

## Delegated Cabinet Member Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker and Portfolio area:</b>	<b>Councillor Taylor, Cabinet Member for Housing and Licensing</b>
<b>Date of Decision:</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> January 2024</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Draft Employment Land Review (ELR) Part One</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Clare Davison</b>
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	<b>All wards</b>

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<b>Reason for the decision:</b>	To seek approval for the publication of Oldham Council's Draft Employment Land Review (ELR) Part One.
<b>Summary:</b>	To seek approval for the publication of Oldham Council's Draft Employment Land Review (ELR) Part One.
<b><i>What are the alternative option(s) to be considered? Please give the reason(s) for recommendation(s):</i></b>	<p>Option 1 – To approve and publish for comments the Draft ELR Part One to provide evidence for the Local Plan Review.</p> <p>Option 2 – To not approve and publish for comments the Draft ELR Part One.</p>
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended to approve and publish for comments the Draft ELR Part One as per option one alongside the Draft Local Plan and supporting documents. ELRs contribute towards the evidence base for identifying the employment land requirement for the borough, can help to identify sites suitable for employment development and will help to inform decisions on allocating land in the Local Plan for employment.

## Implications:

What are the **financial** implications?

The Planning and Infrastructure Team is proposing to publish the draft employment land review (ELR).

As the Council will make it publicly available online only, there are no costs associated with publishing this document.

(John Edisbury, Accountant)

What are the **procurement** implications?

None

What are the **legal** implications?

Under the Council's Local Development Scheme of Delegation, the approval and publication of the Council's prepared or commissioned evidence base is delegated to the Portfolio Member in consultation with the Executive Director.

(A Evans, Group Solicitor)

What are the **Human Resources** implications?

None

**Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment** attached or not required because (please give reason)

The ELR is a technical document which forms part of the Local Plan evidence base. In line with Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act) an EqlA for the Draft Local Plan has been undertaken as part of the preparation of the Draft Plan. As such, there is no requirement to produce an EqlA for this document.

What are the **property** implications

Although there are no direct property implications of publishing this review, the sites identified should be review to determine whether they include council owned land and assets. The implications for the value of these assets would need to be worked through on an individual basis."

(Katy Webster AD Property & Projects)

## Risks:

Oldham Council work within the National Planning Policy Framework and appropriate legislation, including the Town and Country Planning Regulations. The Draft Employment Review is an opportunity for Oldham Council to identify the employment land requirement for the borough and sits alongside Local Plan and GM Places for

Everyone Plan. The refresh of the plan will enable the Council to make informed decisions around sites suitable for employment development and the publication will ensure transparency.

Vicki Gallacher (Head of Insurance and Information Governance)

**Co-operative agenda**

By carrying out this ELR we are taking steps to support employment and economic development in the borough. This aligns with cooperative principles as an opportunity to improve the life chances of our residents, to support innovation, and to potentially support enterprise and the social economy.

(James Mulvaney, Policy Manager)

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Has the relevant Legal Officer confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council's Constitution? Yes

Has the relevant Finance Officer confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council's budget? Yes

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council? Yes

**There are no background papers for this report**

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<b>Report Author Sign-off:</b>	
	Clare Davison
<b>Date:</b>	

Please list any appendices:-

<b>Appendix number or letter</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Draft ELR Part One Main Report

**Background:**

**1. Background:**

- 1.1 To inform the review of the Local Plan the council has undertaken this Draft Employment Land Review (ELR) Part One (the draft ELR) to help develop robust and informed economic policies. ELRs are part of the recognised evidence base that informs plan making. Government policy and guidance indicate that the role of ELRs is to provide sound evidence to inform Local Planning Authorities in planning for employment land uses. If Oldham is to achieve its vision set out in The Oldham Plan to 'uplift every resident' it is essential that we have a portfolio of diverse, suitable, attractive employment sites for existing businesses to grow and relocate to and to attract new businesses to invest in the borough in order to allow our residents access to decent jobs that pay well.
- 1.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) says in paragraph 85 that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. It goes on to say that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- 1.3 Planning practice guidance on housing and economic land availability assessments states that the assessment of land availability is an important step in the preparation of the Local Plan and includes guidance on the methodology for carrying out the assessment of sites, including a suggested size threshold, information on how to identify sites, what types of data to look at, what to include in a site survey and what characteristics to record during the survey. Planning practice guidance on housing and economic development needs assessments also provides guidance on how to carry out the assessments.

#### *Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)*

- 1.4 As the draft ELR does not allocate land or include policy on development, it will not directly create any potential environmental effects and would not be subject to SEA. Any sites considered for allocation as part of the Local Plan would be assessed as appropriate.

## **2 The Draft ELR Objectives**

- 2.1 The overall purpose of the draft ELR is to assess current and future demand for employment land and to provide an audit of the boundaries our designated employment areas (Business and Employment Areas (BEAs) and Saddleworth Employment Areas (SEAs)). The study seeks to achieve the following broad objectives:
  - To assess how much land will be required for employment during the plan period (having regard to the evidence base and policies in the Composite Places for Everyone Plan dated September 2023); and
  - To provide an audit of the boundaries of our designated employment areas to provide an up to date and accurate picture of Oldham's BEAs and SEAs and ensure the boundaries are appropriate.
- 2.2 There is no set methodology for carrying out ELR's as such the approach taken is based on advice within national planning guidance, best practice examples and by following any relevant evidence documents, where appropriate, that were used to inform the economic policies within PfE.

### 3 The draft ELR Findings

- 3.1 Policies JP-J3 'Office Development' and JP-J4 'Industry and Warehousing Development' in PfE outline the amount of office, industry and warehousing floorspace that will be provided across the plan area over the plan period but this is not broken down to a district level requirement. The PfE Employment Topic Paper (July 2021) set out the approach to assessing the need for employment land in Greater Manchester and the Updated Note on Employment Land Needs for Greater Manchester (March, 2021 Nicol Economics) provided further information on assessing employment needs in Greater Manchester and how the plan area requirement was calculated. The documents state that in previous iterations of PfE consideration was given to both past take-up and employment forecasting approaches in the assessment of employment land need, but for the submission plan they focussed on past take-up/development rates as the main method of assessing future needs.
- 3.2 In order to be consistent with PfE, Oldham's Draft ELR broadly follows the same methodology for consistency. The steps followed in the draft ELR to determine Oldham's employment land requirement up to 2039 were:
- Step 1: The average actual historic take-up/development rates was calculated based on past trends from 2012/13 to 2021/22.
  - Step 2: A five-year margin of flexibility or buffer added to account for the uncertainties in any forecasting exercise; and the aspiration to increase the overall size and competitiveness of the Oldham's economy.
  - Step 3: Convert the employment land requirement into square metres.
- 3.3 The outcome of this stage of the assessment was that for offices the need up to 2039 is for around 12 hectares of land and for industry and warehousing the need is for around 41 hectares of land across Oldham.
- 3.4 The draft ELR then sets out further details of our employment land supply and that as part of the Draft Local Plan work some sites from this supply have been identified as having potential for allocation as employment sites and included with Policy E4. These are sites that reflect the council's Creating a Better Place programme, facilitating for example the continued development of Hollinwood Junction and land at Foxdenton, or where there has been recent market interest in bringing forward the site. The sites included with Policy E4 of the Draft Local Plan are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Potential employment allocations included with Policy E4 of the Draft Local Plan

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

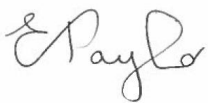
Former British Gas site, Higginshaw lane	Royton South	4.55	16,800
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- 3.5 Going forward a more detailed assessment of our employment land supply will be carried out, particularly on our saved UDP Business and Industrial Allocations and Business and Office Allocations, to determine their suitability as employment allocations, this will be informed by feedback on the potential allocations set out in the Draft Local Plan. This will form part of Final ELR.
- 3.6 In addition to forecasting the employment land requirements, the draft ELR has also carried out an audit of the boundaries of our designated employment areas. In addition to our 'employment land allocations' in Oldham's adopted Local Plan (the Joint DPD) there are 23 Business and Employment Areas (BEAs) and Saddleworth Employment Areas (SEAs) designated. Although they do not count towards our 'employment land requirement' as they are designated for a range of commercial activities it is considered important to carry out an audit of the BEAs and SEAs to provide an up to date and accurate picture of Oldham's employment land and premises offer and ensure the boundaries are appropriate.
- 3.7 The audit of our BEAs and SEAs boundaries resulted in a number of recommendations for the Local Plan. If taken forward this would result in one employment area (SEA 8 Shaw Pallets, Diggle) being de-designated and boundary changes to seven of the BEAs. These recommendations have been included within the Draft Local Plan.

## 5 Next Steps

- 5.1 To publish the draft ELR along with the Draft Local Plan for consultation commencing no sooner than 10 January 2024 and then finalise the document and publish it on the council's website as part of further updates to the Local Plan evidence base. The next steps in relation to the Final ELR will be informed by feedback received on the draft Local Plan which includes the employment areas set out in Policy E1 and a number of proposed employment allocations in Policy E4. Further work to take these employment areas and employment allocations forward may be needed as work on the Local Plan progresses.

Signed: (Cabinet Member for Housing and Licensing and Deputy Leader)



Date: 8 January 2024

Signed: (Deputy Chief Executive (Place))



Date: 8 January 2024