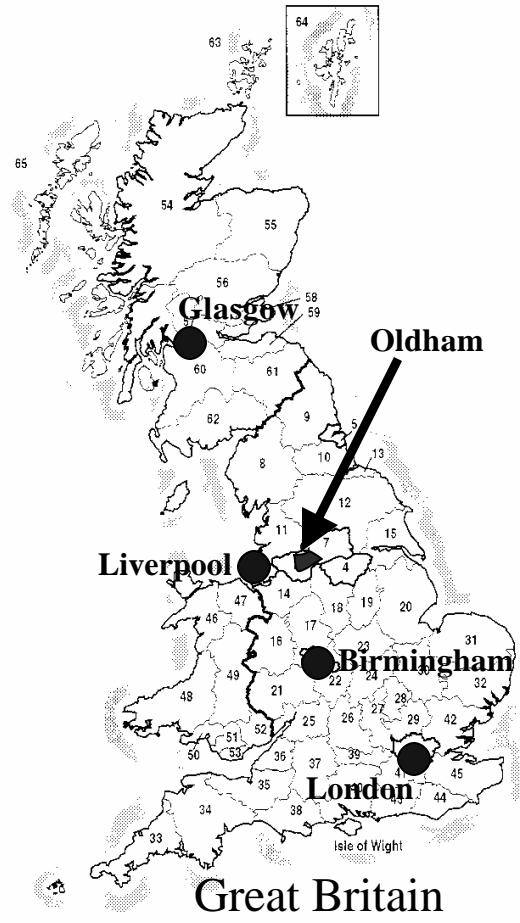


# SEA Case Study: A Land Use Plan in the UK

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# Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Oldham



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# Introduction

- **This presentation describes and evaluates the sustainability appraisal (SA) – in the UK a type of SEA – of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Oldham**
- **In North West England, the SA of the UDP Oldham is widely regarded as a good practice example**
- **Formalised SEA – following the European SEA Directive – is supposed to build upon the type of appraisal portrayed here**

# Context: Land Use Planning in the UK

- **National level: Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)**
- **Regional level: Regional Planning Guidance (RPG)**
- **County level: Structure Plans (or in areas not administered by a county – unitary development plans – UDPs, part 1)**
- **Municipal/District level: Local plans (or in areas not administered by a county – unitary development plans – UDPs, part 2)**
- **Local level: Master Plans**

# Context: Appraisal of Development Plans in the UK

- **Beginning of the 1990s**
  - **Environmental appraisal (EA) as qualitative matrix evaluation, focusing on ecological aspects, usually done by one person and quasi ex-post; based on Planning Policy Guidance (PPG 12)**
- **Mid 1990s**
  - **EA as qualitative matrix evaluation, now partly also considering socio-economic aspects, done by more than one person and quasi ex-post, based on PPG 12**

# Context: Appraisal of development plans in the UK (Cont.)

- **End of the 1990s**
  - **EA as qualitative ex-ante matrix evaluation, considering socio-economic aspects within an appraisal team; increasingly, EA is called sustainability appraisal (SA)**
- **Beginning of 2000**
  - **EA/SA are increasingly seen as integrated appraisals (IA) within an objectives-led process that is closely connected with sustainable development strategies**
- **21 July 2004**
  - **The SEA Directive will come into force and EA/SA/IA will need to be adapted to its specific requirements**

# Action: Objectives Adopted by the - Elected - Council

- **Supporting communities and social inclusion, e.g. ensuring that new developments do not physically divide communities**
- **Promoting economic well being which all can share**
- **Conserving and improving the quality of physical resources, including air, water, soil, fossil fuels and minerals**
- **Improving accessibility and reducing the need to travel**
- **Protecting and conserving the Borough's natural, historical and cultural assets**
- **Regenerating the older urban areas of the Borough and supporting wider urban renaissance**

# Action: UDP Time Table

- **March to May 2000: Community invited to express their views on the future scale and direction of development**
- **Spring 2001: Plan is placed on deposit for a six week period; first chance to view draft policies and proposals**
- **Summer 2002: Plan is placed on deposit for a six week period for a second time; comments on the changes to the first deposit are invited**
- **End of 2003: preparation of UDP final version**

# Why and How Was SEA Conducted?

- **There is guidance on environmental appraisal for development plans (DPs) from 1993 (Good Practice Guide). Furthermore, in 1998, guidance for SA of Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) was published. There is currently no guidance for SEA of DPs.**
- **Oldham Council formulated the following goals for the SA:**
  - **SA is a process that must lead to an improvement of UDP performance**
  - **It should expose conflicts and choices, must be iterative and work alongside the plan preparation process**

# Why and How Was SEA Conducted? (Cont.)

- **Continuing:**
  - **SA must be transparent, rigorous and independent**
  - **The appraisal team should be different from the UDP team with which it should communicate well**
  - **Results should be made available for scrutiny for public and consultees**
  - **Process should be objectives-led with clear sustainability targets reflecting local issues; set through a consensus-building process**
  - **Means and information to measure targets are essential to test performance**

# What Was Done

- **The SA team consisted of 19 persons and was split in 2 groups:**
  - ***Sustainability appraisal group***; consisted of representatives of public administration, chamber of commerce, environment and economic forae – carried out detailed appraisal at each stage
  - ***Sustainability appraisal sounding board***; consisted of elected members and a ‘critical friend’ – watched over the process
- **SA was conducted for the UDP draft from June 2000 to July 2001**

# What Was Done (Cont.)

- (1) Start: providing members with UDP, SA and regional objectives (Action For Sustainability – AFS)**
- (2) Appraisal of issues paper [current policy, drivers for policy change, trends]**
- (3) Develop local sustainability objectives**
- (4) Develop step-by-step methodology for future site selection**
- (5) Appraisal of first draft policies**
- (6) Appraisal of second draft policies**
- (7) Appraisal of future use of ‘difficult’ sites**
- (8) Consultation strategy**
- (9) Future appraisal stages**

# Key Results: Benefits

- **Flexibility**
- **Consensus-building process**
- **Integration of social, economic and environmental aspects**
- **Cross-sectoral co-operation**
- **Consideration of regional aims and objectives**
- **Consistency with regional sustainability strategy**
- **Learning process for all SA participants**
- **Pro-active character**

# Key Results: EU SEA Directive and Compliance of SA Oldham

- **Tiering – vertical and horizontal** ✓
- **Communication, consultation, participation** ⇔
- **Reporting and alternatives** x
- **Follow up: Monitoring and review** ?

# Messages

- **The SA team members had very positive perceptions of the SA; however, for those not involved in the process, it is unclear what exactly happened, when and why – the SA report only describes the process, not the expected impacts, alternatives considered etc.**
- **The reasons for the positive perception of the SA have to be carefully evaluated in terms of the real outcomes: A comparison with the EU SEA Directive requirements shows that whilst procedural compliance is strong, substantive compliance is weak; this raises the question whether consensus-based approaches improve processes, but avoid tackling critical content-related issues**