

**Greater Manchester  
Combined Authority**



**Councillor Howard Sykes MBE**

Our ref: HDS

Date: 6 December 2023

Dear Sir or Madam,

**RE: Places for Everyone Consultation**

I am writing on behalf of Oldham Liberal Democrat councillors to provide our response to the 'Places for Everyone' consultation.

It is our long-held view that 'Places for Everyone' represents the wrong approach to housing development in Oldham. Not only will the strategy fail in its stated aim to deliver the affordable housing that Oldham and Greater Manchester needs, but the release of green belt land and the unambitious approach to use of brownfield and ex-industrial sites means that 'Places for Everyone' has also clearly failed to garner support from the public.

**Outdated modelling**

Places for Everyone proposals in Oldham are based heavily on housing needs assessments. The last needs assessment for Oldham was conducted in March 2019. Before the impact of the pandemic.

The latest methodology for calculating housing need was published in December 2020 and was based on population and household growth using 2014-based projections. Basing a housing strategy on figures which are already nearly a decade out of date is a wholly inappropriate approach to development.

**Protecting local green belt**

Our green spaces are precious. Once they are gone, they are gone for good. Oldham Liberal Democrats reaffirm our strongly held belief that the loss of habitat, biodiversity and carbon trapping eco-systems that these proposals represent would be a travesty. People in Oldham have made their objections to green belt development clear on countless occasions over recent years.

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Leader of the Real Opposition. Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group Oldham Council.  
Liberal Democrat Spokesperson on Transport in Greater Manchester.  
Member for Shaw Ward. Member for East Ward Shaw & Crompton Parish Council.  
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Oldham borough is not without alternative options. Indeed, our wealth of untapped brownfield and ex-industrial heritage assets present ample opportunity for the delivery of truly affordable housing, yet these are not prioritised within the Oldham 'Places for Everyone' allocation.

### **The wrong homes, in the wrong places, for the wrong reasons**

The Greater Manchester property boom and the rising cost-of-living should both represent cause for alarm for housing policymakers. Large scale, regional developments, without local oversight, clear governance, or accountability, are open to exploitation from developers – with legal loopholes able to be exploited in the pursuit of profit over affordability.

The Liberal Democrats remain unconvinced that 'Places for Everyone' will serve the interests of Oldham. It will deliver the wrong homes, in the wrong places, for the wrong reasons.

Yours sincerely,



Howard Sykes

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