry purposes and land in built up areas which has not been developed previously e.g. parks, recreation grounds and allotments). Also excluded is land that was previously developed but where the remains of any structure has blended into the landscape to the extent that it can be considered part of the natural surroundings and has nature conservation or amenity value.

**Private Recreational Open Space**
Privately-owned and/or managed outdoor area used for recreation, where use is restricted to certain groups and not available to the general public.

**Private Sector**
A sector of employment run by private individuals/organisations as opposed to the Government-run public sector and the voluntary sector.

**Regional Planning Guidance**
Issued by the Secretary of State for Transport, Local Government and the Regions. A statement of the overall planning aims for the region, to set the context within which individual local planning authorities prepare their development plans.

**Renewable Energy**
The term “renewable energy” covers those resources which occur and recur naturally in the environment. Such resources include heat from the earth or the sun, power from the wind and from water and energy from plant material and from the recycling of domestic, industrial or agricultural waste.

**Renewal Areas**
Introduced under the 1989 Housing & Local Government Act to replace Housing Action Areas and General Improvement Areas as the primary legislation for tackling housing, environmental, social and economic problems on an area basis.
**Glossary of Terms**

**Rochdale Development Agency (RDA)**
A partnership between the public and private sectors to promote new business investment and property development throughout the Borough.

**Rochdale Partnership / Local Strategic Partnership**
Borough-wide partnership of organisations, agencies, businesses and community groups with responsibility for the preparation of the Community Plan and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

**Service Sector**
Non-manufacturing employment to include banking, finance, business services, hotels, catering and distribution.

**Site of Biological Importance (SBI)**
A protected area of ecological significance in terms of flora, fauna, geological or physical features and listed in a register produced on a county-wide basis (GM Districts). Sites are graded A, B or C, depending on their scientific significance.

**Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)**
A protected area identified by English Nature as being of national importance in terms of wildlife, flora, fauna, geological or physiological features.

**Social Housing**
Housing provided by a social landlord (usually a housing association), normally with public subsidy.

**Street Furniture**
Seats, hanging baskets, bins, bollards and other facilities used to enhance an area as part of an environmental improvement scheme.

**Sui Generis**
See ‘Use Classes Order’.

**Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)**
Planning guidance issued by the Council from time to time, which supplements and interprets the policies and proposals of the plan itself. The purpose of such guidance is to offer positive assistance to those who are preparing to submit an application for planning permission as to how particular policies will be applied in practice, or how a range of policies are relevant and will be applied to, a specific site or area.

**Sustainable Development**
Defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development as “Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations to meet its own needs”. The Government says that the planning system and development plans should ensure that development and growth are sustainable.

**Tree Preservation Order (TPO)**
An Order made by the Council which aims to protect trees and woodland areas of high amenity value which may be under threat. Consent is required from the Council to fell, lop or prune trees which are protected by the Order.

**Unfit Housing**
Housing which does not meet legislative standards for human habitation.

**Unstable Land**
Land which, by reason of geological conditions or man-made changes, is likely to be subject to movement or collapse, putting at risk development located on or near it.
**Urban Fringe**
That part of the countryside which lies closest to urban areas. Generally under most pressure for new development/change.

**Use Classes Order**
The Use Classes Order groups land uses into various categories known as “Use Classes”. When changing the use of land or premises to another which falls into the same group, planning permission is not generally required. A change to a use in a different ‘use class’ requires planning permission. There are some uses which do not fall into any category. These are known as ‘sui generis uses and include uses such as petrol stations, theatres and amusement arcades. As these are not classified within a broader category of uses, any change of use will require planning permission.

**Waste Regulation Authority**
The body responsible in Greater Manchester for licensing waste disposal facilities, ensuring that standards are enforced, registering waste carriers and providing a waste disposal plan to set the framework for disposal by both private and public sectors.

**Windfall Site**
A site not specifically allocated for development in the UDP but which becomes available for development or is granted planning permission during the lifetime of a plan.

**Wind Power Developments**
Sites consisting of groups of wind powered electricity generators. Also known as ‘Windfarms’.