

CD 10



Core Proof of Evidence

Employment

Wigan Replacement Unitary Development Plan

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1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Core Proof of Evidence sets out the background to the Council's approach to employment policies in the Replacement Unitary Development Plan (UDP). It has two main strands: the Policy Context and the Local Context. From these a number of key issues and requirements can be identified that need to be addressed, in part through the land use planning process guided by the Replacement Wigan UDP.
- 1.1.2 At First Deposit there were 121 objections to the Employment Policy Chapter, 23 of which have been withdrawn to date as a result of changes made at Revised Deposit. There were 1,340 objections to the Employment Policy Chapter at Revised Deposit. The majority of all of the objections received have been to the policies that safeguard land and buildings for employment uses and/or allocate new employment sites (Policies EM1, EM1A and EM1B).
- 1.1.3 This Core Proof provides supporting evidence for the Council's detailed Proofs of Evidence in response to objections to the employment policies in the Plan. It is one of 3 Core Proofs of Evidence - the others being for Housing Policy (**Core Document CD 9**) and the A5225 Wigan and Hindley Bypass (**Core Document CD11**) - that should be read as a whole.

2 The Policy Context

2.1.1 The Employment Policies Chapter of the Draft Replacement UDP has been prepared in the context of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) produced by Government, specifically: PPG1, PPG3, PPG4, PPG12, PPG13, PPG23 and PPG24; Regional Planning Guidance for the North West (RPG13); the Regional Economic Strategy produced by the Northwest Development Agency; and the Greater Manchester Strategy. In addition, the Government has now embarked on a process of replacing PPGs with Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) of which, to date, draft PPS1 is material to this Core Proof.

2.2 Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 1: General Policies and Principals (February 1997)

2.2.1 PPG1 states (paragraphs 21) that it is important that the locational needs of businesses are taken into account in the preparation of development plans. In defining suitable locations for development, plan policies should take into account:

- the contribution to regenerating existing urban areas;
- access to customers;
- access to raw materials and suppliers;
- links with other businesses and the special needs of small businesses;
- the workforce catchment area;
- the availability of adequate infrastructure; and
- various transport considerations including the particular needs of the freight industry.

2.2.2 In continuation (paragraph 22), it states that development plans should also:

- encourage new enterprise and investment by setting out clear land-use policies for industrial and commercial development;
- provide for new development which will be consistent with transport policy; and
- ensure that new development is compatible with the objectives of sustainable development including the re-use of previously developed land.

2.3 Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 3: Housing (March 2000)

2.3.1 PPG3 states (paragraph 42) that local planning authorities should review all of their non-housing allocations when reviewing their development plan, and consider whether some of this land might better be used for housing or mixed use developments.

2.4 Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 4: Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms (November 1992)

- 2.4.1 PPG4 provides guidance on a range of issues relating to industrial and commercial development and small firms. The guidance emphasises the important role of the planning system in integrating environmental and economic objectives. In particular, development plans are seen to provide the policy framework for weighing the importance of industrial and commercial development against that of monitoring and improving environmental quality.
- 2.4.2 Paragraph 3 states that development plans should provide industrial and commercial developers and local communities with greater certainty about the types of development that will or will not be permitted in a given location.
- 2.4.3 Paragraph 5 states that planning authorities should ensure that their development plans contain clear policies for different types of industrial and commercial development and positive policies to provide for the needs of small businesses.
- 2.4.4 Paragraph 6 states that local authorities should be realistic in their assessment of the needs of business and should aim to ensure that sufficient land which is readily capable of development and well served by infrastructure and a variety of sites to meet differing needs are available.
- 2.4.5 Paragraph 8 goes on to state that planning authorities are able to channel different types of business development into particular locations.
- 2.4.6 Paragraph 10 states that the locational demands of businesses are a key input to the preparation of development plans. Development plan policies must take account of these needs and at the same time seek to achieve wider objectives in the public interest. It goes on to state that development plans offer the opportunity, amongst others, to encourage new development in locations which minimise the length and number of trips, especially by motor vehicle, encourage new development in locations that can be served by more energy efficient modes of transport and discourage new development where it would be likely to add unacceptably to congestion.

2.5 Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 12: Development Plans (December 1999)

- 2.5.1 PPG12 states (paragraph 4.9) that in preparing development plans, local authorities should take account of the need to revitalise and broaden the local economy, the need to stimulate employment opportunities, and the importance of encouraging industrial and commercial development, particularly in the growing knowledge driven sector. They should look to provide a range of suitable sites in their plans for industrial and commercial development, which take account of the needs of existing and future businesses.

2.5.2 Paragraph 4.10 identifies economic considerations that may be relevant to land use policies in development plans, including regional economic strategies prepared by Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and regeneration initiatives, including programmes and projects funded through RDA regeneration programmes, the Single Regeneration Budget and European Structural Funds.

2.6 Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 13: Transport (March 2001)

2.6.1 PPG13 states (paragraph 19) that it is important for social inclusion to ensure that jobs are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling.

2.6.2 Paragraph 45 states that local authorities should locate development generating substantial freight movements, such as distribution and warehousing, away from congested central areas and residential areas, and ensure adequate access to trunk roads.

2.7 Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 23: Planning and Pollution Control (February 1997)

2.7.1 PPG23 states (paragraph 2.12) that development plans should make realistic provision for the types of industry or facility which may be detrimental to amenity or conservation interests. It is important that criteria should not be drawn up to exclude all provision in plans for potentially polluting development projects or to prohibit all applications to set them up.

2.8 Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 24: Planning and Noise (September 1994)

2.8.1 PPG24 (paragraph 1) sets out how the planning system can be used to minimise the adverse impact of noise, without placing unreasonable restrictions on development or adding unduly to the costs and administrative burdens of business. Plans should contain policies designed to keep noise sensitive development apart from noisy developments (paragraph 5).

2.8.2 Paragraph 10, which is concerned specifically with development control, notes that much of the development that is necessary for the creation of jobs will generate noise. It states that the planning system should not place unjustifiable obstacles in the way of such development but must ensure that development does not cause an unacceptable degree of disturbance.

2.9 Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1: Creating Sustainable Communities (February 2004)

2.9.1 Draft PPS1 sets out the Government's vision for planning built around three themes: sustainable development; spatial planning and community involvement in planning. It is fundamentally about the new planning system being introduced through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2.9.2 However, with regard to employment issues, it states (paragraph 1.15) that planning authorities should have regard to the importance of encouraging industrial, commercial and retail development if the economy is to prosper and provide for improved productivity, choice and competition, particularly when technological and other requirements of modern business are changing so rapidly.

2.9.3 It is also concerned that planning policies should give high priority to ensuring access for all to jobs (paragraph 1.22).

2.10 RPG 13 - Regional Planning Guidance for the North West (March 2003)

2.10.1 RPG13 was prepared by the North West Regional Assembly and revised by the Secretary of State following a Public Examination. Its main purpose is to provide a regional spatial strategy within which local authority development plans can be prepared. It contains a number of policies that are directly relevant to the Employment Policies Chapter of the Replacement UDP.

2.10.2 Policy DP1 requires economy in the use of land and buildings. Development plans should adopt a sequential approach to meeting development needs. This means that preference should be for the re-use of buildings and infrastructure; followed by the re-use of previously developed land; and then previously undeveloped land that is not important open space, is well located in relation to other development and infrastructure and is, or can be made, accessible by public transport walking or cycling.

2.10.3 Policy DP4 requires economic growth and competitiveness, with social progress for all.

2.10.4 Policy SD1 identifies Wigan Borough as being part of the North West Metropolitan Area, within which a significant proportion of the development and urban renaissance resources of the Region should be focused. Priority will be given to development which will enhance the overall quality of life in the North West Metropolitan Area where there are social, economic and environmental problems.

2.10.5 Policy EC1 states that the Region's economy should be strengthened by an increasing focus on the sectoral priorities identified in the Regional Economic Strategy, namely established sectors including mechanical and engineering industries and food and drink; and growth sectors including knowledge-based industries and tourism.

2.10.6 Policy EC2 seeks to ensure that development plans are able to meet the changing needs of manufacturing industry.

2.10.7 Policy EC3 supports the development of knowledge-based industries in accordance with Policies DP1 and SD1.

- 2.10.8 Policy EC4 promotes the potential of business clusters for sustainable growth.
- 2.10.9 Policy EC5 states that development plans should identify regional investment sites for strategic business investment which supports the Region's sectoral priorities. Such sites should support urban renaissance; the objectives of Policy EC6; areas of economic assistance; sectoral priorities and Policies DP1 and SD1.
- 2.10.10 Policy EC6 commits local authorities and other agencies to co-ordinate their efforts coherently in order to enhance the attractiveness to potential investment of locations in more needy areas, especially within the North West Metropolitan Area.
- 2.10.11 Policy EC9 identifies that tourism has the potential to be a major economic driver within the North West, including within the North West Metropolitan Area. The emphasis should be on maintaining and adding quality rather than mere quantity. Development plans should facilitate the provision of employment opportunities through tourism.
- 2.10.12 Policy UR1 seeks a renaissance of the Region's urban areas.
- 2.10.13 Policy UR5 states that the suitability of existing employment land commitments should be assessed in the light of whether:
- they provide for strategic sectoral investment;
 - they are commercially viable and attractive for employment;
 - development would be more environmentally and socially sustainable in alternative locations;
 - redesignation for other uses is consistent with the retention of a balanced and appropriate mix of uses within settlements;
 - they provide a focus and support for urban renaissance by regenerating and consolidating existing urban areas through the promotion of mixed use, efficient use of land and car parking provision.
- 2.10.14 It requires local planning authorities to ensure that land allocations in development plans provide for development to meet identified needs only, and to minimise the amount of take-up of additional greenfield land for development.

2.11 Regional Economic Strategy (Core Document CD 3)

- 2.11.1 The Regional Economic Strategy prepared by the Northwest Development Agency (NWDA) was revised in 2003. It now contains 10 strategic objectives under 5 headings:

Business Development:

1. Exploit the growth potential of business sectors.
2. Improve the competitiveness and productivity of business.
3. Develop and exploit the region's knowledge base.

Regeneration:

4. Deliver urban renaissance.
5. Deliver rural renaissance.
6. Secure economic inclusion.

Skills and Employment:

7. Develop and maintain a healthy labour market.

Infrastructure:

8. Develop the strategic transport, communications and economic infrastructure;
9. Ensure the availability of a balanced portfolio of employment sites.

Image:

10. Develop and market the region's image.

2.11.2 In October 2003 the NWDA produced a Policy Statement (**Core Document CD 4**) on the outcome of the Mersey Belt Study that had been published in May 2002. The Agency resolved to note the special importance of sites at Wigan South Central as strategic opportunities for encouraging the development of knowledge based industry in the North West Metropolitan Area that is identified in Regional Planning Guidance. Working alongside the local authority, it also endorsed the use of its powers and resources (including land assembly and, if necessary, compulsory purchase) to bring about their successful regeneration and development.

2.12 The Greater Manchester Strategy (Core Document CD 5)

2.12.1 'Sharing the Vision: A Strategy for Greater Manchester' was published by the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) in 2003. One of its key themes is 'Promoting a Dynamic Economy'. Amongst the key issues are:

1. Developing the Greater Manchester economy as a key driver for North West England, a natural location for investment, with the dynamism of a world-class city; and
2. Improving the performance of the Greater Manchester economy so that it generates employment and wealth for all its citizens.

2.12.2 The 'Knowledge Capital initiative' is identified as a key priority. It states (page 12) that the Regional Centre will provide the physically identifiable centre of the Knowledge Capital, but advanced connectivity and knowledge management means that the concept can be developed to ensure that it is inclusive of Greater Manchester as a whole.

2.12.3 Page 14 states that the strategy is underpinned by the concept of urban concentration for further development opportunities. 15 strategic sites are

identified, the development of which will be critical to the future economic prosperity of much of the county. Amongst the 15 sites is the Wigan Hub.

2.13 Key Policy Issues

2.13.1 From the policy context set out above, a number of key requirements emerge for the Replacement UDP, in particular:

- The need to review existing employment allocations (PPG3, RPG13);
- The need to provide a range and choice of sites to meet different needs (PPG4, PPG12, PPG23, RES).
- The need for economy in the use of land (PPG3, RPG13);
- The need to regenerate the Borough and revitalise / modernise the local economy (PPG1, PPG12, RPG13, draft PPS1, RES, GMS); and
- The accessibility of sites for goods and workers (PPG1, PPG4, PPG13, draft PPS1).

3 The Local Context

3.1 The Local Economy

3.1.1 Local economic conditions greatly influence the quality of life for people in the Borough, in terms of their ability to find work, the wages / salaries that they can earn, their ability to buy goods and services, and investment in the state of the environment and infrastructure that serves the community. The Unitary Development Plan has a small but significant role in creating the right conditions for economic development. It is largely concerned with land use issues, primarily ensuring that there is an adequate supply of land and buildings for employment uses, while maintaining an appropriate balance with environmental and other interests. As such, the employment policies affect not only the business community, but the residents of the Borough as a whole.

3.1.2 Following the collapse of the mining industry and most of the heavy engineering and textile industries in the Borough, much progress has been made in turning the local economy round. However, there is still much to be done. The situation now compared with national and regional situation, is that Wigan Borough has:

- Relatively low overall unemployment;
- High levels of unemployment in some Ward areas;
- Relatively high levels of economic activity;
- Fewer self employed people;
- Very high levels of people commuting out of the Borough for work;
- More jobs than at any time since the 1960s;
- A high proportion of jobs in manufacturing and construction;
- A continuing and severe decline in the manufacturing sector;
- A low - but increasing - proportion of jobs in services generally;
- A low proportion of workers in professional and managerial jobs;
- A high proportion of manual workers, including skilled trade occupations;
- Low salaries / wages;
- Significant problems of multiple deprivation taking into account a range of factors including incomes, employment, health, education and crime.

3.2 Unemployment

3.2.1 At 3.1%, unemployment in the Borough has dropped below the rates for Greater Manchester, the region and the country, at 3.6%, 3.5% and 3.3% respectively (resident based, economically active, aged 16 to retirement, from NOMIS, GMResearch, April 2004). Wigan now has the joint 4th lowest rate of the 10 districts in Greater Manchester, level with 2 other districts.

3.2.2 This is a significant achievement over the last fifteen years. In 1990, unemployment in Wigan was 8.0%, the 3rd highest rate in Greater Manchester, and it was above the average for the county, the region and the UK at 7.2%, 7.9% and 6.0% respectively.

3.2.3 However, significant pockets of high unemployment remain. Table 1 sets out the unemployment rates across the 24 Council Wards (pre 10 June 2004). Using resident population base figures from April 2004, from which Wigan Borough has an unemployment rate of 3.1%, 7 Wards - Abram, Atherton, Ince, Leigh Central, Newtown, Norley and Whelley - have unemployment rates over 4.0%, the highest being Norley at 7.4%. For male unemployment, a further 5 Wards have rates in excess of 4.0% - Bedford-Astley, Beech Hill, Hindsford, Leigh East and Worsley Mesnes, and the Borough rate is 4.3%. The rate in 6 of these Wards is in excess of 6.0%, the highest again being Norley at 10.1% which also has the highest female unemployment rate at 3.8%.

Table 1. Ward Based Unemployment Rates - April 2004

	Male (Rate %)	Female (Rate %)	Total (Number)	Total (Rate %)
Ward				
Abram	5.4	2.3	215	4.1
Ashton-Golborne	3.6	1.4	186	2.6
Aspull-Standish	2.7	0.8	130	1.8
Atherton	6.9	3.5	250	5.4
Bedford-Astley	5.2	2.3	199	3.9
Beech Hill (Wigan)	4.7	1.7	169	3.3
Bryn	3.2	1.7	143	2.5
Hindley	3.8	2.0	183	3.0
Hindley Green	3.5	1.7	179	2.7
Hindsford	4.6	2.0	222	3.4
Hope Carr (Leigh)	3.3	1.1	143	2.3
Ince	8.1	2.7	233	5.8
Langtree (Shevington)	1.9	0.7	103	1.4
Leigh Central	6.4	2.5	232	4.7
Leigh East	5.0	1.3	222	3.3
Lightshaw (Lowton)	2.8	1.0	147	2.0
Newtown (Wigan)	7.9	3.1	246	5.8
Norley (Wigan)	10.1	3.8	266	7.4
Orrell	2.2	1.1	89	1.7
Swinley (Wigan)	3.9	1.3	142	2.8
Tyldesley East	2.3	1.1	141	1.7
Whelley (Wigan)	6.2	2.3	197	4.5
Winstanley (Wigan)	2.5	1.0	154	1.8
Worsley Mesnes (Wig)	4.9	1.6	200	3.4
Wigan	4.3	1.7	4,383	3.1

Source: NOMIS and Greater Manchester Research, May 2004.

Rates and figures are ONS resident population based.

Ward rates of 4% or above are highlighted in bold.

3.3 Economic Activity

- 3.3.1 Wigan has an economic activity rate in line with the average for Great Britain. However, it has a higher proportion of employees and a lower number of self employed people, particularly compared to the North West Region.
- 3.3.2 Calculated as a percentage of economically active people, the unemployment rate for the Borough is 4.7%, but again it is below the national and regional rates. A further 5% are economically inactive but want a job.

Table 2. Economic Activity / Inactivity - Wigan in Context 2002/3

	Great Britain (%)	North West (%)	Wigan (%)	Wigan (numbers)
Economic activity rate	78.3	75.6	78.3	147,000
Employees	65.1	63.6	66.8	141,000
Self employed	8.7	7.5	7.4	14,000
Unemployed	5.2	5.5	4.7	7,000
Economic inactivity rate	21.7	24.4	21.7	41,000
Wanting a job	6.0	5.7	5.0	9,000
Males	4.9	4.7	4.0	4,000
Females	7.2	6.8	6.0	5,000

Source: Local Labour Force Survey (March 2002 - Feb 2003) from www.nomisweb.co.uk, May 2004 (CD 12).

Highest percentage in each category shown in bold; lowest in italics.

3.4 Job Density

- 3.4.1 Available figures show that Wigan has approximately 142,000 people in work but fewer than 100,000 jobs. The density figures in the Table below represent the ratio of total jobs to working age population. The differential between the number of jobs and the number of people with jobs is a significant factor in why the job density in Wigan is 25% lower than for the region and the country.

Table 3. Job Density - Wigan in Context 2001

	Great Britain	North West	Wigan
Job Density	0.8	0.8	0.6

Source: www.nomisweb.co.uk, May 2004 (CD 12).

3.5 The Structure of Employment

- 3.5.1 Employment growth increased by 13.3% between 1991 and 2001, on a par with the sub-regional and regional average, but below the national average of 18.7% (**The State of the Borough, Core Document CD 13**).

3.5.2 Nevertheless, the Borough now has more jobs than at any point since before 1971. Table 4 shows how the structure of employment in the Borough has changed since 1971. There was more than double the number of jobs in manufacturing in 1971 compared to 2002. It is still a very important sector but it has been overtaken by 'distribution, hotels and catering' and 'public administration, education and health', both of which support more jobs in the Borough than ever before. In addition to these two largest sectors, there are also more jobs in construction and transport and communications.

Table 4. The Structure of Employment in Wigan Borough, 1971 - 2002

	1971		1981		1991		2002	
	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%
Agric, forestry, fishing	5700	5.9	300	0.3	200	0.2	<i>100</i>	<i>0.1</i>
Energy and water	1600	1.7	5000	5.5	1700	1.9	<i>100</i>	<i>0.1</i>
Manufacturing	43800	45.4	30800	33.9	24400	27.6	<i>18500</i>	<i>18.9</i>
Construction	<i>4500</i>	4.6	5300	5.8	5400	6.1	7800	8.0
Distribution, hotels & cater	<i>11500</i>	<i>11.9</i>	18200	20.0	21300	24.1	24400	24.8
Transport & communicat'ns	5700	5.9	5600	6.2	<i>5400</i>	6.1	6900	7.0
Banking, finance & insur'c	13000	13.4	<i>4100</i>	4.5	6200	7.0	11900	12.1
Public admin, ed & health	<i>11000</i>	<i>11.3</i>	21500	23.7	23700	26.8	23800	24.3
Other services							4500	4.6
Total	96800		90800		<i>88300</i>		98100	

Source: Census of Employment 1971, 1981, 1991 and Annual Business Inquiry 2002, from NOMIS / Greater Manchester Research
Highest number and percentage in each category shown in bold; lowest in italics.

3.5.3 Despite the massive drop in the number of manufacturing jobs, the Borough is still more strongly represented in that sector, and in construction jobs, compared to UK, North West and Greater Manchester. As noted above, manufacturing is in long term decline with fewer jobs in that sector year on year. Conversely, the Borough is weak in the growth sectors of banking, finance and insurance and other services. Table 5 refers.

**Table 5.
The Structure of Employment - Wigan Borough in Context 2002**

	Great Britain	North West	Greater Manchester	Wigan
	%	%	%	%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	0.9	0.5	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>
Energy and water	0.8	0.6	0.7	<i>0.1</i>
Manufacturing	<i>13.4</i>	15.1	13.9	18.9
Construction	4.5	4.7	4.7	8.0
Distribution, hotels, catering	24.6	25.0	24.7	24.8
Transport, communications	6.1	<i>6.0</i>	7.3	7.0
Banking, finance, insurance	19.6	17.3	19.6	<i>12.1</i>
Public admin, educ & health	24.9	26.0	24.2	24.3
Other services	5.3	4.8	4.8	4.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Annual Business Inquiry 2002, from NOMIS / Greater Manchester Research.
Highest percentage in each category shown in bold; lowest in italics.

- 3.5.4 The 'knowledge economy' is recognised as the most critical structural trend in achieving an advanced economy, marked by rising levels of innovation, technology, creativity and entrepreneurship, and by a more skilled and educated workforce. It includes both knowledge-based production (such as aerospace, electrical machinery and optical equipment, printing, publishing and recorded media, chemicals and energy) and knowledge-based services (telecommunications, computer and related services, research and development, finance and business services, air transport services, and recreational and cultural services).
- 3.5.5 These industrial groupings are based upon international definitions of 'knowledge-intensity', where individual industries are classified as 'knowledge-based' if graduates make up at least 25% of the workforce. Wigan has a low knowledge intensive economy, evidenced by its ranking of 330th out of 408 local authorities in Great Britain (**Core Document CD 13**).
- 3.5.6 Wigan's proportion of employment in knowledge-driven sectors is just over half of the national average, and is significantly below the averages for Greater Manchester and the North West. However, employment in knowledge-based sectors in the Borough increased by 31% between 1991 and 2001.

3.6 Occupations

- 3.6.1 The Borough has a significantly lower proportion of its population in management, professional and associate professional occupations than both the Region and nationally, as Table 6 shows. Consequently, it has a much higher proportion in skilled trades, process plant and machine operatives and elementary occupations. Consistent with its low knowledge-intensive economy ranking, noted in paragraph 3.5.5 above, Wigan is ranked 321st out of 408 local authority areas, based on the proportion of local residents classified as 'knowledge-workers'.
- 3.6.2 These figures include all residents in work, which includes the one-third who commute out of the Borough for work, as noted in paragraph 3.4.1 and Table 3.

Table 6. Employment by Occupation - Wigan Borough in Context 2002/3

	Great Britain (%)	North West (%)	Wigan (%)	Wigan (numbers)
1. Managers & senior officials	14.4	13.2	10.5	15,000
2. Professional occupations	11.7	10.9	7.7	11,000
3. Assoc. professional & technical	13.6	12.6	11.4	16,000
3. Administrative & secretarial	13.2	13.8	13.4	19,000
5. Skilled trades occupations	11.4	11.3	15.0	22,000
6. Personal service occupations	7.3	8.1	7.3	10,000
7. Sales & customer services	8.0	8.4	8.3	12,000

8. Process plant & machine ops	8.2	8.8	11.9	17,000
9. Elementary occupations	12.2	12.8	14.0	20,000
Total				142,000

Source: Local Labour Force Survey (March 2002 - Feb 2003) from www.nomisweb.co.uk, May 2004 (CD 12).

Highest percentage in each category shown in bold; lowest in italics.

3.7 Earnings

3.7.1 Average earnings for residents of the Borough are significantly below the averages for Great Britain and the North West. The figures in Table 7 include the high proportion of Borough residents that work outside the Borough. The figures are not significantly different for jobs in the Borough suggesting that people commuting out of the Borough are not earning much more than those working in the Borough, even though earnings for the North West region are considerably higher.

Table 7. Earnings by Residence - Wigan in Context 2003

	Great Britain (£s)	North West (£s)	Wigan (£s)
Gross weekly pay			
Full-time workers	475.8	440.1	<i>400.9</i>
Male full-time workers	525.0	487.0	<i>435.9</i>
Female full-time workers	396.0	367.5	<i>346.8</i>
Hourly pay			
Full-time workers	12.0	11.1	<i>10.2</i>
Male full-time workers	12.8	11.8	<i>10.6</i>
Female full-time workers	10.6	9.9	<i>9.3</i>

Source: New Earnings Survey: resident based statistics, 2003, from www.nomisweb.co.uk, May 2004 (CD 12).

Highest figure in each category shown in bold; lowest in italics.

3.8 Business and Enterprise

3.8.1 Wigan ranks 182nd out of 408 local authority areas in Great Britain for enterprise, based upon business formation, business survival and changes in the VAT registered business stock (CD 13). Business density, at 25 businesses per 1,000 population, is lower than the averages nationally, regionally and sub-regionally. Average business size is 12 employees and 74% of new businesses survive at least 24 months (from 1999). Local business stock increased by 3.5% between 1994 and 2001, which is above the national average and contrasts to recorded declines in both Greater Manchester (-4.4%) and the region (-0.2%).

3.9 Education and Skills

3.9.1 A knowledge economy is powered by the knowledge, skills and other attributes of its workforce. Therefore, education and skills are central to economic development. The qualifications profile of the Borough's resident population of working age ranks Wigan 328th out of 408 local authorities (CD 13). Approximately one quarter of the working population has poor

literacy and numeracy. Only 17% of the working population are qualified to National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 4 and above. 36% are qualified below NVQ level 2. However, at 27%, Wigan does have a high proportion of its working population with NVQ level 3, and almost half of school leavers achieve 5 or more GCSEs.

3.10 Deprivation

- 3.10.1 The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has recently released new Indices of Deprivation 2004 (ID 2004).
- 3.10.2 The indices cover incomes; employment; health and disability; education, skills and training; barriers to housing and services; crime; and the living environment.
- 3.10.3 The data is produced for new 'Super Output Areas' (SOAs), each with approximately 1,500 population, of which there are 200 covering the Borough. 16.0% of the Borough's SOAs are within the highest 10% nationally; 20.5% within the next 10-20% highest band nationally; and a further 14.0% within the next 20-30% highest band nationally. Accordingly, half of the Borough's SOAs are within the most deprived 30% of SOAs nationally.
- 3.10.4 At Local Authority level there are 6 summary measures of multiple deprivation. None of the 6 can be favoured over any other. They cover local concentration, the extent of population in deprived areas, income deprivation, employment deprivation and average scores and rank. Wigan Borough is amongst the highest 15% of all 354 Local Authorities in England for all of these measures.
- 3.10.5 It is difficult to make direct comparisons with the previous Index of Deprivation in 2000 (**Core Document CD 38**), because the ID 2004 applies to smaller areas than the Wards covered by the 2000 data. However, it is clear that deprivation remains a major issue for the Borough on a national scale, primarily focused on a band through the middle of the Borough between west Wigan and east Leigh. Further information in the form of a report to the Council's Cabinet will be available by the time of the Public Local Inquiry. It will be identified as a Core Document for the Inquiry (**Core Document CD 6**).

3.11 Key Local Issues

- 3.11.1 From all of the above it is obvious that while there have been considerable improvements in the local economy, there are still key issues that need to be addressed, notably:
- the high levels of unemployment in some Ward areas;
 - very high levels of people commuting out of the Borough for work;
 - a continuing and severe decline in the manufacturing sector;
 - the low wage economy; and
 - the significant problems of multiple deprivation throughout much of the Borough.

3.11.2 As a land use development plan, the Replacement UDP cannot resolve these issues alone, but it can and does set out a land use planning framework that will maximise the contribution it can make.

4 Planning for Employment Development in Wigan Borough.

4.1.1 This Chapter sets out how the Replacement UDP addresses the Key Policy and Local Issues identified in the preceding chapters.

4.2 The Take-up of Employment Land

4.2.1 The Adopted Wigan UDP identified 550 hectares of employment land. Of this 550 hectares, 356 hectares (of which 82 hectares were within 2 Strategic Employment Sites allocated under Policy E1A, and 274 hectares were at a total of 41 sites allocated under Policy E1B) were identified as suitable for employment development as at January 1996, when the plan was adopted.

4.2.2 The portfolio of sites making up the 356 hectares was described as providing for a wide range of employment uses in order to promote economic growth and jobs, diversify the employment structure and capitalise on the potential of the Borough. The land supply was comfortably over the target figure for employment land development during the Plan period, in order to provide the required element of choice and to meet the requirements of small businesses, office developments, general industry and storage and distribution.

4.2.3 As Table 8 shows, the take-up of employment land since the Plan was Adopted in 1996 has been 16 hectares per annum. Over the longer term since 1989, it has been slightly lower at 15 hectares per annum. However, both statistics more than match the estimations made in the early 1990s in preparing the Adopted UDP.

Table 8 - Take-up of employment land 1989-2003

4.2.3.1.1 Year	Take up (Ha)
1989	11.2
1990	19.5
1991	21.3
1992	9.9
1993	21.5
1994	17.1
1995	2.2
1996	24.2
1997	21.4
1998	23.2
1999	15.7*
2000	15.7*
2001	9.4
2002	7.6
2003	11.0
Total	230.9
Annual Average	15.4

*Denotes average over the two years

Source: UDP Allocated Employment Land Availability Update.

January 2004, Planning and Regeneration Department (**Core Document CD 8**)

4.2.4 The 'State of the Borough' audit (**CD 13**) records that Wigan has experienced the 222nd highest growth rate in commercial and industrial floorspace between 1985 and 2000, out of 408 local authority areas. This is the highest growth rate in Greater Manchester but only the 19th highest in the North West.

4.2.5 The past take-up of land is an important consideration in determining the likely future demand for employment land and the appropriate level of supply in the Replacement Plan.

4.3 Review of Remaining Employment Land in the Adopted UDP

4.3.1 PPG3 and Policy UR5 of Regional Planning Guidance for the North West require the Council to review all remaining employment land allocated in the Adopted UDP, to determine whether it would be better used for housing or mixed use developments.

4.3.2 The Council has undertaken such a review. Table 9 identifies the 43 locations concerned and whether or not they have been reallocated for employment uses in the Replacement Plan.

Table 9
Employment Land in the Adopted UDP - reallocated in Replacement Plan

Policy Ref:	Site Name	Area (hectares)		Allocated in Replacement UDP (Policy EM1A)
		Total	Remaining (End 2001)	
E1A 1	Stonecross Lane, Golborne	35.9	6.3	Yes
E1A 2	Westwood Park, Wigan	49.5	20.1	Yes
E1B 1	South Lancs Industrial Estate, Ashton	89.6	38.6	Yes
E1B 2	Wigan Pier Business Park, Wigan	3.7	1.7	Yes
E1B 3	Bag Lane, Atherton	0.7	-	Yes
E1B 4	Prestwich Parker Site, Atherton	4.8	2.3	Yes
E1B 5	Chanters Industrial Estate, Hindsford	11.4	-	Yes
E1B 6	Gadbury Fold, Atherton	16.7	16.7	No
E1B 7	Welch Hill Street, Leigh	0.2	0.2	No
E1B 8	Golborne Colliery	4.0	1.1	Yes
E1B 9	Newton Road, Lowton	4.0	-	Yes
E1B 10	PPG Leigh Road, Hindley Green	27.3	26.2	Yes
E1B 11	Green Lane/Alder Lane, Hindley Green	2.9	2.9	Yes
E1B 12	Hindley Industrial Estate	12.6	4.3	Yes
E1B 13	Hindley Sewage Works, Platt Bridge	2.6	2.6	No
E1B 14	Leigh Road, Hindley Green	21.0	21.0	Yes
E1B 15	Dobson Park Industrial Estate, Ince	14.3	2.6	Yes
E1B 16	Seaman Way, Ince	1.8	1.8	Yes
E1B 17	Markland St/Forge St/Victoria St, Ince	3.8	0.8	Yes
E1B 18	Kirkless Works, Top Lock	3.9	1.1	Yes
E1B 19	Moss Industrial Estate, Lowton	20.1	4.8	Yes
E1B 20	Hope Carr Industrial Estate, Leigh	35.6	14.3	Yes
E1B 21	Victoria Street/Cleworth Street, Leigh	29.2	13.6	Yes
E1B 22	Leigh Wharf	0.9	-	No
E1B 23	Leigh Road, Leigh	0.5	0.5	No
E1B 24	Pemberton Colliery	10.8	10.8	Yes
E1B 25	Richmond Hill Ind. Estate, Pemberton	2.1	0.4	Yes
E1B 26	Lamberhead Ind. Estate, Pemberton	0.5	-	Yes
E1B 27	West of Templeton Road, Platt Bridge	0.2	-	No
E1B 28	Bradley Hall Trading Estate, Standish	23.3	-	Yes
E1B 29	Bankfield Road, Tyldesley	1.1	-	Yes
E1B 30	Adjoining Ferodo, Chaddock Ln, Astley	1.7	-	Yes
E1B 31	Adjoining AGS, Chaddock Ln, Astley	0.5	0.5	Yes
E1B 32	Warrington Road, Wigan	4.2	4.2	Yes
E1B 33	Martland Mill Industrial Estate, Wigan	44.9	6.5	Yes
E1B 34	Adj Heinz, Walthew House Ln, Wigan	33.2	15.2	Yes
E1B 35	Boundary Street, Wigan	0.05	0.05	No
E1B 36	Frith Street, Wigan	1.0	1.0	No
E1B 37	Miry Lane Industrial Estate, Wigan	6.1	1.0	Yes
E1B 38	Clayton Street/Great George St, Wigan	0.3	0.3	Yes
E1B 39	Wheatlea Industrial Estate, Wigan	22.2	0.4	Yes
E1B 40	Old Town Hall, King Street, Wigan	0.3	0.3	No
E1B 41	Warrington Rd/Darlingt'n St East, Wg'n	1.3	0.1	No
	Totals	550.75	225.25	

Source: UDP Allocated Employment Land Availability Update - January 2002, Wigan Council Planning and Development Department. **(Core Document CD 7)**

4.3.3 Table 10 identifies the 10 sites that have not been reallocated, accounting for approximately 10% of the land. Of these, the largest - Gadbury Fold - has planning permission for housing development, the advance works for which are underway. Leigh Wharf has been developed for offices, a public house and car parking. A public car wash facility has been developed on the small site at Templeton Road, Platt Bridge. The remaining sites are undeveloped but most have potential for housing and some have potential for commercial use.

Table 10: Employment Sites in Adopted Plan Available end 2001 not allocated for employment uses in the Replacement UDP

Ref:	Name	Area (ha.)	Brownfield or Greenfield
E1B 6	Gadbury Fold, Atherton	16.7	Brownfield
E1B 7	Welch Hill Street, Leigh	0.2	Brownfield
E1B 13	Hindley Sewage Works, Platt Bridge	2.6	Brownfield
E1B 22	Leigh Wharf	0.9	Brownfield
E1B 23	Leigh Road, Leigh	0.5	Mix
E1B 27	West of Templeton Road, Platt Bridge	0.2	Brownfield
E1B 35	Boundary Street, Wigan	0.05	Brownfield
E1B 36	Frith Street, Wigan	1.0	Brownfield
E1B 40	Old Town Hall / King Street, Wigan	0.3	Brownfield
E1B 41	Warrington Road / Darlington Street East	1.3	Brownfield
	Total	23.75	

4.3.4 33 of the sites in Table 9 have been reallocated within one of the 37 Primary Employment Areas (PEAs) that are designated under Policy EM1A in the Replacement Plan (see Table 11). 26 of these sites had land remaining at the end of 2001 (see column 'Remaining - End 2001' in Table 9). Overall, 29 of the 37 PEAs incorporate land allocated for employment uses in the Adopted Plan, including developed land.

4.3.5 The majority of the 26 remaining employment sites that are reallocated within Primary Employment Areas, are within existing industrial estates, business parks or other industrial areas. These account for 100.6 hectares. Only 5 of the 26 sites are not, although one is an extension of an existing industrial estate and another includes a large modern factory site. Together, they account for over half of the available employment land identified in the Replacement Plan. They are:

- E1A 2 Westwood Park, 20.1 hectares remaining / EM1A 20, 21.3 hectares available.
- E1B 1 South Lancashire Industrial Estate, 38.6 hectares / EM1A 36. 39.2 hectares.
- E1B 14 Leigh Road, Hindley Green, 21.0 hectares / EM1A 13 East of Leigh Road, 37.6 hectares, comprising a large extension eastwards into despoiled safeguarded land.
- E1B 21 Victoria Street / Cleworth Street, 13.6 hectares / EM1A 6 Parsonage, 18.2 hectares, comprising an extension northwards into unallocated land.

- E1B 24 Pemberton Colliery, 10.8 hectares / EM1A 30, 18.7 hectares, comprising an extension eastwards and land formerly part of the safeguarded route of the A5225, now redirected to the north.

4.3.6 These sites have not been developed to date for a range of reasons, including land assembly and ownership issues, inadequate infrastructure and the unavailability of public subsidy. The Council is confident that these constraints can be overcome during the next few years.

4.3.7 The ability to realise the full potential of Westwood Park, East of Leigh Road and Pemberton Colliery is dependent upon the delivery of the A5225 Wigan and Hindley Bypass. This road is being advanced through the Replacement UDP and is the subject of a separate Core Proof of Evidence (CD 11), which should be read alongside this Core Proof.

4.3.8 Related to the A5225, a new access has been created into Pemberton Colliery within the last few months and a new road into Westwood Park is underway, both funded through the European Regional Development Fund as part of the South Wigan and Ince Economic Development Zone. These roads will connect these sites to the A5225. The Council has a major stake in both sites as a landowner and it has and will continue to exercise its powers as landowner to secure development.

4.3.9 A large part of the Parsonage site has now been reclaimed in advance of development.

4.3.10 Land forming part of the extension of the South Lancashire Industrial Estate has recently been acquired by a developer, who has also agreed an exclusivity agreement with the Council for its key landholdings on the site. Plans are now being worked up and detailed site investigations and transport impact assessments are underway. The scheme has been expanded to include the construction of the Ashton Northern Bypass, which connects the A58 with Junction 25 of the M6, in accordance with the Replacement Plan text.

4.4 The Supply of Employment Land (Policy EM1A)

4.4.1 The Primary Employment Areas (PEAs) that are defined under Policy EM1A in the Replacement Plan include all but two sites not currently in employment use that are allocated for such uses. The exceptions are the mixed use allocation at the former Bickershaw Colliery (Policy EM1G) and the Leigh Sports Village proposal (Policy C1D). The purpose of identifying PEAs is to safeguard the primary employment land resource in Wigan Borough. Table 11 lists all the Primary Employment Areas and shows the total area of land available for development within each at the end of December 2001.

4.4.2 The total of 259 hectares available for development, either immediately or in the medium to longer term, is consistent with the take-up rate of allocated employment land since 1989. It does not include vacant developed sites within the PEAs that were available for reoccupation or redevelopment.

Table 11
Primary Employment Areas in the Replacement UDP (Policy EM1A)

Ref:	Location	Area (hectares)			Available Land Brownfield or Greenfield
		Total	Available (end 2001)	In Adopted UDP (area where different)*	
EM1A 1	Stone Cross Park, Golborne	31.6	6.4	Yes	Greenfield
EM1A 2	Golborne Enterprise Park	4.0	1.1	Yes	Brownfield
EM1A 3	Bridge Street, Golborne	7.3	-	No	-
EM1A 4	Newton Road, Lowton	7.1	-	Yes (4.0)	-
EM1A 5	Moss Industrial Estate, Lowton	20.0	4.9	Yes	Greenfield
EM1A 6	Parsonage, Leigh	23.6	18.2	Yes (19.6)	Brownfield
EM1A 7	Bridgewater, Leigh	15.3	1.2	No	Brownfield
EM1A 8	Hope Carr/Leigh Commerce Park	33.5	11.0	Yes	Greenfield
EM1A 9	Chaddock Lane, Astley	23.6	0.7	Yes (2.2)	Brownfield
EM1A 10	Parr Brow, Tyldesley	7.4	-	Yes (1.0)	-
EM1A 11	Chanters Ind. Estate, Hindsford	11.4	-	Yes	-
EM1A 12	Gibfield, Atherton	39.9	16.0	Yes (4.8)	Brownfield
EM1A 13	East of Leigh Road, Hindley Gr'n	37.6	37.6	Yes (20.5)	Brownfield
EM1A 14	West of Leigh Road, Hindley Gr'n	52.4	22.3	Yes (27.3)	Greenfield
EM1A 15	Swan Lane, Hindley Green	29.6	7.0	Yes (12.6)	Greenfield
EM1A 16	Makerfield Way, Ince	24.1	11.9	No	Brownfield
EM1A 17	Wigan Enterprise Park, Ince	12.8	1.8	Yes (1.8)	Brownfield
EM1A 18	Dobson Park Ind. Estate, Ince	13.7	2.1	Yes (13.8)	Brownfield
EM1A 19	Rosebridge, Ince	8.4	1.2	Yes (3.5)	Brownfield
EM1A 20	Westwood Park, Wigan	33.9	21.3	Yes	Brownfield
EM1A 21	Wigan Pier Business Pk/Riverside	5.6	0.9	Yes (3.7)	Brownfield
EM1A 22	Chapel Lane, Wigan	7.1	-	No	-
EM1A 23	Wallgate, Wigan	17.3	0.3	Yes (0.3)	Brownfield
EM1A 24	Springfield and Miry Lane, Wigan	32.2	5.5	Yes (6.1)	Brownfield
EM1A 25	Martland Park and Heinz, Wigan	100.4	16.3	Yes (77.2)	Greenfield
EM1A 26	Gidlow Lane, Beech Hill	8.7	2.1	No	Greenfield
EM1A 27	Bradley Lane, Standish	28.5	3.3	Yes (22.70)	Brownfield
EM1A 28	Richmond Hill Ind Est, Pemberton	2.2	0.4	Yes	Brownfield
EM1A 29	Lamberhead Ind Est, Pemberton	18.0	-	Yes (0.5)	-
EM1A 30	Pemberton Colliery	20.2	18.7	Yes (4.9)	Brownfield
EM1A 31	Warrington Road Ind Est, Wigan	8.3	-	No	-
EM1A 32	Warrington Road, Hawkley	13.7	4.2	Yes (4.2)	Greenfield
EM1A 33	Wheatlea Industrial Estate, Wigan	20.4	0.4	Yes	Greenfield
EM1A 34	Haslemere and Land Gate, Bryn	7.8	-	No	-
EM1A 35	Park Brook, Wigan Road, Bryn	3.2	3.2	No	Brownfield
EM1A 36	South Lancashire Ind Est, Ashton	91.0	39.2	Yes	Greenfield
EM1A 37	Kirkless Ind Estate, Top Lock	12.5	-	Yes (2.8)	-
	Total	834.3	259.2	481.5	

* Area in Adopted Plan relates to the total area within the Primary Employment Area, not the 'available area'.

4.5 The Supply of Employment Land (Policy EM1B)

4.5.1 As noted in the Revised Deposit Replacement Plan (page 39), the Primary Employment Areas identified under Policy EM1A do not comprise the total land requirement for employment uses. Outside of the Primary Employment Areas there are many other employment areas and sites that meet the need of businesses and provide employment (or are currently vacant but were most recently in employment use). Altogether, they

represent a significant land resource for employment uses, which also needs to be safeguarded in support of employment and the local economy.

4.5.2 The purpose of Policy EM1B is to safeguard these sites. It applies outside of the Primary Employment Areas to proposals for the development or change of use of employment land and buildings for/to non-employment uses. It sets out a number of clauses, one of which must be satisfied if the loss of the employment land is to be acceptable in employment policy terms. These clauses cover the circumstances when the benefits for the wider community of redevelopment or change of use would outweigh the loss of the employment land, or when retaining the site for employment use is not realistically viable. The emphasis is on the applicant to demonstrate their case to the satisfaction of the Council.

4.5.3 Land safeguarded for employment uses under Policy EM1B continues to meet employment needs and contribute to the employment land resource in the Borough. In doing so, they reduce the pressure for development on greenfield sites on the edge of the urban area. If Policy EM1B didn't apply, it is very likely that many more of these sites would be developed for housing, primarily because of the price differential between housing and employment development land, as set out in paragraph 4.8.2 below.

4.6 The Supply of Employment Land (Policy EM1C)

4.6.1 Most new employment development will be on allocated land within Primary Employment Areas. However, Policy EM1C sets out criteria against which employment development on land elsewhere, not currently in employment use, will be considered. In doing so it provides an appropriate level of flexibility for business development in circumstances when allocated sites or existing employment sites are not suitable. However, development in the Green Belt or on Safeguarded Land will be subject to other policies in the Plan and will not be permitted in advance of a further review of the Plan which specifically allocates it for development, or unless very special circumstances are demonstrated.

4.7 The Overall Supply of Employment Land

4.7.1 Overall, the level of supply outlined in sub-sections 4.4 - 4.6 above, is considered to be appropriate to meet the need for employment land in the Borough through to 2016. Critically, however, it is carefully balanced against the need to safeguard the amenity of residential areas and maintain areas of open land, with minimal intrusion into Green Belt or Safeguarded Land.

4.8 The Range and Choice of Sites

4.8.1 The need to provide a range and choice of sites to meet different business needs is highlighted in PPG4, PPG12, PPG23 and the Regional Economic Strategy.

4.8.2 The 259 hectares of employment land identified covers over 60 sites. They range from very small infill sites in established industrial areas to the

extension of the South Lancashire Industrial Estate, which is the largest site at over 32.7 hectares.

4.8.3 As noted in the Replacement UDP, the Primary Employment Areas that the sites are within incorporate modern business parks, older industrial estates and other industrial and employment areas. They vary considerably in terms of the types of employment uses that they are likely to attract, but they do have particular advantages for continuing and/or expanded employment use, including:-

- (a) a critical mass of employment uses and/or land for employment development which is, and will continue to be, capable of meeting a wide variety of business needs;
- (b) an emphasis on reuse and redevelopment of brownfield land and sites, and consequent reduced need to release greenfield sites;
- (c) a balanced geographical spread throughout the Borough;
- (d) good accessibility for workers and potential workers (including in the most disadvantaged areas), by a choice of mode of transport including on foot and, wherever possible, by public transport;
- (e) good accessibility for goods either to and from local markets and suppliers and/or to and from the national road network, including a number of locations with potential for rail connection.

4.8.4 The range, amount and geographical spread of employment sites will offer an appropriate level of choice for a diverse range of companies, both those existing companies in the Borough seeking to expand or relocate and companies from outside the Borough that could be attracted into the area. In particular, the range of sites includes those most suited to traditional industries that Wigan has strength in, such as food manufacturing, sites suitable for knowledge-based industries, in order to modernise the local economy, replace jobs lost in traditional sectors and secure a more prosperous future.

4.8.5 With rising land values and the general environmental reclamation of derelict and degraded sites, there is an emerging issue with sites suitable for low amenity uses. Such uses have an essential role in the local economy and need to be accommodated. Only three of the Primary Employment Areas - Chanters Industrial Estate in Hindsford and Miry Lane and Kirkless Industrial Estate in Wigan - primarily accommodate low amenity uses. These sites are at a premium for such uses.

4.9 Economy in the Use of Land and Buildings

4.9.1 The need for economy in the use of land and buildings, with preference for the reuse of buildings and land, is set out under Policy DP1 in Regional Planning Guidance. This policy applies to all land uses and extends the principles applied to housing development in PPG3. On housing specifically, PPG3 requires 60% of new housing nationally to be on brownfield land (including conversions). RPG extends this to 80% in Wigan Borough.

- 4.9.2 This requirement together with the related trends on house prices nationally, regionally and locally is exerting great pressure on the supply of employment land in the Borough. Land for housing development can achieve a price of £1,000,000 per hectare compared to between £250,000 and £400,000 per hectare for industrial land (Valuation Office Agency, January 2004). Planning permission for housing has already been granted on a number of older employment sites such as the former Bleachworks at Standish and Bedford New Mills, Leigh.
- 4.9.3 Clearly there is a considerable financial incentive for landowners to investigate the potential for housing on their land, and many have and are doing so. This is having the affect of reducing the amount of land in, or available for, employment use.
- 4.9.4 This has been a long-term trend in Wigan. Until relatively recently the area had a very industrialised environment. A huge amount of industrial land and premises including all of the Borough's coal mines, came into disuse. A vast environmental clean-up has been necessary. While large areas have been reclaimed for recreation, nature and agriculture and some sites have been redeveloped for employment uses, a lot within urban areas has been redeveloped for housing. This has significantly improved the quality of residential environments and enhanced the image of the Borough.
- 4.9.5 However, as a result, the stock of older employment land and buildings is much reduced. For the most part, what remains is more readily suited to existing and future employment use without undue adverse impact on surrounding areas. As a direct consequence, the Replacement Plan sets out to safeguard employment land for employment uses. It does this in two ways. As set out above, where there is a critical mass of employment uses and a record of investment, together with other attributes, Primary Employment Areas have been designated under Policy EM1A. Outside of the PEAs, the redevelopment of employment sites for other uses is covered by Policy EM1B.
- 4.9.6 The alternative course of action would be to allocate new greenfield sites on the edge of the urban area for employment development. There is no need to do this, as evidenced in the Core Proof on Housing (**CD 9**). It is the Council's view that it would also defeat the objectives of PPG3 and RPG13 of prioritising brownfield land for development. It would also potentially result in large areas of single use development, contrary to wider Government objectives for mixed use development as highlighted in PPG1, draft PPS1 and elsewhere.
- 4.9.7 Furthermore, as the Housing Policy Core Proof sets out, there is a sufficient supply of brownfield land coming forward for housing development in the Borough, outside of the Primary Employment Areas and in line with Policy EM1B.

4.9.8 The Replacement Plan therefore can and should strongly adopt the principle of reusing land and buildings for employment purposes, in line with RPG13. A large proportion of the land available for employment uses in the Replacement Plan is brownfield, as Table 12 shows.

Table 12
Land Available (December 2001) in the Primary Employment Areas
Proportion Brownfield / Greenfield

	Land Available	
	BROWNFIELD	GREENFIELD
Total (Area in Hectares)	145.4	113.8
Percentage of Total	56.1	43.9

4.9.9 Table 12 is derived from Table 11 which identified whether the available land in each PEA is brownfield or greenfield. It includes some generalisations where small brownfield sites are discounted in a predominantly greenfield PEA, and vice-versa, but the Table clearly shows that the Replacement Plan is intent on delivering economy in the use of land.

4.9.10 In addition, the emphasis of Policy EM1A is very much on safeguarding the primary resource of existing employment land and buildings in the Borough. Amongst the 575.1 hectares within PEAs not identified in the Plan as available, there are always buildings, units and areas within plots that are vacant and available or potentially available for reuse. All of this land is brownfield so the total brownfield employment land in PEAs is 720.5 hectares.

4.9.11 However, while the Replacement Plan ensures that the use of greenfield land for employment uses is kept to a minimum, greenfield land is required in order to ensure that economic growth and modernisation is not unduly constrained. Nevertheless, the Replacement Plan almost exclusively meets this requirement through existing allocations that have yet to be fully developed, or remain undeveloped.

4.9.12 It is the intention of the Replacement Plan that all employment land is used efficiently, as least as far as this can be controlled through land use planning powers. Part of the purpose of designating Primary Employment Areas is to achieve this objective.

4.10 Regeneration and Economic Development

4.10.1 It is clear from the policy context and the local context that there is an ongoing need to regenerate the Borough and modernise its economy. The Replacement UDP states that although much progress has been made, economic regeneration remains a fundamental priority. Accordingly, the Council is committed to increasing the number and range of job opportunities for the Borough's residents and encouraging employment development.

4.10.2 The Council has identified a growth corridor centred upon the main concentrations of multiple deprivation in the Borough and key economic opportunities. It comprises:

- The A5225 Wigan and Hindley Bypass;
- The South Wigan and Ince Economic Development Zone, which includes 'Wigan South Central', Wigan Enterprise Park and the proposed western section of the A5225; and
- The Atherleigh Corridor, which includes Leigh Sports Village as an advanced phase and the eastern section of the A5225.

The A5225 Wigan and Hindley Bypass

4.10.3 As noted in the Replacement Plan, the full potential for development at a number of the Primary Employment Areas will only be realised through the construction of the A5225 Wigan and Hindley Bypass. Significant development at 'East' and 'West' of Leigh Road, Hindley Green, is largely dependent on the easternmost phase of the road from Atherleigh Way to Leigh Road. The full potential of sites at Pemberton Colliery, Westwood Park and Wigan Pier Quarter is similarly dependent on construction of the western section of the A5225 to Junction 26 of the M6 Motorway. The remaining section of the road would fundamentally alter the profile of established sites at Wigan Enterprise Park, Dobson Park, Makerfield Way and Rosebridge. This would stimulate significant private sector investment in redevelopment where appropriate and improving existing accommodation, and make the locations more attractive for both knowledge based businesses and other companies requiring goods access to the trunk road network.

4.10.4 The A5225 Wigan and Hindley Bypass is the subject of a separate Core Brief (**Core Document CD 11**).

South Wigan and Ince Economic Development Zone

4.10.5 The South Wigan and Ince Economic Development Zone (SWIEDZ) covers a large proportion of the most deprived areas in Wigan. It is in receipt of £14.2 million of European money plus other funding from the Single Regeneration Budget, the Regeneration Fund and Heritage Lottery amounting to a further £16.75 million. It includes 11 Primary Employment Areas of which Wigan Enterprise Park / Dobson Park and Makerfield Way are being advanced through EDZ investment, in addition to those PEAs within Wigan South Central.

4.10.6 Wigan South Central is being progressed through SWIEDZ. The concept of Wigan South Central was highlighted in the Northwest Development Agency's response to their Mersey Belt Study (**CD 4**). The Study had identified a "gap area" of sites suitable for knowledge-based business in Greater Manchester, centred on Wigan. Wigan South Central was advanced by the NWDA and the Council as a location with potential to address this. The strategy is currently being progressed with the intention of a concordat being agreed between the two parties.

Key objectives include:

- The expansion of the economic potential of key employment sites at Pemberton Colliery (Pemberton Park), Westwood Park, Wigan Pier Business Park and Wigan Pier Quarter (Policy EM1H in the Replacement Plan);
- Securing the improvement of the south-western gateway to Wigan town centre, including the development of key sites;
- Improving strategic transport connections through the development of the A5225, including the railway stations interchange (Policy A1K);
- Creating a high quality physical environment to attract knowledge-based industries;
- Developing a university portal;
- Creating an environmental technologies campus, including incubator units;
- Developing and expanding the creative industries and tourism sectors;
- Undertaking a skills audit to ensure that the needs of businesses and local people are being met;
- Delivering new high quality residential development to help re-image the area.

The Atherleigh Corridor

4.10.7 The Council's next priority for an area regeneration programme is the Atherleigh Corridor, based around the A574 Atherleigh Way in Leigh, Atherton, Bickershaw and Hindley Green.

4.10.8 This area has the second largest concentration of deprivation in the Borough. Six of the Primary Employment Areas (EM1A 6, 7, 12, 13, 14 and 15) are within the area. Against the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000 (**CD 38**), 5 of these 6 PEAs were within former Wards within the most deprived 20% nationally, and the 6th was within a Ward within the top 30%. In total, there are 119 hectares of land available for development within these 6 areas, most of it brownfield. The mixed use designation at the former Bickershaw Colliery (Policy EM1G) and the proposed Leigh Sports Village (Policy C1D) are other important regeneration proposals in the 'Atherleigh Corridor'.

4.11 Accessibility

4.11.1 The Borough is in an excellent location within the North West region, midway between Manchester and Liverpool with good road and rail connections north-south and east-west. However, the benefits are eroded by the lack of a good internal road system, particularly east-west.

4.11.2 As noted above, the ability to realise the full potential of many of the Primary Employment Areas is dependent on the proposed A5225 Wigan and Hindley bypass. It is critical for the efficient movement of goods and service providers. It will also improve access for workers to employment areas, both via the new road and through freeing up capacity on the

existing highway network to improve provision for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists.

- 4.11.3 However, a major factor in physically accessing employment opportunities is location. This is a determining factor behind the principle of safeguarding existing employment land close to where people live, instead of allocating new greenfield sites on the edge of the urban area away from housing development. Such locations are often not easily accessible except by car.
- 4.11.4 In terms of geographic accessibility, 18 of the 25 new Council Wards have at least one of the 37 Primary Employment Areas within them. Those that do not are spread across the Borough from Orrell to Tyldesley and Shevington to Abram. All of these Wards are close to at least one PEA in a neighbouring Ward and, with the exception of Abram, have relatively low unemployment.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1.1 As noted in Chapters 2 and 3, there are a number of key issues for the Replacement Plan and this Core Proof demonstrates that it sets out an appropriate strategy to address them, as far as it can as a land use development plan.
- 5.1.2 Existing allocations in the Adopted UDP have been reviewed in line with PPG3 and Regional Planning Guidance. The Council has determined to reallocate the majority of outstanding allocations. It has done this because:
- Any constraints acting on these sites that may have prevented them coming forward to date are being, or can be overcome within the lifetime of the Plan. Examples include Pemberton Colliery (Pemberton Park) and Westwood Park where developers are now on site.
 - They are predominantly brownfield, and those that are greenfield - such as at South Lancashire Industrial Estate and Warrington Road, Hawkley - form logical extensions to existing employment areas.
 - They are well related to areas of high deprivation, particularly in South Wigan, Ince, Atherton and Leigh.
 - The development of these sites will help to deliver Wigan's regeneration priorities.
- 5.1.3 The portfolio of sites in the Replacement Plan provide a range and choice of sites to meet different needs, from traditional manufacturing to knowledge-based manufacturing and services, storage and distribution and low amenity uses.
- 5.1.4 Most of the sites are well established or have previously been employment sites. They are well located in terms of access for workers and potential workers, including in disadvantaged areas, as well as for goods and service providers. But the proposed A5225 will substantially increase the attractiveness of many of the sites, bringing the benefits of good road access to the heart of the Borough.
- 5.1.5 The supply of land also strikes an appropriate balance for meeting employment need. Unemployment is low but remains relatively high in certain parts of the Borough. There is now a record number of jobs but also a very high outflow of workers to jobs outside the Borough. To provide jobs for all of these people would require the development of large parts of the Green Belt - it simply cannot be achieved. Therefore, it has to be accepted that a large part of the Borough's employment needs will continue to be met outside the Borough.
- 5.1.6 Instead, the Borough needs to attract better quality jobs in growth sectors that pay more money. To achieve this, high quality sites are needed as well as a more highly skilled workforce. We also need to continue to change people's perceptions of Wigan. This includes improving the built and natural environment. To assist this, the Plan proposes a number of issues, including a Regional Park (Policy C1G, in line with Policy UR12 in Regional Planning Guidance), the Wigan Pier Quarter (Policy EM1H), redevelopment of the Bickershaw colliery site (Policy EM1G) and Leigh

Sports Village (Policy C1D). Wigan South Central includes the Pier Quarter and parts of the Wigan Flashes, both of which would contribute to the regional park. Westwood Park is immediately adjacent to part of the Flashes, as is the route of the proposed A5225. Both schemes would open up views of the Flashes and considerably improve peoples' image of Wigan as a green location.

- 5.1.7 Finally, we need to retain our employment sites unless there are very good reasons otherwise. Policy EM1A designates Primary Employment Areas where there should be no change of use or redevelopment for other uses. Policy EM1B applies to other employment sites and sets out criteria, one of which must be met if the loss of the employment site is to be acceptable. Without these policies to safeguard sites important for employment uses, the financial incentive for housing development would be likely to result in the considerable depletion of employment sites. This would result in Wigan becoming a bigger exporter of workers than it already is.