

**Salford West Strategic Regeneration Framework
& Action Plan**

Results of Round One Consultations
December 2006

Executive Summary

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

A series of consultation events were held in December 2006 as part of the process of developing a Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) and Action Plan (AP) for Salford West. These were aimed at stakeholders from the statutory, community and private sectors;

7/12/06	Public Sector Workshop,
8/12/06	Private Sector Workshop,
11/12/06	Councillors and Community Stakeholder Discussion,
13/12/06	Councillors and Community Stakeholder Workshop.

In total 84 people attended the workshops. In addition information and questionnaires were circulated to Councillors who could not attend these events. Information has also been posted on the Council's website with a section for questions and comments.

Attendees were asked to look at three main issues;

- the future role of Salford West,
- the key strategic issues facing Salford West, and
- and the key opportunities for the area.

This report summarises the discussions at each of the workshops. The Executive Summary highlights the main findings from all of the events.

1.2 The Role of Salford West

The main roles highlighted by stakeholders, at a regional and local level, were for Salford West to be;

- a desirable place to live,
- a quality leisure destination, and
- a source of future employment opportunities.

1.2.1 A Desirable Place to Live

First and foremost stakeholders saw Salford West growing further as a desirable place to live. Salford West will have a reputation as an area of choice with strong neighbourhoods and a choice of quality housing.

This brings together a variety of characteristics. It builds upon and aims to extend existing desirable neighbourhoods. It also envisages the future development of assets such as town / neighbourhood centres, industrial heritage and access to green spaces. It exploits the proximity to quality employment zones.

Stakeholders were keen to see Salford West become a neighbourhood of choice for workers in new growth sectors in the region. Discussions included the need to provide a sequence of homes from starter to executive family and retirement homes. Finally, much of the discussion concerned ways of extending and linking neighbourhoods with strong housing markets into areas with weaker markets.

1.2.2 A Quality Leisure Product

Stakeholders envisioned Salford West with an excellent leisure and tourism offer. It will offer both quality and variety. This included sports and events at the new Salford Reds Stadium, heritage and water based tourism as well as outdoor and countryside pursuits.

The vision included both leisure pursuits for local residents, and developing the area as a regional tourism destination. Discussion among stakeholders centred on the areas' waterways, green spaces and heritage assets, all seen as currently under-developed. Chat Moss was highlighted as having a key role to play here, seen by stakeholders as a significant, but underused asset. Much of the discussion at the events centred on maximising the obvious assets in a way that contributes to Salford West becoming a more desirable neighbourhood, rather than undermining that role.

1.2.3 A Source of Future Employment Opportunities

The provision of employment sites was identified as a third key role. Salford West will offer quality sites for growth industries.

This included providing new locations for employment, allowing employers to grow and expand. Stakeholders also discussed the possibility of providing a more focussed employment offer than at present, rationalised around modern sites. This would allow the reuse of older, less successful areas to create a clearer divide between residential / commercial areas, and contribute to the creation of more desirable residential areas. The need to link Salford West residents to employment opportunities was a recurring theme.

1.3 Key Strategic Issues for Salford West

The key issues facing the area as identified through the discussions were;

- transport,
- town and neighbourhood centres,
- housing,
- employment opportunities and worklessness, and
- crime and community safety.

1.3.1 Transport

Stakeholders considered transport to be the top strategic issue for Salford West. This was mentioned as the key issue by stakeholders in all of the events. This reflected a group of concerns including ease of movement, quality of public transport, severance and congestion.

Stakeholders noted that **movement** around Salford West and from Salford West neighbourhoods to key areas for employment is difficult, particularly movement from north to south. The area especially lacks orbital links both within Salford West and from Salford West to destinations outside the area.

Public transport was generally not well regarded, other than on the main radial routes in and out of Manchester.

Severance was identified as an issue. Salford West is divided up by significant transport infrastructure. The main motorways, trunk roads and railway lines not only sever the neighbourhoods of Salford West from one another, but provide a very poor first impression of the area for visitors.

Congestion is the third aspect of this issue. It is a major issue on the M60 and the main roads into the regional centre at peak times. The effects of a congested M60 stretch into Worsley and Boothstown and along Liverpool Road. Stakeholders also perceive that the amount of traffic through the area impacts on the current population. Poor air quality in particular was mentioned. Finally, the poor linkages and congestion make it more difficult for residents in Salford West to **access** the facilities of Salford, as well as facilities and job opportunities further afield.

1.3.2 Town and Neighbourhood Centres

Stakeholders were concerned about Salford West's town and neighbourhood centres. This included issues such as level of voids, quality of the public realm and dominance of one type of business for example take-aways. Questions were raised about potential future roles for the centres. Developing the centres as retail destinations was not seen as a viable option, largely due to the level of competition nearby. Options discussed across the area included developing a night time economy, concentrating activity on centres, niche retail developments and establishing attractions such as farmers markets. There was a recognition that each centre is very different and responses would need to be tailored accordingly.

1.3.3 Housing

Housing was the third key issue. The structure of the Salford West housing provision was highlighted as an issue. Stakeholders suggested that there are

missing “rungs” from the housing ladder. While there was agreement that there are missing elements from the housing market opinion on which sections are missing varied. Some stakeholders mentioned that Salford West includes the bottom and top rungs of the property ladder but is missing some of those rungs in the middle. Others highlighted a lack of top end executive homes. Some stakeholders felt that a lack of middle market housing in some areas (especially a lack of private semi-detached and detached homes) leads families to leave Salford West altogether.

Stakeholders also noted issues around the type of homes in parts of Salford West. Some stakeholders perceived an over-provision of one type of tenure in some parts of Salford West, such as terraced homes in some localities, or the dominance of flatted accommodation in Eccles.

Affordability was also discussed, especially in the more affluent areas around Worsley, Boothstown and Walkden South.

1.3.4 Employment Opportunities and Worklessness

A further key issue for Salford West is that of linking employment opportunities and worklessness. Stakeholders were concerned that parts of the area have a culture of low expectations and low aspirations. This leads to an ongoing problem of young people dropping out of education and training, perpetuating the cycle of disadvantage and deprivation. Problems identified included low skills, a lack of basic skills, high levels of incapacity and a lack of aspiration.

A lack of jobs as such was not perceived to be the problem. Some stakeholders suggested that there were 10% more jobs than people. Accessing jobs is the issue. This relates partly to skills, and aspirations but also to transport. Many residents are unwilling or unable to access the employment opportunities that do exist in and around their neighbourhood.

1.3.5 Crime and Community Safety

Crime and community safety was the final issue consistently raised across the workshops. This encompassed a range of problems including burglary, vandalism and anti-social behaviour. For the private sector workshop the main concern was burglary and damage to property. This was seen as negatively impacting on profitability and potential investment. Hate crime was raised as an issue, particularly in Eccles.

Overall community safety was seen as a partnership issue, requiring a response from a range of partners. Tackling community safety issues was discussed as integral to delivering the future role for the area in terms of housing, leisure and employment.

1.4 Opportunities

Stakeholders identified a range of opportunities. The challenge for the SRF and Action Plan is ensuring that these opportunities underpin the new vision and role for Salford West. Key opportunities include;

- Major public investment such as in schools (Building Schools for the Future), housing (Stock Transfer), health facilities (LIFT), and criminal justice (new law courts in Eccles);
- Private sector development opportunities for example Salford Reds, Port Salford and housing developments;
- Job opportunities in surrounding areas including Manchester city centre, mediacity:uk and Trafford Park;
- Underdeveloped leisure assets with potential for recreation and tourism for example Chat Moss, canals, Lower Irwel Valley and industrial heritage;
- Planned improvements to transport infrastructure such as Leigh guided busway;
- Strong sense of local identity in the town and neighbourhood centres;
- Major developments in Central Salford.