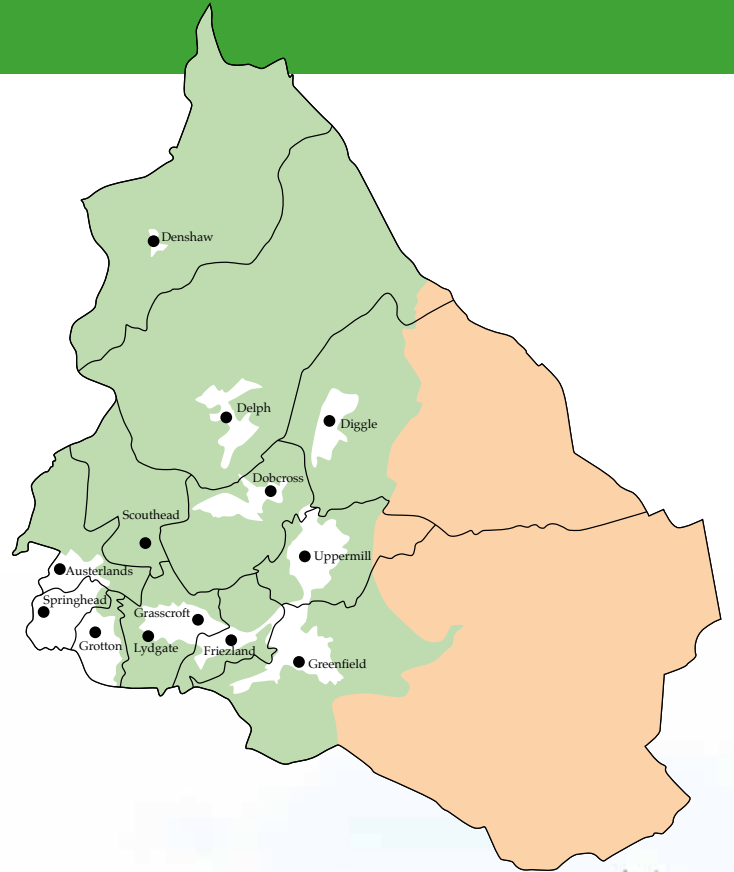




SADDLEWORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2022–2037 DRAFT 1.0



Introduction

The Neighbourhood Plan is a powerful tool to help to shape what happens in the parish of Saddleworth in the future. Neighbourhood Plan policies take precedence over non-strategic Local Plan policies in decision making. This general conformity means that the Local Plan will provide a strategic policy framework which underpins the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed after five years but covers a period of fifteen years.

The designated area is the area agreed with Oldham Council and the Peak District National Park Authority. Saddleworth Neighbourhood Plan covers the area delineated by the Saddleworth Parish Boundary.

Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead.

Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.

Consultees on the plan were the residents of Saddleworth Parish, the Community and Residents' Associations of Saddleworth, the children of local schools, Oldham Council and the Peak District National Park Authority. Other groups to be consulted were the Police, Royal Society Protection of Birds, Churches of all denominations, other faith groups and local historical societies.

*Saddleworth Parish Council
Strategic Planning Committee,
January 2022*

Contents

Introduction	X
History	X
Profile	X
Infrastructure	X
Plans and legislation	X
Vision	X
Policies and recommendations	X
Landscape character and quality	X
Conservation areas	X
Housing	X
Flooding	X
Retail and commerce	X
Travel and transport	X
Related information and resources.....	X

History

The upper reaches of the River Tame, and its numerous tributaries define Saddleworth geographically. Its valleys contain the villages of Denshaw, Delph, Dobcross, Diggle, Uppermill and Greenfield. In the western part of the parish are the villages of Scouthead, Austerlands, Grasscroft, Lydgate, Grotton and Springhead. A large area of the parish is heather moorland which is a special landscape protected by two international designations.

Situated on the western side of the Pennines, but historically part of the West Riding of Yorkshire, Saddleworth has long looked in two directions – over the Pennines and eastward to the towns of Huddersfield, Halifax and Leeds and westward to its Lancashire neighbours of Oldham, Ashton, Rochdale and Manchester. This dual identity is as true today as it was in the Middle Ages and in the time of the Tudors and the Stuarts, when its absentee Lords of the Manor lived far away in Yorkshire and administration was from Pontefract and later Wakefield. Ecclesiastically, however, it was in the parish of Rochdale and Diocese of Chester. Today, it is administered by Oldham Council, forms part of the sub-region of Greater Manchester, but is partly in the Peak District National Park and is a part of the South Pennines Countryside Character Area. A true border territory, its ancient boundary unites the three historic counties of Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cheshire and although it is in the North West Region, it also borders on the Yorkshire, the Humber and East Midlands Regions.

Saddleworth was at the forefront of the industrial revolution with hundreds of water powered textile mills springing up along the River Tame and the emergence of one of the most impressive turnpike road networks in the country. The construction of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, with its three miles long tunnel under the Pennines, was one of the major engineering feats of its day.

The late twentieth century witnessed a transformation of Saddleworth from a community of industrial stone built villages to a largely dormitory area for the major employment centres on both sides of the Pennines. The motorway network accelerated this change. Local shops and services disappeared in most of the villages and with this change came a decline in the local economy. House building mushroomed especially in the west, as Saddleworth was transformed from an industrial landscape to a district of attractive Pennine villages with a valued industrial heritage.

The present Civil Parish dates from the local government reorganisation of 1974, but its boundaries are essentially the same as those of its predecessor which was formed by the amalgamation of Saddleworth Urban District Council with Springhead Urban District Council in 1937. Saddleworth Urban District Council had been in existence since 1900, and the medieval Township dated back to the Saxon period. This long history gives a real sense of local identity both at a parish level and at a village community level.

Saddleworth, like many communities, faces many challenges today and going forward. These relate mostly to the threat of over-development accompanied by rising land prices, the decline of a mixed local economy, the lack of affordable housing, and the expense of maintaining local services and infrastructure in a geographically large rural district. However, these are balanced by Saddleworth's strengths: its largely prosperous, healthy, and well-educated population and its strong community spirit. This is shown by the large number of voluntary societies and organisations and community festivals such as the annual Whit Friday Brass Band Contest, the Rush Cart Weekend.

Profile

The population of Saddleworth is around 26,000 at 2019. It is roughly split 49/51 male/female, which is a marginally larger gap than across Oldham Borough as a whole.

Ethnicity in the area is over 97% white British, which is significantly higher than across Oldham as whole (77.5%).

Age: The proportion of residents aged 65+ increased by nearly 25% between 2011 and 2018, while younger people are significantly underrepresented.

Employment: Median household income is over £30,000, while the employment rate is around 67.5%. Both figures are significantly higher than for Oldham Borough as a whole (£22k, 58.2%). Youth unemployment is also significantly lower than for Oldham Borough as a whole (1.4% compared to 7%).

Households: There are around 12,000 households in Saddleworth. There is a high proportion of owner occupied properties (>80%), and a low proportion of social rented properties (<7%). Around 9% of households are in fuel poverty. Median house prices are in the region of £240,000, although there is a significant difference across the area between the urban areas close to Oldham town and the more rural areas.

Education: Across Saddleworth, >85% of pupils enter the Early Years Foundation stage with a good level of development. Less than 17% of adults have no qualifications, and >35% of adults have a first degree.

Health: <17% of adults have limiting long-term illnesses, which is higher than the proportion for Oldham Borough as a whole, although this is likely to be related to the significantly higher proportion of elderly residents. Male life expectancy is over 81 years, and female life expectancy is over 85 years. Health behaviours are good throughout, and this is then reflected in good health outcomes.

Community safety: Around 1,500 crimes were reported in Saddleworth in 2018, with reported crimes of <56 per 10,000 population (compared to an Oldham average of 124).

Community: >91% of residents reported themselves to be satisfied with the local area. Nearly 50% volunteered within the last 12 months. Voter turnout was at >36% at local elections.

The figures contained within this Neighbourhood Plan have been produced using the ward profiles produced by Oldham Borough Council, and will change significantly over the expected lifetime of this Neighbourhood Plan. The up to date ward profiles are currently found at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/179/ward_profiles

Infrastructure

Education: Saddleworth has one secondary school, which is currently in the process of being moved to a new site at Diggle. The new school will have capacity for 1,500 pupils.

A significant proportion of children from across the area are educated outside the Parish, with two schools – Waterhead Academy and Leesbrook Academy falling just outside the Parish boundaries, and a number of schools in Oldham Borough also having intake from across Saddleworth.

Health: Medical centres are located across the Parish. The main Gp practice is Saddleworth Medical Practice, located in Uppermill, but other centres include Pennine Medical Centre in Greenfield, and the Garside Street Clinic in Delph.

Other medical practices provide services for Saddleworth residents, most notably Lees Medical Practice, Leesbrook Medical Practice, Moorside Medical Practice, and the Pennine Medical Centre in Mossley (which also falls outside the Borough). The two nearest hospitals are the Royal Oldham Hospital and Tameside Hospital (again, Tameside Hospital falls outside the borough).

Transport: The borough is served by a single railway line, and one station, located at Greenfield. Trains run towards Manchester and Huddersfield.

The Metrolink service runs through Oldham, with stations located at Oldham Mumps, Derker, Shaw and Milnrow, all outside the Parish boundaries.

The main motorways near to Saddleworth are the M62, with junction 22 at Rishworth Moor falling just outside the Parish boundary, and the M60 ring road, which falls several miles outside the Parish. The primary roads through the Parish are the A62, the A672 and the A670.

Plans & legislation

The Saddleworth Neighbourhood Plan 2022–2042 has been developed in parallel with other planning legislation, which includes the National Planning Policy Framework, Greater Manchester’s forthcoming Places for Everyone and Transport 2040, Oldham Borough Council’s forthcoming Local Plan, and the Peak Park Management and Local Plans

The revised National Planning Policy Framework sets out government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It currently falls under the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>.

Places for Everyone is still under development at the time of this Neighbourhood Plan being developed. Every effort has been made to ensure that this plan is aligned to *Places for Everyone* as required by national legislation. The Places for Everyone portal can be found at <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-housing/places-for-everyone/>

Oldham Borough Council’s Local Plan is still under development at the time of this Neighbourhood Plan being adopted. Every effort has been made to ensure that this plan is aligned to the Local Plan, as required by national legislation. The portal for Oldham’s local plan can be found at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200199/planning_and_building/1809/local_plan_review

The Peak District National Park’s National Park Management Plan can be found at <https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/strategies-and-policies/national-park-management-plan>

The Saddleworth Neighbourhood Plan does not include a Strategic Environment Assessment, as it has been developed in conjunction with the Oldham Borough Local Plan, which includes a landscape character assessment, which has been used for the purposes of the Landscape Character and Quality Section of the Report.

This Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites for development – allocated sites for development can be found in the Oldham Borough Council Local Plan, and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority’s *Places for Everyone* proposals.

The Parish Council covers an area with a number of sensitive environmental assets. However, a large proportion of the area of the Parish Council falls within the Peak District National Park, where the Peak Park Management and Local Plans are the relevant planning documents for development.

In the remaining area, the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have significant environmental effects not already addressed through the sustainability appraisal of Oldham Borough Council’s Local Plan.

The majority of land in Saddleworth is classified as Green Belt or Local Green Space classifications, in addition to which there are 22 defined Conservation Areas. As such those environmental assets have been already classified, and protected by existing plans and legislation.

Vision

The fundamental principle which underpins our vision and the policies in this plan is that of sustainable development. This means:

- achieving simultaneous and carefully balanced progress in pursuit of economic, social and environmental objectives – not prioritising one of these issues at the expense of the others;
- considering the long term legacy of our actions – ensuring that young people and generations to come can enjoy a quality of life at least as good as that we enjoy in Saddleworth today;
- having a wide geographic perspective – recognising that our local actions can have much wider impacts. Climate change is just one example.

Our vision is that Saddleworth will be made up of many thriving communities, each a place with its own strong identity, each one offering great opportunities for people to make their homes, to work, and to spend their leisure time. Many of local people's needs for services, such as for shops, education, and healthcare will be very well met within Saddleworth. New developments will be accommodated but will be located and designed with sensitivity and with investment in the necessary supporting infrastructure. Saddleworth will be known for the quality of its countryside and the care with which land owners manage it.

We are very clear that Saddleworth must not become just a dormitory area for Greater Manchester and the West Yorkshire conurbation

Saddleworth will benefit greatly from its vital economic, social and environmental links with the rest of the Greater Manchester area, and also its strong connections to West Yorkshire. These neighbouring areas will continue to provide great opportunities for our residents, for instance, for employment and entertainment.

A long term Vision is an essential part of a Neighbourhood Plan. It sets out the direction in which this Plan, and subsequent Plans, should take us.

Our Vision for Saddleworth reflects views expressed by local people during the extensive public engagement which has informed the preparation of this Plan.

Likewise, the particular qualities which make Saddleworth such an asset to the North of England must be conserved and enhanced. The contribution which it will continue to make to the Peak District National Park is particularly noteworthy. Saddleworth's natural landscapes, its attractive and diverse villages, and its outstanding opportunities for a wide range of outdoor recreation are great strengths. These will make Saddleworth a great place to live and visit, but they will also help to underpin its economic contribution. The tourism and leisure sector is an obvious example, but we envisage that other small and medium sized enterprises will make Saddleworth their base because of its excellent environment and its vibrant communities, and because highly skilled people will choose to live here.

Policies and recommendations



Landscape character

This section remains under development

Objectives

Policies

Recommendations

Evidence

Particular items that have been considered in terms of character include views that need to be protected, and the areas relationship to the Peak Park.

The Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment in particular notes the Saddleworth War Memorial on Pots and Pans as such a view.

Consideration should also be given to the views of church spires from across the area, and the aqueduct, for example.



Conservation areas

Saddleworth currently has 26 designated conservation areas, which are maintained

Housing

OBJECTIVES

1. Housing

Address underprovided housing needs, in particular, suitably affordable (including social) housing stock for first time buyers looking to stay in the area, or for pensioners to move into appropriate and easily maintained homes.

2. Environment

With particular attention to the number of unidentified waterways and watercourses, work to improve the mapping of watercourses across the district, and ensuring that this information is available and usable in considering development.

Identify and protect recreation and nature conservation corridors, and local green spaces, in addition to the green belt already identified in the area, to ensure that where new development takes place it respects and where possible enhances the local environment.

The Parish Council has declared its ambition to be carbon neutral as a district by 2035. It is expected that all new building or renovation work should be done with that ambition in mind, with regards to building methods, environmental impact of use, and minimising associated environmental costs such as transport.

3. Design, character and heritage

Ensure that where possible, traditional, unused buildings are brought back into new use.

Ensure housing development maintains or improves the unique local vernacular, with particular respect paid to historical design and methods of construction.

Identify specific heritage sites not currently covered in the local plan or wider Greater Manchester heritage analysis for protection and enhancement.

4. Health, and safety

Ensure developments are designed with physical and mental health in mind.

Design with public safety in mind, ensuring that the public realm has considered design which minimises risk, and reduces the likelihood of antisocial behaviour.

5. Transport

Address chronic parking issues, by ensuring adequate provision for parking spaces, and alternative methods of transport

Reduce traffic congestion by minimising the requirement for car use, by providing thought-through design for local access to shopping and transport hubs, as well as ensuring that new developments have direct access to A roads where they will bring a substantial volume of new traffic.

6. Infrastructure

Ensure that key infrastructure needs are supported by any development, in particular ensuring that there are sufficient places at schools and health centres.

POLICY 1 – HOUSING

Development should aim to deliver a range of housing types, with specific focus on the provision of affordable, social and intermediate housing. In particular, it should deliver one-bedroom accommodation targeted at young people, allowing those leaving family homes for the first time to remain in the area, and appropriate homes for the elderly and disabled, which promote accessibility.

RECOMMENDATION 1 – HOUSING

In support of policies 1 and 2, all large developments have as a condition of their approval, the mandatory formation of a consultation group with local residents and groups, to discuss the development between planning approval and completion.

The positive and proactive engagement with the community by those bringing forward plans for development – as plans are prepared and submitted, and as development takes place. All planning applications for development which is likely to have an impact beyond the immediate site should be accompanied by a Statement of Community Engagement.

Oldham’s current Local Housing Need Assessment (LHNA) is based on central government’s standard methodology. For Oldham, local housing need has recently changed to 693 new homes per year, due to the publication of the government’s (amended) standard methodology in December 2020.¹

Data on the community response to Housing needs can be found on pages 71–73 of the Dobcross data, and pages 7–10 of the Saddleworth data.

The LHNA identifies that Saddleworth and Lees has the highest median house prices of any of the districts in the borough.

Saddleworth and the Saddleworth villages are identified as a clear identifiable sub-market, with a distinct need for affordable housing. The LHNA identifies a complete lack of 1-bedroom housing, and limited housing for older residents. Demand for housing is high across the district.

Specific data on property type and size is included on pages 45 and 46, while information on tenure is included on page 51. Comparable market rent data is on page 58.

The community research found that residents identify the that the there was little priority given to shared space housing (e.g. flats) – just 9% of respondents cited it as their first priority. Just over 45% of respondents to the Saddleworth survey specified detached houses as their least preferred development type, by far the strongest response to any particular type of housing.

In order of response, the weighted preferences for types of housing (most preferred first) were:

- 1) Terraced (2.53)
- 2) Retirement homes (2.76)
- 3) Semi-detached (2.80)
- 4) Sheltered /supported accommodation (2.91)
- 5) Shared space (e.g. flats) (3.30)
- 6) Detached (3.49)

There was little need identified for private rented accommodation, with 64% wanting more owner-occupied, and 37% wanting more social rented stock.²

There was a strong preference for three bedroom houses (64%), then two bedroom houses (39%)². There was small demand identified for four bedroom or more (6.5%) or one bedroom (6%), although this does contrast with the Oldham Housing Needs Analysis.

¹ Oldham’s Local Housing Needs Assessment (OHNA) can be found at:

https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/5590/housing_strategy_needs_assessment_report_2019

² Respondents could choose more than one option.

POLICY 2 – ENVIRONMENT

Developments should aim to deliver:

- modern standards of design and construction, which will minimise the sunk environmental costs during the building process;
- meeting or exceeding national environmental guidelines and recommendations for zero-carbon homes across their lifetimes;
- the appropriate provision of new small green/open spaces, such as pocket parks and active green spaces (e.g. green walls and green roofs) and their maintenance, and an overall increase in the provision of green space;
- the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) in all development, unless there are clear, supported recommendations for alternative provision;
- a positive impact on the relationship between urban and natural features;
- support any existing wildlife, particularly by keeping features that support existing wildlife, providing alternatives where there are overriding reasons for their removal, and incorporating new supporting provision in new buildings;

- support wildlife movement and foraging through the provision of native hedgerow and tree planting, and the use of wildflower planting in areas of open space;
- improvements to identified flood risk locations.

Developments will not be supported which:

- do not meet the Borough Council's target provision for the replacement of any one tree lost with three new trees;
- do not replace any loss of green space with an equal or greater new provision of green space;
- would result in the loss of Ancient Woodland.

If it is not possible to replace any lost green space with an equal or greater provision, consideration would be given to proposals to enhance existing green space, but this would be a less preferred option.

Note: Please also see the related aspects of transport provision, in particular with regards to car charging, improvement of public transport, and pedestrian and cycle access.

RECOMMENDATION 2 – ENVIRONMENT

Measures should be taken to monitor the air quality of the area – particular in locations near to schools, or where there is traffic congestion – and to publicly publish this information.

As well as the requirement for SUDS, it is recommended that efforts should be made to identify pre-existing drainage and culverted waterways, and report them to the Borough Council, to improve knowledge of existing potential flood risks.

The disused railway lines which run through Saddleworth are particularly noteworthy in creating recreation and nature conservation corridors. These are already identified as Recreation Routes / Open Spaces but good to note these should continue to be identified as key Green Infrastructure features.

The local plan has identified Local Green Spaces, as well as other green infrastructure. It has already been identified that three sites should be considered for Local Green Spaces status, those being:

- Dacres
- Stoneswood
- Wall Hill

The data from the surveys conducted for this Neighbourhood Plan also identifies an extensive number of sites which might be included as further Local Green Spaces. This has been addressed in the policies on landscape character and quality.

While a number of the comments focused on the protection of existing Green Belt and OPOL spaces as a generality, specific recommendations were received on Austerlands chimney, the canalside, Chapel Gardens, Dawsons Field, Dick Clough, Pickhill Valley, and a number of more generally described areas.

A major part of the environmental aspect is the response on potential flooding issues, which is considered in a separate but related section. Data on flooding concerns can be found in Dobcross data (p 148), and in the individual answers to question 12 on the Saddleworth survey.

Consideration has also been given to the status of Ancient Woodlands. It is not anticipated that the policy adopted will be in conflict with any proposals coming forward as part of the Oldham Local Plan.

Further supporting information required here to establish concerns over flooding, pocket parks and integrated green space, wildlife, and tree conservation.

This Neighbourhood Plan does not include a Strategic Environmental Assessment – please see the introductory section on *plans and legislation* for detail.

The environment section must be read in conjunction with the expected green infrastructure plan which is currently being prepared to inform the Local Plan Review.

The environmental assessment should also refer to the analysis of local character, referred to in the design, character and heritage policies, and to the sections on countryside and landscape character, and on greenbelt and natural environment in this Neighbourhood Plan.

POLICY 3 – DESIGN, CHARACTER AND HERITAGE

All development shall be of a high quality of design, which complements and enhances the distinct local character and identity of Saddleworth's villages, in particular, the rich heritage of weavers' cottages and traditional buildings.

This shall be achieved by:

- the use of distinctive local building materials, with particular relevance to the design and materials used in the weavers' cottages and associated mill buildings, or by making concerted efforts to deliver complementary design to enhance and improve the distinct Saddleworth vernacular;
- a presumption in favour of a colour palette which reflects, or is in harmony with, the materials of its context. In particular, extensions and infill development should respect and be sensitive to their context and settings;
- having regard to not only the context of the protected views, 26 Conservation Areas, 385 listed buildings, 2 scheduled monuments, but also local green spaces and other types of protected status. Proposals which detract from the special character, and/or architectural and/or historical significance, and setting of Conservation Areas and heritage assets in the area will not be supported;
- the provision of associated high-quality public realm.

RECOMMENDATION 3 – DESIGN, CHARACTER AND HERITAGE

From the *Places for Everyone* proposals, three locations were identified as appropriate to be considered for Local Green Space status: Dacres, Stoneswood and Wall Hill. In addition to that, specific recommendations were received in our survey for Austerlands chimney, the canalside, Chapel Gardens, Dawsons Field, Dick Clough, Pickhill Valley, and a number of more generally described areas.

The Parish Council will endeavour to promote the use of Local Green Space status, as well as other protected statuses, support local residents in applying for these protected statuses, as well as applying for them itself where appropriate.

With particular regards to redevelopment sites, such as the Fletcher's Mill site, any applications should include a phased masterplan to ensure that development should prioritise brownfield development first.

In defining Saddleworth’s existing design, character and heritage, the GM Landscape and Character Needs Assessment identifies the “unifying vernacular of traditional millstone grit farms and cottages, with small villages and clusters of buildings in sheltered locations often fringed by trees”, with specific reference to St Chad’s Church and Diglea.

Saddleworth has in particular a rich heritage of weavers cottages and traditional mill buildings, and the plan is intended to integrate new developments which address and echo these sensitively.

The plan has specifically not excluded contemporary design, but instead has stated that it must be complementary to existing design, and reflect or be in harmony with existing designs.

26 conservation areas have already been defined by Oldham Borough Council in Saddleworth, with two having existing character appraisals – Delph and Grasscroft. Work is expected to develop further character appraisals as appropriate. Information on the existing and future character appraisals can be found at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200291/heritage/1908/conservation_areas

Full information on the 385 listed buildings and two scheduled monuments in Saddleworth can be obtained from Historic England at <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

POLICY 4 – SAFETY AND WELLBEING

Development should aim to deliver:

- new public realm which is conducive to encouraging positive mental and physical health (in particular, see Housing – environment with regards to pockets parks and green space, and Housing – transport with regards to pedestrian and cycling access);
- public realm which is conducive to public use, while minimising the risk of anti-social behaviour (ASB). Where there new public realm that could provide a risk of anti-social behaviour, applications should be accompanied by a risk assessment statement and (where appropriate) policy.

POLICY 5 – TRANSPORT

Development should aim to deliver:

- provision for two parking spaces per dwelling. The exception to this would be new one-bedroom housing, which would make provision for one parking space per property;
- for large developments, minimal or no use of minor, unadopted, or single-lane roads to access the site. Alternatively, this is can be balanced by the provision of cycle and pedestrian access to local facilities and transport connections over and above the minimum standards, particularly where there is provision of one-bedroom housing and social housing;
- inclusive design for public transport, or a requirement that the entire site can easily access existing public transport (within recommended guidelines for distances to bus or train stops);
- provision of electric charging as standard for all new parking provision;
- for large developments, high-quality pedestrian and cycle access. Both must be designed with existing provision in mind, and consideration given to how any developments can help to extend the existing network, or provide the key priorities above;
- safe, accessible cycle storage as a priority;
- improved accessibility for people with mobility issues, or those with pushchairs;
- a contribution towards the provision of new paths;
- where appropriate, provide cycle and pedestrian crossings to ensure safe and convenient continuation of sustainable traffic routes.

Data on parking space requirements and access is included on pages 77–78 of the Dobcross responses. Over 90 per cent of respondents said that parking spaces and access to a main road should be prerequisites for planning permission. Data on electric cars is included on pages 92–97. Over 65% of respondents said that they were considering an electric car in the next five to 10 years. 56% said that they would be able to charge it at home. 48% said that public charging facilities would be a factor in their purchasing decision.

As per the separate section on Traffic and Transport, Saddleworth is underserved by public transport, which means that it will remain overly dependent on private transport – particularly cars. Our policies have therefore concentrated on two aspects, provision of environmentally friendly charging points to ensure that private transport is as low impact as possible, and the improvement of 20 minute neighbourhoods, to minimise the need for private or public transport through the use of local facilities.

Data on footpaths and bridle paths is included in the responses to question 29 of the Saddleworth survey. Suggestions largely centred on working with community groups, and increased maintenance.

Data on car usage is on page 34 or the summary responses (question 30), with the vast majority of respondents having 1 (44.24%) or 2 (38%) cars.

Suggested locations for charging points is included in the responses to question 31 (primarily existing car parks).

Requirements for charging points have been factored into planning applications as part of the neighbourhood plan. It should be noted that requirements for charging points should also be considered for retail and commercial development, as noted in the section on retail and commerce. Providing support for public charging should be considered as part of the infrastructure considerations for section 106 money.

Cycling facilities were addressed on question 33 of the Saddleworth consultation. Safety issues were cited extensively, with users requesting better on road management to make cyclists feel safe, and better, and particularly more connected, off road provision.

Provision for cycling facilities has therefore been factored into planning applications and infrastructure needs, as per charging points.

Accessibility needs are included in the responses to question 34. The most common issue raised was with regards to availability of bus services.

POLICY 6 – INFRASTRUCTURE

Development should aim to deliver:

- provision for two parking spaces per dwelling. The exception to this would be new one-bedroom housing, which would make provision for one parking space per property;
- for large developments, minimal or no use of minor, unadopted, or single-lane roads to access the site. Alternatively, this is can be balanced by the provision of cycle and pedestrian access to local facilities and transport connections over and above the minimum standards, particularly where there is provision of one-bedroom housing and social housing;
- inclusive design for public transport, or a requirement that the entire site can easily access existing public transport (within recommended guidelines for distances to bus or train stops);
- provision of electric charging as standard for all new parking provision;
- for large developments, high-quality pedestrian and cycle access. Both must be designed with existing provision in mind, and consideration given to how any developments can help to extend the existing network, or provide the key priorities above;
- safe, accessible cycle storage as a priority;
- improved accessibility for people with mobility issues, or those with pushchairs;
- a contribution towards the provision of new paths;
- where appropriate, provide cycle and pedestrian crossings to ensure safe and convenient continuation of sustainable traffic routes.

Oldham Council does not use the Community Infrastructure Levy, which would otherwise form one of the primary aspects for any response on infrastructure as part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

However, the Neighbourhood Plan has looked at specific infrastructure deficiencies which need to be addressed before development can go ahead, e.g. highway impact, public open space, affordable housing, education and healthcare.

In particular, the answers to questions 4 and 5 of the Saddleworth survey, and questions 9 and 10 of the Dobcross survey provide information on identified infrastructure needs.

In the Saddleworth survey, 82.25% of people identified housing, planning and development as one of their three key issues for the next five years, and the same chose it over 20 years. In other responses, education and healthcare places, and roads and parking were the most common responses.

The Dobcross survey primarily identified issues around traffic and parking in both the current and future issues facing the village.

Flooding

OBJECTIVES

?

Retail and commerce

OBJECTIVES

1 Commerce

asd

2 Tourism

asd

3 Homeworking

asd

4 Farming

asd

POLICY 1 – COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

New B-class commercial development will be supported within existing employment areas subject to the following criteria:

- the scale and nature of the proposals would not have significant harmful impacts on the amenities of adjoining activities; and
- the scale and nature of the proposals would not have an unacceptable impact on existing commercial activity on adjacent land, including agricultural activity; and
- the proposal would not have unacceptable impacts on the local road network, particularly in respect of the volume of HGV traffic.

Developments will be required to provide travel assessments and/or travel plans in line with Local Plan Policy.

There will be a strong presumption against the loss of commercial premises (A-class or B-class) or land which provides employment or future potential employment opportunities.

Applications for a change of use to an activity that does not provide employment opportunities will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that: the commercial premises or land in question has not been in active use for at least 12 months; and the commercial premises or land in question has no potential for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment generating uses and as demonstrated through the results both of a full valuation report and a marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least six months

Question: should this be longer?

In addition to site allocations in the Oldham Local Plan, proposals will be supported which result in the creation or sustainable expansion of existing and new businesses, particularly those defined as micro (sole traders or those with fewer than ten employees) or small (ten to fifty employees).

Such proposals will be supported where the following all apply:

- The site is located outside the Green Belt or the development is acceptable in terms of national Green Belt policy;
- The proposal supports new business investment or the expansion of an existing business;
- The site can be connected to the existing highway network and will not result in severe adverse traffic impacts on surrounding roads;
- The site is large enough to accommodate car parking, including EV charging points (or other renewable technology), service areas and landscaped areas appropriate to the scale of the business;
- The proposals recognise the overall aim to reduce carbon emissions through sustainable design and promoting access by walking, cycling and public transport.

Business development which involves the sensitive conversion or redevelopment of existing buildings or makes use of a previously developed site will be particularly encouraged.

POLICY 2 – HOMEWORKING AND CONNECTIVITY

Proposals which promote the role of homeworking within the economy will be supported. These include, where planning permission is required, improvements to broadband and telecommunications infrastructure and extensions to existing residential dwellings which are subsidiary to the main dwelling, subject to other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, relevant Oldham Local Plan Policies, and national planning policies.

Development proposals should incorporate suitable infrastructure to support integrated communication technologies as part of the initial design process.

On sites allocated for residential development in the Plan all new properties should be served by a superfast broadband (fibre optic) connection. Elsewhere in the Plan area all other new buildings should be served with this standard of connection when available unless it can be demonstrated through consultation with network providers that this would not be either possible, practical or economically viable. In such circumstances sufficient and suitable ducting should be provided to ensure that upgraded connections are possible in the future.

RECOMMENDATION 1 – COMMUTER TRANSPORT

The Parish Council will look to support transport planning across the borough and wider region which is developed that recognises of the lack of public transport infrastructure across the Parish, and provides opportunities for better connectivity for people travelling outside Saddleworth for work.

POLICY 3 – TOURISM

Development for new and of existing caravan, chalet, camping, cabin or lodge style developments, or other visitor accommodation, may be supported where they:

- contribute to improving the offer to tourists;
- are appropriately screened;
- provide adequate car parking spaces;
- are accessible to people with disabilities;
- do not generate traffic movements of a scale and type likely to have severe adverse impact on highway safety and efficiency;
- mitigate any adverse impact on the capacity of road, sewerage or other infrastructure; and
- are appropriate to the landscape character.

Travel and transport

OBJECTIVES

1 Public transport

Public transport infrastructure needs to be extended as much as possible, to increase the ease of connections between villages, as well as connections to the rest of the borough and beyond. The current lack of public transport means a heavy reliance upon private transport, which needs to be considered in all aspects of planning and development going forward.

2 Cycling and pedestrian routes

Pedestrian routes need to be improved to ensure the safest possible routes. Many road layouts were created in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and have limited to no pavements.

3 Improved connectivity across the borough

The further residents are from the urban end of Saddleworth (i.e. away from the town of Oldham), the greater their concerns about transport. This imbalance needs to be addressed.

POLICY 1 – PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Significant investment in the Greenfield rail link is required, and will be supported. Urgent provision needs to deliver disabled access on Leeds bound side at Greenfield station, and development to deliver this will be supported.

Support will be given to proposals for a second rail station at Diggle to increase the capacity of the local network, or alternative provision of additional stations.

Support will be given to public transport in order to contribute to the reduction of private cars travelling to beauty spots such as Dovestone.

RECOMMENDATION 1 – PUBLIC TRANSPORT

There needs to be greater consultation with the residents on any changes to bus services and routes.

A rural bus service which takes into account alternatives to the traditional bus services must be introduced in order to meet the needs of all the villages.

