

CABINET

Saddleworth School: site selection

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Amanda Chadderton, Cabinet Member for Education

Report of: Maggie Kufeldt, Executive Director, Health and Wellbeing and Elaine Mclean Executive Director Economy and Skills

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Reason for Decision

On 16th January 2015 the Education Funding Agency published its report on the preferred site for the building of a new secondary school in Saddleworth. In accordance with section 14 of the Education Act 1996, Oldham Council is required to formally approve the preferred site for the replacement of Saddleworth School.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. The Education Funding Agency's 'Saddleworth School Priority School Building Programme Feasibility Study' dated January 2015 be noted;
2. The comments received from parents and members of the public in relation to the options for a site for the new school be noted and that;

3. The Diggle Pallet Works Site is agreed as the location for the replacement Saddleworth School as set out in Section 5 of this report.

Executive Summary

For a number of years, it has been recognised that Saddleworth School has been in a poor state of repair and requires rebuilding. Saddleworth School was previously to be replaced under the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme but the BSF programme was concluded before a new school was built.

The existing school is made up of 11 blocks of accommodation, most of which are in a poor state of repair. The existing school site is very constrained, with limited land upon which to site a new school.

In March 2013, the Council was advised by The Education Funding Agency (EFA) that, subject to securing a site, funding would be made available to develop a replacement Saddleworth School under the Priority Schools Building Programme (PSPB). The EFA is funding the building of the new school and all the associated costs relating to the ICT network, fixed furniture and equipment, general sports facilities and landscaping. Oldham Council will fund fixtures and fittings, ICT equipment, an upgrade to the football pitch, a contribution to fencing, footpath and carriageway widening, improvements to residents' car parking, a carriageway upgrade into the site, demolition of on-site buildings, the relocation of the telecoms mast and associated fees.

The Council therefore undertook a site identification and appraisal exercise. This process concluded – as the previous site appraisal carried out as part of the BSF process did - that there were two viable sites. One is the existing School site and the other is the former WH Shaw Pallet Works in Diggle. As the Council has to assemble/purchase the site for the school, options to acquire the former Pallet Works site were entered into in April and July 2014.

In July 2014, the EFA decided to carry out a feasibility study to consider four options, two relating to the existing site and two relating to the Pallet Works site and to identify the option that they considered to offer the best value for money to the public purse.

The EFA Feasibility Study was produced in January 2015 and concluded that following appraisal of the options, land to the back of the former WH Shaw Pallet Works Site in Diggle had been identified as the preferred site for the construction of a new school. Oldham Council will fund works associated with the highways and access requirements and artificial sports pitch provision as identified in the Feasibility Study

Since the announcement that Saddleworth School was to be included in the Priority Schools Building Programme, there has been extensive engagement with stakeholders including the general public on the various site options.

A summary of the issues raised by the public both before and after the publication of the EFA Feasibility Study is attached at Appendix 3 and copies of the comments received during this period are attached at Appendix 4.

Once the choice of site has been confirmed, there will be further consultation on the planning application for the new school, which is to be submitted by the EFA's contractor, Interserve.

Saddleworth School: site selection

1. Background

- 1.1 For a number of years, it has been recognised that Saddleworth School has been in a poor state of repair and requires rebuilding.
- 1.2 Saddleworth School was previously to be replaced under the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. The BSF programme was discontinued in 2010 when the Coalition Government was established. The existing school site is very constrained, with limited land upon which to site a new school. As part of the BSF programme, Oldham Council carried out an options appraisal and concluded that redevelopment of the school on the existing site would be expensive and disruptive. The Council identified a new site, 'the Diggle Site' approximately 2km away, upon which it would locate the new school. The BSF programme was terminated prior to the new school being built.
- 1.3 The existing school is made up of 11 blocks of accommodation, most of which are in a poor state of repair:
- all classrooms suffer from draughts, poor acoustics and, those on the top floor, from water ingress;
 - most windows are single glazed and need replacing;
 - effective regulation and control of lighting and heating is prevented by the condition of the mechanical and electrical systems; and
 - all electrical safety systems require replacing and there is no single fire management system.

The existing school site is very constrained, with limited land upon which to site a new school.

- 1.4 In March 2013, the Council was advised by The Education Funding Agency (EFA) that, subject to securing a site, funding would be made available to develop a replacement Saddleworth School under the Priority Schools Building Programme (PSPB). The EFA is funding the building of the new school and all the associated costs relating to the ICT network, fixed furniture and equipment, general sports facilities and landscaping.
- 1.5 The Council therefore undertook a site identification and desktop appraisal exercise. This process once again concluded that there were two viable sites - the existing School site and the former WH Shaw Pallet Works in Diggle.

- 1.6. Following discussions with the Education Funding Agency (EFA) in December 2013, the Council agreed to seek a land option to secure the frontage plots at the former WH Shaw Pallet Works. However, following a new proposal to exclude the Grade II listed building at the 'backland' of the former WH Shaw Pallet Works site, in July 2014, the Council agreed a further land option to deliver this area of land which, the EFA confirmed, would be considered as an option as part of a feasibility exercise. Both of these options were stipulated as conditional (that is to say, conditional upon the Council serving notice on the other that the Council wishes to proceed to completion and only to be progressed if the school scheme was to be delivered on that site).
- 1.7. In July 2014, the EFA decided to carry out a feasibility study to consider the options available to address the condition need at Saddleworth School and to identify the option that they considered to offer the best value for money to the public purse.
- 1.8. The feasibility study was prepared by a team from the Education Funding Agency (EFA), supported by a Technical Advisory firm, a legal firm and in consultation with key stakeholders.
- 1.9. From July 2014, the EFA progressed with a comprehensive site feasibility review, carrying out intrusive survey work to rigorously assess all of the site options. Four options for the building of a new school were considered:
 - **Diggle Greenfield Site**

This option locates a new school building on greenfield land on a new site in Diggle on the frontage land adjacent to Huddersfield Road and to the west of Diggle Brook.
 - **Diggle Pallet Works Site**

This option locates a new school building on a new site on land east of Diggle Brook.
 - **Uppermill Existing Location**

This option locates a new building on the existing site in Uppermill, utilising an area near to the entrance currently occupied by existing school buildings.

- **Uppermill Playing Field**

This option locates a new building on the existing site in Uppermill, utilising the existing playing fields, which are at the north east of the site and remote from the current entrance to the site.

2. Current Position

- 2.1 The EFA feasibility study (Appendix 1) was released in January 2015. EFA preceded the release of this document with a series of meetings with key stakeholders, including the Council, representatives of the school, local Councillors, residents groups and objectors.
- 2.2 It is an 81 page report which identified the 4 site options above for the project. For each option, searches and surveys were undertaken as appropriate to ensure that initial design proposals could be developed that were deliverable and robust costings produced.
- 2.3 An options appraisal, reviewing all four options, was carried out to assess the advantages and disadvantages of each and then to identify the best-fit option in terms of balancing education advantage against costs. The criteria against which the options were assessed and ranked are as follows:
- Estimated Cost
 - Buildability / Construction
 - Teaching / Learning
 - Programme – timeliness of delivery
 - Statutory Issues
 - Ecology
 - Operational issues
 - Public Perception and Opinion
- 2.4 For ease of comparison a schedule was prepared identifying the pros and cons of each option. This is included in Appendix 7.1 of the EFA's Feasibility Study (attached as Appendix 1 to this report).

- 2.5 Each option was then ranked and assessed against the above criteria and sensitivity analysis were run which looked at weighting different aspects differently, and the impact of this.
- 2.6 The option which ranked highest was provision of a new school on the Pallet Works site in Diggle. It is also the lowest cost option. The feasibility study therefore concluded that, based on the assessment criteria used by the EFA, the 'backland' at Diggle (Diggle Pallet Works site), provides the most appropriate site solution. Whilst the EFA is now progressing design solutions for its preferred site, as the Council is responsible for providing a school site under the 1996 Education Act, it is the Council's responsibility to formally approve the future site of the new school.
- 2.7 Since the EFA released their report at the end of January 2015, the Council, the EFA and the school have made the information widely available as set out in Section 3.5 of this report.

3. Engagement

- 3.1 Awareness of the PSBP funding to replace Saddleworth School has been in the public domain since April 2013. Since that time there has been ongoing engagement with the public by the school, the EFA and the Council. Engagement with stakeholders took place both before and after the publication of the EFA feasibility study, with extensive local media coverage in July 2014 and again when the EFA report was published in January 2015 and members may recall the petition with almost 3,000 signatures being presented to Council in February 2015.
- 3.2 The school held a parent forum in November 2013 at which the vision for the new school and the potential for the curriculum and teaching and learning in the proposed new school building were shared and discussed. Since then a Technical Group - made up of local residents who either have a professional interest in design and construction or who are local representatives- has been meeting on a regular basis to consider design issues for the new school.
- 3.3 Since April 2013, the following mechanisms have been used in order to engage and inform the public about the progress towards deciding on the design and location of a new Saddleworth School. These mechanisms have enabled a wide range of issues and concerns to be raised by members of the public and which have then been shared between the Council, EFA and the school as appropriate to inform ongoing work and to inform the EFA feasibility study.
- 3.4 **Table 1** below summarises the engagement which took place prior to the publishing of the EFA study.

TABLE ONE

SCHOOL and COUNCIL	COUNCIL
<p><i>Frequently Asked Questions</i></p> <p>Saddleworth School and the Council have publicised and made available a list of FAQs on their respective websites. These FAQs have been updated as more information has been available. A copy of the latest FAQs can be found at Appendix 3</p>	<p><i>Press releases</i></p> <p>7 statements/press releases have been issued since April 2013 informing the public of the latest position. The Saddleworth News and Diggle News have also publicised these releases.</p>
<p><i>Saddleworth School Technical Group Meetings</i></p> <p>The remit of the technical group was to support the school working closely with the EFA, the Council and Interserve to gain the best solution for the children of Saddleworth. The group can consider and offer advice and support, but are not the decision makers in the process. The membership of the group includes:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Teacher of Saddleworth School • Chair of Governors • Vice Chair of Governors • Local Authority Officer • Local residents of Saddleworth with relevant expertise e.g. design, construction experience • A representative of the Diggle Residents Association. <p>The group has met 16 times since the 20th November 2013.</p>	

<p>Parent Forum 25th November 2013</p> <p>To discuss possible locations, what type of school build might be possible, what type of school is wanted to discuss ideas and place some priority on features required.</p>	<p>Public Meetings</p> <p>16th October 2013</p> <p>The Council held a meeting to introduce the front site in Diggle as an option. This meeting was attended by the Leader of the Council, The Cabinet Member responsible for Education, the Head Teacher, the MP, the Council Chief Executive and Senior officers from regeneration and education. During this meeting, a commitment was made to work with local residents to discuss and consult about accessibility and parking</p> <p>Meeting at Parish Council 25th September 2013 – The Leader of the Council attended this meeting.</p>
	<p>Letters to residents</p> <p>Local residents at 22 – 44 Huddersfield Road, Diggle have received letters on three occasions (October 2013, August 2014 and February 2015) seeking their views about options for residents parking should the Diggle site be chosen</p> <p>Questions at Saddleworth and Lees Executive and Questions at Council</p> <p>A number of members of the public have used the Council’s meetings as a means of asking questions about the proposals. Since the initial announcement of potential funding for a new school, questions from 19 members of the public and from 2 Ward Councillors have been answered at Full Council and 2 questions from members of the public</p>

	<p>answered at Saddleworth and Lees District Executive.</p> <p>Public Petition</p> <p>In addition to answering public questions, Full Council has also received and debated a petition at its meeting on the 4th February 2015 which requested that the Council “Do not move Saddleworth School”. The petition had 2984 signatures. The request in the petition was subject to vote and was not accepted. (It should be noted that at this stage not all Councillors had had sight of the EFA Feasibility Study and the Council recognised the need to keep all options open until it had been fully examined)</p>
	<p>Letters, emails and Freedom of Information Requests</p> <p>The Council and the EFA have received a range of correspondence and requests for information from members of the public and via local M.P’s since the public announcement of the rebuilding of the school in April 2013. All of this correspondence has been answered and the issues, where appropriate, have also been considered during the EFA feasibility study process.</p>

3.5 The EFA released their Feasibility Study which provides comprehensive analysis of 4 potential options in January 2015. The Council considered that this was an appropriate point at which to give the public a final opportunity to express their views and opinions before making a decision on the site for the new school.

- 3.6 The Council announced this on the 18th February 2015 and invited the public to contact the Council with their views before 5pm on the 18th March 2015. The EFA Feasibility Study was made available on the Council website and hard copies were made available in the local libraries at Uppermill, Lees and Oldham. Members of the public could submit their comments on line or by post.
- 3.7 A total of 1094 comments were received during this period expressing a range of views regarding the EFA preferred site in Diggle. This report includes a thematic list of the comments received through that process and also includes an explanation of how the issues have been or will be taken into account. This list can be found at Appendix 3. A pdf containing all of the submissions received and with personal details redacted for data protection will be made available for members to inspect.
- 3.8 Appendix 3 lists issues that have been raised both prior to and since the publishing of the EFA Feasibility Study and, where appropriate, explains how the Council or other partners have or will take these into account in taking decisions about the rebuilding of the school.

4. Options / Alternatives

- 4.1 The EFA Feasibility Study took into account a wide range of factors in coming to a conclusion about their preferred site. However, there has been some public feedback about the “weighting” that the EFA has given to the various factors they have taken into account. It is therefore considered important that members of the Cabinet have all the relevant information to enable them to come to their own decision. These are considered to be:
- The ability of each option to deliver the school’s vision of a learning environment that is fit for the future;
 - The maintenance of educational standards both during and immediately following the construction process;
 - The practicalities involved in mitigating any adverse impacts of any development;
 - The ability to deliver a new school within EFA deadlines;
 - The cost to the EFA; and
 - The cost to the Council
- 4.2 The Council also has to take account of the range of comments that have been received as outlined in section 3 of this report and its appendices.

The Council has a range of options to consider:

Option 1 - Do Nothing

- 4.3 The Council could choose to do nothing. But, as the EFA Feasibility Study says, “the current condition of the buildings is such that it would not be possible to achieve the programme requirement for contractor warranted serviceable life through a ‘do nothing’ option”. Due to the extensive repairs needed to the current school buildings, this option was therefore discounted from the option appraisal undertaken.
- 4.4 In proceeding with this option and choosing not to work with the EFA, it is likely that the Council would lose any funding available to support the development of a new School. The Council would need to make a significant capital investment in repairs to bring the school to a reasonable standard for learning which would not represent good value for money. This would not facilitate the school vision about the future learning environment.

Option 2 - Refurbishment of the Existing School

- 4.5 As already referred to above in paragraph 1.3 the existing school is in very poor condition and refurbishment was dismissed as a viable option as part of the original BSF option appraisal. Even with extensive refurbishment, the school would not deliver the school’s vision of a learning environment that is fit for the future.

The following four options were considered in detail as part of the EFA Feasibility Study

Option 3 – Diggle Greenfield Site

- 4.6 This site, fronting Huddersfield Road is more expensive than the backland option in Diggle and would be closer to housing and far more visible and intrusive from Huddersfield Road. It is also judged to have more potential impact on the local ecology of the area which is of major concern to some local residents.

Option 4 - Diggle Pallet Works Site

- 4.7 This option locates a new school building on a new site on land east of Diggle Brook. In July 2014, Cabinet agreed to proceed to obtain an option via a replacement conditional Contract for this site.

Option 5 – Uppermill Existing Location

- 4.8 This option locates a new building on the existing site in Uppermill, utilising an area near to the entrance currently occupied by existing school buildings.

Option 6 – Uppermill Playing Field

- 4.9 This option locates a new building on the existing site in Uppermill, utilising the existing playing fields, which are at the north east of the site and remote from the entrance to the site.
- 4.10 Options for a replacement school to be developed on the existing School site are more expensive and are likely to result in a prolonged period of educational disruption during the construction period with a high risk of a negative impact upon school and pupil performance. Because of the constraints of the site the school would be unable to deliver its educational vision effectively. There would also be a lack of on-site sporting facilities for pupils during construction. There would be no car parking for contractors, staff or parents for the duration of the works which would be very difficult to manage, especially in view of the pressure on car parking already experienced within Uppermill. The Uppermill options have the advantage of requiring little change in travel to school patterns and minimal change for Uppermill and Diggle residents and local businesses. The use of the existing site would not require any loss of land in the Green Belt.

5. Preferred Option

It is recommended that the Council **supports the site option preferred by the EFA which is the rear of the Diggle Pallet Works site** and which is referred to as **Option 4 in para 4.6** above. The reasons for identifying this as the preferred option may be summarised as follows:

- 5.1 It will facilitate a design which will allow the school to realise its education vision more fully. The school's vision is summarised as establishing a school:
- Where each child is supported to fulfil their own potential and to follow an appropriate pathway of their choice, wherever that may take them; locally, nationally or globally.
 - Where adults and children form a community in which everyone is treated with respect, given equal consideration of their interests and helped to have rich lives in mind, body and spirit.

- Which teaches students to become confident, resilient and independent so that they can be successful in their lives after school.
- That is embedded in the Saddleworth community, where children make a positive contribution to the community's life.

The size of the preferred site will allow for this vision to be delivered through a school design which will facilitate a broader curriculum and more dynamic learning experiences than would be possible on the other site options. In Years 7 and 8 it will allow the school to provide teaching and learning which will support transition from primary school and ease pupils into the secondary school experience whilst developing their self-belief, ambitions and understanding of their own learning. In years 9, 10 and 11 the design will allow the school to offer courses which will enable students to choose from a comprehensive range of qualifications according to their needs and aspirations.

Key to this is the concept of home bases for each year group, which are embedded in the design. These would accommodate general teaching areas and form spaces, and pupils would only leave these for practical lessons in areas such as science, technology and physical education. Each home base would look and feel different, becoming increasingly sophisticated and adult in feel, and providing students with a sense of progression as they move up through the school.

- 5.2 It is a larger, more accessible site, with the capacity to provide more sports facilities that are largely adjacent to each other and teaching facilities that would be located in one main block.
- 5.3 The size of the site also allows for the increase in pupil places in the school from the existing 1350 to 1500 to be managed effectively and without risk to the quality of children's educational experience. This will assist in meeting the growth in demand for school places in the Saddleworth area and across the borough as a whole.
- 5.4 This option has significant benefits during the construction phase because it involves no disruption to education and sporting activities nor would it involve car parking and on site safety challenges for the period of the build.
- 5.5 Re-use of the former WH Shaw site enables the replacement of a dilapidated site with a new educational facility.

- 5.6 The option has a setting which is screened by established trees and more respectful of the Diggle Valley and brook, while also providing much needed educational infrastructure.
- 5.7 Associated highway improvements to be implemented by Oldham Council (see paragraph 3.3.1.2 in the EFA report) are expected to benefit the rural community and residents near to the school in Diggle.
- 5.8 In addition to the land that would be improved using funding under the PSPB, the Council would be acquiring a Grade II listed clock tower. This building would be retained and the Council is exploring grant funding opportunities that would see this vacant and dilapidated listed building brought back into a viable use. Community groups have already contacted the Council and expressed an interest in occupying this space in conjunction with the school.

Members should also be aware that there are some disadvantages to this site. Work is already under way to address and mitigate these as set out below:

- 5.9 Some development of Green Belt land will be required, but this will be predominantly for playing fields rather than buildings.
- 5.10 Mitigating works will be needed to manage the local ecology and potential flood risk.
- 5.11 A comprehensive highways scheme will be required to deal with the extra pedestrian and motor traffic. Provision will also have to be made for parking for some of the local residents on Huddersfield Road. Initial estimates indicate that the provision of retaining walls, pedestrian crossings, lay-bys, traffic calming measures, a school safety zone and footways further away from Diggle is likely to cost a total of £800k (subject to revision).
- 5.12 Members need to be aware that the relocation of the school will have an impact on travel arrangements for pupils. This includes the following issues:
- Some pupils living more than 3 miles from the new school will also become eligible for a free bus pass which will have implications for the Home to School Transport budget.
 - In addition, some of those children already attending the school in Uppermill, whose journey to the new school site would be within the 3 mile distance criteria, may also be offered a free bus pass for a transitional period of 2 years from the date when they moved to the new school site.

- Initial assessment of the potential impact indicates that the majority of children will not be disadvantaged by the change in the school journey. On average, about 12 children from Saddleworth School qualify for a free school bus pass each year, based on the distance from home to school. These children mainly live in Denshaw and Delph villages. If the site is chosen at Diggle, the Denshaw children would still qualify, and some of those at Delph. The larger group of additional qualifying children would come from those living in Austerlands, Grotton and Springhead.
- In addition, a compensatory payment will be made for a period of 2 academic years to those children whose journey falls within the statutory distance, but includes additional risks such as crossing busy roads. It is estimated that this would cost up to a maximum of £60,000 per annum and would be funded from within the Dedicated Schools Grant. This is similar to arrangements agreed under the Building Schools for the Future programme previously.
- Those families applying for school places for September 2016 and September 2017 will have full information about the location of the school therefore the Home to School and College Transport Policy will apply.

5.13 There will need to be changes to school and local bus services as there are currently infrequent scheduled services to Diggle. These changes will need to take account of any community use as well as school hours and term time. It is anticipated that this will create additional costs for Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM). TfGM has been consulted on the site options for the new school and will review its provision once the decision has been made on a preferred site. Initial discussions have indicated that the additional bus service provision may cost in the region of £200k per annum, but this is not a confirmed figure.

5.14 There has been some public opposition to the relocation of the school to either site in Diggle. Any new development in this location is likely to have an impact upon the village of Diggle. A summary of the issues raised can be found at Appendix 2 including an outline of how those issues would be taken into account and / or mitigated.

5.15 Concern has been expressed by some members of the public about the safety of pupils who might walk to school either along footpaths that require improvement or along the canal which is adjacent to a railway line which is shortly to be electrified.

- The school will be required to have a School Travel Plan and this will need to address safety issues.
- The school would not be allowed to include the canal as a walking route to school via the planning application process and the submission of the School Travel Plan.
- The Council will examine the pedestrian access routes beyond the immediate area of the school to address how safety might be improved overall for pedestrians. This is in direct response to the comments submitted to the Council during the recent final call for views. If additional costs are incurred for this these will be considered within the context of the Financial Implications set out below.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The total Council funding available for the Saddleworth school scheme is £2.019m. This together with a contribution from WRT Developments of £37k, there is £2.056m available for the scheme. The Council contribution is being financed by the ring fencing of capital receipts from land transactions arising from the school scheme.

6.2 Taking into account expenditure already incurred, the current capital programme includes expenditure expected to be incurred by the Council of £1.298m for 2015/16 and £0.700m for 2016/17. The following works totalling £1.390m have already been approved:-

- o Upgrade of football pitch
- o Contribution to fencing
- o Footpath and carriageway widening (Huddersfield Road)
- o Residents car parking
- o Carriageway upgrade into the site
- o Demolition of on-site buildings
- o Relocation of telecoms mast
- o Associated fees

6.3 The balance of funding, currently £0.666m is yet to be allocated but has been earmarked to contribute towards fixtures and fittings and ICT equipment neither of which are covered by the EFA funding envelope.

6.4 As the scheme progresses and is developed, it is acknowledged that the scope and cost of the approved works may fluctuate and that unforeseen issues may arise. Any net increase in costs that cannot be mitigated, for example by reprioritising the Local Transport Programme will reduce the amount available to

fit out the school unless additional Council resources are allocated. The Council can review opportunities to provide any additional support for this project in line with its corporate priorities through the capital planning process. As additional resources are not likely to be required immediately, any needs can be considered in the context of uncommitted capital resources within the overall programme.

6.5 The Council has had to provide an assurance to the EFA that it had the commitment and funding in place to support the school development, to provide an indemnity to the Secretary of State for Education.

6.6 In addition, there will be associated revenue costs particularly in relation to pupil travel in the form of enhanced service provision and displaced pupils that will need to be incurred once the school is open and for which budgetary provision does not exist. Any additional revenue funding will be reviewed through the medium term financial planning process and addressed in budget setting for 2016/17 and future years.

7 **Legal Services Comments**

7.1 As part of the decision making in this matter, members must act in good faith, take into account all relevant considerations and not take into account irrelevant considerations. Members must not make a decision which no reasonable local authority could have made. Members need to ensure that the full range of issues highlighted in this report, are properly considered in making their decision. Members also need to be satisfied that sufficient consultation on the proposal has taken place.

7.2 Under the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013, statutory consultation is required where there is a transfer to a new site “except where the main entrance of the school on the proposed site would be within two miles of the main entrance of the school on its current site (unless the school is transferring to a site within an area of another local authority.)” From information provided, the proposal falls outside of this requirement. Nonetheless, the Council has undertaken a further consultation process outlined earlier in the report given the submissions which have previously been made to the Council.

8. **Co-operative Agenda**

8.1 The improvement of education standards, especially at secondary level, is a key priority for the Council. This requires robust and co-operative partnerships between schools, parents and the Council. The provision of a modern educational

facility which provides the environment for 21st century learning will provide a stronger basis for improved partnerships and improved learning.

9 **IT Implications**

9.1 Funding for IT equipment is identified in the Council's capital programme as set out in the Financial Comments above. IT infrastructure is included in the EFA funding envelope.

10 **Property Implications**

10.1 A number of the property implications arising from any decision to relocate the school to the Diggle site have been addressed in previous reports approved in July 2014. The construction of a new school in any location is likely to result in property maintenance savings to the Council. The Council are aware of a third party who claims to have the benefit of a covenant that would restrict the use of part of the Diggle site. This is currently being explored in further detail.

11 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

11.1 These issues are considered in some detail within this report particularly in Appendix 2 and also in consideration of the options in section 3.

12 **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

12.1 None have been identified by the EFA or the Council and this has not been raised as a potential issue during consultation with the public.

13 **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

13.1 Yes an EIA has been completed and highlighted the need to make provision for additional costs for travel for low income pupils and to review any special transport requirements for any disabled pupils and staff.

14 **Key Decision**

14.1 Yes

15 **Key Decision Reference**

15.1 EDS-02-15

16 **Background Papers**

- 16.1 November 2008: CABINET: ACQUISITION OF LAND AT FORMER WH SHAWS, HUDDERSFIELD ROAD, DIGGLE
- 16.2 February 2009: DELEGATED DECISION: Building Schools for the Future – Acquisition of the former Shaw’s Pallet Site, Huddersfield Road, Diggle
- 16.3 June 2010: DELEGATED DECISION: Acquisition of the former WH Shaw Pallet site, Huddersfield Road, Diggle
- 16.4 December 2013: DELEGATED DECISION: Acquisition of former WH Shaw Pallet Works
- 16.5 July 2014: CABINET: Acquisition of former WH Shaw Pallet Works
November 2014: DELEGATED DECISION: Former WH Shaw Pallet Works
- 16.6 Saddleworth School – final call for comments 18/2/15 – 18/3/15
http://www.oldham.gov.uk/new_saddleworth_school
- 16.7 Pdf containing all of the submissions received as a result of the final call for comments and with personal details redacted.
- 16.8 Equality Impact Assessment
- 17 **Appendices**
- 17.1 Appendix 1 – most recent version of the FAQs
- 17.2 Appendix 2 – Thematic list of issues raised by the Public before and after the publication of the EFA Feasibility Study
- 17.3 Appendix 3 – The Saddleworth School Priority School Building Programme Feasibility Study January 2015 (The EFA Feasibility Study)

Appendix 1 – most recent version of FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions

Funding

How is the school being funded?

The new school will be delivered as part of the Government's Priority School Building Programme (PSBP) which was established to address the needs of the schools in worst condition across the country.

Is the project at risk if the Government changes in May?

The present Government has demonstrated its priorities and shown it is committed to the PSBP. However, we cannot predict the priorities that a different future Government may have for the use of available capital resources.

How is the construction of the building being managed?

The construction of the new school buildings is being managed by the Education Funding Agency (EFA), an executive agency of the Department for Education. A project team has been appointed by the EFA and this team will manage the design and build processes.

The EFA has selected a contractor from their Contractors Framework. On this project Interserve is the contractor that will design and construct the new school.

How was the contractor chosen for this scheme?

The PSBP is being delivered using the EFA Contractors Framework. This framework was established in line with EU Procurement Regulations.

Contractors on the Framework were invited to tender for the design and construction of the North West 3 PSBP Batch of schools. Through that process, Interserve was appointed preferred contractor for this batch.

What is being funded by the Education Funding Agency and how much funding is available?

The EFA is funding the building of the new school and all the associated costs relating to the ICT network, fixed furniture and equipment, general sports facilities and landscaping.

Oldham Council is funding works associated with the highways and access requirements and artificial sports pitch provision as identified in the Feasibility Study. The Council will also purchase/assemble the site for the school and pay for 'fitting out' and ICT equipment.

Site location

- [Map of the preferred option at Diggle](#)

Was a replacement school on the Saddleworth School site considered?

The construction of a replacement Saddleworth School on the existing Uppermill site has always been an option and has been fully considered.

A Feasibility Study was undertaken which looked at four delivery options: an option to replace the building in its current location at Uppermill; an option to replace the building on its current sporting facilities; an option to site it on the frontage plots at the former WH Shaw Pallet Works off Huddersfield Road; and the option eventually chosen, to construct it on land to the rear of that Diggle site, replacing dilapidated industrial buildings.

Would a replacement school fit on the Saddleworth School site?

A new 1,500 place school would fit on the existing school site; however it would not meet current guidelines for the size of site for a secondary school.

Rebuilding the school on its current site would also mean extensive disruption to the school during a phased construction programme and it would mean access to teaching facilities would be disrupted.

The existing Saddleworth School site measures 11 acres although this includes several areas that would be unusable due to site levels and topography, particularly towards Pickhill Brook.

The chosen site at the former WH Shaw site would provide up to 18.11 acres of usable space.

Why were the public not consulted about the choice of the Diggle site?

The identification of sites available for the provision of a new Saddleworth school is the responsibility of the Local Authority. These choices are then offered to the EFA to undertake its detailed Feasibility Study.

Formal public consultation for the construction of the school on the preferred site will be undertaken by Interserve, the contractor, prior to it submitting a planning application. Oldham Council must also undertake a statutory public consultation – as the local planning authority – once that is submitted.

Are buildings being developed in the Green Belt?

The EFA Feasibility Study preferred option for the provision of the new school is at the rear of the WH Shaw Pallet Works site in Diggle.

In the control option that the EFA has developed for this site, the school buildings, parking and bus turning are all within the curtilage of the Pallet Works site. However grass sports pitches and artificial sports pitch provision for the school may be provided by the use of Green Belt land. This will be developed further during the design of the scheme by the contractor and consulted on as outlined above.

What Highways and Access Works will be undertaken as part of the construction of the new school?

It is well recognised that there is a need to improve accessibility at the preferred site in Diggle.

Meetings have taken place with representatives from the Highways Authority and a series of works have been suggested that will help mitigate the impact of the school and improve traffic flow for all Diggle residents.

Details of these works will be shared and could include:

- introducing parking restrictions,
- the expansion of existing parking laybys on Standedge Road to provide an early drop off,
- widening the carriageway along parts of Huddersfield Road,
- widening pedestrian footpaths along parts of Huddersfield Road to ensure that pupils can continue to walk safely from the neighboring villages and early drop off points
- the introduction of a School Zone to ensure that the carriageway widening does not result in traffic increasing their speed,
- widening and provision of footpaths on the access road to the Pallet Works site,
- this would be in addition to the parent drop off, bus turnaround etc., which would be included within the site curtilage.

Oldham Council will submit a Planning Application for the highway works associated with the project and will deliver these works. The contractor's application for Planning Permission for the new school will include a Green Travel Plan which will be prepared in co-ordination with the School and Oldham Council.

If the Council can fund the cost of the highway works for the Diggle site, why can't it fund the additional costs of the school remaining on the existing Saddleworth School?

The cost of funding the works required for the school to stay on the existing site is likely to be significant. It will include the need for extensive temporary accommodation and funding a longer construction programme as the works will need to be phased to keep the current school operational.

The current site does not meet existing guidelines on the size of site appropriate for a secondary school.

Oldham Council is looking to acquire part of the former WH Shaw Pallet site by way of a land swap using the existing Saddleworth School site to ensure best value for money. Given current valuations this would provide a capital receipt which would then be used to fund highways improvement works in Diggle.

What is proposed for the existing school site in Uppermill if the replacement school is built in Diggle?

The existing owner of the former WH Shaw site would acquire the existing Saddleworth School site once it is vacated.

The developer would be responsible for demolishing the existing buildings and any development on this site would require planning approval in the normal way.

Which options were considered by the Education Funding Agency?

Four options were considered as part of the EFA's Feasibility Study:

- Option 1 – Diggle green field site. This option locates a new school building on Greenfield land at the frontage land of the former WH Shaw Pallet Works site adjacent to Huddersfield Road and to the west of Diggle Brook.
- Option 2 – Diggle pallet works site. This option locates a new school building on land east of Diggle Brook and remote from Huddersfield Road.
- Option 3 – Uppermill existing location. This option locates a new building on the existing site in Uppermill, utilising an area near to the entrance currently occupied by existing school buildings.
- Option 4 – Uppermill playing field. This option locates a new building on the existing site in Uppermill, utilising the existing playing fields, which are at the north east of the site on a plateau and remote from the entrance to the site.

Why have you chosen the Diggle Pallet Works site?

The EFA undertook an options appraisal which reviewed the advantages and disadvantages of four sites. The criteria considered included:

- Estimated Cost
- Buildability / Construction
- Teaching / Learning
- Programme
- Statutory Issues

- Ecology
- Operational issues
- Public Perception and Opinion

This appraisal resulted in Option 2 – the provision of a new school on the rear of the WH Shaw Pallet Works site in Diggle – being selected as the preferred option to take forward.

The advantages of this option may be summarised as follows:

- It has significant benefits during construction with no disruption to education for the period of the build.
- it keeps construction work at a clear distance from staff and students.
- It reuses the former WH Shaw site and enables the replacement of a dilapidated site with a new educational facility.
- Although not included within the proposal the option supports the redevelopment and setting of the Grade II Listed building.
- It has a setting which is screened by established trees and is respectful of the Diggle Valley and brook, while also providing much needed educational infrastructure.
- It is a larger more accessible site, with more sports facilities that are largely adjacent to each other; and teaching facilities located in one main block.
- Associated highway improvements to be implemented by Oldham MBC will benefit the rural community and residents near to the school in Diggle.

What are the issues that make the existing school site not possible?

Whilst the replacement school could be rebuilt on the existing site it should be noted that, due to the phasing required, the provision of temporary accommodation and a requirement for several decants, the construction period for this option will be extended.

Maintaining an operational school within and around a construction site would provide a challenge in terms of noise, dust and loss of facilities resulting in significant disruption to the school and consequential detrimental effect on the

education of the students for a substantial period of time.

The EFA also has concerns regarding the safety of staff and students during construction of a new building on the existing school site.

Surveys have indicated that there may be poor ground conditions in some areas of the existing school site which will increase the complexity of the build and the costs are projected to be significantly higher for both options reviewed for this location.

Design

Who is responsible for the design of the building?

The EFA has prepared a 'control option' which demonstrates that a new school building could be accommodated on the preferred site.

Interserve, the construction partner, will prepare a detailed design and make a planning application.

Can Oldham Council, Saddleworth School and the public influence the design?

The detailed design meetings began in January 2015 and will complete in March 2015 and are between Oldham Council, Saddleworth School, the EFA and Interserve.

The School's Technical Group will also be able to input into the design and once all parties are happy with them, these will be shared with the public over the course of a number of weeks as part of a consultation exercise. This will be prior to any planning application being made.

Statutory consultation would also be carried out by the Planning Authority once the planning application has been submitted.

How many storeys will the new school building be?

The final design solution is not known.

The 'control option' in the Feasibility Study suggest a building which takes account of the topography of the site, that being a part two and part three storey building.

Will the building be detrimental to the setting of the Grade II listed clock tower?

The impact of the new building on the setting of the Listed Building will be a planning consideration and an issue that the applicant will need to address through effective discussions with English Heritage who are likely to be a consultee to the application.

The development of the school will arguably result in a better setting for the listed building. The likely result is that Oldham Council would retain responsibility for the building and look at various funding options and uses that could safeguard the property for future years.

Will the sports pitches have floodlights?

The school is keen to allow the local community to use the facilities onsite. In order to allow this, it is likely that any artificial sports pitches would need to have floodlighting. If this is the case, it is likely that a planning condition would limit the opening hours of the pitches to protect neighboring homes against any noise and light pollution.

Is there a risk of flooding from either Diggle Brook or the nearby Huddersfield Canal?

In January 2010, Oldham Council commissioned JBA Consulting to produce a Hybrid Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).

The report advises that: "The Diggle Brook flows through the Diggle School site; however, the risk from this small watercourse is estimated to be low. The sequential approach to development layout should be applied within the site so that the most vulnerable development is located away from the watercourse. The adds that "whilst the actual risk to Diggle School from Diggle Brook is low, the residual risk from the Huddersfield Canal is more significant, as it lies on higher ground to the east of the site".

Initial flood risk assessments have been completed as part of the Feasibility Study and costs for appropriate technical solutions included within the budget. The feasibility proposal includes the provision of gabion protection to the eastern side of Diggle Brook to alleviate issues with flooding to the playing fields. This will involve raising the bank on this side by about 1m in height, together with further regrading of the playing field area.

The exact technical solution will not be known until the contractor develops the actual design for the school and its flood mitigation measures. The approach to flood mitigation will form part of the Planning Application which would be considered by the Planning Authority and Environment Agency

Will the development and hardstanding result in increased risk of flooding downstream in Uppermill?

In respect to the development and any associated new hardstanding (tarmacked and concreted areas), the impact of run off can be effectively managed through appropriate drainage systems. The Hybrid SFRA report itself acknowledged that “all development proposals should look at opportunities to incorporate SUDS to reduce the risk of surface water flooding (Sustainability Appraisal indicator). Surface water runoff from these sites should not increase as a result of development and not discharge into the combined sewer system.” This will be developed by Interserve as part of the integrated design solution they will develop for the school and form part of the Planning Application.

Will the present sewage and drainage system be upgraded?

The EFA technical advisors have reviewed the potential effect of the development on sewers, surface water and flooding. Costs for appropriate measures have been provided in the budget. The contractor will undertake their own surveys and will design a solution appropriate in consultation with the utility companies and other stakeholders.

What will be done to protect the current habitat and ecology?

Initial surveys have been undertaken as part of the EFA’s feasibility study including ecology, great crested newts, breeding bird and bat surveys. Funding has been allocated to address any concerns raised by the surveys and further bat surveys will be undertaken before any of the existing buildings are readied for

demolition. The contractor will undertake their own surveys and will design a solution appropriate in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

What happens to the footpath across the site?

It is not considered possible to divert the footpath (within the timeline for the project) so that it runs outside the school site and therefore fences will need to be installed to separate the school from users of the footpath. Gates will be added as appropriate to permit access between the school and their grassed playing field areas.

Will the railway have any effect on the project?

Initial investigation of any impact by or on the construction of the new school has been undertaken with Network Rail and statutory bodies. This will continue throughout the design development stage of the project and any issues identified will be addressed.

The Feasibility Study has also undertaken an initial acoustic survey which recommends that mechanical ventilation would be required on the building elevation facing the railway line to prevent noise having an impact on the provision of education.

How will you ensure that there is no undermining or effects on the canal retaining walls?

Interserve will take this into account and will consult with appropriate organisations to ensure that the design is suitable and appropriate. Engineering measures will be included, if required.

Will the project affect emergency access to the railway tunnel and canal?

It is not envisaged that emergency access will change or cause a problem for the design of the project. The contractor in designing the project will take this into account and will consult with appropriate organisations to ensure that the design is suitable. Appropriate engineering measures will be included, if required.

What will be the future of the all-weather pitch currently located on the Uppermill site?

The site of the all-weather pitch is included within the land swap proposals and therefore, in the event that planning permission is secured for the new school development on the land to the rear of the former WH Shaw Pallet Works site - and the Council calls upon its option to enter into the land swap - ownership of the all-weather pitch would be transferred to WRT Developments. As WRT Developments are expected to redevelop the Uppermill site on a residential basis, the all-weather facility would no longer be available on the Uppermill site.

As part of the Saddleworth School proposals in Diggle, an all-weather pitch would be constructed to a similar, if not better standard and it is envisaged that community groups would have access to this facility. As with the remainder of the education asset, nothing would be closed until a replacement facility is available.

Highways/Transportation

How will children get to the new site from Uppermill?

The new school site is less than 2km from the existing school site. The Planning Application will include a detailed Green Travel Plan. The school buses will have a turning point within the curtilage of the new school site.

Is Oldham Council taking responsibility for additional buses that may have to be laid on?

The Council are in discussions with the School and Transport for Greater Manchester on this matter. Until such time whereby the site has been confirmed, it has been difficult to progress these matters but, as with completion of the Feasibility Study and the anticipated progress in respect to the design works, it would now be possible for a solution to be agreed during the continued planning and construction phase of the school.

Programme

What is the programme for the project?

A procurement and delivery timeline to deliver the new school on the land to the rear of the former WH Shaw Pallet Works site will be confirmed by Interserve as they develop the designs for the new school.

We hope to be able to submit a planning application in Spring 2015, start construction work in winter 2015 and open the new school in 2017.

The procurement and delivery of the new Saddleworth School will be the responsibility of the EFA with close support and input from Oldham Council and the Saddleworth School and working closely with Interserve. Input from the public and local interested parties will be sought through the informal processes of public consultations and the formal process of the Planning Application.

General Questions

Who will be responsible for the demolition of the old factories on the site?

Once the industrial buildings are vacated, it is understood that the current site owner will take steps to demolish the buildings on the site, some of which suffer from structural issues.

It is likely that, in the event that planning permission is secured and Oldham Council call upon their option to purchase the land, a vacant site would be handed over to the EFA and Interserve prior to commencement of the school development.

Does this mean that there are no plans to try and develop the green fields at the frontage of the former WH Shaw Pallet Works site for a school?

The Feasibility Study's preferred option is to develop the land to the rear of the former WH Shaw Pallet Works site with playing fields to go on part of the Green Belt site. Therefore, it is not planned to take forward the option to progress the development of the frontage fields immediately adjacent to Huddersfield Road.

Will Oldham Council own the frontage plots either side of the access road at the former WH Shaw Pallet Works site?

The frontage plots immediately adjoining Huddersfield Road would be retained by the current landowner. Oldham Council will, however, acquire the Green Belt land to the rear of 20-44 (even) Huddersfield Road.

How will the new school site and building help the education of my child?

The Saddleworth School Education Vision is to provide a school:

- Where each child is supported to fulfil their own potential and to follow an appropriate pathway of their choice, wherever that may take them; locally, nationally or globally.
- Where adults and children form a community in which everyone is treated with respect, given equal consideration of their interests and helped to have rich lives in mind, body and spirit.
- Which teaches students to become confident, resilient and independent so that they can be successful in their lives after school.
- That is embedded in the Saddleworth community, where children make a positive contribution to the community's life.

The provision of the new school facilities will allow the school to concentrate on the provision of education without being hampered by the condition and layout of the current school facilities which are life expired.

Where will the existing users of the pallet works site go?

The main occupier of the site is Patterson and Rothwell who originally intended to occupy the former WH Shaw Pallet Works site on a short-term basis. The company has now purchased alternative premises within the borough and is in the process of vacating the property.

What happens if a Judicial Review is lodged?

This will be addressed in an appropriate manner at that time.

How do we get hold of a copy of the Feasibility Study and the surveys?

Copies of the EFA's Feasibility Study will be made available on request. Please send an email to **PSBP.EFACAPITAL@education.gsi.gov.uk**

Appendix 2 Thematic list of issues raised by the Public before and after the publication of the EFA Feasibility Study

NOTE: The table shows whether the issue or comment was made/raised prior to the EFA Feasibility Study, after or both

Comments received about the EFA preferred option - Diggle Pallet Works Site and in favour of the Uppermill options

Issue/comment	Before Study	After Study	How this has been or will be taken into account
The Diggle site is on a flood plain, risk of flooding from the brook and the canal; Increased risk of flooding further downstream; Playing fields not usable in wet months There is culvert running across the site which floods; Loss of floodplain for Diggle Brook if gabions used	x	x	See FAQs in Appendix 2. All of these issues will be considered as part of the planning application in line with Policy 9 of the Core Strategy. Initial flood risk assessments have been carried out as part of the Feasibility Study and appropriate technical solutions have been costed and will be included in the final design. The Council would consult with the Environment Agency as a statutory consultee on Flood Risk Assessment for the site.
The sewers and drains can't cope		x	This has been examined as part of the feasibility study and costs for appropriate measures have been included.
Damage to wildlife, ecology – including bats, nesting lapwings, herons, grey wagtails, dippers	x	x	See FAQs. Initial surveys have been undertaken as part of the feasibility study and funding assigned to address any issues. A bat survey is being carried out before the demolition of any buildings.

<p>The GM Ecological Unit is currently assessing the site with a view to designating it as a Site of Biological Interest (SBI)</p> <p>The Huddersfield Narrow Canal is an SBI and runs within metres of the site</p>		x	<p>The GMEU is making this assessment but they can only recommend its adoption. The Council's understanding is that it is likely to be put forward as a Grade C SBI and the Council has discretion about whether it is adopted as an SBI. Either way, the ecological issues will exist and a management scheme would be put in place.</p> <p>The designation of the canal is acknowledged and will be considered as part of the planning application. It should be noted that the current use of the majority of the site is currently industrial.</p> <p>The Council and the applicant will work with the GMEU on these issues and as part of the planning application in line with Policy 21 of the Core Strategy. This would include any appropriate mitigation.</p>
<p>Building on the Green Belt; This conflicts with the Local Plan</p>	x	x	<p>The outdoor sports pitches would be located on Green Belt land. The school buildings would be on brownfield land. This issue would be considered as part of the planning application in line with Policy 22 of the Core Strategy and NPPF (para 89).</p>
<p>There is a covenant included in the deeds of local properties that would prevent the use of the Green Belt land</p>	x	x	<p>It would be inappropriate to comment on any third party rights. Needless to say, if any third party rights exist, the Council would speak with any beneficiaries.</p>
<p>Loss of open space, damage to the local environment</p>	x	x	<p>This is largely covered by the responses above.</p>

Damage to Diggle village life; Major change to Diggle		x	It should be noted that the pallets site has, until recently been occupied by Patterson and Rothwell on a 24/7 operation. Before that a significant number of pallets were stored on the site. This was visible from Huddersfield Road. It should be noted that other types of development could take place on the Diggle site because much of it is brownfield land.
The canal is a tourist attraction and the school will detract from its attractiveness		x	The school would be replacing empty and dilapidated buildings which are now being vandalised. The Council will consult with the Canal and River Trust as part of the planning application process.
Safety of children because of the proximity of the railway and the future electrification.	x	x	Initial investigations have taken place with Network Rail about this and other related rail issues and will continue throughout the development. The adjacency of the canal and the public footpath providing access to the site will need to be addressed carefully by the school in its School Travel Plan and health and safety policies. The canal will not be identified as a safe route to school within the School Travel Plan.
Safety of children travelling to school along the canal	x	x	These issues will need to be addressed by a School Travel Plan which will be required as part of the planning application
Safety of children because they will have to walk further	x	x	

<p>Journeys for pupils by bus and car will be longer; More people will have to travel by car or by bus; Too far from other villages; Poor public transport services both during the day for school use and also after school for after school clubs and community use; Will there be bus services back to Greenfield and Delph for after school club users?</p>	x	x	<p>and the use of the canal will not be permitted as a safe route to school. A Transport Assessment will reveal potential vehicle trip generation and changes to journey patterns. As a result, mitigation measures will be identified. The Council will examine the safety issues associated with the main pedestrian routes on the highways and will work with Transport for Greater Manchester to make the necessary changes to school bus services and to public bus services. It is acknowledged that the extension of bus services to Diggle will be a challenge. The Council will support the school with the development of the School Travel Plan.</p>
<p>It will cost more to use the bus - £38 per month for some pupils</p>		x	<p>Some pupils will become eligible for free bus passes i.e. they will live more than 3 miles from the school as a result of the relocation (more than 2 miles for children from low income families). The Council will consider introducing similar transition arrangements regarding cost of travel as for the BSF and Academies programmes.</p>
<p>Highways design – traffic problems, difficult pedestrian access, pavements not wide enough, poor junction, existing congestion problems exacerbated by additional traffic, existing problems with buses mounting pavements; Additional traffic at school drop off and pick up time adding to primary school traffic</p>	x	x	<p>See FAQs in Appendix 2. The Council acknowledges that there is a need to improve highways design and accessibility both to the school and to Diggle and will be carrying out highway improvement works in identified areas including submitting a separate planning application for certain elements of the scheme such as the provision of a car</p>

Parking problems for local residents	x	x	park for some residents on Huddersfield Road subject to their final feedback on this proposal. A school travel plan will be required as part of the planning application for the school. The school may need to agree different opening and closing times with the primary school.
More traffic fumes		x	The school travel plan will seek to encourage as many pupils as possible to use public transport, or walk or cycle where appropriate. This will be taken into account in developing the highways scheme. The Council will work with TfGM to introduce changes to the bus services to encourage use of public transport.
New rat runs will be created through Dobcross and other areas as parents choose new routes to get to school		x	The travel plan/traffic assessment will examine how pupils will access the school and will inform the need for measures beyond Diggle. The Council will also monitor changes to traffic flows in the surrounding areas once the school is in operation and will identify any further measures required.
Diggle is often inaccessible when it snows; Children will have to walk home in treacherous conditions		x	The Council prioritises the clearing of primary routes across the Borough in the first instance. An annual review of all routes is undertaken and the new location for the school would be considered fully. The school would need to review its response to extreme weather as part of a wider review of policies and in relation to its business continuity plan.

Concerns about the quality of the design and how it will fit with the local area including the Grade II listed clock tower	x	x	Interserve plan to carry out a 4 week pre planning consultation with the public during w/c 18 th May when the draft designs will be shared and members of the public will have the opportunity to comment before the final plans are drawn up. The planning application will consider how the design fits with the local area, including its relationship with the clock tower in line with Policy 24 of the Core Strategy. A Design Access Statement and Visual Impact Assessment would be required with the application.
Loss of jobs from the site by the relocation of Paterson and Rothwell	x		Paterson and Rothwell were located on the site temporarily whilst works were being carried out at their Royton site. There was therefore no loss of jobs associated with this move.
Impact on Uppermill businesses; Lack of shops and amenities in Diggle for use by the pupils; No analysis on the potential effect on Uppermill businesses	x	x	By moving a facility to another village, this would allow other businesses to benefit from increased footfall. Whilst the Council would like to support local businesses in Uppermill, they do not have a right to the school facility in the village. Future developments in the area would be expected to generate further footfall.
Potential light pollution	x	x	It is expected that the community

Potential noise pollution	x	x	will be able to use school facilities and the artificial pitches are likely to include floodlighting. These issues would need to be surveyed and appropriate mitigation measures designed. The potential for light and/or noise pollution will be considered as part of the planning application and it is likely that a condition would be imposed restricting the hours of use and ensuring that lighting is installed to industry standards.
Movement of earth on the site during construction	x		The Council will require cross sectional drawings of the existing and proposed site to assess this issue as part of the planning application.
Sports England asked for the all weather pitch to remain in Uppermill			Sport England did not make this request. The pitch is included within the land swap proposals and the all- weather pitch on the existing site would pass to WRT developments. As they are expected to redevelop the site, this pitch would be retained because it would be replaced at the Diggle site. Sport England would be consulted as a statutory consultee on any planning application.
Allegations of commercial gain by the Council; Is the Council getting market value from the land swap	x	x	The Council is not going to gain financially from the land transactions involved at Diggle and Uppermill. The capital

The cost to the Council	x	x	<p>receipts expected will be used to pay towards the costs of the highways works and also for other works such as fencing around the footpath which cuts across the site and for the 3G pitch. The Council will also be leading a process to try and secure funding for the repair of the Grade II Clock tower so that it can be brought back into a viable use.</p> <p>All previous land transactions have been subject to independent review by the District Valuer Services.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that there may be further costs re. school transport and possibly additional highways costs to manage traffic impacts beyond Diggle. The latter would be for the wider benefit of Saddleworth and would be considered as part of the prioritisation of schemes in our local transport programme.</p>
The only reason that Diggle is the EFA preferred site is because it is the cheapest option		x	<p>The EFA has made an assessment of all 4 options using a range of criteria which includes the total cost. Its preferred option scored highly on other criteria including buildability/construction, teaching/learning, programme and operational issues.</p>

<p>Lack of consultation with the public; The decision has already been made; Council has been secretive; The decision is being made by people who don't live in Saddleworth</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>The Council and the school have produced and regularly updated a set of FAQs and have included as much information as has been available. The Council has a responsibility to offer sites for consideration by the EFA. The feasibility of those sites is then tested by the EFA. The Council has taken steps to ensure that the public have been kept informed and have ensured that a process has been put in place to gather public views once all of the information was available in the EFA Feasibility Study. Once a site has been chosen via this report, Interserve will consult the public informally on the design. The Ward Members have been regularly informed and consulted throughout the process e.g. considering the long list of possible sites. Once a planning application has been submitted, a statutory consultation process will be instigated by the Council as the Local Planning Authority.</p>
<p>Reduction of value of houses in Diggle; Reduction of house value if on street parking removed</p>	<p>x</p>		<p>Independent valuation experts generally suggest that proximity to a high performing school actually increases property values. Improvements to local amenities are also shown to have a positive impact on values. A residents car park is proposed for residents affected on Huddersfield Road</p>

<p>It is possible to manage the construction phase on the Uppermill site in a way that does not disrupt the education of the pupils;</p> <p>Access to the Uppermill site for construction traffic could go on the road round the back past the all weather pitches</p>		x	<p>The Council and the EFA do not believe that this is practical in a way that ensures the smooth running of the school and does not believe that the construction and school related traffic can be managed satisfactorily on such a constrained site.</p> <p>The alternative route suggestion is assumed to refer to Ryefields Drive which is a private road and a bridleway which would need to be strengthened at considerable cost in order to support construction traffic.</p>
<p>Moving the school will change the boundaries and the eligibility for the school</p>		x	<p>It is not envisaged that the school will need to change its admissions criteria as a result of relocation to the Diggle site.</p>
<p>The existing school could be extended at a fraction of the cost of a rebuild</p>		x	<p>The condition of the existing building is very poor and requires considerable investment to bring it to a reasonable standard. The site is already below minimum size standards for a secondary school and would be compounded by the proposed introduction of an additional 180 pupils and associated staff. This was not an option considered by the EFA as a result</p>
<p>This proposal is more about building more houses In Uppermill. Can't have more houses because:- Doctors and dentists surgeries are over- subscribed; Too few school places and nursery places</p>		x	<p>The Council's objective is to provide a fit for purpose school to replace the existing school which is in poor repair. The feasibility study has been carried out by the EFA and the issue of the development of housing is not a criterion included within the appraisal of the options.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of the health service to provide sufficient health provision.</p> <p>The building of a new school will create additional school places</p>

			at secondary level
Houses will be built on the land in front of the school and children will have to walk through a building site for 5 years		x	The access road to the school would provide a safe route and any construction that takes place in the future (see note below about future use of the land in front of the school) would need to include a full risk assessment that would have to take account of this issue and include comprehensive health and safety measures
The infrastructure is already in place in Uppermill		x	This is acknowledged. Please see other answers above regarding creating/improving the infrastructure in Diggle i.e. supporting highways works, transport etc.

<p>The development will not stop at the school and the Council will allow change of use to allow housing on the two fields between the school site and Huddersfield Road</p>		<p>x</p>	<p>The entire site (the Diggle Pallet Works site and the two fields) comprises Saddleworth Employment Area (SEA) 8 and Business and Industry Allocation B1.1.28 and future uses would therefore need to be assessed against Policy 14 and Policy 2. Housing does not fall within the list of permitted uses within an SEA and therefore the developer must demonstrate the site is no longer appropriate or viable to continue as its existing use. This can be demonstrated by the applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Through a marketing exercise that there is no market for the uses listed in Policy 14; or b. Through a viability exercise that the continued use of the site for the uses listed in Policy 14 is unviable; or c. That the development of the site for alternative uses would benefit the regeneration areas identified by the council as being in need of investment or would benefit the community of an area.
<p>The Shaw Pallet site would be better developed as an outdoor centre, housing, hotel, canal heritage centre but not a school</p>		<p>x</p>	<p>The site has been market tested in the past with no positive response.</p>

Extend the current site or look at other Uppermill sites		x	<p>The topography of land adjoining the existing school would make it difficult to develop a school building which has a larger floor plate.</p> <p>A comprehensive appraisal of over 15 sites has taken place prior to the identification of only the two possible sites for the EFA to assess via the feasibility study. No other locations were considered suitable or would have been deliverable within the timescales of the programme</p>
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Comments received about the EFA preferred option - Diggle Pallet Works Site and against the Uppermill options

Issue/comment	Before Study	After Study	Comments
<p>The Diggle site will have a positive effect on the village:- Excellent community facilities Meet long standing community need A boost for the local economy Improved access because of the highways improvements</p>		x	<p>Most of these issues are addressed within the report.</p> <p>The positive suggestions about the Diggle site will be considered via the technical design of the school and the highways scheme.</p>
Will remove the eyesore of the pallet works		x	
Provided the highways issues are sorted out, supportive of the Diggle option		x	The introduction of cycleways will be considered as part of the School Travel Plan.
Provided the design is tasteful, support the Diggle site		x	
Many of the arguments put forward are by NIMBY's			

<p>The Diggle site has plenty of room for a good sized school and will provide better facilities for children; It will provide education and resources already available to other children in Oldham</p>		x	
<p>The Diggle site will be developed no matter what even if the school isn't built there</p>		x	
<p>The Diggle option allows the least disruption to pupils' education Don't want children to be educated on a building site</p>		x	
<p>The Uppermill site is not suitable:- Too small Pitches too small Undulating, footpaths through it, lake underneath it Outdated buildings in poor repair Not fit for purpose Access to the school is difficult</p>		x	
<p>Would like to see access by foot as much as possible and the inclusion of a cycle way</p>		x	

Comments received i.e. not made in connection with any site option or more general comments/questions

Issue/comment	Before Study	After Study	Comments
A new school is needed	x	x	There is a general consensus on this.
Process taking too long Make a decision Get on with it How much is this process costing It has already cost my children the chance to learn in an up to date school Get the plans submitted and build underway because current facilities atrocious Children of Saddleworth deserve better		x	The Council agrees that the process has taken a long time. The school was included in the Building Schools for the Future Programme but this was discontinued. This current process has taken longer than all parties would have liked but this is partly due to the difficulties associated with identifying the most appropriate site and the need to thoroughly appraise the options.
Need to decide what is best for the pupils that will attend the school		x	This is a key criteria in making the decision
Most people don't care which site they just want it to be built		x	
Worried about the design and how it fits with Saddleworth – will need screening whichever site is selected; Don't want it to look like Mossley Hollins	x	x	Material types will be defined during the planning application process. It is expected that these will be sympathetic to the local area. Local residents will have an opportunity to comment during the 4 week pre-planning consultation process and the formal planning process.

Worries about dust from construction on any site		x	It is likely the developer will need to submit a Construction Environmental management Plan as part of a planning condition. This would include appropriate mitigation measures.
Can the school have a sixth form?		x	Saddleworth School is designated as an 11-16 school and there are no plans at this stage for the school to have a sixth form.
Great news that EFA wants to commit the funds		x	Agreed.
Pleased to be consulted; Ensure consultation about the build		x	Informal pre-planning consultation will be undertaken by Interserve and formal consultation will happen as part of the planning application process.
Could the Uppermill site be used for health facilities?	x	x	The Council has previously discussed this and there was no interest from health providers.
What are the plans for the Grade II listed clock tower and its upkeep?		x	The Council is exploring opportunities for grant funding to improve this dilapidated building and bring it back into viable use. Community groups have already contacted the Council to express interest in using the building.
The older children could be introduced to and involved in activities, learning etc. that might encourage interest in the construction industry during the build		x	This suggestion will be passed to the Head Teacher