



The future of the Ridings School Site

A report of the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Panel

March 2010

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Executive Summary

This report was originally intended to look at the potential future uses of the Ridings School Site, and produce costed options. However, as our work has progressed it has become apparent that the key issue is not merely what to do with a former school building, but the need for a clear strategy to address many of the problems faced by people living in North Halifax.

There is a need for a vision. A vision which has the support of political leaders, funders, partners and, most importantly, the residents of North Halifax.

This part of Calderdale suffers greater unemployment, lower education and skill levels and lower life expectancy than the rest of the borough. It also fares badly in terms of health, obesity and specific-cause mortality rates.

The very name “The Ridings” has been synonymous for too long in some minds with failings, wasted investment and missed chances. We see this report and our recommendations as a starting point for a new opportunity for the people of North Halifax.

We recommend that proposals are developed in conjunction with potential partners, such as the Football Association, Sport England, Campus Calderdale, the Primary Care Trust and the many community groups, to transform this site and others nearby into a hub for sport, leisure, learning and health. We make suggestions as to how this can be funded and what the benefits may be.

We recommend that funds be made available immediately for two purposes; firstly, to ensure the ongoing security and upkeep of the site whilst proposals are being progressed; and secondly, to engage a project management team to develop these proposals. We offer suggestions as to how this, too, could be funded.

We also recommend that the ultimate goal should be the transfer of a financially viable asset to a community trust representing all the groups and individuals who care passionately about improving this area. Evidence from case studies all over the country show that unless local people are engaged and empowered by the development and delivery process then it is guaranteed to struggle.

We recognise that our proposals will not translate into a physical development overnight, and that it will be a massive challenge to bring them to fruition, but we believe that with a concerted will from all stakeholders the Vision for North Halifax can become a reality.

The members of the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Panel are:

Councillor Peter Coles (Chair)
Councillor Joyce Cawthra
Councillor Barry Collins
Councillor Stephen Gow
Councillor John Hardy
Councillor Colin Raistrick
Councillor Keith Watson

Background and context of the Report

The Ridings School was formed in the 1990's following the amalgamation of two schools, Holmfield High School and Ovenden High School, on a school site dating back to 1937.

The school struggled following the merger. It went into special measures a number of times and was the subject of much negative media attention.

It finally closed as a school in July 2009.

At Cabinet on 26th October 2009 the buildings and grounds were deemed surplus to requirements by the Children & Young Peoples Services Directorate.

Over previous years, a great deal of money had been invested in the site, and some facilities such as a sports hall remain open to the public.

In July 2009 a report went to the Children & Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel in response to a Councillor Call for Action to "seek clarification of the options that had been prepared by Officers and to clarify what work had been done with community and other organisations to explore possible uses of this campus".

The Acting Group Director, Children and Young People's Services reported orally that it had been agreed by Cabinet Members that consultation should be undertaken on the use of the site and Cabinet had requested a report which outlined possible options for the future of the building, taking into account the sustainability of the proposals, the existing organisations in the area and the interest that had been expressed in the site. He advised that no decisions would be made by Cabinet on the future of the building until this work had been completed.

It was agreed that the Acting Group Director, Children and Young People's Services be requested to submit a written report to the Panel outlining the results of the consultation, together with proposals for future uses of the Ridings site before being submitted to Cabinet so that the views of the Panel could be conveyed to Cabinet. This did not happen.

At a Cabinet meeting held on 24th August, 2009, the following was resolved:

- (a) the Children and Young People's Services Directorate continue to progress the current consultation on its intention to declare the Ridings as surplus to requirements as a school, which is due to complete on 1st September 2009, the results to be presented at Cabinet on 14th September 2009 for decision;
- (b) Regeneration and Development, Children and Young People's Services and Community Services continue the current stream of work to review the assets and existing provision by the Council and our partners in North Halifax and provide options for consolidation to be brought back to Cabinet on 26th October 2009;
- (c) any potential options that arise from the work being undertaken by officers must be subject to a fully costed business case clearly demonstrating that the options are self financing;
- (d) all options must be considered alongside the plans being developed for the Mixenden Centre to ensure there is no duplication of provision or adverse impact on funding and long term sustainability of that scheme; and

(e) the above decisions to be lead by the Group Director, Community Services, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Services and the Leader of the Council, with a report back to Cabinet prior to Council on 2nd December 2009.

Following a call-in of that Cabinet decision, the following was resolved at Cabinet on 21st September 2009:

RESOLVED that having considered the recommendation of the Regeneration and Development Scrutiny Panel:

- (a) the decision taken at Cabinet on 24th August 2009 as set out in Minute Number 38/B30 be confirmed except that the deadline in part (e) of that resolution for reporting back to Cabinet be extended to the end of March 2010; and
- (b) the Regeneration and Development Scrutiny Panel be requested to consider options for the future use of the former Ridings School and prepare fully costed proposals for recommendation to Cabinet by the end of March 2010.

In October 2009, the Economy & Environment Scrutiny Panel (as it had then become known) agreed to set up a working party to undertake this piece of work, and also to apply to Cabinet for funding to commission a condition survey.

This report is the result of that work. The work was undertaken using recognised project management techniques, with Officers acting as a Project Team under the direction of Working Party Members who operated as the Project Board. Membership of the Working Party was open to all members of the Economy & Environment Scrutiny Panel. An invitation to participate was extended to members of the Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Panel in December, as it was recognised that their input would be useful.

Summary of evidence received

Evidence was taken from a number of sources. These can be broadly categorized into three distinct areas: The physical condition of the site as it currently stands and; potential uses and interest shown and; an analysis of the area in which the site is situated. The panel also visited a similar site within the Kirklees area, to investigate potential models for The Ridings. Possible sources of funding have also been explored.

Physical Condition:

Following the approval by Cabinet of £20,000, a condition survey was commissioned. The company selected was The Vinden Partnership Ltd. Broadly speaking, the survey was as expected, in that some of the older parts of the school need significant work to bring them up to standard, but that the newer parts are in reasonable condition. A summary of the survey is attached in the appendices to this report. Estimated costs for remedial work are included, but it is important to note that these are for the next 10 years, and that they relate only to the most recent purpose of the buildings, i.e. a school. No detailed work has been undertaken at this stage on the impact to these costs of selective demolition, as this would depend on the identified demand.

Ongoing running costs of the current site:

In addition to identifying the condition of the site, it was important to ascertain the costs of the site at the moment. Children & Young Peoples Services have budgeted for revenue costs associated with the site until the end of March 2010. Clearly, irrespective of the outcome of this report, the Council will still have responsibilities and therefore budget pressures relating to the site beyond that date.

The projected annual running costs are currently £172,067. this is made up as follows:

Security—Staff	£30,393
Premises Insurance	£19,699
Business rates/ Council Tax	£51,904
Security—Premises	£4,542
Electricity	£26,927
Gas	£29,370
Water	£9,636
Repairs—premises	£5,898
Waste/ Equipment Disposal	£1,457
Supplies & Services	£16,838
Management Team	£8,400
Recharges to Sports Centre	(£32,966)

Demolition Cost

A provisional cost to clear the buildings on the site has been estimated at £350,000. Should the Sports Centre be retained, then services will need to be re-provided including a new boiler house at an estimated cost of approximately £175,000. Demolition of the Sports Centre will require the repayment of a lottery funding grant of £70,000.

Market Value of Site

On the assumption that the whole site is cleared and the buildings demolished, the market value of the site is estimated at £1,200,000. The property market remains stagnant at this current time and a developer is likely to struggle to secure funding for such a substantial investment. Should it be desired to maximise the return from any disposal, the sale should be timed when market conditions improve.

The site includes a separate caretaker's bungalow. This is a detached residence in its own grounds, and could be utilised to generate a capital receipt. The amount would not be great, due to work required on it and also its location. Rough estimates prior to any full inspection and based only on similar properties elsewhere are around £50,000—£70,000.

Expressions of interest

Since the school closed, the Council has received a number of enquiries about potential use of various parts of the site for a variety of purposes, all of which are consistent with the aim of improving available services for the people of North Halifax and beyond. What is not clear at this stage is whether each would be interested in utilising elements of the existing buildings or just the footprint.

Campus Calderdale has shown interest in potentially using much of the “existing school buildings” part of the site, although whether they would prefer to refurbish or demolish and build new is not yet clear at this time. Clearly, this would have a major impact on other potential users of the site. We understand that they have access to funding of the order of £2 million, although this has to be clarified.

Interest from the third sector has been encouraging, with a number of community groups keen to be involved in any development. The Halifax Police Boxing Club are particularly anxious to seek an early resolution of the future of the site. The provision of facilities for the boxing club is reaching breaking point. The club is really struggling to cover the costs of its present venue. A move to the Ridings in the near future would enable the future security of tenure and thus enable them to continue with the development of the club and allow them to develop the work they already do with 18 schools in Calderdale. The boxing club, it is felt will have a positive impact on the Ridings and in the surrounding area.

Other expressions of interest include Pennine Magpie, Calderdale Community Coaching Trust, North Halifax Football Club, Ovenden & Mixenden Initiative/ North Halifax Partnership, Ravenscliffe Plus, the Primary Care Trust and Calderdale Music Service. Until Cabinet have decided on the future of the site it is difficult to pursue these and other interests, so space requirements, tenure etc would need to be explored further.

Pennine Housing have also expressed an interest in utilising a significant amount of the existing space, possibly an entire floor, for the delivery of training and other purposes. This option may well provide short-term rental income significant enough to offset much of the ongoing running costs. We understand, however, that the removal of equipment such as tables and chairs from the site may have jeopardised this.

Other options explored

Ian Gray, Director, Economy and the Environment, is pursuing the possibility of integrating the non-school buildings element of the site into a Community Sports Hub scheme. To this end, a presentation was given by the Football Association and Sport England in Halifax Town Hall on February 23rd, giving examples of similar projects around the country. Whilst this was not a scrutiny-organised event, the implications of some of the ideas presented could clearly not be ignored in this report.

There is no one model for this type of scheme, but there are common features. These include having community and commercial activity on one site, having co-location of services, regeneration of urban land and increased participation through diversity of opportunity, linking together clubs, public and private sectors. Facilities can include libraries, crèches, learning centres, GP surgeries, council services etc, as well as sport and leisure facilities. An example of a project about to commence construction in Warrington is included in the appendices.

In the experience of the Football Association Representative, for such a scheme to work it has to have the following ingredients, in order of importance:

- Political will and leadership
- A compelling vision
- Relevance to the local community
- Financial sustainability
- Operational leadership and management
- Early identification of the likely operator

Such schemes do not happen overnight—a typical period from conception to the start of construction is three years—and there is risk attached from a Local Authority perspective. However, some funding is available from both Sport England and the Football Association for the right type of project. Sport England have a Sustainable Facilities Fund, the third round of which will be looking at funding projects in 2011-2012. The fund will be used to support projects that bring together multiple partners, including input from the public and private sectors and National Governing Bodies. The fund will also be designed to encourage others to invest further capital and revenue funding to ensure sustainability.

OSCArena Foundation, formed by Ovenden West Riding FC and Ovenden Rugby League Club, has produced proposals for a major outdoor venue at the Four Fields site, which is very close to the Ridings School site. These ideas are supported by a large volume of work and research undertaken by the clubs.

Also nearby is Mason Green, home to Illingworth RL and North Halifax Football Club. The latter has approximately 30 teams across all age ranges. As with OSCArena, plans are in train to develop facilities at their site, along with the adjacent Beechwood Park.

Representatives of these organisations are of the view that their proposals would have a strategic fit with a community sports hub on the Ridings Site, making a multi-use, multi-site facility for North Halifax.

The Ridings Site is currently zoned as Openspace Urban in the Unitary Development Plan, with the following policy definition:

Open space, sport and recreation facilities form an essential part of Calderdale's environment and play an important role in maintaining the health and wellbeing of its residents. They contribute towards quality of life by improving the quality of the environment and enabling exercise and other pastimes to take place, and they can play a key role in regeneration and sustainable development. The Council's main objectives for open space, sport and recreation facilities are to:-

- i. provide a wide range of high quality open space and sport and recreation facilities that are accessible to all residents of the District and increase the provision of these in areas of demand where resources permit;*
- ii. protect existing open spaces and sport and recreation facilities from inappropriate development; and*
- iii. protect and enhance the District's recreational footpaths and public right of way network*

Data for the Ward and Locality

The Ridings School Site is in Ovenden Ward and sits within the Halifax North locality, which covers the Illingworth & Mixenden, Northowram & Shelf, Ovenden and Warley wards.

Ward unemployment in October 2009 was 8.7%. This compared with 5.1% across Calderdale as a whole, and a United Kingdom average of 4.2% (Yorkshire and Humber average was 4.8%).

In terms of educational attainment, 28% of Ovenden pupils gained 5+ A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths in 2008, compared to a Calderdale average of 50.3%. 50% achieved 5+ A*-C GCSEs (Calderdale average 66.5%) and 90% gained 5+ A*-G (93.7%).

Life expectancy in the period 2006-2008 in Ovenden Ward was 73.3 years for males and 78.1 years for females. This compared with a Calderdale average of 77.1 years and 81.0 years respectively and a figure for the adjacent ward of Northowram and Shelf of 78.5 years for males and 83.7 years for females. In other words, people in Ovenden are likely to live on average 5 years less than those in Northowram and Shelf, the ward next door.

In each of the above sets of data, Ovenden ward had the poorest figures in the district.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

The JSNA is intended to paint the "big picture" in terms of the current and future health and well-being needs of the people of Calderdale, and to outline the inequalities between them. It is a tool for identifying groups whose needs are not being met, and which are experiencing poor outcomes.

The Assessment examines a number of issues, both thematically and by locality profiles. The Ridings School Site sits within the Halifax North locality, which covers the Illingworth & Mixenden, Northowram & Shelf, Ovenden and Warley wards.

The JSNA was published in March 2009. It highlights considerable issues around

childhood and adult health in North Halifax. Particular areas of concern are food and nutrition, alcohol, smoking, coronary heart disease and hypertension.

In addition to the above, the Comprehensive Area Assessment has highlighted Narrowing the Gap as an area of focus for Calderdale.

Site Visit to The Deighton Centre, Huddersfield

The Deighton Centre is a former High School which was declared surplus to requirements for educational purposes but now operates as a multi-use centre with office space, theatre and function facility, training rooms, restaurant etc. It has a floor area of approx. 50,000ft² (4645m²).

There are some similarities with the Ridings School site, but also some differences. Both are based in areas of high deprivation, and there was strong community feeling within Deighton and Brackenhall that something must be done to retain the site for community use.

The two main differences were:

- The school had already been undertaking adult education, so even when it ceased to operate as a school it still continued with some functions.
- Kirklees Council was committed to retaining the building and were prepared to transfer officers and functions there, particularly training. It had two training venues which were sold and generated a capital receipt of £750,000 which was then invested in refurbishing the school building.

External consultants were employed to prepare a business case. This took six months in total, and a further six months were needed to get the facility ready for opening. There was an element of risk as the core income from training was not enough to support the venture. However, it was important that any other activity had to be complementary. There was also initial reticence from some officers at the prospect of working there.

The facility is managed by Community Services within Kirklees Council, and has proven to be of great value to the local area, as well raising its profile and giving a sense of local pride. As a driver for regeneration in the area, it works with other local initiatives such as the Chestnut Centre (small business starter units etc) and the Deighton & Brackenhall Initiative. Ultimately, an asset transfer would be the goal for the centre, but there is an ongoing struggle around capital repair and renewal costs. Until that is resolved, a transfer to a community group would be impractical.

Lesley Whiting, the Buildings Services Manager for Kirklees Council, advised that in addition to the work already proposed by this working party, a Needs Analysis for the Ridings area should be undertaken. A survey of community provision in North Halifax is already partly in place.

Lesley also offered to attend any meetings of the working group if it would be useful, as she is a resident of Calderdale.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Planning Act 2008 included a number of enabling sections relating to CIL. After a long period of consultation and refinement, a Statutory Instrument was laid before Parliament in February 2010 which will bring CILs into being in April 2010. Over time, this

mechanism will gradually replace Planning Gain (Section 106s).

CIL is a mechanism that councils can use to obtain a contribution from developers towards the provision of infrastructure. It is essentially a tariff system or “roof-tax” as pioneered in Milton Keynes. CIL seeks to standardise the existing tariff systems and encourage new ones to be brought forward in a transparent and proportionate manner.

CIL will be levied on both residential and commercial development above a *de minimis* threshold. It will be calculated by the local authority, working with stakeholders to identify the anticipated scope of development over the short, medium and longer terms and, in so doing, identifying the consequential infrastructure requirement. The nature and extent of available funding streams for these infrastructure requirements, from central government and/or other bodies, will then be determined. Thereafter, the contribution from developers will be identified – this contribution will be tested by an independent inspector to ensure that it is set at a viable level.

This *may* be a source of funding for any community-based Ridings development. It is interesting to note that a Conservative planning Green Paper published in late February proposes to scrap CIL and non-site specific planning obligations and instead introduce a single unified local tariff applicable to all residential and non-residential development (even a single dwelling) at graded rates depending on the size of the development. A percentage of the money raised by the tariff would be passed directly to the community where the development takes place.

Findings

From the evidence we have received over the course of this piece of work, a number of things have become evident.

The level of interest shown from members of the community has been great. This has manifested itself both in expressions of interest from community groups to either use parts of the existing site or be involved in future developments, and also in terms of the numbers that have turned up to Scrutiny Panel meetings.

Taking that in conjunction with evidence regarding health, education, skills and other indicators, it is quite clear to us that whatever happens to this site it must be for the benefit of the people of North Halifax.

However, the lack of a clear strategy for North Halifax means that a number of groups have in the past effectively been competing with each other for resources. One of the most impressive changes the panel have observed is the way those groups have worked to come together for a common benefit.

If we discount wholesale demolition of the buildings and selling the land off for housing or retail, the site has two basic usage options: using some or all of the buildings to generate income streams, or attracting outside investment for new build in keeping with community benefits. These options are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Indeed, we feel that allowing short-term immediate use of some buildings will create income generation to offset running costs whilst plans are being developed for a sustainable future.

It is clear from the condition survey that the building as it currently stands is in need of investment to prevent further deterioration, but parts of the building are in far better condition than others. It could be that selective demolition to reduce running costs could be identified as part of any ongoing project development work. The idea of selling off the caretaker's bungalow to provide extra short-term development funding is attractive.

The panel were impressed by the joint presentation of Sport England and the Football Association. The concept of a Community Sports Hub is appealing. Whilst accepting that there would be a lot of work required, with no guarantees of success at this stage, we feel that this is something worth working towards. It would help with narrowing the gap over a number of indicators, as well as engaging the local community. The potential for partnership working, as well as involving national "names", would be of benefit.

The importance of political leadership, community engagement and partnership working cannot be overemphasised with this option. However, we believe that such an approach would have benefits in terms of ways of working far beyond the confines of this scheme or, indeed, North Halifax.

Those potential partners who have so far expressed an interest are all compatible with this approach.

Work would need to be progressed on determining the best form of ownership model in both the short and long terms. Clearly, the role of the Council would be pivotal in the development stage, and their support and goodwill vital in making the scheme sustainable.

The potential funding bids and / or the Community Infrastructure Levy, along with

matched funding from partners, make this an option that we feel should be progressed.

To do this effectively, it is our view that a dedicated project management resource be engaged. We understand from the Director, Economy and Environment, that this would cost in the order of £70,000. This could possibly be funded from the sale of the bungalow.

Recommendations

We recommend that proposals are developed in conjunction with potential partners, such as the Football Association, Sport England, Campus Calderdale, the Primary Care Trust and the many community groups, to transform this site and others nearby into a hub for sport, leisure, learning and health. Funding for this would need to be developed over a number of years and from a variety of sources. These could include:

- Sport England Sustainable Communities Fund
- Football Association Sports Villages funding
- National Governing Bodies funding
- Community Infrastructure Levy
- Campus Calderdale
- Primary Care Trust
- Calderdale Council
- The use of parts of the land for linked retail and private sector development (e.g. sports equipment stores, sports injuries clinics)
- The release of limited parts of the land for appropriate housing development, with receipts ring-fenced for the overall scheme.

We recommend that funds be made available immediately for two purposes; firstly, to ensure the ongoing security and upkeep of the site whilst proposals are being progressed; and secondly, to engage a project management team to develop these proposals. This could be funded from at least three potential sources:

- Council Reserves
- Sale of the caretaker's bungalow to realise the capital receipt
- The re-opening of parts of the school on a limited-term basis for room-rental from interested parties.

We also recommend that the ultimate goal should be the transfer of a financially viable asset to a community trust representing all the groups and individuals who care passionately about improving this area. Evidence from case studies all over the country show that unless local people are engaged and empowered by the development and delivery process then it is guaranteed to struggle. We would envisage that capacity building to achieve this aim would be required, using resources such as the Development Trust Association.

Sources of Evidence:

Evidence was gathered from the following sources:

The Vinden Partnership Ltd Condition Survey

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2008

Analysis of the 2007 Indices of Deprivation - A Briefing Paper by the Chief Executive's Office

Calderdale Unemployment Factsheet November 2009

Sport England - Trudi Else, Capital Projects and Facilities

The Football Association - Peter Kay, Senior Facilities and Investment Manager

The Deighton Centre - Lesley Whiting, Facilities Manager, Kirklees Council

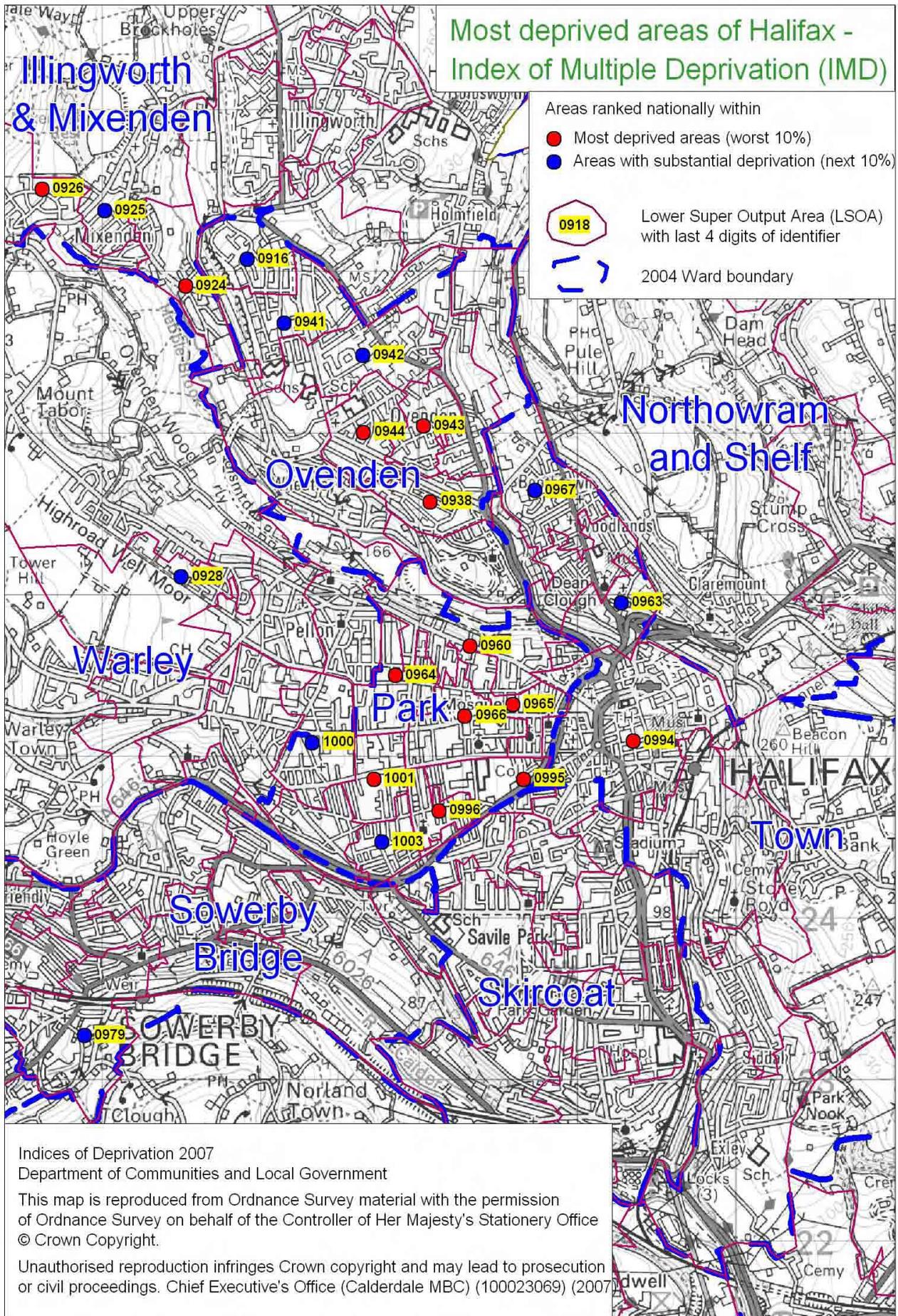
Ovenden Neighbourhood Policing Team

OSCArena - Joe Collins

The Development Trust Association - Neil Berry, Yorkshire & Humber Regional Development Officer

Officers of Calderdale MBC

Minutes of Calderdale Council's Cabinet, Children & Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel and Economy and Environment Scrutiny Panel.



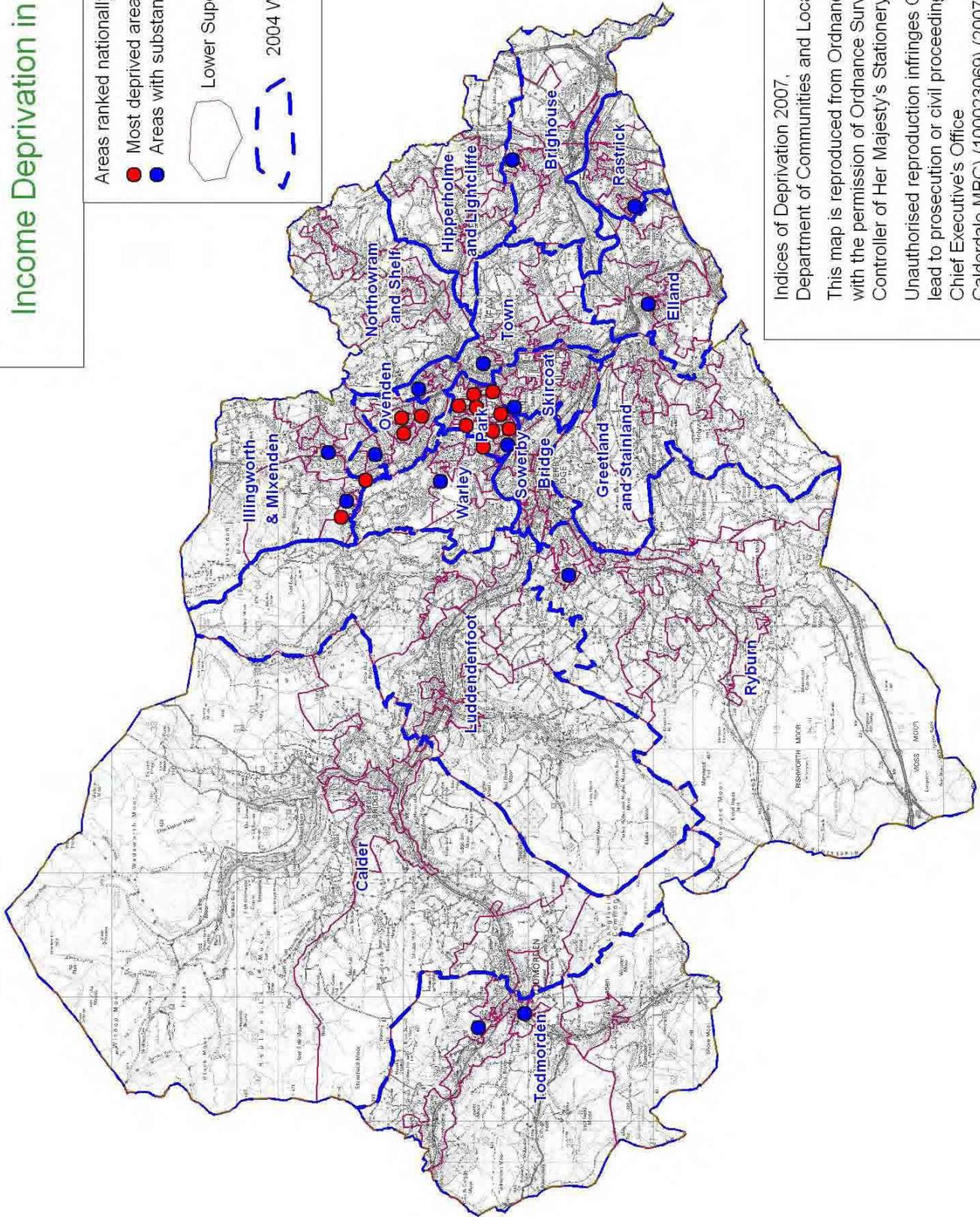
Income Deprivation in Calderdale

Areas ranked nationally within

- Most deprived areas (worst 10%)
- Areas with substantial deprivation (next 10%)

Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)

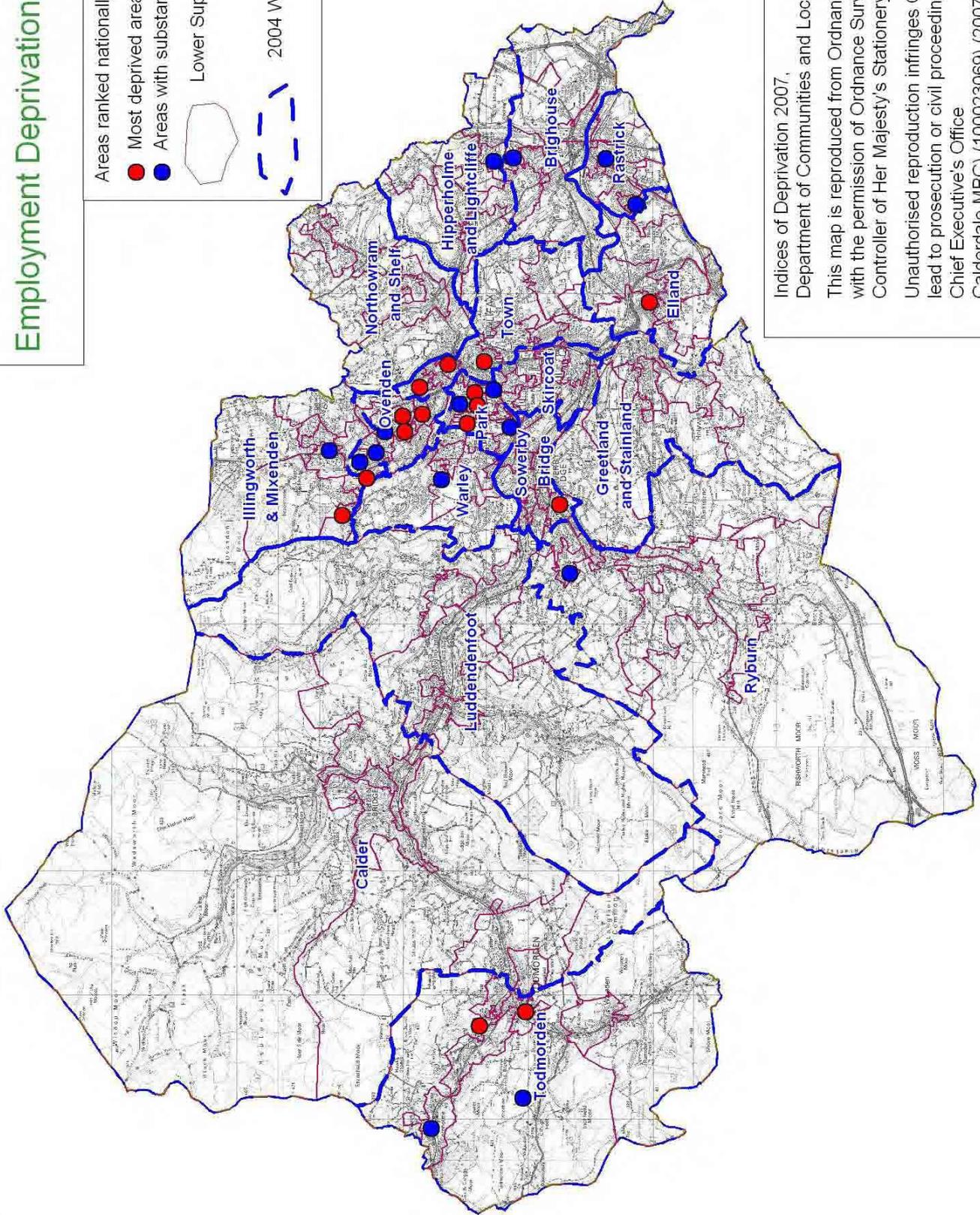
2004 Ward Boundary



Indices of Deprivation 2007,
 Department of Communities and Local Government.
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 Chief Executive's Office
 Calderdale MBC (100023069) (2007)

Employment Deprivation in Calderdale

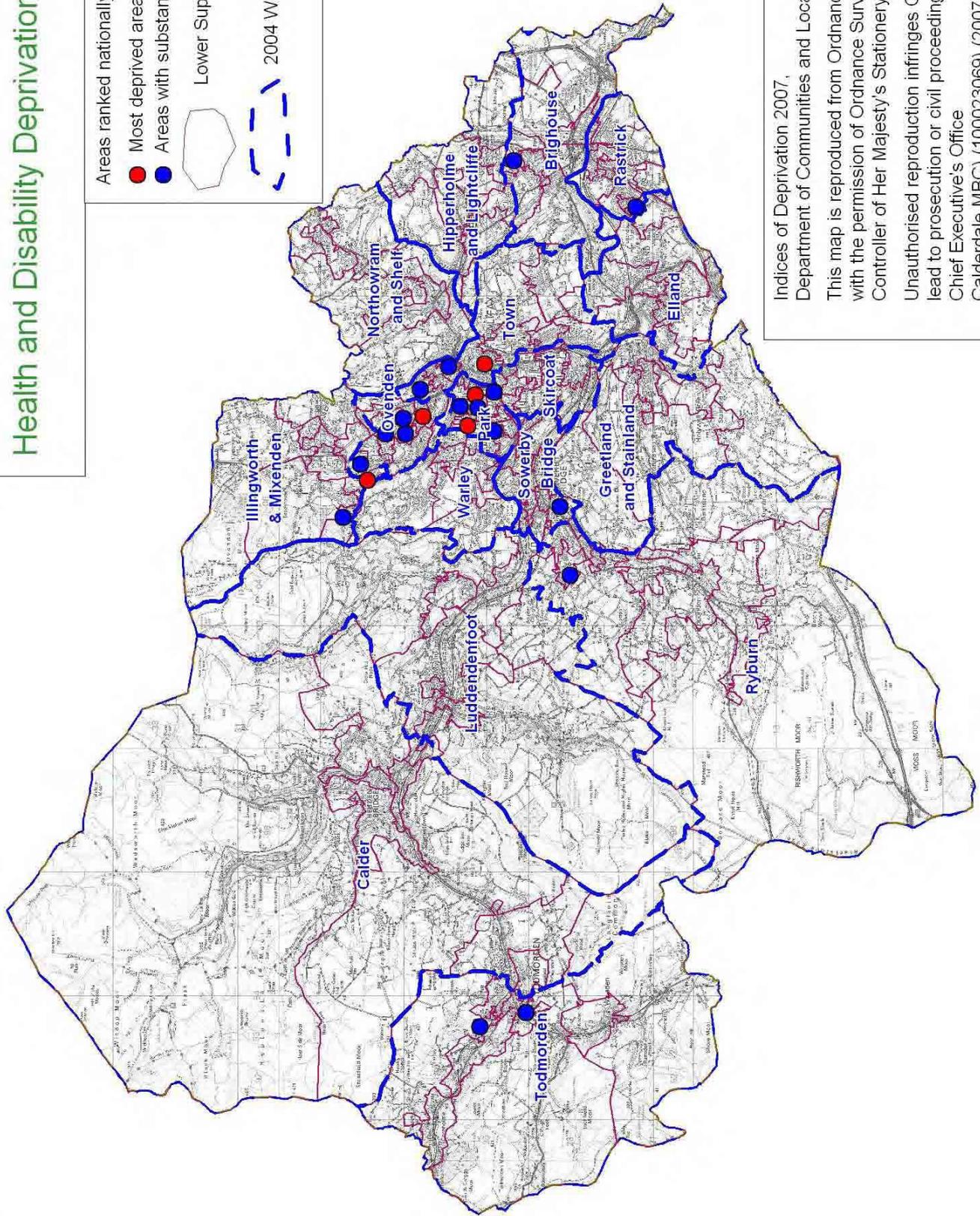
- Areas ranked nationally within
- Most deprived areas (worst 10%)
 - Areas with substantial deprivation (next 10%)
- Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)
- 2004 Ward Boundary.



Indices of Deprivation 2007,
 Department of Communities and Local Government.
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Health and Disability Deprivation in Calderdale

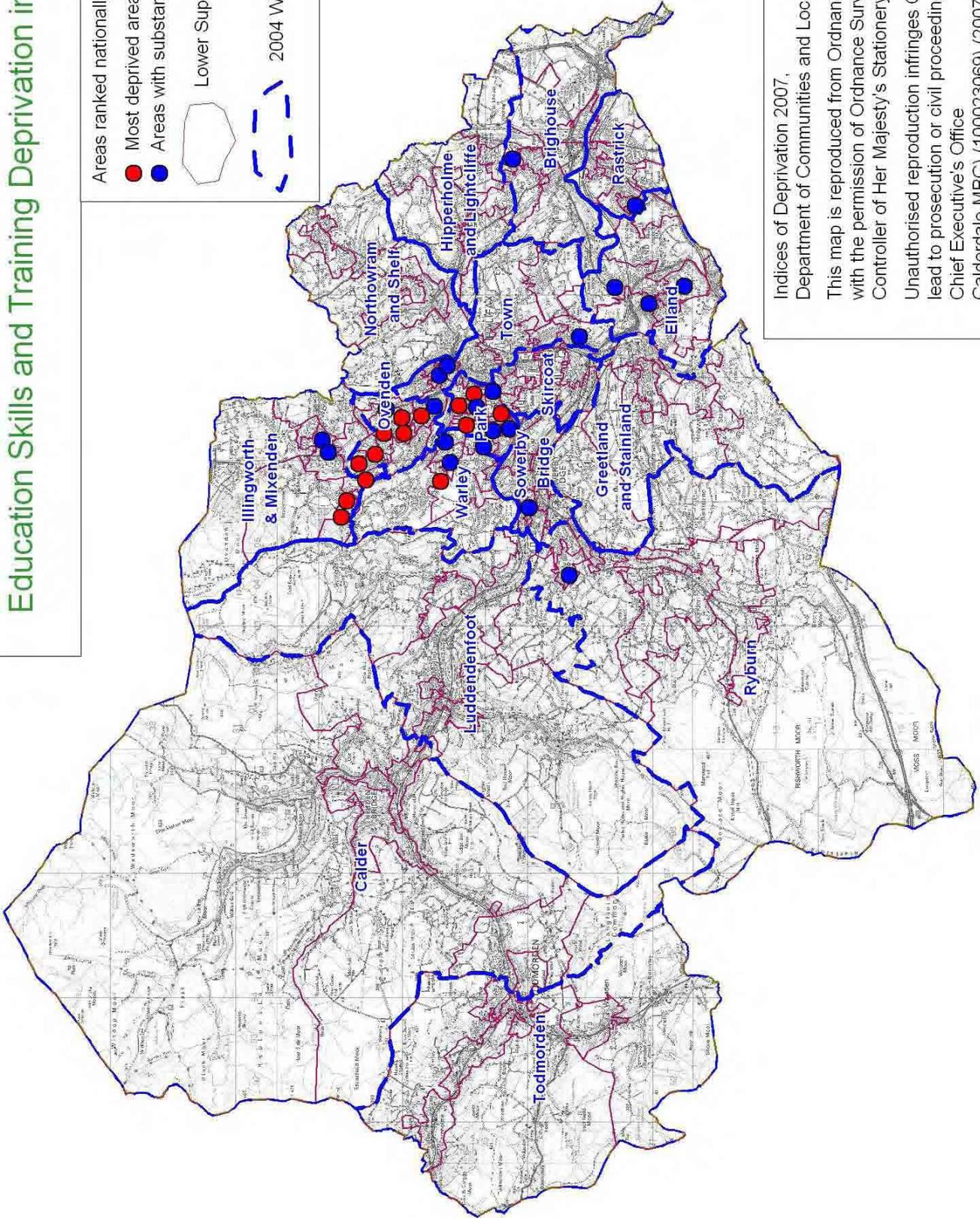
- Areas ranked nationally within
- Most deprived areas (worst 10%)
 - Areas with substantial deprivation (next 10%)
 - Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)
 - 2004 Ward Boundary



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Education Skills and Training Deprivation in Calderdale

- Areas ranked nationally within
- Most deprived areas (worst 10%)
 - Areas with substantial deprivation (next 10%)
- Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)
- 2004 Ward Boundary.



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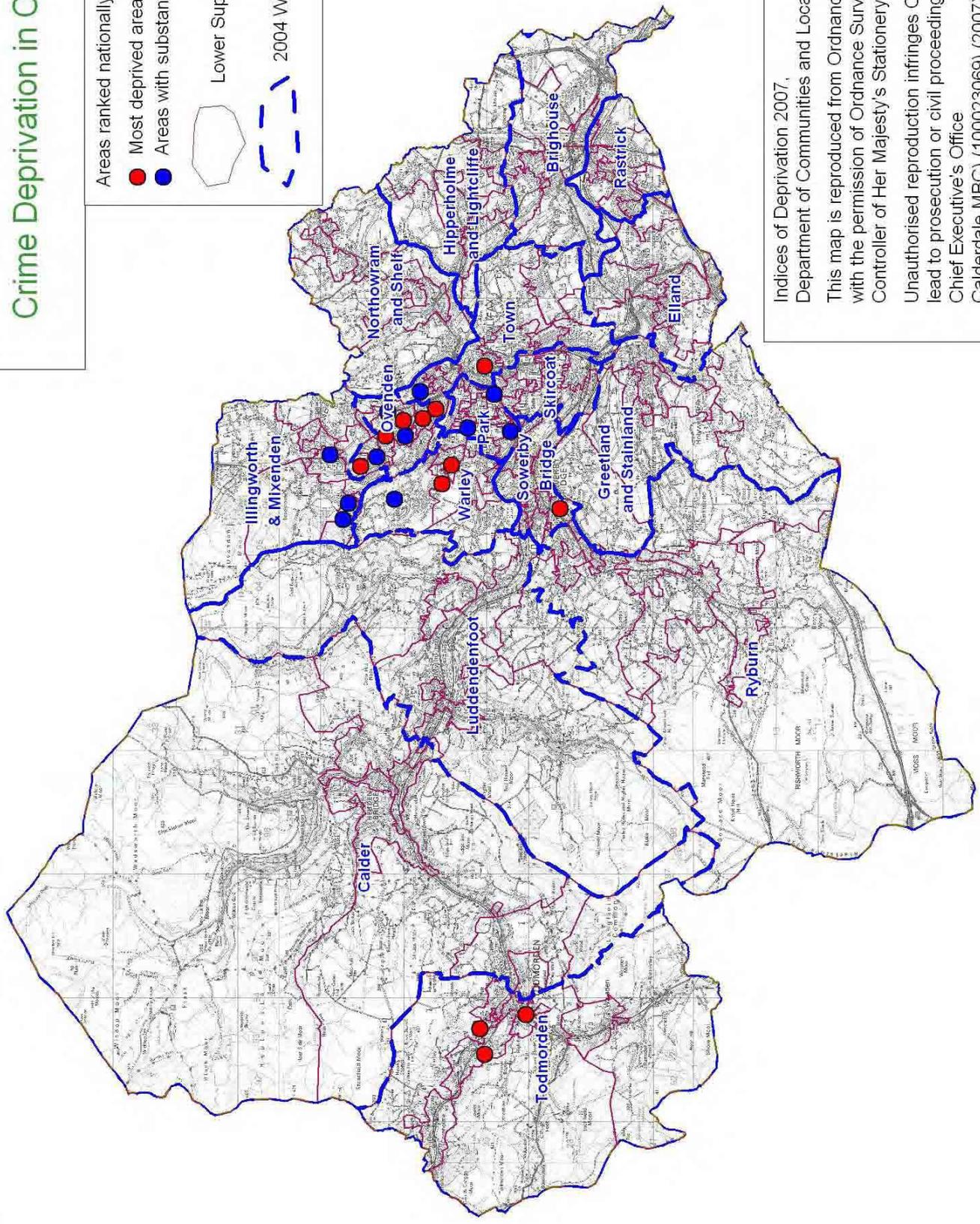
Crime Deprivation in Calderdale

Areas ranked nationally within

- Most deprived areas (worst 10%)
- Areas with substantial deprivation (next 10%)

Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)

--- 2004 Ward Boundary.



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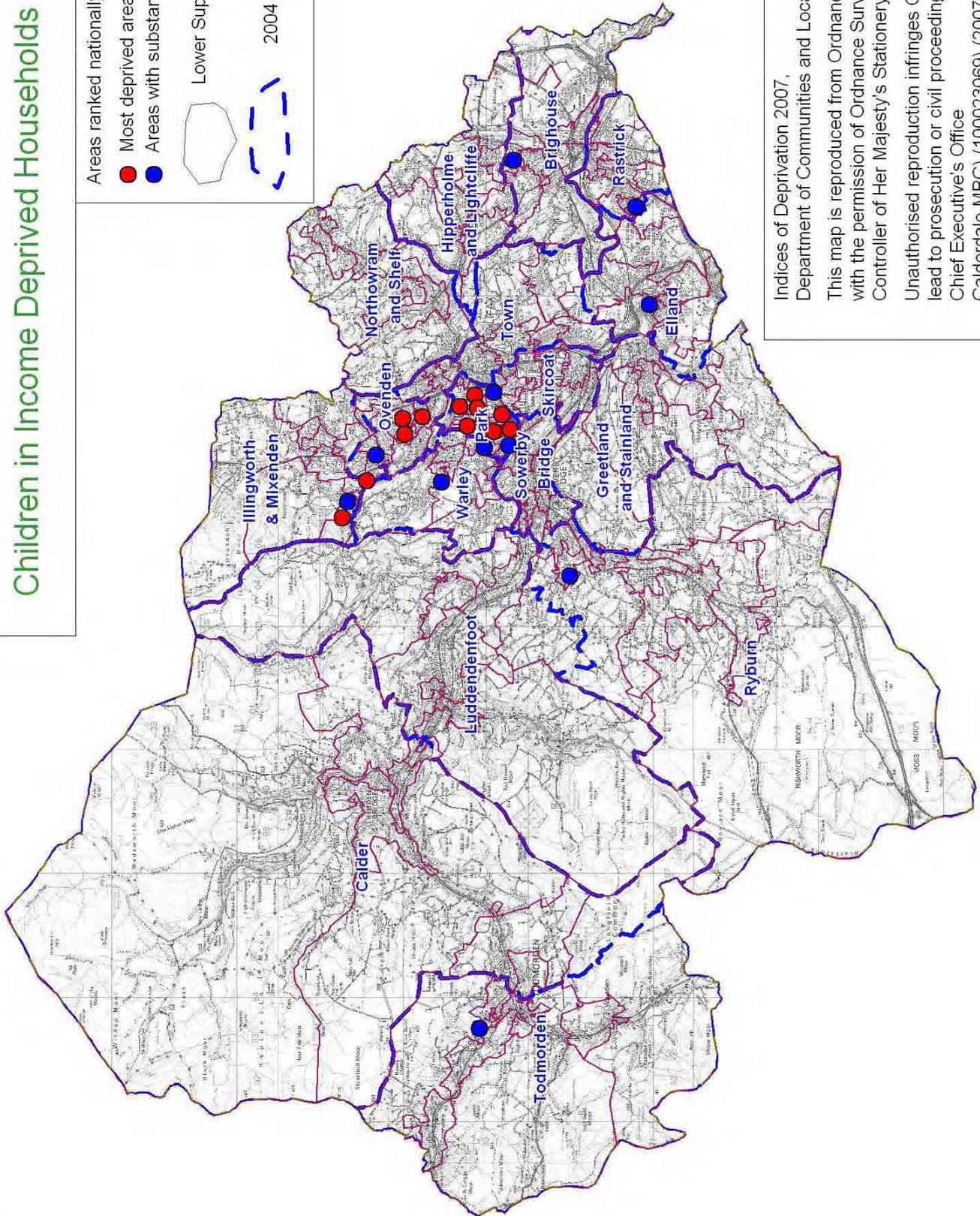
Children in Income Deprived Households in Calderdale

Areas ranked nationally within

- Most deprived areas (worst 10%)
- Areas with substantial deprivation (next 10%)

Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)

2004 Ward Boundary.



Indices of Deprivation 2007,
 Department of Communities and Local Government.
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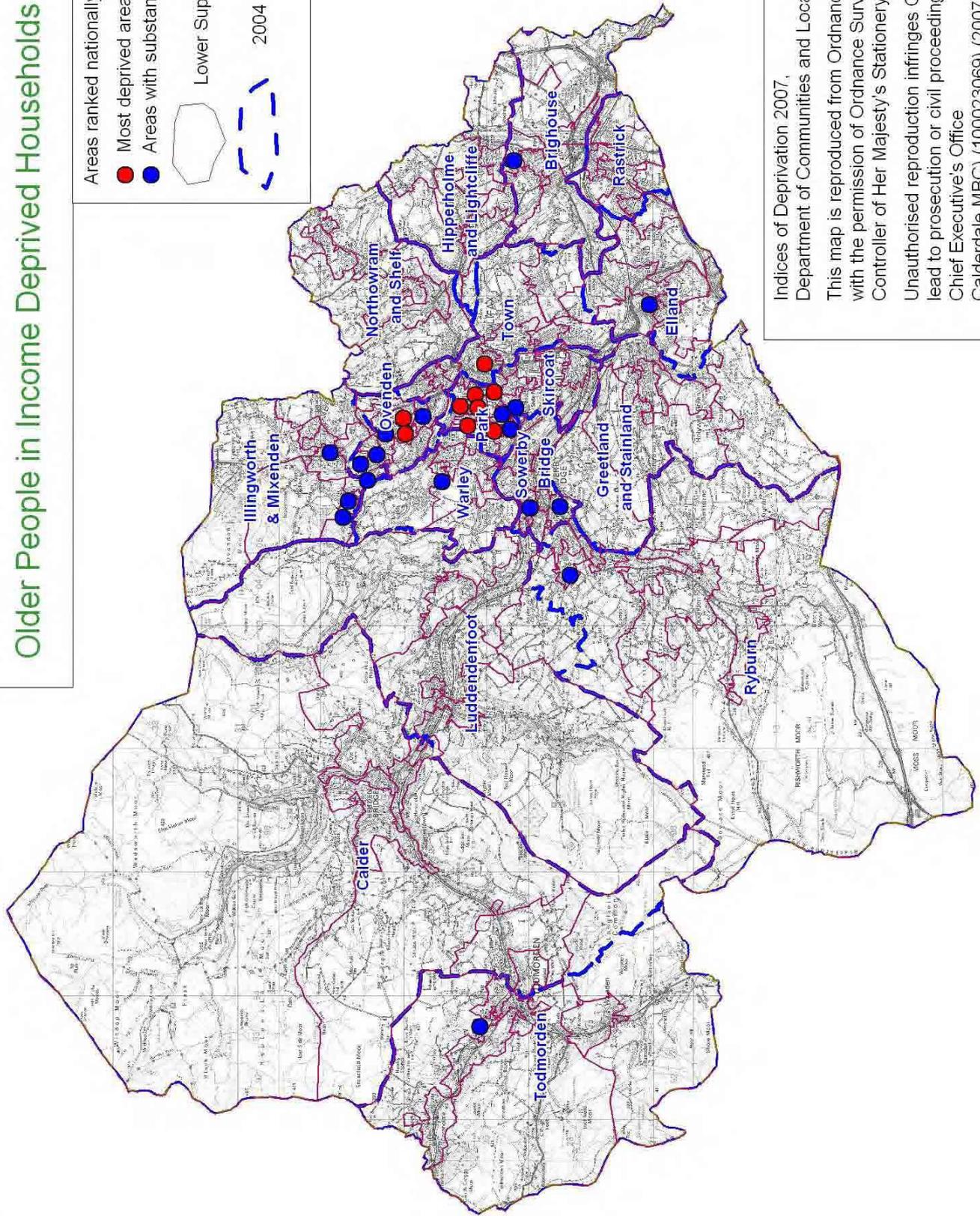
Older People in Income Deprived Households in Calderdale

Areas ranked nationally within

- Most deprived areas (worst 10%)
- Areas with substantial deprivation (next 10%)

Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)

2004 Ward Boundary



Indices of Deprivation 2007,
 Department of Communities and Local Government.
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Condition Survey:

Prepared by The Vinden Partnership Ltd

The premises subject to appraisal are known as The Ridings, Nursery Lane, Halifax. Closed as a school in the summer of 2009, The Ridings was originally formed following the amalgamation of two schools, Holmfield High School and Ovenden High School. In the years prior to its closure the school buildings and site benefitted from substantial investment, widely reported to include in the order of £6.5 million on new buildings since 1997. The legacy of some of this investment remains; the site includes a sports hall and associated facilities which remain open to the public.

The original school buildings date to 1937. Significant development and extension of the school buildings appears to have been limited until 1979, when the detached technology block was constructed to the rear of the site. Nine years prior to this, a small caretaker's residence was constructed to the front of the original school buildings.

1997/98 brought substantial investment; hall, drama and dance facilities being constructed off the east wing of the original school buildings. In addition, a scheme of window replacement using modern aluminium double glazed units is believed to have commenced around this time. Additionally, works to replace the original pitched roof coverings to the original school buildings were undertaken; the assumed original slate coverings being replaced with profiled metal cladding, with insulation beneath. This investment was followed about a year later by the construction of a new science block to the rear east corner of the original school buildings.

Around 5 years later in 2003 further investment in the school built assets was made, constructing the sports facilities on playing fields to the north of the site and refitting the library facilities within the original school buildings. Small extensions were also constructed to increase WC facilities within the main school buildings around this time. We believe the office and new entrance facilities attached to the west wing of the original school buildings were constructed in or around 2005/6.

Since the closure of the school, the site has remained unoccupied (with the exception of the sports facilities), save for a recent one off event using the school hall. A full time caretaker has been retained to oversee the buildings and check that the basic services remain operable (low level heating) in an attempt to arrest the deterioration of the buildings due to lack of use, heating and so forth. We are advised that in 2007 a security fence was erected to the perimeter of the site and this has significantly reduced vandalism and unauthorised access to the school buildings, which had been a historic problem.

Summary of Condition

Roofs

The buildings on The Ridings site have a combination of flat and pitched roofs. Dealing first with the flat roofs, the original school buildings have an asphalt covered flat roof over the first floor common rooms and associated accommodation (rooms F0010 – F0016), accessed via the library or a separate staircase. This asphalt roof (Roof 5) is life expired and leaking significantly, causing water ingress into the rooms below. Repairs are required urgently.

Elsewhere, asphalt covered flat roofs are present on link corridors between the original school accommodation and later additions, above the kitchens and adjacent corridors (G0032 and G0035) and above the link common rooms (G0081 to G0094). Whilst water ingress through these roofs is not as severe as Roof 5, some leakage is occurring and the remaining economic lifespan of these remaining asphalt covered roofs is limited. We

have recommended recovering of roofs 15, 16 & 23 A within 2 years (priority 2 repairs). The remaining flat roofs are covered in bituminous felt of varying age. The flat roof to technology block (Roof 40) is leaking with such severity as to be causing deposits of water on the floors internally. However, inspection of this roof found that the bituminous felt roof covering was in reasonable condition, albeit some very poor quality repairs had been historically undertaken and some evidence of vandalism was evident. In our opinion this roof remains capable of repair in the short term but will most likely need recovering within the ten year period under consideration.

A number of small pitched roofs are also covered using bituminous felt. In our opinion the majority of these roofs are capable of giving further service, in some circumstances with further short term repairs. However, some of these roofs (Roofs 3, 8, 12 & 25) are unlikely to give trouble free service over the next 10 years and we have included therefore for recovering the same in the long term. In contrast, Roofs 20, 21, 22 & 24 (pitched and felt covered) are expected to provide adequate service over a ten year period if the timber fascia, verge and soffit cladding is replaced with new or a durable alternative.

The larger pitched roofs to the original school buildings and the later additions are clad in profiled metal / steel sheeting, secured using screws on washers.

The age of these sheets varies but to the original school buildings appear to be about 15 year old. The condition of the profiled metal / steel cladding is generally poor, with all sheets closely inspected exhibiting severe edge corrosion. In addition, the washers used to waterproof the point where screw fixings penetrate the steel profiled sheets are in a poor condition to the older installations.

Edge corrosion is most often caused by a failure to adequately protect and treat cut ends to the profiled metal sheets during installation. The exposed metal then quickly corrodes and extends up the metal sheet, causing the protective coating on the sheet to peel back, exposing further metal. Specialist remedial paint products are now available to treat edge corrosion and prevent further deterioration of the metal sheets and we have included in our costs to undertake the same. An alternative to treatment of the roof sheets would be replacement and this would substantially increase the lifespan of the metal clad pitched roofs and the period before further maintenance is required.

The older profiled metal sheets to the original school buildings have further problems, related to UV degradation of the surface coatings and corrosion of fixings caused by the lack of protective caps. Some corrosion is also evident to the profiled metal sheets where they have been scratched or damaged. In order to extend the life of these older sheets we have included to repaint these profiled metal roof sheets using specialist paint products designed for the purpose and to replace the corroded fixings together with washers and caps. Whilst these repairs will extend the life of the existing metal roof cladding, we recommend the replacement of the existing roof cladding with new profiled metal sheets also be fully considered.

Replacement of the profiled metal sheeting with new will significantly extend the period before further repainting and maintenance of the sheets is required. As a rule of thumb, most modern factory finished profiled metal sheets have a period to first repaint of around 25 – 30 years (dependant on type of protective coating specified, exposure and its colour), whereas the specialist paint products used to recoat metal sheets in-situ have a much reduced period to repaint of in the order of 8-10 years. Published price book rates suggest that replacement (rather than maintenance) of steel roof cladding would increase repair costs by (in the order) of 55%.

Elevations

The elevations to the subject property predominantly consist of masonry walls pointed in a cement based mortar. There are however some elevations which are partially clad in

profiled metal sheets. Many elevations also have timber fascias at high level. Generally, windows and doors to all elevations have been upgraded to modern double glazed powder coated aluminium items. The new windows are in a sound condition although some vandalism damage (scratched glass, impact damaged infill panels and missing aluminium capping) has been sustained. A small number of old single glazed items remain. These old single glazed window units are thermally inefficient and generally in poor decorative order and condition. We have included budget costs to replace these old single glazed windows with modern double glazed alternatives, prioritised as required within the next two years.

In general terms the current condition of the external elevations can be summarised as being reasonably good. Whilst some urgent work is required to maintain the elevations, the cost of this is relatively low compared to other elements of the buildings.

There are some structural crack fractures evident to a number of elevations, which warrant repair works in the coming two years. Most notably there is a heavily corroded lintel above the large double doors to Elevation 008 (Block A001) which is causing cracks to appear in the surrounding brickwork.

Additionally there is a notable crack to the high level parapet on Elevation 021 (Block A001). Both of these issues require attention in the short term in order to maintain the integrity of the surrounding fabric.

Unsurprisingly for a building of this age and type of construction, there is an amount of masonry repointing required in both the short term and longer term.

Some areas of masonry require patch pointing in the coming two years to ensure longevity. Other areas will require completely repointing over the next ten years.

Rainwater goods were generally either UPVC items or coated aluminium items. Some minor repair work was needed to these items. It should also be noted that rainwater goods will require regular maintenance to ensure that any blockages and obstructions are removed.

Timber fascias (and soffits) to the elevations were found generally to be very weathered and generally in a poor decorative order. Paintwork to timber is in urgent need of re-application in order to prevent the widespread onset of timber decay. There is already a fair amount of timber decay evident to the fascias and timber components on a number of elevations as a result of the poor decorative order of the exterior elevations. The budget costs within this report include to replace small areas of decayed or defective timber with new timber on a piecemeal basis. However, an alternative would be to replace all fascias and soffits with low maintenance UPVC items.

Inevitably replacement of timber components with low maintenance alternatives such as UPVC will increase the initial repair costs. We would expect such UPVC items to be serviceable for in the region of 20 years plus and should therefore prove to be more cost effective over the long term than (repaired) timber components which would require a regular painting regime to mitigate against further decay occurring.

Internal Fabric

Many internal areas of the school are in reasonable condition. We did find throughout our inspection a number of fire doors which are missing self closers, do not shut correctly or are incorrectly rated. In the event the buildings are re-occupied, either in part or fully the physical arrangements to maintain protected routes to safety will need to be addressed. For example, whilst an area of the school may be sublet to an individual user, protected routes of escape may need to be maintained through adjacent areas of the school which are outside of that user's demise.

Over a ten year period, we would expect two internal decoration cycles in a school setting. We have therefore assessed the costs of internal decoration and prioritised on the basis of current condition. The second decoration cycle would of course be long term

(Years 6-10) and our estimated costs therefore are duplicated under this priority heading. Our inspection identified a substantial number of ceilings damaged by water ingress and or deterioration as a result of elevated humidity levels given the restricted amount of heating in the now vacant buildings. Many of the water ingress issues are believed to be as a result of leakage through the roof coverings. We have assessed the necessity to repair and replace ceilings again based on condition, with the majority of budget expenditure being either Priority 1 (urgent) or Priority 2 (Essential within 2 years). Our internal inspection did identify a substantial number of floor coverings either in a potentially dangerous condition (predominately trip hazards) or marked, stained and dirty. Our budget costs reflect these findings, with around £22,000 exc. VAT required for urgent safety related works and a further (circa) £150,000 to replace floor coverings whose replacement is essential within a two year period (assuming the area is subsequently occupied).

Our budget costs assume that over a ten year period (and the continuing use of the buildings as an educational premises) that all floor coverings within the buildings will require periodic replacement. Where floor coverings have not been recorded as needing replacement due to their condition in the next five years (priorities 1 -3) we have provided costs for their replacement in the long term (Years 6 – 10). The total budget cost for floor finish replacement is circa £375,000 exc. VAT over this ten year period.

Mechanical and Electrical Services

A visual condition appraisal report was prepared by Beverley Clifton Morris Ltd (“BCM”) of Portland Tower, Manchester.

BCM identify several issues that they consider impact upon the immediate health and safety of building occupants. These issues concern Legionella, asbestos and defects resulting from the decommissioning of the buildings and removal of apparatus.

The legionella report prepared by H2O identifies contamination with dirt of two cold water tanks within the sports centre. This accommodation remains in use and BCM consider that there is a serious risk to public health. Immediate priority one works are required to mitigate this risk. Elsewhere, cold water storage tanks in the main school buildings and technology block were also found to be severely contaminated with dirt, although the risk from aerosols is considered by BCM to be much lower. BCM recommend initial cleaning be undertaken and a legionella monitoring procedure employed to control future risk of legionella. BCM estimate that site wide the initial Priority 1 cost of decontamination and associated works would be in the order of £40,000.00 (exc. VAT). Longer term BCM suggest that reconfiguration and modification of the water installations should be considered.

Suspected Asbestos considered by BCM to be potentially dangerous due to its condition was identified to the insulative casing surrounding a large indirect calorifier with the front plant room and a loose gasket identified to a boiler front within the rear plant room. These materials have not been tested by BCM for asbestos content and reference should be made to the asbestos surveys recently commissioned by Calderdale for further information.

BCM consider that the partial removal of building services from the school has left numerous classrooms in a potentially hazardous state. The detailed inspection at Appendix I of this report identifies the locations where partial removal of services has left the accommodation in a potentially dangerous state.

BCM estimate priority one repairs to make safe final sub circuit wiring and switch grids will cost in the order of £6,000.00 (exc. VAT) BCM have also expressed concern that the fire alarm to the building appears not to be connected / interlocked to the emergency doors, which is a health and safety issue as this may impede emergency exit routes during activation of the alarm.

In addition to normal periodic testing of the mechanical and electrical installations, BCM are of the opinion that comprehensive operation and safety documentation will be required for the safe future operation and maintenance of the buildings. They have found that the documentation on site is currently incomplete. They suggest a team will need to be employed to review and compile the same. Further, they recommend that invasive investigations and tests are carried out to check the operation of the mechanical and electrical installations. This would be a substantial task, and which in the opinion of BCM may result in substantial upgrading of the M&E services.

Detailed Inspection

For each significant element of the building fabric our report briefly describes specification, identifies its overall condition and action required to remedy each want of repair identified. This is recorded on a room by room basis internally, and for each elevation and roof area denoted on the plans supplied by CMBC externally.

Our budget costs for the action we are of the opinion is required are included under the appropriate Priority rating. For example, a budget cost inserted within the Priority 3 column indicates that remedial works / action as described is desirable within the period of 3 - 5 years.

Priority 1 represents urgent/legislative work

Priority 2 – essential works within 2 years

Priority 3 – desirable works 3-5 years

Priority 4 – long term works 6 -10 years

Element	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4	Total
Roofs	£38,031	£182,146	£32,772	£164,557	£417,505
External Walls, Windows and Doors	£23,687	£105,322	£6,677	£10,938	£146,625
Ceilings	£50,139	£64,584	£14,829	£20,606	£150,159
Internal Walls	£50,164	£107,397	£68,477	£141,718	£367,756
Floors	£21,683	£151,346	£100,243	£101,653	£374,925
Fixtures and Fittings	£9,960	£12,286	£1,899	£1,000	£25,145
Internal Doors	£31,385	£22,268	£10,933	£14,769	£79,354
Internal Window Repairs	£7,593	£23,695	£2,871	£80	£34,239
Miscellaneous	£8,598	£6,130	£1,306	£896	£16,930
Mechanical Services	£86,000	£76,000	£76,000	£76,000	£383,000
Electrical Services	£196,000	£45,000	£45,000	£62,000	£348,000
GRAND TOTALS:	£523,240	£796,174	£361,008	£663,216	£2,343,638

Further copies and background information can be obtained from the Scrutiny Support Office, Westgate House, Westgate, Halifax HX1 1PS.
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