

WIGAN BOROUGH RETAIL AND LEISURE STUDY 2007 TO 2027 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MAY 2007



 **Wigan Council**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

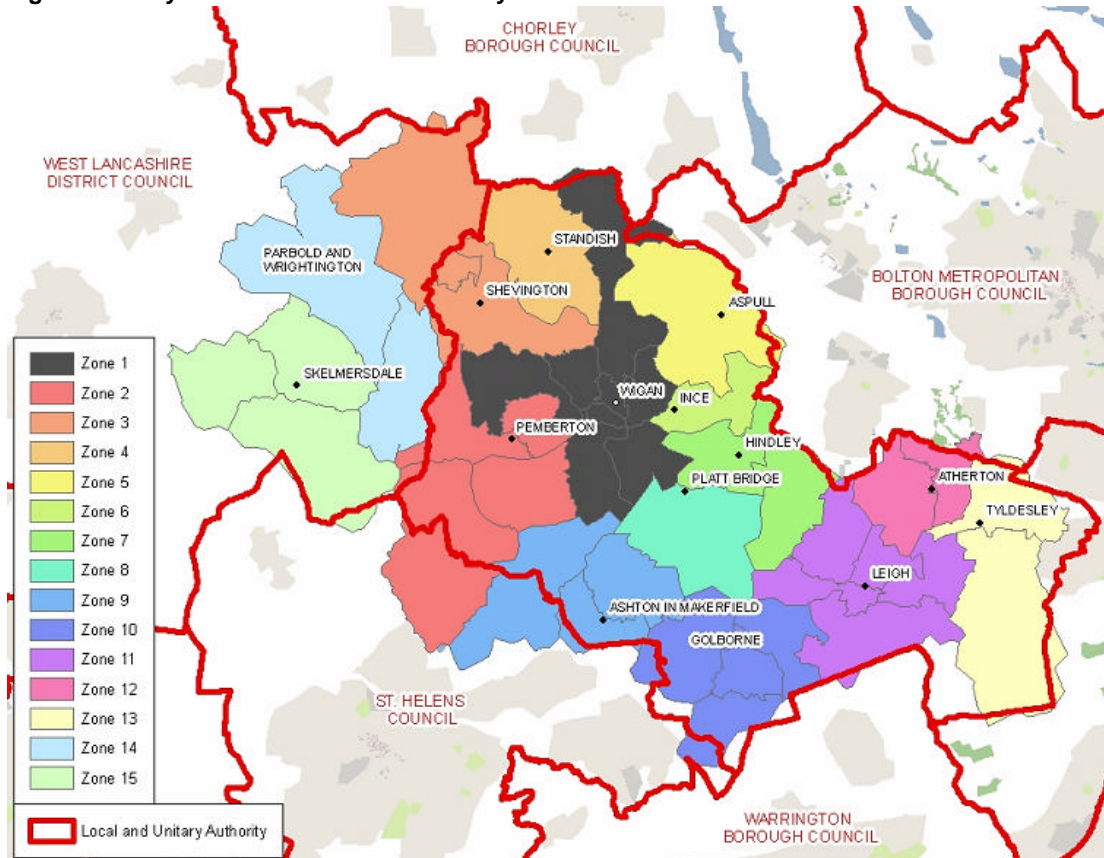
Scope and Purpose

1. Wigan Council commissioned White Young Green Planning and Design in November 2006, to undertake a study of the future shopping and leisure needs and retail capacity of the Borough and to inform the preparation of its Local Development Framework.
2. The purposes of the Study are:
 - to provide an overview of current retail trends;
 - to assess the retail catchment area and value of expenditure attracted to the main centres within the Borough – the performance of centres;
 - to assess the attraction of centres in the retail and leisure sectors;
 - to provide PPS6-compliant vitality and viability analyses of the main centres in the Borough;
 - to provide an overview of the role and function of local centres;
 - to provide a commercial market overview and assess commercial demand; to provide a framework for assessing future planning applications;
 - to define LDF Monitoring Indicators; and
 - to provide policy advice.
3. The principal centres in the Borough are Wigan and Leigh. Other defined town centres which are part of this Study are; Ashton in Makerfield, Atherton, Golborne, Hindley, Pemberton, Standish and Tyldesley.
4. The Study considers the quantitative and qualitative need for additional retail floorspace and commercial leisure provision up to 2027 and where 'capacity' for additional retail floorspace and leisure provision should be accommodated.

Defined Study Area

5. The defined Study Area (Figure 1, overleaf) is based upon post code sectors and comprised predominantly the Borough of Wigan, but partly extending into the neighbouring authorities of St Helens and West Lancashire. The Study Area is based upon that adopted for the Wigan Retail Study 2001/2002, although two additional survey zones are included to cover the Skelmersdale, Parbold and Wrightington areas.
6. The population of the defined Study Area is approximately 367,546 (2006 estimate) and generates £564.7m of convenience goods expenditure and £1,064.3m of comparison goods expenditure. This expenditure is forecast to increase to £683.1m and £2,295.9m respectively by 2027, taking into account population change and forecast retail expenditure growth. Accordingly, it is anticipated that the greatest growth in expenditure is for comparison goods, with only a modest increase forecast on convenience goods spending.

Figure 1: Study Area and Household Survey Zones



Market Research

7. A key element of this study is to obtain a detailed understanding of the extent of the catchment of the main centres within Wigan Borough and shopping patterns that currently exist within it. This is achieved by four strands of original market research, including:

- **A Household Telephone Survey** – which interviewed over 1,950 households within a defined study area;
- **A Town Centre Traders Survey** – distributed to all businesses within the nine town centres of Ashton in Makerfield, Atherton, Golborne, Hindley, Leigh, Pemberton, Standish, Tyldesley and Wigan;
- **An In-street Visitors Survey** – (629 visitors in total) - distributed between the nine town centres as follows: Ashton-in-Makerfield – 60 surveys, Atherton – 61 surveys, Hindley – 60 surveys, Golborne – 61 surveys, Pemberton – 60 surveys, Standish – 60 surveys, Tyldesley – 62 surveys, Leigh – 105 surveys and Wigan – 100 surveys; and
- **Pedestrian counts** – In each of the nine town centres.

Vitality and Viability of Existing Centres

8. In accordance with PPS6 the Study provides an assessment of the 'health' of the main centres within the Borough.
9. **Wigan** is the largest town centre in the Borough comprising 490 commercial units and 113,629 sq m of commercial floorspace. There is a high proportion of comparison goods floorspace, which is strengthened further by the opening of the Grand Arcade (March 2007); the proportion of convenience floorspace is below the national average. The vacancy rate in Wigan is above the

national average significantly suggesting fragility, although the majority are clustered in the Marketgate shopping centre.

10. There are 48 requirements for representation (38,633 sq m). In recent years Zone A (prime) rents in Wigan have increased and yields have reduced. These factors suggesting Wigan is generally a healthy centre. It is not anticipated that the current vacancy rate will be sustained in the long term.
11. **Leigh** comprises 308 commercial units (64,291 sq m). In common with Wigan, the proportion of convenience floorspace is below the national average, as is the proportion of comparison floorspace. The proportion of both vacant units and vacant floorspace is below the national average.
12. There are 16 requirements for representation (9,781 sq m). In recent years, rental levels have increased but yields have changed little; the business survey recorded 50% of businesses considering that trading performance had either remained static or declined since trading commenced. Although Leigh performs an important role within the Borough there are a number of indicators suggesting that the centre could become weaker and fragile in the future, particularly with the Grand Arcade scheme opening in Wigan Town Centre.
13. **Ashton in Makerfield** comprises 184 commercial units (21,860 sq m). The centre has a strong convenience goods sector, with the proportion of floorspace above the national average. The proportion of comparison floorspace and units is below the national average as is the proportion of floorspace that is vacant. A low demand for representation was recorded.
14. **Atherton** comprises 167 commercial units (24,117 sq m). The proportion of floorspace in convenience retail use is above the national average. The comparison offer is poor, with the proportion of floorspace below the national average. The proportion of units vacant (18%) is above the national average, whereas the proportion of floorspace vacant (5%) is below it. The vacancy

analysis suggests that Atherton has a high number of small units vacant. Atherton performs an important role in local shopping needs role.

15. **Golborne** has only 24 commercial units (6,556 sq m). Retail services are well represented but all other categories of retail goods and services are below the national average. The proportion of units vacant (34.8%) and floorspace vacant (37.6%) is significantly above the national average. Given this high level of vacancies, it is considered that the centre faces an uncertain future in its current form.
16. **Hindley** comprises 136 commercial units (21,842 sq m). The proportion of convenience retail floorspace is high, due to a large format Tesco store which dominates retailing in the town. The proportion of comparison floorspace is below the national average significantly. Hindley has high proportions of both units and floorspace vacant. The Tesco store is the main attractor, but there appears to be limited spin off benefits to the rest of the town, which is struggling.
17. **Pemberton** comprises 91 commercial units (9,884 sq m). The proportions of convenience and comparison floorspace are below national averages. The retail service, leisure service and financial and business service sectors all perform well. The proportion of vacancies is comparable to the national average. Pemberton has a varied and diverse retail offer dominated by independents. It performs an important role meeting local needs.
18. **Standish** comprises 100 commercial units (8,094 sq m). Retailing is dominated by a Somerfield supermarket; the proportion of convenience floorspace is significantly higher than the national average. Standish also has a strong service sector and the proportion of retail service, leisure service and financial and business service floorspace are all above the national average. It is considered that Standish is a vital and viable centre.
19. **Tyldesley** has 116 commercial units (13,628 sq m). The centre has a strong convenience goods offer. The proportion of comparison floorspace is below

the national average. The proportion of vacant units and floorspace is significantly above the national average, suggesting that the centre is vulnerable.

Wigan Borough's Market Share Catchment

20. The convenience goods market share of the Borough is 82% of expenditure generated in the Study Area; the Borough performs strongly in retaining convenience goods spending. 9% of convenience goods spending is directed to West Lancashire
21. The comparison goods market share of the Borough is 56% of expenditure generated in the Study Area. The market share in the comparison goods sector is less than that achieved in the convenience goods sector, but this understandable given the strength and proximity of competing destinations including Bolton, Manchester and the Trafford Centre.

TABLE 1: MARKET SHARE OF WIGAN BOROUGH (2007)

	Market Share	Expenditure Retained by Wigan (£m)				
		2007	2012	2017	2022	2027
Convenience						
Main	82%	371.3	390.8	410.4	429.8	448.1
Top-up	82%	92.7	97.7	102.6	107.4	112.0
Sub-total	82%	464.0	488.5	513.0	537.2	560.1
Comparison						
Clothing, shoes, etc.	50.3%	132.1	159.9	193.6	233.7	280.8
Electrical	67.6%	91.5	113.9	141.9	176.3	218.0
Furniture	57.0%	69.2	86.1	107.2	133.2	164.8
DIY	73.3%	60.0	69.2	79.7	91.7	105.0
Other	52.9%	245.1	296.2	358.5	432.7	519.9
Sub-total	56.2%	597.9	725.3	880.9	1,067.6	1,288.5
TOTAL	65.2%	1,061.9	1,213.8	1,393.8	1,604.8	1,848.6

Source: Wigan Shopper Survey (2006) and WYG analysis and Experian

22. Assuming a constant market share, convenience goods spending in the Borough is set to increase by £96.1m between 2007 and 2027. At constant market share, comparison goods spending in the Borough would increase of by £690.6m between 2007 and 2027. In this regard, it should be born in mind that the Grand Arcade is likely to lead to an increase in the market share of the Borough.

Retail Hierarchy

23. Table 2 sets out the Retail Hierarchy in the Borough.

TABLE 2: RETAIL HIERARCHY

DESTINATION	RANK			TURNOVER CONVENIENCE (£m)	TURNOVER COMPARISON (£m)	TOTAL TURNOVER (£m)	MARKET SHARE (%)
	2006	2001	2001- 2006				
Wigan	1	1	-	29.0	253.7	282.7	17.4
Robin Park	2	2	-	75.1	129.9	205.0	12.6
Leigh	3	3	-	13.8	110.5	124.3	7.6
Atherton	4	4	-	31.4	9.7	41.1	2.5
Hindley	5	5	-	24.2	8.4	32.6	2.0
Ashton-in-Makerfield	6	6	-	9.1	9.9	19.0	1.2
Golborne	7	10	+3	3.2	7.0	10.2	0.6
Standish	8	8	-	8.6	1.6	10.2	0.6
Pemberton	9	9	-	4.4	5.2	9.6	0.6
Tyldesley	10	7	-3	3.4	2.5	5.9	0.4
TOTAL	-	-	-	202.2	538.4	740.6	45.5

Retail Capacity Assessment

24. Table 3 summarises the quantitative need for additional food retail floorspace. Quantitative need beyond 2012 should be viewed with caution and is beyond the time frame set out by PPS6 (2005) 'Planning for Town Centres', which advises planning for new retail floorspace over a five year period.

TABLE 3: QUANTITATIVE FOOD FLOORSPACE NEED (INCLUDING GROWTH PRO-RATA TO THE CURRENT MARKET SHARE OF OUT OF CENTRE FLOORSPACE)

	2012	2017	2022	2027
	Sq. m (net)	Sq. m (net)	Sq. m (net)	Sq. m (net)
Wigan	1,200-2,400	2,350-4,700	3,490-6,980	4,570-9,140
Leigh	540-1,080	1,070-2,140	1,580-3,160	2,070-4,140
Ashton in Makerfield	60-120	110-220	170-340	220-440
Atherton	170-340	340-680	510-1,020	670-1,340
Golborne	210-420	410-820	620-1,240	800-1,600
Hindley	170-340	330-660	490-980	640-1,280
Pemberton	20-40	50-100	70-140	90-180
Standish	50-100	90-180	140-280	180-360
Tyldesley	50-100	110-220	160-320	210-420

Average Sales Density Food – Assumed to be £5,000/sq. m and £10,000/sq. m

25. Table 4 factors-in 'overtrading' of existing convenience retail floorspace in the main centres to illustrate the combined qualitative and quantitative need for additional convenience retail floorspace.

TABLE 4: QUANTITATIVE FOOD FLOORSPACE CAPACITY (INCLUDING GROWTH PRO-RATA TO THE CURRENT MARKET SHARE OF OUT OF CENTRE FLOORSPACE)

	2007	2012	2017	2022	2027
	Sq. m (net)	Sq. m (net)	Sq. m (net)	Sq. m (net)	Sq. m (net)
Wigan	-	500-1,000	1,650-3,300	2,800-5,600	3,870-7,740
Leigh	450-900	990-1,980	1,510-3,020	2,030-4,060	2,520-5,040
Ashton in Makerfield	-	-	-	-	-
Atherton	820-1,640	990-1,980	1,160-2,320	1,330-2,660	1,490-2,980
Golborne	1,000-2,000	1,210-2,420	1,410-2,820	1,620-3,240	1,800-3,600
Hindley	-	-	-	-	-
Pemberton	-	10-20	30-60	60-120	80-160
Standish	90-180	140-280	180-360	230-460	270-540
Tyldesley	-	-	-	-	-

Average Sales Density Food – Assumed to be £5,000 sq. m and £10,000/sq. m

26. Table 5 summarises the quantitative need for additional non-food retail floorspace. Quantitative need beyond 2012 should be viewed with caution and is beyond the time frame set out by PPS6 (2005) 'Planning for Town Centres', which advises planning for new retail floorspace over a five year period.

TABLE 5: QUANTITATIVE NON-FOOD FLOORSPACE NEED (INCLUDING GROWTH PRO-RATA TO THE CURRENT MARKET SHARE OF OUT OF CENTRE FLOORSPACE)

	2012	2017	2022	2027
	Sq. m (net)	Sq. m (net)	Sq. m (net)	Sq. m (net)
Wigan	10,840-15,486	24,960-35,657	42,680-60,970	64,420-92,029
Leigh	4,040-5,771	9,300-13,286	15,920-22,743	24,040-34,343
Ashton in Makerfield	280-400	640-914	1,100-1,571	1,660-2,371
Atherton	260-371	620-886	1,040-1,486	1,580-2,257
Golborne	200-286	480-686	820-1,171	1,240-1,771
Hindley	220-314	520-742	900-1,286	1,360-1,943
Pemberton	140-200	320-457	460-800	840-1,200
Standish	40-57	100-143	160-229	260-371
Tyldesley	160-229	360-514	600-857	920-1,314

Average Sales Density Non Food – Assumed to be £5,000/sq. m

*factors in a 1.5% floorspace efficiency for town centre floorspace

Leisure Capacity

27. There is currently one cinema in the Borough; the 11-screen Empire Cinema located at Robin Park. The Borough has two ten-pin bowling alleys: Leigh Superbowl, Windermere Road in Leigh (14 lanes); and AMF Bowling, Wallgate, Wigan (28 lanes). There are three large format bingo halls: Gala Bingo Club, Crompton Street, Wigan; Gala Bingo Club, Robin Park; and BJ's Luxury Bingo, Ellesmere Street, Leigh. 33 registered health and fitness clubs of various sizes were identified in the Borough.

28. 64% of Study Area residents partake indoor sports (including health and fitness) activity. Of these, 21% visit Wigan, 16% visit Robin Park and 10% visit Leigh; 28% of Study Area residents use indoor sports facilities outside of the Borough.
29. 77% of residents visit the cinema. 22% use facilities in Wigan Town Centre, with the Borough overall retaining 39% of cinema trips. 61% of residents visit cinemas outside the Borough, such as those in Manchester and Bolton.
30. Only 14% of residents within the Study Area participate in bingo. The most popular destinations are: Wigan (28%); Leigh (22%); and Robin Park (10%). 26% of respondents visit bingo facilities outside of the Borough.
31. Almost half (49%) of respondents in the Study Area indicated that they visited public houses, bars and clubs during the evening. Overall, of those respondents who participate in this activity, the Borough retains 68% of trips for nightlife resulting in approximately a third (32%) of respondents using facilities outside the Borough. Within Wigan the most popular destinations for nightlife were identified to be: Wigan (31%); and Leigh (13%).
32. For the leisure capacity assessment, the Study Area is divided into a West Area and an East Area. The East Area is identified to have capacity for seven additional cinema screens; there is an outstanding commitment in Leigh for a cinema although no formal proposals have been submitted to the Council. The West Area has capacity for four screens, over and above the existing facility at Robin Park.
33. There is capacity for up to five bingo halls within the Study Area. However, it is important to note that due to the forthcoming smoking ban, major bingo operators are not currently seeking to expand their operation until the full affect of the smoking ban has been realised.
34. Projecting participation rates forward to 2027 indicates that there is no identified need for additional tenpin bowling facilities within the Borough.

35. The assessment indicates that up to four additional health and fitness clubs can currently be accommodated within the Borough. Capacity is identified for two in the East Area and two in the West Area. This capacity is set to remain constant over the period to 2027.

Advice

36. **Wigan** - There is no demonstrable need or capacity for new convenience retail floorspace. There is considerable need for new comparison retail floorspace. The extent of the comparison retail capacity means that comprehensive development/ redevelopment is required to meet the floorspace requirement. A town centre expansion area/areas will need to be planned for. Retail development in Wigan over the periods to 2012 and 2017 should concentrate on the Wigan Wallgate area, if opportunities for redevelopment come forward, and the 'Pier Quarter'. In the leisure sector, there is an identified need for additional Bingo hall provision across that Borough and a need for an additional health and fitness club in the west of the Borough, which would be located most appropriately in Wigan.
37. **Leigh** - Leigh needs to remain competitive with the higher order centres, particularly in light of major town centre schemes in the centres with which Leigh competes. It is important that opportunities are identified through the LDF process to meet the need identified, particularly in the convenience retail sector, and to bolster the role and profile of Leigh as a shopping destination. Although successful relatively in both the convenience and comparison retail sectors, Leigh is fragile and has the potential to spiral into a decline in the face of increased competition. It will be important to balance the limited quantitative need with the qualitative need for improvements. Leigh is the appropriate town to redress the deficiency in cinema provision in the east of the Borough. There is a demonstrable need for a multi-screen cinema. There is a need for two additional health and fitness clubs in the east of the Borough, and this need to likely to be met by current proposals in Leigh.

38. **Ashton in Makerfield** - There is a qualitative need to redress the current under-provision of foodstores in this area of the Borough and if no site is available in Ashton in Makerfield, then the LDF should consider opportunities for sites in other centres within this area. The town fairs better marginally as a comparison retail shopping destination, but is fragile and needs improving. There is a commitment for 2,191 sq. m (net) of comparison goods retail floorspace at York Street. The commitment meets the need for additional floorspace in Ashton in Makerfield to 2017, if it comes forward. If the York Street scheme does not come forward, then the LDF should be looking to make provision for a fairly sizable extension of comparison retail activity in the town.
39. **Atherton** - It is important for Atherton to preserve and enhance its role as a convenience shopping destination. The town is also a successful comparison retail destination and although the need for additional floorspace is limited, it will be important for the LDF to ensure that sites are available to meet this need. If the need, in both the convenience and comparison retail sectors is not met in Atherton, then the centre will decline and it will fall behind other destinations in the local area and elsewhere in the Borough. Given the identified need for additional convenience and comparison retail floorspace, the LDF should be looking to bring forward a site/sites for mixed convenience and comparison retail development.
40. **Golborne** - Convenience retail floorspace is overtrading considerably and there is an immediate need for a medium-sized foodstore. The LDF should consider options for addressing this need, looking first at town centre sites within Golborne and then other sites in the town's hinterland if a central site in Golborne is not available. The town is less successful as a comparison retail destination, but there is a capacity for additional comparison retail floorspace identified. It is important that the capacity for both convenience and comparison goods floorspace is met, to maintain Golborne's position in the hierarchy and keep the town competitive against other retail destinations. The comparison retail capacity could be met either through in-fill amongst the

existing commercial centre or through a non-food offer in any foodstore that might be forthcoming.

41. **Hindley** - There is a modest capacity for additional comparison retail floorspace in the short term, which becomes more significant in the medium and long term. Hindley is a fragile centre and the LDF should plan for some considered expansion, at least in the comparison retail centre, to increase retail activity and achieve an element of modernisation in the retail environment and retail offer. Hindley needs to compete with the other smaller town centres in the area and elsewhere in the Borough.
42. **Pemberton** - There is limited capacity for additional convenience retail floorspace and no requirement to identify a sites meet the assessed need for additional convenience retail provision. Similarly, there is modest capacity in the comparison retail sector although this is slightly more pronounced than the need in the convenience retail sector. The objective for Pemberton should be to continue to meet local shopping needs, and to perform its local shopping role as ancillary to the higher order centres in the Borough. Pemberton should not look to compete with other higher order centres, but develop its complementary role.
43. **Standish** - The objective of the LDF should be to protect the local shopping role that Standish performs. There is no requirement to allocate sites for either comparison or convenience retail development or leisure development.
44. **Tyldesley** - There is a modest requirement to plan for additional comparison retail floorspace. The objective of the LDF should be to improve its overall health and performance as a centre and bolster the town's position in the local hierarchy. Action needs to be taken to give Tyldesley more of a competitive edge when it is trading against other centres that draw trade from the same local area. There is some justification for improving the centre by allocating sites for retail development and seeking to encourage development. The LDF should look to determine how the poor performance of Tyldesley can be reversed.